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Dear CWU Regional Leaders and Volunteers,

Thank you for your support and determined leadership on behalf of Central Washington University. With your help, we plan to build an engaged Wildcat nation that promotes CWU throughout the state, region, and country, while taking our membership and fundraising to new heights in support of CWU and its students in the years to come.

Your collaboration is fundamental in helping enhance the academic quality of Central while also making a college education more accessible to hundreds of students. As regional leaders and volunteers, you play a critical role by providing support to the CWU community through cultivation, engagement, and development of its alumni and friends.

This handbook is a guide to showcase the most effective ways to provide support in three meaningful ways:

- Connect–Outreach
- Engage–Build Participation
- Lead–Develop Leaders and Philanthropic Partners

All regional leaders and volunteers are dedicated to serving CWU with passion, purpose, transparency, and integrity.

Wildcat pride and a culture of philanthropy evolves from building lasting relationships with alumni and friends. Your efforts to bring together CWU alumni, donors, and friends that make up the Wildcat family will help our university achieve its full potential.

Thank you for dedicating your time and efforts to serving your alma mater.

CWU Alumni Association
Our Mission, Vision, and Philosophy

Mission

The mission of the Central Washington University Alumni Association is to support the CWU community through cultivation, engagement, and development of our alumni and friends.

Vision

Our vision is to build a passionate Wildcat Nation.
Philosophy

- We believe that CWU should be a cooperative enterprise, a community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Collectively and individually, all are responsible for developing, supporting, and sustaining the objectives of Central.

- We believe that our alumni comprise an integral and inseparable part of CWU, and that all alumni have a continuing obligation to serve their alma mater.

- We believe that our alumni can serve the university by joining together in an organized association, which can promote and focus support and service. The concepts for developing the alumni association’s organizational policies should be determined by the alumni themselves.

- We believe that it should be the function of the alumni association to work with CWU to develop ways and means of alumni engagement, involvement, and communication with their alma mater, and to see that alumni are recognized as a respected and integral part of Central.
Among the keys to growing an engaged alumni base is identifying potential members and donors, and determining potential capacity to give back and become engaged.

You play a critical role in helping to connect your fellow alumni, from initial outreach and introduction to nurturing interest and building strong relationships that lead to deeper institutional ties and engagement.

**Wondering how to identify potential contacts from your networks? Ask yourself these questions:**

- **Who do I know that...** wants to help wave the flag and is a proud wildcat, parent, or supporter.

- **Who is...** interested in cultural activities, an athletic fan, or an alum of CWU?

- **Who are my...** daily contacts, close friends, social media contacts, business colleagues, relatives, or neighbors that had a great Wildcat experience?
Who am I connected with... vendors and service suppliers, associates in other organizations, or customers and clients that could lend support or resources?

Keep in mind that potential supporters do not have to be Central alumni to make a major impact.

Here are the best ways for regional leaders and volunteers to help build the Wildcat network:

1. Identify, through your own network and acquaintances, individuals or organizations who may have an interest in supporting CWU.

2. Reach out to alumni and advancement staff at least twice a year, preferably at least once in person. The purpose of these conversations is to identify relationships with individuals that need to be cultivated.

3. When appropriate, review lists of potential members, donors, and peers to provide information about capacity and/or inclination to support the university or important engagement opportunities.

Regional leaders and volunteers can be confident that CWU University Advancement (UA) staff will treat all referrals in an appropriate and professional manner and include you in the ongoing development of that relationship.

“Who do I know?”
It is often beneficial for staff and board members to make contact with individuals in your region to help encourage their participation and help to explore their interest in engaging further with the university. You can add great value by introducing board members or other CWU staff members to these individuals.

By lending their names and credibility to first contact with potential supporters, regional leaders and volunteers can help break down barriers and offer a comfortable starting point for CWU staff to expand discussions with potential supporters. A telephone call or email by a peer that opens a new door is invaluable.

“I play a critical role in helping to break down barriers and reconnecting alumni and friends to Central Washington University.”
Prospecting

Central’s University Advancement runs a well-defined system for tracking contact with alumni and prospective donors. As regional leaders and volunteers engage with potential supporters, it is very important that they relay the information from meetings directly to alumni and advancement staff in order for them to update records and maintain an accurate account of contacts and progress.

Confidentiality

In their role, regional leaders and volunteers are privy to sensitive and often confidential information, address, email, and preferred contacts and at times engagement/solicitations strategies. Regional leaders and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest level of confidentiality in their work on behalf of Central.

