Alumni Relations
a model of resource development

Mick Welling, Todd Stephenson, Mike Moore
Indianapolis Men’s Chorus
GALA Festival 2012
July 10, 2012
Qualifications

• Indianapolis Men’s Chorus (IMC) : 23rd Season

• Mick : 20th Season, 58 consecutive concerts
  • Unofficial “Oral Historian”

• 10 years on the IndyChoruses’ Board
  • 4.5 years, then 1.5 years as At-Large Director
  • 3 years as IMC President, then 1 year as Chorus Rep

• 6 years as Alumni Relations chair
Qualifications

- **Todd**: 13\(^{th}\) Season, 33 concerts
  - “Broadway & Opera Aficionado”

- 25 years experience with Accounting & Budgeting
  - experience with Composition and Article-Writing

- 6 years on Alumni Relations committee
Qualifications

- **Mike**: 6th IMC Season, 15 IMC concerts
  - 1 Voices of Kentuckiana Season, 2 concerts
  - IMC Secretary – 3rd Season

- 28 years experience
  - IT Support/Programming/Database

- 4 years on Alumni Relations committee
Disclaimers and Disclosures

- Mick is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

- Not a Latin Major
  - alumnus (masculine, singular)
  - alumni (masculine, plural)
  - alumna (feminine, singular)
  - alumnae (feminine, plural)
  - alumni (masculine + feminine, plural)
Watch the Language!

- Singers
- Leave-of-Absence Singers (or LOAs)
- Alumni
  - Not Inactive Singers
  - Not Non-Singers
- Volunteers, “Fifth Section”, “Unsung Heroes”
Teaching Points

- The importance of Alumni database management
- The importance to build & maintain Alumni relationships
- How to build an Alumni Benefits package
- How to increase Revenue & Resources from your Alumni
- Create a 3-5 year prioritizing plan of starting your chorus' Alumni Relations Committee (ARC)
Who Loves the Chorus?

- Singers
- Alumni / Past Singers
- Other Volunteers
- Audience
- Donors
Why Singers leave the Chorus?

- “I don’t have enough time”
- “I don’t have enough money”

- “I need to move away & leave the area”
- “I’m need to be more committed to my ________”
  - Work, Boyfriend/Girlfriend, Church, Family, Pets, Charity

- “I don’t like the ________”
  - AD, Accompanist, Music, Dance, Concerts, Venue
  - Leadership, Board, Policies, Conflict, Cliques
I don't like your tone, mister.

SHOOTOUT AT THE OK CHORALE

1-10-97
Why create Alumni Relations?

Choose a Model

- Friends – Family – Community
- Social Network – Fellowship - Camaraderie
- Preserving Memories – Oral History – Written History
- Create a Legacy – Preserve Archives
- Returning Singers
- Volunteers for Concerts, Events
- Volunteers for Committees, Projects
- Audience Members
- Donors
Alumni Relations

a Development model

- Development is ALL about “Building the Relationship”
- Audience Development
- Revenue Development
- Board Development
- Membership Development
- Alumni Development
Revenue Development Model

- Build, Cultivate, and Grow the Relationship

- Always close with “The ASK”
- Never miss an opportunity to do “The ASK”

- Ultimately, it’s all about the MONEY
“Resource Development” Model

- It’s still ALL about the Relationship
- Keep it Personal, Intimate, Individualized

- It’s not just about “The ASK”
- It’s not just about the money

- There are other Resources besides money
- Invite
- Money is really “The Last-ASK”

...“The Final Resource”
Could you be a Returning Singer?
  - Could you be a Committee Volunteer?
    - Could you be a Project Volunteer?
      - Could you be a Concert or Event Volunteer?
        - Could you be an Audience Member?
          - Could you be a Donor?
            - Who else can you introduce us to?
“Work-In-Progress”

- Building on the Progress
- Always Updating
- Always Changing
- Trying Something New
- Trying Something Different
What do the Alumni get from the Chorus?

- Alumni Benefits
Alumni Benefits

- Reduced Tickets
- Preferred Seating
- Discount Products
- Early Released CDs
- Coupons

- Newsletter
- Information, News
- Previews

- Alumni Chorus
- Community Gigs
- Family
- Community
- Sense of Belonging

- Recognition
- Appreciation
What does the Chorus get from the Alumni?

