

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Alumni Visioning: Executive Summary and Themes Report

Executive Summary

The following report represents a summary of themes that emerged from a quantitative and qualitative review of data collected from approximately 200 alumni who participated in a series of 12 nationwide visioning sessions. These sessions took place between the period of December 2007 and April 2008.

Visioning sessions included the following key stakeholders:

- Alumni regents
- Alumni Leadership Council members
- Regional board members
- Past and prospective alumni leaders
- Student leaders
- Alumni relations staff members

When necessary, to ensure sufficient count (12-24) and representative sample (school and class year), we expanded the list to include alumni who have attended a Pepperdine-hosted event in the past year.

The following five themes were found to be most representative of feedback we received from alumni during our visioning process. Themes were determined to have significance based on the number of times they appeared consistently within and across sessions.

Alumni desire the following:

- I. Deep connections with the Pepperdine community
- II. Significant Impact on the World
- III. Academic Excellence
- IV. Exclusive Benefits
- V. Highly Visible Winning Athletics Program

Major Visioning Themes

I. Deep Connections

A. Deep Connections with University

The University should help foster and maintain the connection that all members of the community have with the university---for a lifetime. (This theme area had the most ideas and thoughts, although they were not always the most highly ranked).

B. Deep Connections between Alumni, Students, Faculty and Staff

Desire for Pepperdine to promote and maintain systems, programs and a general philosophy of deep intimate and meaningful connections between all members of the community---alumni with students, alumni with other alumni, alumni with faculty and staff, etc. Robust on-line directories, presence on social networking sites, career opportunities available across all schools and regionally based support systems were mentioned often.

C. *Giving to University*

A desire to have these deep connections/relationships with each other and the university revealed through giving – a goal often stated as 100% participation. A sense of connection is necessary to stimulate a desire to give along with knowledge of where the money would go. Alumni also desired to have their support be utilized to increase endowment, increase affordability, reduce student debt and support alumni-related tuition discounts while impacting ranking.

II. Significant Impact on the World

A. *Major Contribution through Service*

This is a very clear theme that has come from each session. Capitalizing on uniqueness of mission and Christian principles, participants want Pepperdine to be a world leader in the area of service, ushering students and alumni into a life of service through many purposeful, structured volunteer campaigns and events.

B. *Problem Solver (on a grand-scale)*

Alumni want Pepperdine to help solve the world's problems---homelessness, poverty, cancer. Alumni want to be proud of a University that is turning out research, bright new minds/experts, solutions and products---all focused on making the world a better place.

C. *Influential World Leaders*

Consistently, alumni felt markers for success meant having world leaders that have graduated from one of our schools. Again, tied to many of the other themes, alumni want to be associated with a very special place that contributes to the world in a significant way. Having alumni in the “network” who are powerful and influential (eg: world and nationally renowned leaders).

III. Academic Excellence

There are a lot of references to Harvard University in both the “Deep Connections” and this academic theme. Alumni want Pepperdine to be a respected institution of learning, publishing, problem solving, etc, a place where people learn to think big, solve complex problems and make a difference.

IV. Exclusive Benefits

There are many ideas related to services and benefits which alumni feel they should receive as a member of an exclusive alumni community.

Examples include access to private clubs, timeshares in exotic locations, etc. Repeatedly, alumni feel that the University and the Pepperdine network should be in a position to ensure jobs for graduating students and alumni. Alumni should have abundant opportunity to be hired upon graduation by fellow alumni.

V. Highly Visible Winning Athletics Program

All alumni want to be proud of Pepperdine in general--but ATHLETICS stands out. Most participants realize that Pepperdine does have a winning sports program; however, alumni consistently mentioned how important it is to have a championship football or basketball team that wins big, is nationally recognized and in the limelight (television and media coverage).