

Suzann Coutts

Versatile, high energy professional offering several years of progressively responsible experience in higher education alumni relations, with a proven track record of demonstrating strong management, communication, organizational and leadership skills.

Core Competencies

- Volunteer Management and Engagement
- Event Planning
- Web/HTML experience and Data Analysis
- Excellent Written and Oral Communication

Professional Experience

McMURRY UNIVERSITY Abilene, TX

Director for Alumni Relations

08/2013 – Present

- Responsible for assessment and reporting on goals for alumni relations ongoing projects and initiatives in order to make changes/updates necessary for continued success.
- Procured programs to increase virtual alumni and student engagement including online book club and career services weekly webinar series.
- Direct all aspects of alumni career networking, affinity, and regional event programming.
- Serve as liaison to, and help identify and recruit volunteers for, the Alumni Association Board of Directors guiding board activities, communication, partnerships, and fully supporting operations.
- Serve as advancement liaison to, and help identify and recruit volunteers for, the Science and Mathematics Advisory Board, which supports all departments in science and math areas at McMurry.
- Directed strategic planning process for Alumni Association Board of Directors, including collaborating with external taskforce to rework board structure and rewrite board bylaws to best support McMurry students, alumni, and to align with the University Strategic Plan.
- Team with faculty for travel to regional alumni events at museums, and for arts performances, where they engage with alumni “on the road.”
- Travel regionally for face-to-face visits with alumni to learn about their experiences, share updates from the University, and discuss potential volunteer opportunities.
- Developed McMurry University’s Night of Distinction: Celebrating Alumni Achievement, a signature alumni awards event to increase visibility of Distinguished Alumni and Outstanding Alumni (departmental) honorees. Moved the event away from annual Homecoming to build alumni and student engagement opportunities with the awards event week.
- Created first day-of-service event, *McMurry Serves*, for alumni in 2015. The event has seen 3 consecutive years of growth, with almost 400 volunteers in 2018 and 24 project sites.
- Outlined a plan and successfully executed the first on-campus student professional conference (LEAP) where alumni present various topical sessions to help students with professional success.
- Worked with faculty to identify and then secure commitments from alumni to provide professional expertise and volunteer for LEAP Conferences.
- Implemented McMurry’s first Student Engagement & Philanthropy Week, utilizing partnership with the McMurry Student Foundation, to create greater impact with education for students on philanthropy and engagement.
- Co-developed first student giving program at McMurry to promote recurring gifts called the *1923 Society*.
- Worked with the offices of the President and Annual Giving to implement Senior VIP events where University President hosts graduating seniors to welcome them to the Alumni Association.
- Serve as co-advisor for the McMurry Student Foundation, a student group formed to increase awareness among students about philanthropy and to educate them about what it means to be engaged alumni.

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- Work hand-in-hand with director of annual giving on programming/initiatives for students and young alumni, including McMurry's first giving day in 2016.
- Oversee all aspects of planning and implementation of annual Homecoming on campus, with special focus on class year and affinity reunion programming, in conjunction with Academic and Student Affairs.
- Serve as editor and primary contributor to the alumni section of the *The Messenger*, McMurry's biannual Alumni & Friends magazine, and strategically select alumni for feature recognition.
- Manage Alumni Relations departmental budget and supervise one full-time staff member and one half-time staff member.

CLARKSON UNIVERSITY Potsdam, NY

Assistant Director for Alumni Relations

03/2008 – 7/2013

- Responsible for recruiting, training and supporting regional chapter volunteers.
- Created regional volunteer chapter guidebook for presidents and new volunteers.
- Developed new Volunteer Recognition program.
- Served as liaison for "Regional Outreach" committee of the Clarkson University Alumni Council.
- Strategically directed all aspects of alumni regional event programming, overseeing execution of 100+ events annually.
- Traveled extensively to events nationwide in order to network and build relationships with alumni.
- Created several chapter-wide event programs including an Annual Hockey Telecast for 25+ locations and *Clarkson Serves*, our first day of service event with over 350 participants nationwide.
- Helped implement several on and off campus events for student engagement with alumni including senior seminar, career advising network, freshmen send-off events and regional holiday parties.
- Built and delivered all online alumni event forms and email marketing messages; served as main administrator for online alumni community via iModules.
- Analyzed event attendance data to determine important trends and create various reports to evaluate and track program results.
- Managed Alumni Chapters and Events budgets.
- Supervised team of two coordinators, support staff and student workers.
- Served as co-advisor for the Clarkson senior class, helping with Senior Week and the Senior Gift Program, along with the Director of the Clarkson Fund.

CLARKSON UNIVERSITY Potsdam, NY

Administrative Assistant – Alumni Relations

06/2007 – 03/2008

- Complete support for Assistant Director overseeing annual Alumni Reunion.
- Updated content on Reunion web site and was responsible for all email marketing to alumni.

ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY (via Kelly Services) Canton, New York

Administrative Assistant – Alumni & Parent Programs

11/2006 – 06/2007

SHAW INDUSTRIES, INC. Dalton, Georgia

Human Resources Recruiter

09/2004 – 10/2006

- Recruited for supervisory maintenance and customer service openings.
- Helped develop training program for employees to promote more from within.

THE WILSON COMPANY Dalton, Georgia

Office Manager

08/2002 – 09/2004

- Responsible for Customer Service, product/manufacturing inquiries and billing/account questions.
- Supervised three other employees, responsible for payroll and accounts payable/receivable.

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Essential Skills

- Microsoft Office Suite proficient; Working knowledge Dreamweaver, Photoshop
- Extensive work in database management and manipulation in systems including the Raiser's Edge
- Experience with several web-based Content Management platforms including Cascade Server, Blackbaud's NetCommunity, and iModules Encompass
- Extremely organized with an affinity for managing multiple projects simultaneously
- Excellent ability to connect with constituents

Additional Committee Work at McMurry

- Served as dimension committee co-chair and steering committee member for Foundations of Excellence study of the first year experience, through the John Gardner Institute
- Serve on the Foundations of Excellence Advisory Board
- Serve as member of the University Leadership Team
- Serve as member of the Faculty & Staff Campaign committee for the annual fund
- Serve as member of Advancement Leadership Team

Education and Professional Development

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT POTSDAM, Potsdam, New York

Bachelor of Arts in English/Writing (May 2002)

Member, Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)

CASE ASAP Summer Conference (August 2016, August 2017)

CASE District IV Conference (April 2014)

CASE Conference "Alumni Engagement Strategies: Traditional Communities, New Networks" (Dec 2012)

Harris Connect Users Conference (2010, 2011)