

SUNY Cortland
Division of Institutional Advancement
2008-2009
Annual Report

The Division of Institutional Advancement is SUNY Cortland's primary source for communicating with the outside world, as well as within the campus community. It articulates and promotes the College's mission to the general public while giving special emphasis to students, parents, alumni, benefactors, faculty and staff. The 2008-2009 academic year was challenging, exciting, and filled with many significant accomplishments. While this report contains an overview of the divisions' work, individual departmental annual reports are on file in the Office of the Vice President for Institutional Advancement.

OVERVIEW OF DIVISION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Alumni Affairs

The alumni program hosted 25 successful chapter events throughout the state and conducted very successful regional events in Florida, Las Vegas, and Branson, Missouri. Special events were also scheduled this year in association with the New York Jets training camp, the men's championship lacrosse game in Foxboro, Massachusetts, and in New York City at the new Yankees Stadium. The staff worked with public relations to develop and launch the new electronic newsletter, *Moments*, which has been received warmly by many of our alumni.

Reunion weekend in July was attended by over 600 alumni and guests with another affinity reunion success (NEX) showing again that this is successful way to get alumni back to campus. Another unique event this past year was the recognition event for Lynne Parks Hoffman '68 to honor her philanthropy and the naming of the alumni house. The 50th Cortaca Jug game provided an opportunity to develop a very successful weekend for football alumni, including undefeated 1988 football team. The Lynne Parks '68 Alumni House hosted over 75 events and provided lodging services for 140 nights. Gift raising for the Alumni House was modestly successful this year however large commitments made to the endowment fund were received. The Trustee program and the capital restoration program have been approved by the College and the Foundation Board will become part of the case for support of the College. The Kintera online community project continues to provide challenges for the staff yet it does provide the vehicle for the online newsletter and other electronic communications with nearly 30,000 alumni.

Foundation

This was a very difficult year for fund raising. In total, the foundation raised \$2.9 million during the past fiscal year. While this amount is not a record, it is only slightly below last year's mark of more than \$3 million. The Foundation had approximately 6,000 donors who gave an average gift of \$225.

An enormous effort was launched by the Foundation and development staff related to the underwater endowments and generally speaking, handled that situation very well. Guidance was received from the SUNY consultants on how to approach this difficult situation and high praise must go to the Manager of Financial Operations for maintaining accurate records on all underwater funds and communicating with gift officers and the Vice President to help to ensure accurate and timely information for donors.

The Cortland Fund exceeded its goal, going over \$750,000. The automated call center made nearly 19,000 more calls than ever before, reaching 3,000 more prospects than in the previous year. The staff also worked with the senior legacy committee completing several projects involving current students with philanthropy. The local business appeal was also more successful this year than last bringing in over \$13,000. A special fund raising event will be the raffle of the super bowl tickets provided by the New York Jets. The raffle will result in funding to the Foundation to be used for scholarships and other campus priorities.

An important leadership gift from ASC of \$980,000 over the next five years was an enormous boost to the fundraising program for the year. Because of the estate gift from Ethel McCloy Smiley '31, the Foundation exceeded its annual goal.

The past year has been consumed with the work done on developing the campaign for Cortland. An enormous amount of my time and energy was put into working with the consultant, the Board, the executive committee and with our SUNY consultants to maneuver through a historic time of economic upheaval. Working with the board executive committee and the chair, the staff was successful in having the board unanimously approve moving forward with the campaign. The timing, which was part of the recommendation, the extended silent phase, and the decision to leave the consultant and work with the SUNY consultants, were all very good decisions. A good deal of effort was put into working with the Provost and other members of the campus community to develop the Colleges' strategic plan. The case for Cortland is strengthened immeasurably by having gone through this process and the Colleges' ability to raise significant private support is much greater. The proposed divisional re-organization, taking advantage of the executive director of alumni affairs' long standing positive relationships, will add a great deal to the fundraising efforts of the College. For a complete copy of the *2008-2009 Cortland College Foundation Annual Report* go to:

