

# LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK FOR REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

JOHNS HOPKINS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (JHAA) & THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

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## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions will help you clarify terms that will show up repeatedly in this guide (in alphabetical order):

An **affinity group** is an organized group of alumni and other members of the university community who share similar interests or experiences. Affinity groups are formed around common career interests, industry verticals, shared experiences, pastimes and university affiliations, or around the commonalities of ethnicity, gender, religion, philosophy, politics, and so on. Some groups are regional; others are nationwide or global. Some groups are face-to-face; others are virtual.

A **regional community** is a group of alumni that have formed an official relationship to, and represent, the JHAA in a given geographical region. These groups are led by a dedicated committee of volunteers that organize activities for their community. Regional groups are sometimes led by an executive committee, which typically includes a president and a variety of other volunteer leaders. In other cases, regional groups are served by a single regional representative.

A **divisional club** is a regionally-based group of Johns Hopkins alumni and friends of the university that represents the interests of a particular Hopkins division or school. Hopkins' nine divisions are the School of Krieger School of Arts & Sciences, the Whiting School of Engineering, the Carey Business School, the School of Education, the School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, the Peabody Institute, the Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the School of Advanced International Studies.

A **volunteer** is someone who gives, without compensation, of his or her time and talent to aid the JHAA, its regional communities, and its programs and initiatives.

A **young alumni committee (YAC)** is a regionally-based group of Homewood (KSAS & WSE) undergraduate alumni who have graduated within the past 10 years. YACs often work closely with the regional communities by co-sponsoring events. It's common for a YAC officer to serve on the regional community's executive committee. These committees were formed to meet the unique interests and needs of our most recent graduates.

## ROLE OF REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

The role of the regional alumni communities is to provide opportunities for alumni to engage with one another to further their connection to Johns Hopkins University. Regional communities are volunteer-driven organizations that represent the interests of all JHU alumni from the nine affiliated divisions.

They provide a consistent calendar of events – which may vary based on the size of the city – to bring alumni together. These events are typically social, educational, cultural or service-orientated in nature. In addition to alumni events, regional communities can also assist the university as a supportive resource in terms of helping to identify volunteers for specific projects or roles offered by the university.

The regional communities are under the umbrella of the greater Johns Hopkins Alumni Association and receive ongoing support from the Office of Alumni Relations.

## THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

### PURPOSE

To aid in the success of your community and its activities, we in the Office of Alumni Relations provide continuous support and resources to community leadership.

Here are some of the ways that we're prepared to help your community:

- Assign a staff liaison to work with your community leadership
- Coordinate online registrations and ticketing for events
- Promote events and programs through email announcements (sent from our database-driven listservs)
- Send JHU paraphernalia for events (e.g. nametags, pens, banners, give-aways, sign-up sheets, etc.)
- Manage the financial side of events, including the signing of contracts and payments to venues and vendors
- Oversee your community's official website (on [alumni.jhu.edu](http://alumni.jhu.edu))

### STAFF LIAISONS

Your staff liaison, with the Office of Alumni Relations, will meet in person with community leadership as needed. Your liaison is also able to attend signature events as his or her schedule permits. Finally, your liaison can help you arrange conference calls as needed to get your committee together. For these reasons and more, it's very important to stay in frequent contact with your staff liaison.

Note – this may differ for international communities. Some of our international communities are permitted to maintain their own mailing lists and coordinate their own registration and ticketing processes. Additionally, a staff liaison for an international community will communicate primarily via email and may not be able to provide the same logistical support.

## ALUMNI COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Regardless of the size of your regional community, having strong and well-defined leadership is a key component to your community's success. The goal of community leadership is to ensure that responsibilities are shared so every member of the group continues to enjoy his or her role in the community.

The size of your regional community's leadership team will depend on your community's size and activity level. Most communities are led by an executive committee that meets regularly to plan events and programs that offer social, cultural and intellectual engagement and that strengthen the JHAA's local presence. No matter the size of the executive committee, one person must act as the community's main point of contact with the Office of Alumni Relations.