- Resources
Resources

- Returning Singers
- Committee Volunteers
- Project Volunteers
- Concert or Event Volunteers
- Audience Members
- Donors
- Who else can you introduce us to?
A Three-Year Plan

(the basics)

- **Year One**
  - Plan and Create

- **Year Two**
  - Begin the Relationship with Communication

- **Year Three**
  - Advance the Relationship with Reciprocal Interactions
A Three-Year Plan

- **Year One**
  - Identification -&- Create the Database/Spreadsheets
  - Create -&- Evaluate a “Wants/Needs” Summary
  - Create the Alumni Benefits Packages

- **Year Two**
  - Letters -&- Notification, Birthday & Anniversary Cards
  - Newsletters -&- Email Communications

- **Year Three**
  - Memory Parties ➔ Written History ➔ Alumni Webpage
  - 25th Anniversary Book
  - Events: Fundraisers -&- “Family Reunion” Picnic
Building the Relationship

- The KEY-STONE to any Development
- The KEY-STONE to Revenue Development

- Keep it personal
- Keep it intimate
- Keep it individual

- “Invite”
Database / Demographics

- The Foundation of any Development
- One of the hardest part of any Development
- One of the most important part of any Development
- Start Early in the Life of the Chorus
- Stay Current and Up-To-Date
THE MORMON TABERNACLE TRIO
Database / Demographics

- **Contact Information**
  - Last Name
  - First Name
  - Middle Name
  - Nick Name
  - Home Address: Street Address, City, State, Zip
  - Home Phone
  - Mobile Phone
  - Email address

- **Personal information**
  - Birthday/Anniversary
  - Partner
  - Profession
  - Skills/Talents

- **Chorus Information**
  - Member Since
  - Membership Status
  - Folder Number
  - Voice Part/Section
  - Committee Memberships

- **Data integrity Information**
  - Data last updated
  - Data last verified

- **Notes/Miscellaneous**
  - Invalid data
  - Outdated info

- **Nice to Have**
  - Concert Info/History (# concerts sang)
  - Music, etc.
• Don’t get rid of old-information
• You can prevent a Back-Step into outdated info

• Keep listing of relationships & connections
• Keep track of old jobs, skills
• Past Skills are not Lost or Obsolete Skills
Update your Alumni Database

**Singers**
- Ask your current Singers
- Update using your Newsletter (e.g. “Highnote”)
- Use your Rehearsal Breaks to check & update lists
- Update monthly, prepare for Birthdays

**Alumni**
- Ask your known Alumni
- “Six Degrees of Separation”
- “Spider-web” connections of updated info
- Who else do you know or remember?
Update your Alumni Database

Online (Research Sites)
- 411.com
- ZoomInfo.com
- ZabaSearch.com
- WhitePages.com
- Spock.com
- Google.com
- Reunion.com
- Classmates.com
- Sullr.com  (reverse phone)

Chat Sites
- Yahoo
- AOL Instant Messenger (AIM)
- Windows Live Messenger (MSN)
- “Dating Sites”

Social Networking Sites
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Google+
Alumni Database Models

- Combine your Alumni with Membership Database
- With Audience Database
- With Donors Database

- Separate your Alumni for Alumni-Specific mailings, information, gatherings, events, fundraisers
Alumni Database Tools

**eTapestry.com**
- Subscription Service
- Provide Support Staff & Trainings
- Online
- Shared
- Very Powerful Relations
- Very Powerful Queries

- Columbus GMC

**Musetta**
- Online Hosted Database for Choruses and Orchestra
- Contact Information
- Office Functions
- Calendars
- Music Inventory / Wardrobe
- Attendance
- Surveys

- San Francisco GMC
Alumni Database Tools

**Microsoft Office Suite**
- **MS Excel / Spreadsheet**
  - Basic and Familiar
  - Least amount of computer savvy
  - Small Databases for storage & printing
- **MS Access / Database**
  - “More Versatile”
  - More Powerful
  - More Sophisticated
  - Specified Queries & Sorts
  - Mailing Labels
  - Multiple Reports with Same Data
  - Requires specialized knowledge to set-up/create

**Open Office Suite**
- **Calc / Spreadsheet**
  - similar to **MS Excel**
- **Base / Database**
  - similar to **MS Access**
- **OpenOffice.org**
  - Free
  - Less Common, Familiar
  - Less Powerful
  - but Powerful Enough
## Alumni Database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online</th>
<th>“Do It Yourself” Stand Alone Application</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Pros:**  
  • Collaborate with others  
  • Automatically backed up  
  • Available anywhere internet is  
  • Does not require technical knowledge  
  • Only one copy/source | **Pros:**  
  • Versatile  
  • With knowledge, can be tailored to specific needs |
| **Cons:**  
  • Potentially not as versatile  
  • May not do what is required/desired  
  • Potentially expensive | **Cons:**  
  • Cannot collaborate easily  
  • May require technical knowledge  
  • Not automatically backed up  
  • Who has the current copy?  
  • Who is responsible? |
Alumni Database

“The Weakest Link”

- You must update regularly
- You must stay current
- Volunteers burn out
- Don’t let your Mailing List become a “Mauling” List! (Keep the data up-to-date and “clean”, not redundant)
Alumni Benefits

