

## Action Plan: Summary

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the past few years, the senior officers of Queen's University and the alumni leaders of the Queen's University Alumni Association have felt a growing urgency to engage more alumni in the life of the institution.

In January 2004, the Office of Advancement, headed by Vice-Principal George Hood, retained a consultant to assess the potential for raising alumni participation to new and sustainable levels. There followed a comprehensive audit and survey of alumni, with recommendations for change and improvement.

The audit and survey confirmed that there is a significant gap between the exceptional loyalty and affection that alumni feel for Queen's, and their involvement with the University, whether as volunteers or donors or as proud, informed citizens and members of one of Canada's most important institutions -- with all that that signifies for them both personally and professionally. Queen's has not engaged its alumni at a level commensurate with their strong positive feelings, nor with the University's ever-increasing need for the kind of support that alumni elsewhere can and do provide their alma maters, including donations.

In response to this imperative, and as one of her first acts of office, Principal Karen Hitchcock convened a task force and charged it with developing an action plan to raise the level of alumni involvement with the University to new and sustainable levels within the next three to five years.

The Principal's Task Force (PTF) was composed of representatives of the University's senior staff, the leadership of the Queen's University Alumni Association, and other alumni and students.

As part of the 5-month planning process, the PTF held two Town Hall meetings open to all members of the University community, and availed itself repeatedly of a steady stream of ideas and suggestions received then and throughout the process from numerous sources.

From all these deliberations, the PTF has produced a plan that will enhance and intensify alumni engagement at all levels through a process that will start at the beginning of the students' experience with Queen's and extend throughout their lives as alumni.

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### **ACTION PLAN FOR ALUMNI RELATIONS AT QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY**

#### **A. Mission for Alumni Relations at Queen's University**

***To engage alumni in the life of the University, starting from their earliest experience with Queen's and extending throughout their lives.***

#### **B. Vision for Alumni Relations at Queen's University**

Alumni relations at Queen's seeks to be characterized by:

- *a broad base of alumni participation and support*
- *an expansive and vibrant Alumni Association led by a strong, diverse cadre of alumni leaders, working in partnership with a professional Alumni Office*
- *the high quality and appeal of its diverse programs and services*
- *its functional integration with all the components of advancement to create a dynamic advancement program*
- *a strong central Alumni Office and strong component parts in Faculties and Schools.*

#### **C. Scope**

The Plan identifies three areas of strategic importance, comprising seven areas of particular focus:

##### **1. Engagement**

- transform the Queen's University Alumni Association (QUAA)
- reconstitute and expand the network of affinity groups, including Branches
- create an alumni volunteer network to assist in identifying and recruiting students for Queen's

##### **2. Students and Young Alumni**

- transition students to alumni

##### **3. Programs and Services**

- create an alumni education program
- build a central reunion program to complement the traditional Homecoming
- transform and enhance the Queen's Annual Fund

#### **D. Strategic Horizon**

The Plan addresses an immediate critical challenge to Queen's future. It is intended to be adjusted from time to time to reflect progress, to provide room for new goals and initiatives, and to substitute for those that may prove untenable for unforeseen reasons. Its intended lifespan is three to five years, after which it will be time to create a new plan

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### **E. Goal 1: Engagement**

1. Implement structural and organizational changes to promote and support increased alumni participation in the life of the University
2. Transform partnership between the University and the Queen's University Alumni Association
3. Recommend that the QUAA transform and expand its structure and policies to support increased, more diverse alumni engagement, including increasing the number of positions of leadership throughout the organization, including graduate alumni
4. Conduct a campaign for three to five years for increased alumni volunteer engagement across a broad front, involving all areas of the University
5. Increase the ability of the central Alumni Office to drive increased alumni engagement for the whole institution
6. Develop a formal, extensive national and international network of alumni volunteers to help identify and recruit prospective Queen's students
7. Strengthen the concept of the entering University "class" as a cohort

### **F. Goal 2: Students and Young Alumni**

1. Create a conceptual framework for students that will increase the likelihood of developing attitudes and habits toward the University as alumni that will manifest themselves in regular participation and support throughout their lives.
2. Develop an inventory of opportunities for integrating students and young alumni
3. In partnership with graduating classes and other campus stakeholders, develop an organization and structure that will assist each graduating cohort to become a strong alumni cohort
4. On a centralized database, track/record student non-academic activities
5. Involve graduating classes in Homecoming/Reunion weekends
6. Integrate student leaders from all 4 undergraduate classes in the QUAA, at Board meetings, and at the QUAA annual leadership convocation (Assembly) and related events
7. In collaboration with the AMS, plan at least one class-wide event for first-year students and graduating students
8. Add Fourth Year Class notes column to alumni "Keeping in Touch" notes section of the Queen's Alumni Review

