

Alumni Advisory Board

Summer - General Meeting Minutes

Saturday, April 20, 2024

- I. Welcome – Nellie Hohne
- II. Roll Call – Holly Kowalski
 - a. AAB - Gary Bullock, Jason Carlyle, Amy Cary, Mike Chaney, Steve Decker, Nellie Hohne, Melva Holt, Neil Irwin, Kenny McCleary, Kedar Murthy, Craig Pohlman, Bill Schott, Casey Schroepel, Dieter Shultz, Jeffery Smiley, Amanda Stapleton, Floyd Yager; Absent: Kameron Eisenhour, Matthew Iwema, Kali Nordquist, Andrew Novotny.
 - b. ARBOT: Dan Price; Absent, Chris Inman, Robert Stone
- III. Review Agenda and Approval of Minutes – Nellie Hohne
 - a. Motion to approve minutes, Mike Chaney; seconded by Steve Decker, motion carried.
- IV. ARBOT Report – Dan Price
 - a. The board meeting was held in late February. The board toured Edwards Lifesciences. Alum Mike Mussallem has now retired but was the CEO of that company and is now the Chairman of the Board. Their focus is replacing heart valves. That evening there was an alumni reception hosted by Bruce and Karen Cahill at their home.
 - b. There was a report from the faculty and staff. They conduct a survey to get an idea of what is working. Although there was a reduction in participants, the quality of results was better. The board takes this into consideration and continues to work to improve faculty and staff relations.
 - c. Commencement speaker was announced and will be Dr. Mae Jemison. Dr. Jemison along with John Swearinger, Alumni Honor Award winner last year, will be receiving honorary doctorates.
 - d. Several faculty members were promoted or granted tenure and are listed on page 28 of the board book. The Engineering Physics undergraduate degree has been renamed Nanoengineering immediately. 52% of students showed more interest in that as it describes what they are doing and what the field is that is growing.
 - e. Job placement is at 99.3%. Unfortunately, that means that there are some students who do not want a job. The high, low and average salaries are listed on page 28. The low salary was due to student taking a service role, which was by choice. Students who engage in athletics or Greek life have a slightly higher GPA.
 - f. The budget, for the first time in several years, did not need to be supplemented by the rainy-day fund. That included a 2% salary increase for employees.
 - g. Facilities continue to work on the new dorm and the root quad. Both projects are on schedule and are within budget. Another significant item is the expansion of the SRC to accommodate expanding rosters and the introduction of women's Lacrosse.

- h. The board granted approval for the application for the Lilly Endowment CCC Grant. This will be for the Innovation Grove project on the corner of SR 46 and 42. That submission was ahead of schedule and the board hopes for a favorable outcome.
 - i. Enrollment update to be given by Dr. Tom Bear this afternoon.
 - j. Institutional Advancement raised over \$8 million at the end of January in gifts and pledges. The annual Rose giving day raised over \$650,000 from 667 donors.
 - k. Lastly, there were two speakers (names on page 29 of board book) that spoke for an hour each through Zoom. One gentleman spoke on 10 Higher Ed Trends to Watch and the other spoke on how much college should cost, and he was worth listening to too.
 - l. Dan presented a video report that was shown to the group.
- V. Staff Updates – Steve Brady
- a. New Residence Hall
 - b. Lilly CCC initiative and partnership with IJRI
 - c. Giving Day update
 - i. Over \$600,000 raised
- VI. Guest Speaker – Dr. Tom Bear, Vice President, Enrollment Management
Thank you for your time and the collaborative relationship between alumni and enrollment management. Alumni are truly the face of Rose-Hulman.