- Reduced Tickets
- Preferred Seating
- Discount Products
- Early Released CDs
- Coupons
- Newsletter
- Information, News
- Previews

- Alumni Chorus
- Community Gigs
- Family
- Community
- Sense of Belonging
- Recognition
- Appreciation
Surveys

- Paper vs. Online: “Survey Monkey”
- “Wants-and-Needs” Survey
  - create Alumni Benefits
- “Skills” Survey
  - what can you offer (or do) for chorus
- “Exit” Survey
  - when Singers leave chorus
Snail-Mail Cards

- These Gifts are about growing the Relationship
- These Gifts help strengthen the Relationship
- These Gifts help cement the Relationship

- Do **not** use the cards as an opportunity for “The ASK”

- These Gifts represent Recognition and Appreciation
- These Gifts represent the Community and Family
Snail-Mail Cards

- Snail-Mail is very personal, intimate
- Look for some choral-themed cards
- Look for some musical-themed cards
  - Musical Notes, Musical Staff, Instruments
  - “Just a note...”
Snail-Mail Cards

- Thank-You Cards
- Birthday Cards
- Anniversary Cards
- Christmas Cards
  - Holiday Concert reminder postcard
- Congratulations Cards
  - New Job, Raise
  - New Significant Other
- Get-Well Cards
  - Accident, Illness
- Sympathy Cards
  - Losses
Online E-mail Cards

- Cheaper, Faster, Easier
- Mass-Mailing possible
- Mass-Mailings are less personal
- Hallmark.com
- AmericanGreetings.com
- BlueMountain.com
- 123Greetings.com
- Regards.com
- eGreetings.com
- E-Cards.com
Alumni Chorus

- Monthly rehearsal & review
- Limited Repertoire
  - Standards / Classics
- Back on Stage, with the Chorus
  - Finale / Encore
  - Anniversary Shows
  - Familiar Shows, One-Acts
- Performance Gigs
  - Events, Fundraisers
  - Church Service, Political Rally, Outdoor Events
Standard Songs

- GLBT music
- Patriotic
- Holiday / Christmas
- Showtunes
- Church / Religious / Non-Denominational
- Memorials
Alumni Singing-Opportunities

- Christmas Caroling
- Valentines Day: Singing Telegrams
- Political Rallies
- Church Services
- Memorial Services
- Outreach Gigs
- Sing-Alongs
Alumni Karaoke

- Social Event
- Audition / Recruitment Opportunity
- Fundraiser
- Cabaret
Community Gigs and Booths

- AIDSwalk
- National Coming Out Day
- World AIDS Day

- Spotlight: Art for AIDS
- IndyPride Festival & Parade
- Penrod Arts Fair
- Talbott Street Arts Fair
- Broad Ripple Arts Fair
Business Cards

• For your Alumni Relations Committee (ARC) members
• For your alumni

(For your singers)
(For your volunteers)

• Contact info
  • Name “optional”

• Concert info: Mini-Season Brochure
Info on Concerts & Gigs

- Date & Time
- Venue
- Ticket Prices
- Guest Artist
Invitations for “New Season”

- Rehearsal Space
- Audition Dates
- Early Announcement of Concerts
  - Themes, Dates, Venues
- Upcoming Additional Performances & Gigs
Newsletter

- Concert Info
- Auditions Info
- Upcoming Additional Gigs
- “Meet the Singer”
- “Meet the Alumnus”
- “Meet the Artistic Staff”
- Human Interest Stories
- “Missing-Alumni” on a Milk Carton
Retention

New Singers: first year, 1-3 concerts

⇒ ⇒ Median Singers: 2-3 yrs, 4-9 concerts ↔ ↔

Dedicated Singers: > 3 yrs, > 10 concerts
Retention

- “Fifth Section”
- “Silent Voices”
- “Unsung Heroes”
- “Chorus Widows”
- Artistic Staff
- Administrative Staff
Emails

- Announcements
  - Rehearsals
  - Concerts
  - Gigs & Other Performances
  - Activities & Social Event
  - Fundraisers
- Human Interest Stories
Summer Picnic / Reunion

- Shelter House
- Pitch-In Dinner
- B-Y-O-B
- Pool-Party
Outings

- Movie nights
- Theatre nights, Broadway Tour nights
- Choral Concerts
  - GALA Chorus, Church, Symphony, Children
- Bowling nights
- Games nights
- Haunted House tour, Christmas Lights tour
Night Out / Dinner Out / Parties

- Dinner Parties in homes
- Progressive Parties
- Dinner Parties out at a restaurant
- Get-Togethers at local bars
- Holiday Parties
- Holiday Dinners
  - Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter
I see you got rid of the pigeons.

Only on Thursdays.

Why just Thursdays?

