University of North Alabama

Alumni Relations Strategic Plan

University of North Alabama | Three Year Plan

This three-year strategic plan guides how UNA Alumni Relations will strengthen lifelong connections with alumni and friends. Through meaningful opportunities to connect, volunteer, give and advocate, we will serve our alumni community while advancing the University's mission.

Our Mission

To advance the mission of the University of North Alabama by engaging alumni and friends through meaningful connections that inspire lifelong relationships, pride and support.

Our Vision

To cultivate a vibrant, ever-evolving UNA community united by pride and belonging, transforming the lives of alumni and friends for generations to come.

Our Values

People and Relationships First. We prioritize meaningful relationships in all that we do, both within the alumni and friend community and across campus, understanding that trust and collaboration are the foundation of engagement and institutional success.

Culture of Excellence. We pursue excellence in everything we do, holding ourselves accountable to deliver exceptional experiences, meaningful engagement and lasting impact for our alumni, friends and University community.

Integrity. We act with honesty and transparency, holding ourselves to the highest ethical standards.

Respect and Empathy. We treat everyone with dignity and seek to understand diverse perspectives.

Service Above Self. We make decisions based on what best serves our alumni, friends and University, prioritizing long-term impact over convenience.

Our Operating Principles

- Our diverse alumni community has individual aspirations and circumstances. We will offer opportunities that reflect those differences.
- Our programs will deliver value to alumni while supporting UNA's goals.
- Growth in alumni engagement will contribute to measurable expansion of the donor pool.
- We will seek best practices and bring a broader perspective to our programs.
- The impact and cost-effectiveness of our programs will guide how we invest in alumni engagement.

Our Strategic Priorities

Our overarching goal is to grow and retain the number of alumni and friends who engage with UNA each year. Five strategic priorities will guide this work and strengthen long-term participation as volunteers, advocates and donors.

I. Delivering Meaningful Alumni Connections

By engaging the UNA alumni community through meaningful programming, we will help to enhance lifelong connections wherever alumni are.

- Build and promote a culture of engagement and volunteerism that will connect alumni to UNA and to each other.
- Prioritize engagement in key markets based on alumni density and/or areas with high strategic opportunity.
- Explore affinity group structures to expand opportunities for alumni engagement based on shared interests.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy based on signature programs and institutional events that offer meaningful opportunities for engagement.

II. Understanding Alumni Dynamics

By gaining intelligence on the attitudes, wants, needs and characteristics of our alumni community, we will be empowered to fully engage them in the life of UNA.

- Identify parameters and benchmarks for measuring all relevant forms of alumni engagement.
- Deploy alumni surveys on a regular basis to assess alumni attitudes toward UNA, perceptions of engagement and giving, and interest in affinity areas.
- Collaborate with Development Services and other campus departments to institutionalize an effective alumni data intake and reporting process.
- Segment alumni audiences based on key demographic/generational groups to foster more impactful, relevant communications.

III. Building a High Performing Organizational Culture

By cultivating a forward-thinking organizational infrastructure, business processes and a supportive technology framework, we will develop best-in-class strategic outcomes.

- Create a professional development plan that focuses on cross-training, knowledge sharing and pursuit of best practices to build a high-performing team culture.
- Establish clear expectations and implement an accountability structure that defines the role of the UNA Alumni Association and volunteer expectations.
- Facilitate a cross-campus goal sharing process that encourages collaboration with other UNA partners who engage alumni.

IV. Defining the Value of Alumni Engagement

By consistently communicating the importance of alumni connections, we will build and sustain affinity and pride for UNA.

- Develop a brand strategy that positions the UNA Alumni Association/Alumni Relations as the desired portal for alumni engagement and as a vibrant and essential campus partner.
- Enrich the social media, website and newsletter experiences by applying new features and techniques to create valuable, memorable and engaging visitor connections.
- Inspire greater alumni pride by consistently telling stories of UNA alumni successes.
- Develop an overall content strategy that shares how alumni can benefit from any level of engagement with UNA.
- Promote a culture among the UNA alumni community that inspires philanthropic support of the University.

V. Cultivating Future and Early Alumni Connections

By creating a culture of lifelong connection from the student experience forward, we will promote engagement into the early alumni years for uninterrupted engagement.

- Create programs from the first year to the final year that promote lifelong connections to UNA.
- Advance the relationship with new alumni as they enter post-graduate life and instill a sustained culture of engagement throughout their first decade.
- Optimize existing pathways for alumni mentoring and networking for students and recent graduates.

Expected Outcomes

This plan will strengthen University engagement, connect and mobilize the broader alumni community, and support increased philanthropic participation in the University's mission.

Engagement

More alumni and friends will choose to engage with UNA in meaningful ways.

Collaboration

More UNA colleges and units will partner with Alumni Relations for mutual benefit.

Brand Equity

UNA alumni will feel a greater sense of pride in the University and become valuable advocates.

Philanthropy

More alumni and friends will consistently invest in UNA to create positive change.

Measuring Our Progress

We will establish baseline data and use key performance metrics to assess progress in collaboration, engagement, brand equity and philanthropy.

Engagement. Total event attendees, including new and returning participants; website traffic; social media engagement rate, including traffic, likes, shares and comments.

Collaboration. Recurring campus partnership meetings; events co-hosted with campus partners.

Brand Equity. UNA specialty license plate sales; survey participation rate; alumni pride score from survey responses.

Philanthropy. Unique donors; alumni participation; friend participation; participation rates among engaged and non-engaged constituents.