When enlisting committee members, it may be helpful to use the descriptions below that detail the specific responsibilities of each position. This gives potential volunteers a clear idea of what the committee expects of them as they carry out their duties. As these descriptions are suggested, and not required, we encourage you to tailor the following examples of common officer positions to the specific needs of your group.

## COMMON COMMITTEE POSITIONS

### PRESIDENT/CHAIR

This position embodies the ideal alumni volunteer characteristics and as such serves as the primary alumni association ambassador on behalf of the region as the leader for the regional community committee.

Suggested responsibilities include:

- Build a cohesive team amongst the committee members.
- Convene regular meetings and create the agenda.
- Maintain momentum through follow-up with individual committee members.
- Communicate regularly with your community's staff liaison.

### OTHER LEADERSHIP ROLES

- Vice President – supports the President and steps in where needed
- Secretary/Communications Chair – manages the committee mailing lists, takes and distributes minutes at committee meetings
- Social Media Chair – manages any social network group pages, promotes events on GoHopOnline, Facebook, Twitter, etc.; assures that photos are taken at events and posted online
- Young Alumni Chair/Liaison – represents the interests of undergraduates of the past 10 years; organizes programming for young alumni, assures that price points are reasonable for young alumni
- Programming Chairs – a number of volunteers can take on event planning roles based on interests. For example:
  - Community Service Chair – organizes volunteer events such as a local President's Day of Service or Hopkins In Action event
  - Cultural Chair – organizes theater performances, concerts, or museum tours
  - Educational Chair – organizes guest speaker events or faculty talks
  - Family Chair – organizes events and experiences geared towards families with young children
  - Food and Drink Chair – organizes foodie dinners, beer and wine tastings or happy hours

- Signature Events Chair – organizes crab feasts, holiday gatherings, or any annual event unique to your region
- Sports and Recreation Chair – organizes recreational sports leagues, lacrosse game watches, or events with local professional sports teams (e.g. MLS, NBA, NHL, MLB, etc.)

## TERMS AND TRANSITIONS

In order to cultivate new leadership and relationships within a regional community, all committees are required to evaluate committee chairs and potentially select new leadership on an annual basis.

The term for a primary regional/international leader is two years. Since this is a volunteer position, the term can be reduced if a three-year time commitment is challenging. All other committee chairs serve one-year terms. One-year terms for each position other than the regional/international leader can be renewed indefinitely. However, we strongly recommend that committee chairs serve no more than two consecutive terms in any single role. We also recommend that a leadership track be established so that committee leaders have planning experience before they assume the role.

Domestic regional leaders are appointed by the Office of Alumni Relations. International leaders are decided upon by their respective committee.

## SUGGESTED EVENTS

A strong annual schedule of events keeps alumni engaged with one another and the Hopkins community. With your leadership committee, schedule an annual calendar planning meeting in late spring to brainstorm ideas for the next fiscal year. When assembling a schedule of events, make sure that you include a variety of opportunities. Experiment with different times and venues to see which engage a consistent alumni audience.

When brainstorming for new events, here are a few good rules of thumb to keep in mind:

- Determine the goal of the event and the target audience. For example, if the goal is to meet new people, a happy hour or a walking tour is more ideal than a baseball game or musical performance.
- Decide on events that are relatively easy to plan and execute.
- Keep in mind that constituents in your community are diverse—consider different geographical locations and different needs based on age and university affiliation.
- Consider ticket prices that are affordable for alumni, especially younger alumni.
- Use your regional budget allocation to best serve your community - strive to offer discounts or break even on event costs. Note – not all groups receive budget support.
- Plan 4 to 6 weeks in advance. The sooner you plan, the more support you can receive from the Office of Alumni Relations.

To give you a rough idea of what types of events have worked well in the past, we've provided a number of common alumni events with examples below.