Growth in the institution has never been higher. The interest in Rose-Hulman is exploding. In the fall of 2020, the prior trend was Rose had been at about 4400 applications for admissions every year. That number had been stagnant for a long time. Rose moved to the common app and while other schools had applications shoot up, Rose did not experience that. At one point there were about 1,000 international students applying. What was happening was Rose was losing that domestic share of applications as the international applications were increasing. Admissions has been working on the last couple of years is to broaden our reach on a national and international basis. Rose wants to move away from being a regional institution to becoming a more nationally recognized institution. Admissions has been using a lot of tools in order to do that and that is where alumni become very valuable. During the last few years Rose has grown from 4,357 to 6,283. This year's applicant pool is the highest ever for Rose-Hulman, representing all 50 states and 86 countries. Interest in Rose-Hulman on a national level is increasing. The Wall Street Journal article naming the top 20 institutions has brought Rose a lot of credibility and name recognition. US News and World report is great, but it is a niche group.

Rose has been trying to leverage our strengths but also using big data working on a national level to identify students that are a good fit with Rose-Hulman. This involves looking at consumer income groups, buying behavior, test takers, and academic interests. We have a knowledge of students who come from suburban, public, AP rich households and these are good students for Rose-Hulman. Rose has been using this data to help find those kids and get to them at an early age. Not only are we trying to fill a first-year class, but we are also trying to push attendance at our pre-college summer programs.

It is a benefit and a challenge being in Terre Haute, Indiana. Getting a student from the east coast or west coast to come and live here is not always going to be attractive. To other students it is a good space because they realize their college learning experience is going to be here on campus.

Rose depends heavily on the college board and ACT. Even though we are test optional world, a lot of states are now requiring students to take the test. Rose goes after students as Sophomores/Juniors as they are taking standardized test scores and get them to come to us. This is more challenging because they don't take those as paper and pencil but electronically and prohibit our access to those kids, so we have to find other ways to reach those students.

The interest in Rose-Hulman has never been higher. Rose has a record number of applications for admission but also has a record number of admits this year. So the percent of students we admit is the same but because we are working on the bigger end that number of admits here is also a higher number.

The students that are applying to Rose-Hulman are already going to be self-selected to a certain degree. They know it is going to take a certain academic profile of a high school student to even apply to begin with. The other aspect is, when talking about the names that we go after, Rose has not accelerated that name buy in order to deny kids admission. It is not a healthy world to get into, like some institutions, which invite a student just so that they can deny them. That happens on a regular basis. Rose has not tried to accelerate that growth to push an artificial admission rate. The other thing is that when students do look at the profile of who we admit, it is a competitive population.

Going into this year, there were a lot of questions, especially from faculty, with this record number of whether or not Rose was going to push down the acceptance rate. There is an enrollment cliff coming and there are fewer kids going to college. There is another dimension to this; get your apps, admit, and then you have to enroll. That factor of the yield rate is going down. Rose is losing about a percentage point every year. Also, Rose is not going to admit a kid just to hit a number. Admission is an ethical act. If Rose grants admission to a student, Rose is saying, we have confidence that to the best of our ability, you will be successful. So, Rose held that admission rate, which gave us more this year.

High school visitors are also at a record number this year. It is amazing what kind of energy it creates on this college campus. There is a presentation room in Hadley Hall, which used to be the waiting room. If you walk by there on a daily basis, it's full. That is what we want current students to see and visitors. Rose has a record number of 2,300 high school seniors who have visited so far this year. That is 10% growth from last year. Record number of applications, record number of visitors to campus, because we know what type of impact that has when a student comes here and visits. The great thing now since we are past

COVID there are overnight and weekend events, and all the great things Rose has been able to do in the past.

There is also a record number of FAFSA filers and families submitting for financial aid. But, the growth in non-filers has been dramatic this year and it's not because they are not going to file. Because of our federal government, they are having a real struggle this year. In a normal year, in October, families will apply for financial aid, but they were unable to do that until January of this year. Rose would usually get financial aid awards out in January, but we were unable to do that until a couple of weeks ago and not even for our entire student population. In fact, in the coming week, it will be our first chance to get a good sense of most all of our students who applied and wanted financial aid giving them their awards. A week and a half before their big decision. Rose is months behind in what would be a normal year. Rose is not unique; everyone is in this situation. What this has led to is that Rose is part of a consortium group called Market View, and what this group does is colleges submit unit record information on all of their students. This information is dumped into a big hopper, and they can look at an entire vibrant market of higher education and see trends. What percent of private schools are down in deposits right now – 75%. Everyone is worried about what is going to happen in the coming year.

