



ACSN

ALUMNI CAREER SERVICES NETWORK

ALUMNI CAREER SERVICES NETWORK (ACSN)

FY18 Annual Report

September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018

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PRESIDENT'S YEAR-IN-REVIEW

Dear ACSN Members,

We're happy to provide you with our first Annual Report, a publication that will communicate our ongoing commitment to the field of Alumni Career Services and highlight the organization's achievements over the past year. This first report will include more context and history of our organization while you can expect that future reports will take the shape of a snapshot of annual progress and accomplishments.

We were very active in the 2017-2018 fiscal year and are proud of many key accomplishments. Here are a few new initiatives:

- ★ **Winter Meet-up**
On Friday, January 19, 2018 ACSN members and friends met up in seven cities across the country to enjoy an expert livestream on leadership followed by networking with alumni career services colleagues.
- ★ **Member Survey**
A member survey was conducted during April-May 2018 to assess what members are seeking and gaining from engagement with ACSN. Results showed that member loyalty is high. Members are looking to share best practices and for opportunities to connect, learn and develop.
- ★ **Corporate Partner Summit**
Business Development sponsored the first corporate partner summit at the 2018 conference in Nashville. Representatives from 11 corporate partners plus current and former ACSN board members attended. The Summit resulted in recommendations for better integrating corporate partners in the work of ACSN.
- ★ **Strategic Plan**
In the spring of 2018, the board decided that in order for ACSN to move into its next chapter, we needed a strategic plan. A consultant was hired to lead the process with the board and the mission and vision of the organization were updated as the first step.

Thank you for your membership and continued support.

Sincerely,

Kristine Thody and Cindy Hyman
Current & Past President, ACSN, 2018-2019

About the ALUMNI CAREER SERVICES NETWORK

Mission (2018)

The Alumni Career Services Network (ACSN) supports and enhances the development of alumni career services practitioners by providing meaningful opportunities for professional growth and networking while demonstrating the value of alumni career services to key stakeholders.

Vision (2018)

ACSN will become the premiere global thought leader in our field by promoting best practices and the value proposition of alumni career services. ACSN will cultivate strong relationships with corporate partners, colleges and universities and other key influencers to advance our profession and the delivery of services to alumni.

History & Milestones

Alumni career services originated on a small scale in the 1990's. By 2003, there were approximately 10 programs in the U.S. The field gained more traction in the recession of the early 2000s when alumni began returning to their alma maters for career help. Student-facing teams were already taxed and didn't have the bandwidth to add alumni to their portfolios. Alumni relations offices, alumni associations and advancement/development saw an opportunity for engagement in a time when traditional social engagement was waning. In response, colleges and universities began offering a range of services to their alumni, viewing this as an opportunity for engagement. They typically launched these efforts with few resources, most often one, or a portion of one, staff person.

In 2004, a small group of professionals began a listserv, "AlumniCS" and held monthly conference calls to discuss their work. The group met for the first time at the University of Chicago. Reciprocity agreements were the first form of collaboration. Over time those disappeared, and technology developed that allowed professionals to better serve their geographically dispersed alumni. Alumni career services professionals were early adopters of many resources that are now common-place throughout career services including tele-coaching, webinars and podcasts. Listservs were ultimately replaced by LinkedIn groups, which became the basis of many programs across the country, especially when other resources were limited.

Everyone saw the value of meeting in-person to share best practices and concluded an annual conference was appropriate. In 2008, Alumni Career Services Network (ACSN) was proposed and adopted as a name, the group established By-Laws and voted to become a 501(c)(6) organization.

Conference

ACSN celebrated its 13th annual conference in Nashville in 2018. More than 140 professionals and representatives of 10 vendors attended. Attendees hailed from all parts of the United States, Canada, Europe, Great Britain and Australia. The conference was two and a half days and featured keynote speakers, breakout sessions, networking events, vendors and a corporate partner summit.