- Brewery, Winery/Vineyard and Distillery Tours and Tastings
- Community Service Events
- Cooking Classes
- Crab Feasts
- Cruises
- Fitness Events (climbing, cycling, hiking, cycling)
- Happy Hours
- Holiday Parties
- Lacrosse Game Watches
- Local Alumni Talks and Panels
- Museum Tours
- Prix-Fixe Foodie Brunches or Dinners
- Sporting Events and Receptions (MLB, NBA, NHL, MLS, etc.)
- Theater Productions and Receptions
- Traveling Faculty and JHU Press Author Talks

## NON-RECOMMENDED EVENTS

Certain types of events are prohibited by the JHAA. These include the following:

- Partisan political events
- Fundraisers
- Gambling events



- Events that financially benefit a particular business or individual associated with Johns Hopkins

If you have any doubt about the appropriateness of an event, make sure to consult your staff liaison.

## PLANNING AN EVENT

To make this as easy as possible, we've broken the process down into several steps. Simply follow these steps, making sure to work with your staff liaison, and you will have an enjoyable and memorable event.

### STEP 1: HOLD AN ANNUAL PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

We recommend that our volunteer leaders hold a meeting at least once a year in order to develop the community's biannual/annual plan.

This meeting is the time to design a realistic calendar of events for your region based on the budget that you have been allocated. At this point, you should be thinking about the types of events and the month(s) they will be held.

### STEP 2: SET THE DATE AND CHOOSE THE VENUE

Two to three months prior, set an exact event date and choose a venue following these guidelines:

- Select the date based on the availability of the speaker/venue/host, etc.
- Finalize details for the event (date, timelines, venue, cost, capacities, and event description).
- Complete the online [Event Submission Form](#) (available at [alumni.jhu.edu](http://alumni.jhu.edu)) as soon as the date and venue for your event are set. This will allow your staff liaison to help promote your event and manage online event registration.
- Make sure all contracts and invoices are sent to your staff liaison for signature and payment.

Note: After receiving your Event Submission Form, your staff liaison will do the following:

- Finalize arrangements with the venue, including the direct payment of the deposit or final balance.
- Set up an event webpage and online registration.
- Send email invitations to alumni in your region.
- Send you updates on event registration numbers.
- Send you nametags, sign-up sheets and JHU-paraphernalia to give your event a "Hopkins" feel (upon request).

### STEP 3: PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

Here are a few methods used to promote your community's event:

- **Enlist the Office of Alumni Relations.** When you submit the Event Submission Form to us at the Office of Alumni Relations, our staff members add the event to the online calendar, send out email invitations, and collect online registrations. Email and communications will be scheduled and sent out at the discretion of the Office of Alumni Relations.
- **Use social media.** Post the event, including all relevant information, on your community's Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn pages. Remember to direct viewers to the online registration page.

**STEP 4: AT THE EVENT**

- Arrive early! We recommend you get there an hour before the event begins to meet the venue's point of contact, and to make sure everything is set up properly. If you have requested audio/visual equipment, make sure to do a test run to ensure that everything is working.
- Set up a guest registration table near the entrance. Your registration table may include nametags, sign-in sheets, and giveaways.
- Keep track of walk-ins and no-shows and share these with your staff liaison.
- If the situation allows, make a few brief remarks about the community, its upcoming events, and how guests can get more involved.

**STEP 5: AFTER THE EVENT**

- Check in with your staff liaison to let him or her know how the event went.
- Fax or email your staff liaison with any sign-in sheets, together with names of walk-ins and no-shows, so we can maintain accurate records.
- Mail, email or fax any receipts or final invoices to your staff liaison.

## POLICIES

### FINANCIAL POLICIES

#### REIMBURSEMENTS

If you need to make a purchase on behalf of your community, please save the original, itemized receipts so that you can be reimbursed. Receipts can be mailed, scanned, or even sent as a photo through your phone.

Reimbursement checks generally take up to 2 weeks to get processed and mailed.

Whenever possible, please work with your staff liaison to make purchases via a university credit card or university check. It's rare that a regional community leader must spend his or her own money.

#### TAX INFORMATION

The university is exempt from sales tax in 36 states. If you find yourself making purchases on behalf of your alumni community, please contact your staff liaison to ensure that you're not charged tax. A copy of the university's tax exempt card can be sent to you in advance of your purchasing, as well as certificates of exemption for applicable states.