Does Rose give merit aid and financial aid? Rose does give merit financial aid. What Rose did this year, knowing what the federal government situation was going to be, was give the offer of admission and a merit award. Then watching the federal government delay, we offered people financial aid estimates. Rose did just under 1,000 financial aid estimates this year. At one point, that put us up by almost 30% in deposits from where we were last year. When talking about those private schools that are down in deposits, Rose has been on the positive side of this. Over the last week, there has been a substantial slowdown in terms of their decision making. So, record number of apps, record number of visitors, record number of financial aid filers and our goal is to have a freshman class of about 600 and Rose is worried if they are going to make that this year because of our situation. It's not that Rose hasn't pushed and if this was a normal year, Rose would have quite the first-year class. The uncertainty right now makes this a very tough environment for us to work in. Public schools, about 65% of those schools are down in deposits. They won't give out financial aid until after May 1. Uncertainty is rippling into the upper classes as well.

With the FAFSA delay, the biggest concern coming out of this is the fact that kids are just not going to participate this year. They are not going to navigate this, and they are not going to go to college. They are going to take a gap year and where are they going to go? There is a lot of data that says if a kid does not go into college that first year after high school, they never do go on to college. When we looked at the data from our financial aid, filers as well as just our applicants, we identified about 550 kids in our 6200 applications for admission that historically, would have been aid eligible students that we had no FAFSA on this year, that is about 30%. Even though we grew in applications this year (about 900

applications), Rose admitted about 800 of those kids; however, 500-600 we didn't really get traction on because of the confusion with the whole process. If any mistakes were made, the student could not go back in and correct. The federal government held that off until about a week ago where kids go back in and make corrections. Rose just had 300 files come in that had corrections made that the staff had to spend the whole day going through and getting those updated so that we could make financial aid awards.

Challenges for enrollment, the enrollment cliff. This means fewer kids available. In 2024-25, it is supposed to be a boom year and then you can see the drop in the number of high school graduates. This will be a part of the environment that Rose will have to navigate. Rose is a STEM institution and there is still a strong demand for our pride(price). It is also why Rose wanted to go after more of a national market. If you look at demographics by region in the United States, the Midwest gets hit really hard in terms of numbers. Rose wanted to be sure that if the markets go up and down, we have the protection of being a national institution. 30% of our students come from Indiana then Illinois followed by California. 75% of kids that come to Rose are the only student to come here from their high school. That is the beauty of Rose, but it is also a challenge at the same time. Even when the numbers start to jump in 2031, the student demographics will change and there will be more students of color.

The drop in the perceived value of a college education is going down. People are not valuing higher education. Families are also looking at the trades and apprenticeships. Kids look at AI and if they go into the accounting field, in five years that job will be obsolete, but someone is still going to have to do heating and air conditioning or replace shingles, etc. If you watch the local news here, the unions are advertising that you can make \$65-100,000/year. The perception of a college education is going from 57% to 36%. Nearly half of those parents say they would prefer not to send their kids to a four-year college. 2/3 of high school students say they will be fine without a college degree. That is frightening. There is a declining number of kids who are valuing a higher education at a lower level.

Why do tuition costs continue to go up if there is such a decline? Our cost structures in higher education do not change. Our biggest investment is in people and keeping good people is a costly endeavor. Everyone talks about the discount rate and how much we have to discount but once you have a freshman here, they are paying a price. The second year we do not increase their discount. So, if you increase tuition, my margin of revenue on a sophomore will be higher. Rose gains a lot of revenue for upper classmen. Tuition increases are just to keep up with our cost structure and to generate revenue from upper classmen.

