



Alumni Association

NAU Near You Alumni Chapter Program Guidelines

Regional Chapters

The mission of our *NAU Near You* Alumni Chapter Program is to empower alumni communities to create personal and professional opportunities that nurture lifelong relationships with one another and the university. The NAU alumni chapter program has been established to connect with our alumni where they live and work. Chapters exist in a city where a number of NAU alumni allow for sufficient capability for engagement and activities.

Purpose of NAU Near You Chapter Program

The purpose of our alumni chapter program is to provide support and recognition for groups to carry out activities aimed at engaging alumni. The official recognition of a chapter symbolizes the formal partnership and mutual commitment between the chapter and Northern Arizona University. Any alumni constituency network must support the mission and strategic plan of the Northern Arizona University Alumni Association (NAUAA).

Participation

Being involved in a chapter means that you are actively participating in the events NAU and the alumni chapter host. As a member, you will receive information about various events, chapter updates and newsletters, and potential benefits or discounts to events in your area.

Chapter members can choose which events they wish to attend and provide feedback to chapter leaders in their area about desired programming and engagement opportunities.

There are no fees or dues associated with being a chapter member. However, there may be activities with added benefits to chapter members who donate. Make a donation online any time at: alumni.nau.edu/giving

Reasons to Join

It's the #1 way to connect to NAU

As a Lumberjack, you'll find many ways to stay in touch with your alma mater. The Office of Alumni Engagement is dedicated to keeping you informed and engaged with NAU by bringing development opportunities to you!

Increase the value of your degree

U.S. News & World Report looks at alumni engagement as one of several measures of quality used to rank major universities in the United States. Your contribution to the NAU Alumni Association helps increase NAU's prestige, which in turn, increases the prestige of the degree you list on your resume. Supporting the NAUAA by joining a chapter helps you and NAU!

Mingle with local Lumberjacks

Whether it's Homecoming, a networking mixer or athletic events, you'll connect with Lumberjacks just like you! We want to provide meaningful programming that our alumni want to see!

Stay in the know

As a chapter participant you hear about upcoming activities and events first! You also help drive the chapter activities in your area!

Get an edge in your career

On top of networking opportunities, chapter members have access to NAU Career Services resources. New graduates can meet established alumni and make connections that help elevate your career.

Keep the traditions alive

The *NAU Near You* Alumni Chapter Program exists to engage, connect and celebrate alumni through activities like Homecoming, football tailgates, alumni awards, and reunions.

Build a Lumberjack network

Through this chapter network, you can join other Lumberjacks for a variety of activities, everything from game watching events and networking to community service right where you live! You can be a driving force to generate NAU pride and foster the Lumberjack spirit!

Leadership Structure

Chapters ideally have a leadership committee of at least three alumni to help lead local activities. This structure allows for successful leadership, event planning, and chapter outreach, while removing the burden of planning, management, and communications from a single alum.

The leadership committee of each chapter will be determined on a voluntary basis. Leadership committee members will assist with the following responsibilities:

- **Chapter Leader:** Acts as a liaison to the alumni chapter coordinator and the main contact to chapter/group members.
- **Events Planner:** Contact for the planning and execution of events.

- **Communications Planner:** Spearheads promotions efforts and serves as a reference point for updated alumni information, in conjunction with the alumni chapter coordinator.

Additional chapter leaders are able to participate on an ad hoc basis depending on the needs of the local chapter leadership. Every local event is an opportunity to talk about being a local leader and to offer new alumni a chance to get involved and make their chapter stronger.

Chapter leaders are required to sign a leadership service pledge as well as an NAU volunteer agreement. Signing these documents ensures that chapter leaders represent NAU with pride and integrity.

Have a plan for transition of leadership committee

- An outgoing leader may wish to mentor an incoming leader through a portion of her/his term in a leadership role.
- Choose a chapter leader elect, making it clear who the next chapter leader will be.
- Set term limits: Two- to three-year terms for all leaders are recommended; these needn't be on the same cycle; some of the leaders could transition each year if they would like.

Other suggestions to promote success

- Establish committees and delegate work.
- Encourage members to be involved in organizing or volunteering for programs and events.
- Periodically survey the interests, skills, and resources of your membership. Know who to turn to for help.
- Host a meeting with members to talk about new ideas.
- Create evaluations for your events to gauge their success.
- Focus your efforts on programs that are sustainable through leadership transition.

Expectations

A successful alumni chapter program is the result of strong collaboration between the university and chapter member volunteers. While many local chapters are encouraged to participate in happy hours and other types of social programming, please keep in mind that a major reason the NAU chapter program is being established is to serve the regional outreach strategies of the university. Therefore, the following minimum expectations for alumni chapters have been established.