Past Presidents

1. **Linda Conklin** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), 1st President 2008/2009
2. **Jennifer Duncan** (University of Texas), 2010/2011
3. **Julie Swaner** (University of Utah), 2011/2012
4. **Carolyn Bregman** (Emory University), 2012/2013
5. **Eddy Cruz** (University of Miami), 2013/2014
6. **Michael Steelman** (George Washington University), 2014/2015
7. **Cheryl Clark Bonner** (Penn State University), 2015/2016 and 2016/2017
8. **Cindy Hyman** (University of Denver), 2017/2018

Annual Conferences

No.	Date	Location	Title/Type
1.	July 2005		8 people on a conference call
2.	July 10, 2006	University of Illinois, Chicago, IL	Peer Connections in Chicago
3.	July 16-17, 2007	DePaul University, Chicago, IL	Peer Connections Conference
4.	June 16-17, 2008	Syracuse University, NYC	Peer Connections Conference
5.	July 14, 2009		Webinar
6.	July 11-13, 2010	University of Utah, Salt Lake City	Leveraging Connections and Innovations in a World of Change
7.	July 24-26, 2011	Emory University, Atlanta, GA	A Toolkit for Change: Mastering the Challenges Facing Today's Alumni Career Services Professionals
8.	July 22-24, 2012	University of Kentucky, Lexington	Alumni Pacesetters: Harnessing the Challenges Facing Alumni Career Service Professionals
9.	July 21-23, 2013	University of Miami, Coral Gables	Alumni Career Services: No Boundaries: An Approach to Alumni Career Services in an Ever-changing World
10.	July 20-22, 2014	University of Denver, Denver	Mile High Expectations: Serving the Demands of an Ever-changing Workforce
11.	July 26-28, 2015	Philadelphia	Creating History: Understanding Our Future Through the Lens of the Past
12.	July 10 – 13, 2016	Fort Worth, Texas Renaissance Worthington	THINKING BIG: Big Ideas, Big Opportunities, and Big Possibilities
13.	July 23-25, 2017	Boston, Massachusetts	The Hub of Innovation & Ideas
14.	July 15-17, 2018	Nashville, Tennessee	Walk the Line of Success

2017-2018 BOARD

Executive Board

Cindy Hyman, President
Cheryl Bonner, Past President
Kristine Thody, President Elect
Leslie Marmor, Treasurer
Johnathan Luster, Treasurer Elect
Jamila Lowe, Secretary

Business Development

Jeff Murphy, VP
Michael Steelman, AVP

Communications

Alexandra Stephens, Co-VP
Jinny VanDeusen, Co-VP
Debra Franke, AVP
Kayla McCulley, AVP

Membership/Nominations

Patrick Fligge, AVP
Nicole Bush, AVP
Nicole Anderson, AVP

Programming

Marilyn Bury Rice, VP
James Chang, AVP
Kristi Fields, AVP
Tonya Osmond, AVP
Colin Von Liebttag, AVP
Elizabeth Wallencheck, AVP

2018 Annual Conference

Andrew Hart, Co-Chair
Sarah Rawls, Co-Chair

VPs serve two-year terms while AVPs (Committee Members) serve one-year terms. Term limits are no more than four years in any one position.

MEMBERSHIP

The Memberships/Nominations Committee identified, explored, and developed new avenues for expanding membership. They reviewed and revised the welcome message for new members, managed the board nominations and elections process, and collected historical data on membership.

264 active individual members:

- 7 Academic Affiliates
- 4 Affiliates
- 189 Professional Individuals
- 1 Student
- 63 Corporate Partner Individuals

Membership Types

Academic Affiliate: Those working at an institution of higher education who do not meet the requirements for Professional Individual membership. Those who have retired from the field of alumni career services also fall in this category.

Affiliate: Professionals not employed by an institution of higher education but serving alumni through coaching and counseling.

Professional Individual: This is the primary membership type for ACSN, for those working directly to provide career services to alumni at an institution of higher education.