#### FUNDRAISING

Regional communities are an extension of the Johns Hopkins Alumni Association; they're not considered to be separate 501(c)3 organizations. Because of this, regional community leaders shouldn't solicit funds on behalf of the university. If a volunteer would like to donate funds towards activities, the donation should be made as a gift-in-kind. In such cases, your staff liaison is available to help move the process along (see "Gifts in Kind" below).

Regional communities shouldn't sell merchandise or hold raffles or other gaming events to raise money for their communities. Regional communities are to work within the funds allocated by the Office of Alumni Relations. If money is needed beyond that allocated amount, communities should set ticket prices as to break even on event costs.

#### GIFTS IN KIND

If a volunteer makes an in-kind donation to an event, or to a portion of that event, a gift-in-kind letter may be sent to the individual. Examples of gifts in kind include alumni paying for food or alcohol for an event or covering the cost of renting a venue. Please work with your staff liaison if a gift-in-kind situation arises.

### EVENT POLICIES

#### CONTRACTS

When reserving a venue or vendor, it is customary to have a signed contract in place with signatures from the university and the venue or vendor. Your staff liaison handles all contracts for your events in order make sure that

they meet compliance standards. Regional leaders are encouraged to request contracts and invoices, but all signatures and contract amendments must come from a university official.

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## INSURANCE INFORMATION

If you have specific questions about insurance coverage for events, please contact your staff liaison to discuss. For example, you may have a question about insurance coverage if you're hosting an alumni event in your personal residence or if a venue has asked for proof of insurance from the university. In these and similar cases, work with your staff liaison to obtain proper coverage. Information is also available on the Online Toolkit.

## COMMUNICATION POLICIES

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### EMAIL LISTS

Regional and international leaders can request a list of names, email addresses and phone numbers of alumni within their region (varies based on alumni population). E-mails and phone numbers may be used only for JHU purposes, such as invitations to events and meetings. Each leader must complete an online confidentiality form before receiving a list.

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### SOCIAL MEDIA STANDARDS

The Office of Alumni Relations encourages all regional communities to have a social media presence. This can include networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter. It's up to each regional community how they prefer to use Facebook (e.g., group pages or fan pages). Facebook is a great way to promote events, welcome new alumni to your area, or meet up over a shared interest.

The most common titles for pages include:

Johns Hopkins Alumni Association – [City, State, or Region] Community or Hopkins [City]

The Office of Alumni Relations can design a customized image for a community to use as its group page photo.

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### WEBSITES

The Office of Alumni Relations will maintain a webpage for each existing regional and international communities at [alumni.jhu.edu](http://alumni.jhu.edu). These webpages will include a brief description of the community, contact information for leaders, a demographic breakdown of each community, and a link to your upcoming events. Regional leaders are encouraged to submit content/notes for their webpage, as well as to develop social media pages to complement the regional community's official alumni webpage.

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### LOGO USAGE

All recognized alumni communities may use the Johns Hopkins name.

There are particular banners and logos that the Alumni Association and its associated communities are permitted to use, which can be found at [brand.jhu.edu](http://brand.jhu.edu). Please check with your staff liaison before using any image you haven't received directly from a Johns Hopkins representative to represent your regional community.

No logos should be distorted or manipulated in any way for any reason.

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## UPDATING YOUR INFORMATION

Because most regional community correspondence is sent via email, it's very important that the contact information that we have for alumni—particularly the email addresses—is accurate and up-to-date.

If you wish to receive mailings at a new email address, please visit [alumni.jhu.edu/form/updateinfo](https://alumni.jhu.edu/form/updateinfo) and give us your most up-to-date contact information. Please encourage your local alumni to keep their contact information updated as well.

When alumni tell us that they are not receiving emails from the university, it is often because they have an old mailing address on file, an old email on file, or they have a “do not contact” note in our database. A “do not contact” note can be reversed by contacting the Office of Alumni Relations at [alumni@jhu.edu](mailto:alumni@jhu.edu)