The discount rate is continuing to accelerate and that is pure economics. Schools are discounting to try and fill up residence halls. On the national level students are close to hitting the 60% discount and some schools are offering 80-85%. If tuition fees were \$50,000/year and schools are discounting that by 60%, they

would be getting \$20,000 in net tuition revenue. Currently, a freshman coming into Rose will pay about \$23,000 to \$23,500 for tuition and fees, \$2,600 for their laptop, \$18,000 for room and board, \$1,500 for books, which is about \$46,000. The average household income for an incoming freshman is approximately \$155,000/year, so we are asking that family for 1/3 of their income. Those families may have a college plan, loans etc. but we are asking them for a significant investment. Rose does not meet 100% of need because Rose does not have the endowment to do that, so Rose does merit scholarships.

In our strategic plan, Rose is looking at ways at how to become more affordable. The value aspect of Rose is very important too. People have to have the sense that they are willing to pay more if they see the value. What we ask people to pay is reinvested in their experiences at Rose. If you pull back that revenue source to invest in the product, you cut some of the student experience here. Academic quality is what is going to be our prominent sales point here. We want good students to get a great quality education. So, maintaining the faculty and the classroom experience and the lab experience should always be where we keep our prominence in terms of investment.

When you think about the fact that 75% of private schools nationally are down and the majority of those schools are down 20% or more and are generating less than that in tuition revenue per student and you see fewer kids applying to college this year, the reckoning is coming. When you see schools that have a historically strong reputation, like Birmingham, that are starting to now say, we are shutting our doors. There is the reality that it's not just Joe's College down the street but real schools with strong reputations. Rose-Hulman will survive through this, but it will not be easy. Bluffton and Finley just merged over in Ohio, and you will continue to see mergers or closures. Just because we see closures of other private engineering schools, does that mean we will have more students coming our way and are they the type of student we want to be a part of our community?

Mechanical Engineering is still the leading undergraduate degree here and they are doing phenomenal things, but Rose has also added Nanoengineering and Engineering Design which are nice majors that compliment some of the historical majors. This gives students some good alternatives to what is available out there. The other thing that Rose offers to students that other STEM schools do not is students can have a double major or minor or the Rose Squared program that is offered.

When students come to visit Rose, we survey them. Who are our best salespeople on this campus? Our current students. The faculty does a nice job, enrollment management staff does a tremendous job with presentations, but it's Student guides, athletes and others are very protective of that environment, and they want kids like them to come here. They are good at explaining their experiences here and that this is not a party school and that you have to work hard during their time at Rose.

We are in a Test optional world right now. During COVID, Rose went to the faculty and asked for a reprieve from testing for a year because kids could not take standardized tests. For the next couple of years that continued because of strong pushback against tests required. This year Rose went back to the faculty and said that we would like to continue with a test optional routine. This forced the faculty to have a debate about which place we would land. The faculty at Rose decided to stay test optional for the next five years. Rose is trying to build a class that comes in with character traits that hit our community. There is still value in a standardized test score, but the world is in a different norm right now. What Rose is doing nationally is aligning Rose-Hulman character traits with the Rose-Hulman community to guarantee student success on campus.

70-75% of students give us a standardized test score, it's not all the kids, so how do we find kids that are successful? One is looking at academics (math, English and sciences), look at their test scores (if given the option to do that), and look for character traits. Working with our faculty to figure out what it takes to be a successful student in the classroom here. The following four are character traits that Rose looks for: passion, resilience, responsibility and initiative. These are actually scored on an application for admission. These are discussed with families when they make a campus visit. Rose wants kids that love calculus and chemistry, are not afraid and are willing to work hard. Students here work collaboratively and build a strong sense of community and that is displayed to families when Admissions takes them to the dining hall for lunch. It's not for the food but to view that sense of community.