Student: Primarily for graduate students currently enrolled in a post-bachelor level program with an intent to enter the field of alumni career services, but open to all students. Currently working in the field of alumni career services. Must be sponsored by an office that provides career services to alumni.

Corporate Partner: Those who sell services and products to those who provide alumni career services in institutions of higher education.

Top 10 Membership by State

No.	State	# of Members	
1.	Massachusetts (MA)	33	New England (46)
2.	New York (NY)	25	
3.	California (CA)	19	
4.	Pennsylvania (PA)	18	
5.	Texas (TX)	13	
6.	Oregon (OR)	9	
7.	Arizona (AZ)	9	
8.	Ohio (OH)	8	
9.	Florida (FL)	8	
10.	Virginia (VA) & Washington, DC	15	VA membership is predominantly corporate members

New Initiative: Member Survey

Questions were developed by the Executive Leadership team and electronically disbursed to the membership. **50 members** submitted a response. The survey response time began April 28, 2018 with the last response recorded on May 23, 2018.

Members responded overwhelmingly indicated they would refer someone to the organization; ACSN member loyalty is high. Expectations are being met, but there is room for improvement.

Members want:

- to share best practices
- to connect with fellow colleagues
- professional development and learning

Members are seeking information on:

- career resources
- web-based platforms for alumni networking
- professional development
- effective social media channels to use with alumni

“The key piece for me is having a network of people who are in the same space, willing to share challenges and successes (honestly) but are external (third party) so they can be more objective regarding needs. The ability to jump on the phone and speak to Micheal Steelman, Jon Ruzek or Cheryl Bonner has been incredibly helpful. The value of the organization is the value of its members - the individuals that make up ACSN (as the few I have mentioned) have consistently been willing to support and listen to each other and provide that support.”

- 2018 ACSN Member Engagement Survey

About our programs:

- The conference appears to be the primary mechanism used to gain knowledge. Explore ways to expand offerings and survey after the conference to ensure member expectations for the conference are being met.
- Regional meetings might increase and foster positive engagement among members.

About our communications and technology:

- Email continues to be the most preferred communication tool with the membership, followed by newsletters and LinkedIn group messages.
- A large percentage of members responded that they have not visited the online site. Explore ways to promote the site, including spotlighting best practices by different schools.

“I just appreciate the fact that I'm no longer alone in my work, stuck between two worlds of advancement and career services. I have a community to learn from and grow with.”

- 2018 ACSN Member Engagement Survey

OPERATIONS

Finances

ACSN is in a healthy financial position with a year-end balance of \$92,702.00.

Communications

The Communications Committee is primarily focused on synthesizing efforts, promoting programs and recruiting/retaining membership on behalf of ACSN. As the general clearinghouse for all email and web content, communications occur nearly monthly through event promotion emails and/or newsletter outreach.

ACSN utilizes multiple platforms and channels for membership outreach and communication including www.myacsn.org. The site features both member and non-member content. Social media tools utilized include LinkedIn for both programming promotion and ACSN Group interactions and Twitter for on-going engagement and event updates. The ACSN LinkedIn group has 3,171 members.

Business Development

ACSN had **11 Corporate Partners**:

- Alumnifire
- Brazen
- Career Shift
- FirstHand
- GeniusMesh
- Graduway
- HireTalent
- iModules
- Mission Collaborative
- PeopleGrove
- VineUp

4 Vendor Demos were facilitated for members:

- September 14, 2017: Alumnifire
- December 6, 2017: Project Me Pro
- February 28, 2018: Career Shift
- March 7, 2018: Tassl

Corporate Partner Summit

Business Development sponsored the first corporate partner summit before the 2018 conference in Nashville. Volunteer Katrina Ward facilitated the Summit and representatives from 11 corporate partners plus current and former ACSN board members attended. The Summit resulted in recommendations for better integrating corporate partners in the work of ACSN.

