**CORNELL ILR ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**ILR Conference Center**

**16 East 34th Street, 6th floor, NYC**

**MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2016 MEETING**

**INTRODUCTION**

President Esta Bigler called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. Board Members introduced themselves, new Board Members were seated and Summer Research Fellows were introduced. Esta announced that Amber Gilbert had resigned her Vice-President-Secretary position due to work commitments and Susan Panepento was appointed by the Executive Committee to fill the remainder of Amber’s term.

Departing Board Member Leona Barsky asked for clarification on which Board Members were seated to vote at this meeting. Esta explained that the June meeting was the first meeting for Board Members elected in the spring election. Therefore, Board Members whose terms end in 2016 and were not re-elected may not vote at this meeting.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

A motion was made by Martin Schmelkin to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2016 meeting; seconded by Rich Lovely. The motion was unanimously approved.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Vice-President-Treasurer Don Zinn gave the financial report. [Copy attached] A general discussion followed concerning the Board’s role in fundraising under the new “no dues” model and the Association’s past funding of Chapter events.

**FALL EVENT**

Vice-President Joe Cartafalsa gave a report on the planning for the Association’s Fall event in Ithaca. The dates for this event are October 14 and 15. The Friday agenda will consist of presentations to the students, followed by an early dinner. The keynote speaker has not yet been secured. [The end of this presentation was tabled until later in the meeting.]

**REPORT FROM THE DEAN**

Dean Hallock gave a report on the state of the school. His focus on the School’s budget deficit has resulted in a fifty percent reduction to only one million dollars for the new fiscal year. He expects this will decline further to $250,000 in the next fiscal year. The Dean has also focused on improving the student experience. These efforts included the school wide book project, and a five week transfer colloquium. In the coming year he hopes to continue to find ways to improve the student experience including easing the adjustment to Cornell and increasing student participation in research. A new assistant dean, Cara Lombardi, will start soon. Applicants for admission continued to rise for this fall – the University submissions were up by 7%, ILR by 20%. The ILR admit rate was about 11.65%. A few examples were given of faculty and student awards. Both groups continue to be recognized for their achievements. The ILR School will continue to be involved in the University’s consolidated business program and will continue to offer a business minor. ILR submitted a proposal to the Board of Trustees on ways it can participate in the NYC Cornell Technology campus. In the coming year, the Dean will also focus on new faculty recruitment for seven retiring faculty positions as well as alumni affairs and development.

**COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Jordan Berman gave the committee’s report identifying the association’s challenges, solutions and execution issues. [Copy of report attached.] He outlined the next steps: to implement a peer to peer brand, develop content– including curating stories, Esta’s blog, and AA community moderators and managers, and developing communication channels: coordinating editorial content with school calendar, developing and publishing content across channels, maintaining relevance, consistency [applying the refreshed brand] and a digital platform. Jordan will put together a one page style sheet for users to follow; alumni will be solicited to increase the AA’s social media presence.

**AFFINITY GROUPS**

Esta reported that as part of the expansion of the AA, we have started to encourage alumni to form new sub-groups as a means of engaging new participants. An example of this is the Finance Council that was formed with the approval of the Executive Committee to establish P2P programs for alumni working in finance. Recently, Leona Barsky formed the ILR Women’s Network, with new Board Member Dawn Levy-Weinstein.

Leona reported that the group had its first meeting at the Extension’s offices and the response was very positive.[[1]](#footnote-1) Recently, she emailed a new request to the Board for $2500 to cover future meeting costs. [Request attached.] She reported that a second meeting is scheduled for July 20 at Akin Gump. Leona explained that she does not want to charge admission to the meetings. She reported that the Executive Committee asked her to use ILRAA in the group’s name and she refused. She explained that the group was not willing to include “Alumni Association” in the group’s name because it is already a recognized brand, dating back to 1977, when the ILR Women’s Caucus was founded on campus. In addition, she stated that it is a grass roots organization independent of the AA. The purpose of the Network is to build on and work with the campus-based group and it is intended to provide a confidential forum for alumni, students and faculty and bring alumni back to the group. A discussion followed concerning whether the independence of the Network from the AA was consistent with the AA’s recent expansion and rebranding efforts and/or was confusing to alumni. Questions were asked about the ILRAA’s practice of granting money to groups. Past-president Dean Burrell stated that only Chapters have been given operational funds, upon request. Chapters have been given $500, but were otherwise self-supporting. Generally, Board Members expressed encouragement and praise for the new group. However, some members voiced criticism of the amount of money requested and the group’s reluctance to operate under the AA umbrella. Vice-president Beth Florin suggested a committee be formed to discuss and recommend whether the ILRAA should be encouraging and supporting Affinity groups and if needed, recommend guidelines for the operation of all Affinity groups. A motion was made by Mary Zitwer-Millman to create a committee to explore and recommend Affinity group guidelines; motion seconded by Tom Barreca, and was approved by a majority of the members.

**ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ellen Dember gave the committee report [Copy attached]. She highlighted that the 2016 nomination process was improved using web-based submissions and that voter participation increased 300%. In addition, concerns that the Board would lose experienced people with a larger pool of eligible alumni did not transpire since many of the elected Board Members have experience working with the AA. Martin Schmelkin asked if in the future the Board could be given notice of the election results before publishing them.

**CHAPTER REPORT**

Lisa Hunter gave the report [Copy attached]. Maury Josephson reported that the Long Island Chapter is working with the Cornell Club to establish regular events. Lisa encouraged the Board to email her with ideas about events and what the Chapters can be doing to encourage more alumni participation, including working with affinity groups.

**FUNDRAISING REPORT**

Rich Lovely reported that the committee’s goal to get 100% Board Member participation was not successful, but they will continue to ask through the end of June. He does not have reliable data yet on the percentage of Board Member participation. Esta reminded the Board members that we all contribute with our work, wisdom and wealth and that any contribution is appreciated.

**STUDENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Joe Cartafalsa reported that the May student graduation event was very well attended and the weather cooperated.

**PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE**

Beth Florin reported that the webinars have started. The first Alumni featured was Valerie Benjamin and the viewer feedback was very positive. The committee is gathering topics and is organizing the next program around late stage career changes. [Report attached.]

**FALL EVENT**

Vice-President Joe Cartafalsa finished his report on the fall event. He reported that there student hosts will be used to shepherd alumni from the keynote speech to the breakout rooms. He solicited Board input on new topics for the breakout sessions. The panels will be slightly different again this year. The Friday night barbeque will be in the lobby of the conference center and will be shorter.

**ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

Lisa Hunter requested that the Board be provided with a contact list with information on all board members. Sue Sappington stated she can create the requested list.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. to begin the annual reception to welcome 2016 freshmen and transfer students.

1. While it was not discussed at the meeting, the recording secretary notes that the Executive Committee authorized payment of all the costs associated with the room and refreshments for the meeting. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)