Central Development Coordination

Open and constant communication among UA staff allows for maximum coordination of efforts. Regional leaders and volunteer should communicate regularly with staff and UA leadership so that all are aware of, and can contribute to, the development of specific engagement strategies.
In some instances, an alumni or constituent can demonstrate interest in becoming more involved in leadership opportunities. These opportunities can be significant and can lead to the identification of future regional leaders, mentors, and alumni, foundation, and academic advisory board members. It is important that regional leaders and volunteers collaborate with alumni and advancement staff to ensure a winning engagement strategy is developed for these individuals.

Regional leaders and volunteers are not expected or required to participate in donor solicitations, but such involvement is welcome and encouraged in select situations.

Visit cwu.edu/engage/contact-us for a full list of current alumni and development staff for each college that can assist you in gift solicitation strategies.

“Matching constituent passion and university priorities.”
Hello, my name is __________ and I am an alumni of Central Washington University.

I have really enjoyed being involved with CWU because it allows me the opportunity to get together with alumni in the area.

We get together throughout the year to cheer on our Wildcats, host networking opportunities to help introduce you to fellow alums, and organize volunteer opportunities in our community. Most of all, we get to connect locally and support our current Wildcats, all while keeping alumni connected through the alumni association.

When’s the last time you were on campus? It really is amazing how much the campus has changed.

I’d love to get your contact information and add you to the group so you get an invite to our next get together.

I look forward to sharing campus updates with you, like the Alumni Plaza inside Tomlinson Stadium that gives alumni and the Wildcat family a place to gather and enjoy the game.

Above is only an example and should be altered to cater to the interests of the person you are speaking with, as well as to your specific areas of interest.
Dear ________,

I am reaching out to you today with an invitation to join me and some of your fellow Wildcats for _________ at _________. I would welcome the opportunity to help introduce you to some amazing people in our community and get you connected.

Central has meant so much to me and my family, and I am sure you are going to love meeting this great group of people. Feel free to bring a friend or invite any Wildcats you might know in the area. We are always looking to grow the group and build our regional network. I can’t wait to learn more about your Central experience and to share with you some of the exciting things taking place on campus.

Let me know how many folks you’ll be bringing and will make sure we have plenty of room. Can’t wait to catch up.

GO CATS!

Sincerely,

___________
Event Planning Checklist

Event planning is a process that takes time and collaboration across departments in University Advancement. A successful event requires equal partnership and marketing between all parties. Below are some general guidelines to help inform you of our internal processes, whether your event is planned as in-person or virtual.

Planning your event

- 3-4 months prior—hold a planning meeting including an alumni staff member.
- 3 months prior—set an exact date and choose a venue with these guidelines in mind:
  - Date and time based on availability of speaker, venue, host, etc.
  - Finalize other details such as timelines, costs, and capacities.
  - Event details must be submitted to alumni staff in writing before any event communication can begin.

- Unless you are sponsoring the event, all contracts and invoices must be submitted to alumni staff for signature and processing.

Promote your event

The alumni staff will help promote your event by creating online registration, emails, social media posts and can provide you with a list of local alums in your area.

- As a host, you are responsible for marketing and sharing links and social media posts as well as making personal phone calls to alums in your area. Personal phone calls are one of the most successful ways of promoting your event.
RESOURCES

During the event

- Be prepared and/or arrive early! The event lead should arrive at least an hour before the event begins.
- The alumni staff can provide you with swag to decorate the space or share with your guests. And remember to bring a notebook and pen to jot down any notes.
- Do a test run to make sure all technical equipment is working and you know how to use it. For example, projector, microphone or zoom meeting.
- If in-person event, set up guest registration table near the entrance. Keep track of walk-ins and no-shows.
- Take pictures and send to alumni staff to post on the website and social media.
- Check in with the venue contact throughout the event to keep things running smoothly.
- Mingle and make connections. Find out if attendees are active members. If not, encourage them to join online or if they are interested, pass their information onto the alumni staff.
- Make a few brief remarks about being connected and staying connected.

After the event

- Check in with the alumni staff to debrief.
- Email the guest registration information to the alumni staff.
- Make sure any payments received are reconciled and delivered to the alumni staff.
- Mail or email any receipts or final invoices to the alumni staff.
- Consider sending a note of thanks to the vendors, guest speakers, etc.
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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