KEY ACTIVITIES & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Programs

ACSN's Programming Committee coordinated **11** professional development webinars this year which are free for members and \$25 for nonmembers. Members and registrants can access nearly a dozen archived webinars covering topics from creating alumni networks and strategic planning, to making the most of limited resources. The ACSN Mentorship Program continued with another successful year. A new in-person regional meet-up was held during January 2018.

Webinars

- November 9, 2017: Becoming a Connected School Using LinkedIn
- February 15, 2018: Supporting Alumnae with their Return-to-Work Journey
- March 23, 2018: Alumni Networking Platforms: Evaluating and Choosing the Right One for Your School
- April 24, 2018: Social Media and the Job Search
- May 17, 2018: President's Panel: Trends in Alumni Career Services
- June 27, 2018: How to Develop Relationships, Build Rapport, Drive Influence and Network Like a Rock Star!
- August 27, 2018: Engaging Alumni in Internship Creation for Undergraduates

Mentorship Program

The mentorship program had another successful year with 17 of pairs matched. Members that are more experienced in alumni career services were matched with members who are less experienced in the field, for a one-year mentoring experience.

Winter Meet-up

- On January 19, 2018, ACSN hosted its first Winter Meet-up featuring presenter: Jessica Williams, founder of The Superwoman Project, who spoke on *Leadership for a Change: How to Succeed in a VUCA World*
- Locations: Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Columbus, OH; Denver, CO; Los Angeles, CA; Philadelphia, PA; and Portland, OR.

"(The) local meetup was amazing and I was able to connect to some interesting partners at other institutions" - **2018 ACSN Member Engagement Survey**

Annual Conference



“Meeting colleagues at the annual conference is the most useful. I recommend this conference HIGHLY to the relatively small and specific cohort of alumni career professionals. The benchmarking is so vital.”

- 2018 ACSN Member Engagement Survey

Conference Highlights

- ACSN’s **13th annual conference** took place in Nashville, TN on July 15-17, 2018.
- The theme was Walk the Line of Success.
- There were **146 attendees** at the annual conference in Nashville, TN.
- Among **9 breakout sessions**, there were **14 presenters**.
- **11 corporate partners attended the conference and 10 were sponsors.**

Breakout Sessions

- Professional Networks: Launching New Programs and Lessons Learned (Jillian Cole, Colgate University, and Bridget Holmes, Georgetown University)
- Looking Back to Move Forward: Helping Alumni Clear Roadblocks on their Path to Success (Elizabeth Wallencheck, University of North Carolina Kenan-Flagler Business School))
- Using Automation and Artificial Intelligence to Successfully Serve Large Alumni Communities (Cathy Francois, University of Maryland)
- Career Comedy Workshop: Comic Relief for the Compassion-Crushed Career Counselor (Margie Cherry, Lafayette College)
- When Yours and Mine Become Our (Alumni): Partnering for Alumni Engagement and Career Development Initiatives (Yvette Martinez & Colin Von Liebttag, Rutgers University)
- Amplify Engagement: Leverage Volunteer-Led Events in Series Programs to "WOW" Alumni (and Your Boss) (Jeff Murphy, Boston University, and Sarah Rawls, Emory University)
- Finding the Line to Success: Implementation of Service Delivery Strategies, Metrics, and Resource Optimization (Cheryl Bonner, Penn State University, and Taryn Kutujian, St. Joseph's College)
- Building Student & Alumni Networks: Mentor Programs and Role-Based Professional Circles (Macrae Hammond, Longwood University)
- "We've Got Your Back!" - Transforming Career Services for a Multi-Generational Alumni Population (Erin Erwin and Emili Bennett, Indiana University)

STRATEGIC PLAN

The need for a strategic plan was born when the time came to take ACSN to the next level. A facilitator was hired to guide the process and started with a rewrite of the mission and vision of ACSN. At the annual general meeting, the executive board worked through brainstorming exercises to create the areas of focus. With that, the Board created four goals and planned for how we would achieve these goals.

The three-year strategic plan can be found [here](#).