http://www.cortland.edu/foundation/annual_report0809.pdf

Creating a Culture of Philanthropy

A great deal of work has been accomplished this year which will benefit the College in both the short and long term. The Vice President gave four presentations on the subject to campus leaders, the faculty and staff as a whole, the College Council and the Foundation. A working group was appointed and has worked all year to develop a comprehensive program focused on students and young alumni. The group had broad representation and will be completing its work late summer and early fall. Funding for the program will come from the Alumni Association, the Foundation, and from one time money from the College. Another related accomplishment is the creation of the MOU between the College, the Foundation and the Alumni Association. The SUNY auditors recommended that we accomplish this and we were coincidentally working on it this year as well. This document does a nice job laying out the important relationships between the three organizations and will help to ensure a better working relationship between all groups in the future as well as helping to ensure financial stability for the two affiliated groups.

Both the Foundation and Alumni Association boards provide outstanding volunteer service to the College. The Foundation board structure, which is currently under discussion, needs to take into consideration the type of board members we are attracting. We have talked about the challenge of getting great board members who want to help the College and making sure that when they come to campus they feel like their time is being well spent. The staff is hopeful that the proposed committee structure outlined by the chair at the June meeting will result in a structure that will accomplish that goal. The orientation meeting for the Foundation board is brief but good and the ongoing board education programs have been fairly good. There is a need to develop a yearlong plan for board education that makes good sense and ties to the upcoming campaign.

The Alumni Association completed the Hezel study, a comprehensive analysis of the purpose, function, and structure of the association this year. The association appointed a strategic planning committee which will develop a plan for implementing the studies' recommendations. The final recommendations from the strategic planning committee should be submitted for approval during the spring of 2010.

Public Relations

The public relations staff wrote and edited 225 news releases during the 2008-2009 academic year. The releases featured the College's key constituencies, i.e., students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, and friends of the College, as well as cultural events on campus. All releases were strategically targeted with the office disseminating the releases instantaneously, using ReadMedia. Several thousand releases regarding Dean's list and President's list awardees were also sent to hometown newspapers around the country.

The public relations staff devoted a great deal of time and energy into writing, editing and producing important institutional publications throughout the year. These include the *Columns*,

with a circulation of over 57,000, the *Annual Report of the President*, the *2008-2009 Cortland College Foundation Annual Report*, and team media guides for all athletic teams. Additionally, the staff has begun the transition to electronic publications by writing, editing and producing *Moments*, the alumni electronic newsletter that is produced quarterly, and the *C-Club Newsletter* that is sent out weekly. Finally, the *Bulletin* is also now being produced electronically and is published under the supervision of the director of public relations. Great care has been given to developing and producing high quality publications replete with photos and concise gripping stories.

Publications and Electronic Media

The Colleges' commitment to the Web has had an ever increasing impact on the work of the publications and electronic media office. Over 90 office Web sites were moved into the content management system throughout the year and 70 employees were trained on how to use this system. The Web redesign commenced during the year and has been the focus of intensive work by the staff. Numerous web sites and publications have had to be updated to reflect the new logo as well as the College's branding and marketing initiatives. In-house design work continues to be of the highest quality while saving the College and specific programs many thousands of dollars. The staff has become very conscious of sustainability goals for the College and always looks for ways to reduce paper and use alternative papers when possible.

Implementation of the Colleges' Marketing Plan

A great deal of work was performed throughout the year to continue to implement the branding and marketing initiatives for the College. The marketing advisory and steering committees continued to develop and implement the strategies that were developed as a result of the Stamats project. The acquisition of funding to re-design the Web site was very important to the marketing program and the College will see great benefits in the not too distant future as a result. The staff was very pleased that the President has decided to make the marketing position a permanent part of the administration as it is a critically important investment as we move the College forward.

This report is a brief summary of the work of the division during the 2008-2009 academic year. A great deal of work has been accomplished and there is much to do in the coming years. For a more complete description of the divisions work, departmental annual reports are on file in the office of the Vice President for Institutional Advancement in Brockway Hall, Room 313.

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