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9. Continue to develop career/networking mentoring
10. Develop alumni special interest and "friends" groups for appropriate departments or organizations in the University
11. Enhance the ThankQ Annual Giving program

### **G. Goal 3: Programs and Services**

1. Enhance core programs and services and add new ones to expand engagement opportunities and effectiveness
2. Revise, strengthen and expand national and international network of Queen's Branches
3. Reconstitute and expand alumni reunion program on campus to complement the traditional Homecoming Weekend
4. Initiate and develop an Alumni Education Program
5. Evaluate and review the role and mandate of the University's alumni magazine (Alumni Review) in fostering alumni relations
6. Expand and strengthen Queen's Annual Fund

### **IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING**

1. Creation of Task Force on Implementation and Progress (TFIP)  
Accountabilities: Vetting, Distributing, Implementation of the Plan

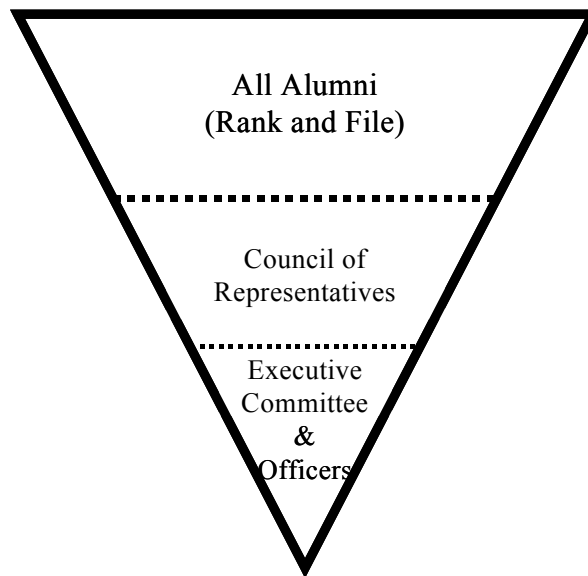
### **APPENDIX: Consultant's Recommendations re: Queen's University Alumni Association (QUAA)**

#### **A. Increased engagement**

1. Expand QUAA Board to include additional committees, more affinity group leaders, and increased number of elected and/or appointed members at large, including representatives from faculties/schools and students (the Executive Committee). Target is 35 – 60 members to be charged with the day-to-day management of the affairs of the QUAA. To meet 3 times a year.
2. Create a middle tier of alumni leadership to be known as the Assembly or Council of Alumni Representatives to include leaders of all alumni organizations, such as Branches, classes, Faculty/Departmental advisory groups, special interest groups such as athletics or the Bands, and other affinity organizations of alumni, as well as selected relevant student organizations (class officers and student government officers). To comprise 200 – 300 members and to meet once a year.

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3. Include as a third tier the remaining alumni body, to assemble on campus once a year.



*(Diagram of 3-tiered Queen's University Alumni Association)*

4. Transform annual meeting and Board meetings to be more inclusive of all alumni leadership toward goal of increased engagement .
5. Integrate student leaders from all 4 undergraduate classes in the QUAA, at Board meetings, and at the QUAA annual leadership convention and related events.
6. Plan one spring class-wide event for First Year students and Fourth Year students, to be sponsored by the QUAA.
7. QUAA to provide representation on editorial committee of the Alumni Review.
  - 7.1 Committee to serve as an advisory group to the Alumni Review Editor and Staff on all matters pertaining to the editorial content of the magazine, and as a resource for the Editor and Staff.
  - 7.2 Committee members to have professional journalism/ publishing/ communications background.

### **C. Committee Re-alignment:**

1. **Create a standing committee of the QUAA on Students and Young Alumni** to advise the Alumni Office and the University and monitor progress on the integration of alumni and students, to develop an inventory of opportunities for such integration, to promote and facilitate traditions, programs and services aimed at students/young alumni, and to recommend changes that will strengthen alumni presence. This committee to work closely with the AMS.

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- 2. Create a standing committee of the QUAA on Reunions to** advise on the development and implementation of class and affinity group reunions, to be staffed by a senior staff person in the Alumni Office.
- 3. Create standing committee of the QUAA on Alumni Education** for alumni to be staffed by a senior staff person in the Alumni Office.
- 4. Create a Standing Committee of the QUAA on Graduate Alumni.**
- 5. Create a Standing Committee of the QUAA on Alumni Student Recruitment Networks.**
- 6. Create an ad hoc committee of the QUAA to be the Queen's National Annual Fund Committee** to be staffed by the Director of the Annual Fund.