The value of our school is not about the admit rate, it's really about building the community. I want to enroll students here that are going to fit the mission of the institution and whose mission is to be a part of the world's best undergraduate science, math, engineering and education. Kids cannot come here and just be receivers, they also have to be givers. They have to invest, and they have to help facilitate that. Part of Sawmill Society is kids doing research, competition, and they are making this place themselves the best in the world. If I build a great sense of community of kids who have had wonderful experiences here, then one day they will be here fifty years from now building on this community they love.

Last year we served approximately 500 kids with pre-college programs. Rose is on record numbers again this year for pre-college programs. Operation Catapult 1,2,3 will have between 110-120 kids coming from all over the United States – all over the world. Project Select is sold out this year. It is vital for Rose to keep our healthy summer programs going strong.

- VII. Staff Report, Alumni Relations – Charlie Ricker
 - a. Introduction of Mel Hayes, Assistant Director of the Alumni Experience. Mel joined us back in January. Caitlin Nash will be out on maternity leave and plans to return on August 5.

- b. The Sesquicentennial celebration is ongoing, and Alumni Relations has held several events already. Alumni Relations has been to Tampa, Dallas, Houston, Austin, St. Louis and to California in February. Alumni Relations plans to host at least one in-person event a month in a city in the country. Upcoming events in Minneapolis, Atlanta, Indianapolis, Seattle, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, DC and Cincinnati. Our goal is to continue to build attendance at these events so that our alumni engagement committee has a base built of alumni in those cities.

The campus kickoff for the Sesquicentennial was held last month. It was a fun event that featured a 150-foot-long sub sandwich, President Coons spoke about the importance of the Sesquicentennial and the value of 150 years at Rose. Erik Hayes spoke about his formidable experiences at Rose and Dr. Stamper introduced our new Strategic Plan to the campus community and then Hank Greene was the guest speaker. He came as part of the Swearingen lecture series.

The Sesquicentennial will continue throughout the year and will conclude at the end of December. At the end of the month or beginning of May, the launch of the 150th Triathlon challenge; if you would like to run, bike or swim 150 miles between May 1 and December 31, sign up and you will receive swag and when completed, special medals will be awarded.

- c. Steve touched on the campus building projects taking place. Renderings of those projects are available if anyone would like to see them.
- d. As Alumni Relations looks forward after the Sesquicentennial is over, getting our networks up and running and identifying our top tier cities and getting established in which cities to visit with either a Presidential visit or Vice-Presidential visit over the next couple of years and planning those out. The goal is to have a more structured system of where we are going, why are we going and who is going to be there.
- e. There has been some interest in what the next Lego kit will be in the series. The cost of Legos has gone up tremendously. In the past, Rose has paid for the kits upfront and then sell those back. Because of the current price increase of Legos, Rose cannot continue to pay the upfront cost. The hope is that the cost will go back down, and we can continue with this project after a year or two.
- f. Innovation Grove will be the big development plan of the farm across the street. There will be a lot of space used for student activities such as the frisbee disc golf course that is currently there. Students are utilizing as classroom space and lab space with the civil engineering barn that is located on that property. There is also marsh land located on that property that bio students have been using. What other projects might happen on that property is still up in the air but would probably be geared towards students.
- g. Homecoming this year will look slightly different due to the Sesquicentennial. There will be much more information on this later, but Saturday night has historically been open for reunions but this year that night will be closed to reunions to host our Sesquicentennial Gala, which will be held at the Convention Center in Terre Haute. It will be a community Gala as well so that includes alumni, community partners, stakeholders, faculty, staff, etc. Price has not yet

been determined, it will be black tie optional, President Coons will give an update and then there will be the Glenn Miller orchestra playing music, dancing, etc. Reunions will need to be held Friday night or they can be held Saturday morning pre-game or Sunday brunch.