- Maintain a leadership pool of at least three alumni to lead the chapter (chapter leader, events planner, and communications planner).

- Communicate monthly with alumni constituents and the alumni chapter coordinator. If the alumni chapter coordinator, chapter members, or other constituents request something from you, return requests in a timely manner.
- Host at least 3-4 events each year organized by the local chapter. These may be social in nature or up to the discretion of the chapter leadership.
- Assist in hosting university or alumni association event(s) that occur in the chapter area beyond the recommended 3-4 local events.
- Cultivate a local pool of alumni volunteers interested in becoming future chapter leaders or who are interested in other volunteer opportunities at NAU.
- Assist in maintaining social platforms linked from the NAU alumni website that adhere to university guidelines.
- Be represented by at least one member at the annual Alumni Chapter Leader Summit to network with other chapter leaders and to share best practices.
- Designate one member to participate in calls/meetings with the NAUAA Alumni Chapter and Networking Committee as needed.
- Submit nominations for alumni award winner programming which takes place annually during Homecoming.
- Submit a *Chapter Activity Spotlight Form* after unique events/activities. This is located in the alumni chapter toolkit.

Annual Engagement Proposal and Activity Resources

The annual chapter proposal is a timeline of anticipated activities/events that will help us appropriate funds for each chapter's operating needs during a fiscal year. This doesn't mean all details for each event should be finalized. The alumni chapter coordinator uses the chapter plan to estimate the funding each chapter will require for the fiscal year as well as what type of insurance coverage will be necessary for various activities. The NAU fiscal year is from July 1 – June 30 of each year.

- Creation and submission of an annual engagement plan is required no later than June 15th of each year. This is flexible during the first year of a chapter. The annual engagement plan is located in the alumni chapter toolkit.
- Hosting 3-4 events per year and reviewing community and university calendars to identify potential events that chapter members would like to participate in throughout the year is recommended.

Use the list of program categories below to help create the annual plan.

- Athletic engagement opportunities
- Career & professional development programming
- Community service opportunities

- Family focused events
- Educational lectures or guest speaker gatherings
- Philanthropic education and awareness
- Social gatherings
- Young alumni connections
- Mentorship and networking

Please include the following information on the annual plan:

- Chapter Name
- Leadership Committee Members
- Point of Contact for alumni chapter coordinator
- Complete the event/activity table which is in the alumni chapter toolkit under *Annual Engagement Plan Guide*

Hosting Resources

The planning, execution, and follow up of events are primarily the responsibility of the chapter leadership committee. However, the alumni chapter coordinator is available to offer support and assistance throughout the process. Examples of areas where the alumni chapter coordinator will support chapter activities include:

- Post RSVP link on alumni website and promote on social to help boost outreach
 - Communication with chapter leaders regarding attendance numbers.
- Support materials are available to all chapters, including nametags and decorations to make fellow alumni feel welcome and add a bit of blue and gold.
- Attending key events as needed.
- Assistance and guidance with identifying and securing presenters/guest speakers for chapter events.
- All internal communication with NAU faculty, staff and administration will be handled by the alumni chapter coordinator. If you have reason to contact NAU staff about anything chapter related, please work through the alumni chapter coordinator.

In addition to hosting regional activities, chapters will need to report back to the alumni chapter coordinator with metrics from the various activities they are hosting. Chapters are required to provide membership lists, event registration, and attendee lists to the alumni chapter coordinator so that we can track alumni engagement across the globe. Enhanced data, metrics, and measurement allows us to more fully tell the story of the impact of regional chapters on alumni engagement and assists us in advocating for better resources for chapter programming.

Attendance Boosters

By having a plan ready in advance, it allows the alumni chapter adequate time to draft a communication plan to promote each event. Email invites are the most common form of invitation utilized by chapters. Although chapters will assist with the criteria for invites, invitation creation and distribution will be handled by the alumni chapter coordinator to ensure consistency and brand standards are being upheld.

Spread the word about events on the alumni chapter's social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and be sure to include the link to register. Many successful chapters send a monthly newsletter with updates from the university, information about upcoming events, and various opportunities for involvement. In rare cases, mail invitations may be utilized depending on the type of activity and the reach the chapter is hoping to have. Sending one or two reminders for every activity invite is recommended.

Office of Alumni Engagement Contacts

Questions, comments, or concerns regarding the chapter program should be directed to the alumni chapter coordinator. The alumni chapter coordinator is the staff liaison for all chapter inquiries.

The communications coordinator will also be working with chapters regarding inquiries specific to social media, marketing and communication efforts. Collaboration between both chapter communication planners and the communications coordinator will ensure NAU brand standards are upheld and that we have consistent messaging with regard to chapter communication efforts.

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