Choir practice.
Alumni Rehearsals

“Meet-and-Greet”
Preview Rehearsals

- All rehearsals are open to the public
- Designate ONE Rehearsal every Concert Prep Period (CPP) as an “Alumni Rehearsal”
- Advertise as a “Meet-and-Greet” Reunion
- Advertise as a Preview of the Concert
Alumni Rehearsals

“Meet-and-Greet”
Preview Rehearsals

- Greet & Welcome, with Name-Tags for Everyone
- Handout Package
  - Chorus History
  - AD’s & Accompanist’s bio
  - Season Brochure
  - Concert Tickets & Season Tickets available
- Refreshments
Meet the ...

- New AD
- New Accompanist
- New Board Members
- New Rehearsal Space
- New Venue
- New Office
- Guest Artists

... Any Changes – Anything New
Hospitality Room / Reception

- Pre-&-Post Concerts
- Pre-&-Post Events

- Special Treatment for Alumni
- Special Area for Alumni

- Treat Alumni like VIPs
- Allow Alumni to Meet-&-Greet (Mini-Reunion)
Dues: Extra Access

- If Alumni pay Dues,...
  what Extra Access can they get?

- Preferred Seating at Concerts & Events
- Back-Stage Pass
- Annual Choral Seminar / Singers’ Workshop
- Extra Online Info
- Chorus Info (same as a singer)
Directory: Search

- Centralized Database
- Reconnect with Old Friends
- Stay Current and Up-To-Date
Website / Webpage

- Centralized Information
- Database – Contact Information
- Written History – Memories
- Upcoming Info
- Testimonials
Social Networking Sites

- Yahoo Groups
- My Space
- Facebook
Alumni Appreciation Night

- At bar / restaurant
- Coupons
- Incentive:
  - free drink
  - discounted appetizer
  - no cover-charge
Alumni Appreciation Banquet

- Awards & Recognition
- Hall-of-Fame –or– “Hall-of-Shame”
- “Thank-You’s”

- Combine with Annual Meeting
- Combine with Singer Appreciation
Alumni “Memory” Parties

- Rehash the Favorite Memories
- Review old photos
- Get the stories in their own words
- Audio Taping
- Video Taping
- Blurbs for your Website
- Preparation for an Anniversary Album
25th Anniversary Album

- Plenty of lead time
- Stories
- Anecdotes
- Memories
- Photos
What do the Alumni get from the Chorus?

- Alumni Benefits
What does the Chorus get from the Alumni?

- Resources
Resources

- Returning Singers
- Committee Volunteers
- Project Volunteers
- Concert or Event Volunteers
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- Donors
- Who else can you introduce us to?
Community Gigs and Booths

- AIDSwalk
- National Coming Out Day
- World AIDS Day

- Spotlight: Art for AIDS
- IndyPride Festival & Parade
- Penrod Arts Fair
  - Talbott Street Arts Fair
  - Broad Ripple Arts Fair
Committee Membership

- Production
- Finance
- Social
- Special Needs
- Marketing
- Audience Development
- Board Development
- Revenue Development
- Resource Development
- Alumni Relations
Projects

- Time-Limited, Short-Term Projects
- Backstage Help for Concerts
- Ushers / Front-of-House
- Mailing Brigade
- CD-Project
- GALA-Festival Planning
- Fundraiser: Silent Auction
**Fundraising Events**

- Fundraiser benefiting the Chorus
  - Alumni Committee
  - GALA fund, Production fund, CD project
  - Youth Chorus

- Fundraiser benefitting Another Organization
  - Lambda Legal, Human Rights Campaign (HRC)
  - Homeless Shelter, Domestic Violence Shelter
  - Susan G Komen Foundation, Indiana Youth Group (IYG)
Fundraising Events

- Formal Dinner & Silent Auction
- Progressive Dinner with a Dessert & Concert
- Informal Dinner, Chili Cook-Off, Iron-Chef
- Casino Night
- Bachelor-and-Service Live-Auction
- Karaoke: “Dinner-and-a-Show”
- Cabaret, Talent Show, Drag Show
Fundraiser Non-Events

- Non-Event is an “As-If” Event, for pure donation

- Non-Event
  - “Leap-Year Party” (February 29)

- Non-Concert
  - “Day with(out) Art” (December 1, World AIDS Day)

- Non-Walk or Run
  - “Un-Run”
Finally... Just do “The ASK!”

- Ask your Alumni for donations
  - Donations of Time
  - Donations of Energy
  - Donations of Knowledge
  - Donations of Experience
  - Donations of MONEY
- Keep it personal and intimate = INVITATION
- Face-to-Face > Phone Call > Letter > Email
# Budget

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<th>Expenses</th>
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Alumni Relations

a model of resource development

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- [http://www.indychoruses.org/alumni-relations.html](http://www.indychoruses.org/alumni-relations.html)