VIII. New Business

a. ARBOT Selection – Nellie Hohne

- i. Page 11 in the board book outlines changes in selecting ARBOT. There is a chart that shows our current ARBOT members and Robert Stone will be rolling off at the end of his term this year. The proposed change is that we will select an alum who graduated less than 15 years out this year, then next year the Past President will come in and then following that year an alum will be selected who has been a graduate of more than 15 years ago. This was presented at the Board of Affairs committee meeting in February and was approved.

b. Meeting Schedule – Nelle Hohne

- i. AAB meetings have been scheduled for the next two years and are as follows:
 1. Summer 2024: Saturday, August 10 (Cincinnati)
 2. Fall 2024: Saturday, November 9 (Indianapolis)
 3. Spring 2025: Saturday, April 5 (Terre Haute, Alumni Awards)
 4. Summer 2025: Saturday, August 9 (Terre Haute)
 5. Fall 2025: Saturday, November 8 (Indianapolis)
 6. Spring 2026: Saturday, April 18 (Terre Haute – Alumni Awards)

c. Meeting Calendar – Nellie Hohne

- i. Pages 48-49 of board book. This is just a guideline of what we should be doing every month for each committee. Please add items to this calendar as it is a fluid document. This will help to keep all of us on target.

d. Awards – Mike Chaney

- i. Thanks to Amy, Steve, Neil and Matt for their hard work on this committee and helping select award winners. Please take the time to celebrate these award winners today during the Alumni Awards program.
- ii. One award the group struggled with was the Volunteer Award. The committee moved someone into that Award from another category. Someone who is a good volunteer doesn't do that to get an award. For next year, if you notice someone that is doing good work as a volunteer and also volunteering for Rose-Hulman, push them to apply for this award. It is an important award, but it was the award that this group struggled to award.
- iii. Reception begins at 5:30; bar closes at 6:50 and program begins at 7.

e. AAB/ARBOT Membership – Amanda Stapleton/Kedar Murthy

- i. Membership is trying to mirror our alumni population with those we add to the alumni board. There are four candidates from the 2010's and one from the 2020's decade. There were 10 applicants that came through and it was broken down into five candidates for the 2010's and five for the 2020's. Thankfully the candidates for the 2010's were very strong. The committee was able to increase the candidates for the 2020's from ARBOT submissions who did not apply for the AAB initially. The

committee members spoke with these applicants on an individual basis and then the committee met to discuss the different attributes these individuals could bring to the board. Our recommendations are on page 19 of the board book.

1. Nellie made a motion to approve the recommendations; Kedar Murthy seconded the motion; Motion passed.
- ii. Kedar Murthy stated that ten people applied for the ARBOT position. After discussion with Charlie, the list was shortened to four.
- iii. Kedar recommended Marie Kleine for the ARBOT position. Marie has a lot of board and educational experience and would be a tremendous asset to the AAB as a representative to the Board of Trustees.
 1. Nellie made a motion to approve the recommendation of Marie Kleine; Steve Decker seconded the motion; Motion passed.
- iv. Page 45 of board book – due to the change in the ARBOT selection process, the Constitution needs to be updated. According to our Bylaws we must give 50 days' notice, so we are not voting on this today. The board will officially vote on this in August.

IX. Breakout Sessions

X. Committee Report Out

- a. Alumni Engagement – Dieter Schultz
 - i. Jeffery Smiley has agreed to serve as the chairperson
 - ii. Jeff, Mel and Charlie will get together to begin work over the summer.
- b. Student Recruitment – Dieter Schultz
 - i. The Notecard project was a success again, thank you everyone for completing your notecards on time.
- c. Board Nominating – Amanda Stapleton
 - i. We will welcome our new members in August at the next meeting.
- d. Awards – Mike Chaney
 - i. This afternoon is the awards celebration.
 - ii. We have a great slate of recipients and are looking forward to seeing you all there.
- e. Career Services – Gary Bullock
 - i. Passing the committee to Melva Holt as the chair.

XI. Old Business – Nellie Hohne

- a. Upcoming meetings were already discussed.
- b. Please look at pages 5-7 to make sure that the information is correct. If any information is incorrect, please let Charlie know so that the database can be updated.

XII. Adjournment – Nellie Hohne