



2012-2013 NEAT Grant Program Report
April, 2013

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Abstract

K-State has long been proud and fortunate to have tremendously loyal and dedicated alumni. However, because of changes in technology and mail systems around the world, the Association and university have become disconnected with many international alumni. In addition, the Association seeks to be notified when K-State faculty and staff travel abroad in hopes of connecting them to international alumni.

The Association has taken a multifaceted approach to contributing to the internationalization of K-State. The approach includes:

- Obtaining the most recent contact information for international constituents
- Expanding the number of international alumni chapters as well as
- Identifying individuals who are willing to serve as alumni contacts for their country
- Developing a new procedure to document traveling plans of university faculty and staff
- Engaging current international students to build lasting relationships
- Providing means for international constituents to connect through social media
- Surveying the needs and interests of the international community in relation to the Association

A variety of challenges continue to exist however, in maintaining connection with the international community. Because the Association has a limited budget, funding international events would not be possible. More staff would be required to continue to update contact information for international alumni and friends. Collaboration and networking among university offices and colleges also need to improve in order to notify the Association of faculty traveling abroad.

Although there are still challenges in staying connected with international alumni and friends, the NEAT Grant helped pave the way for the K-State Alumni Association to be reunited once again with international alumni and friends and to help K-State meet its goal to internationalize the university.

History of the K-State Alumni Association

Kansas State University originally began as Kansas State Agricultural College in 1863. Close to 10 years later, alumni began to envision what it would look like to strengthen alumni involvement in the college. In 1874, a small group of alumni joined together to hold their first meeting in Manhattan's Presbyterian Church. By the 1950s the K-State Alumni Association operated with a full board of directors that laid a strong foundation for the successes of the Association today.

For the past 17 years, the Association has ranked No. 1 in the Big 12 Conference for the percentage of graduates who are members of the Association. Members are provided with benefits such as local discounts, insurance, access to K-State recreation and libraries, the *K-Stater* magazine, and career services. With 120 K-State alumni clubs in 39 states across America, the Association includes a plethora of programs and councils including Traveling Wildcats, Alumni Fellows, Student Ambassadors, Student Alumni Board, Multicultural Alumni Council, and much more. In 2012 alone, the Association provided more than \$228,000 in scholarships for K-State students and had over 90,000 K-State family and friends participate in more than 1,000 Association sponsored activities. The Association's successes continue to increase each year.

Challenges

Even with all the accomplishments the Association has achieved, there is always room for improvement. K-State has long been proud and fortunate to have tremendously loyal and dedicated alumni. However, because of changes in technology and mail systems around the world, the Association and university have become disconnected with many international alumni.

Under the leadership of President Kirk Schulz, K-State has developed a visionary plan to be accomplished by 2025. This plan includes strategic initiatives that will enable the university to be recognized as one of the top 50 public research universities in the United States by 2025. A component to the 2025 plan is an initiative for K-State to become more engaged with their international community. Part of this process involves maintaining better communication with alumni living abroad.

Currently, the Association is usually not aware when the university's more than 1,700 faculty and staff travel abroad. In hopes of connecting faculty and staff with alumni living abroad, the Association seeks to be officially notified of travel plans for all faculty and staff. In addition, the Association also aspires to increase the number of international alumni clubs. Making these connections would assist with building relationships, networking, creating or strengthening university partnerships, and improving relations with business partners.

Solution: NEAT Grant

With the help of the National Educational Alumni Trust Grant, the Association hired an international programs intern to work specifically with international alumni and faculty and staff traveling abroad. The intern was given the following tasks and duties:

- explore new methods of obtaining contact information for international alumni
- survey international alumni to discover their areas of interest as it relates to their alma mater
- implement a biannual electronic newsletter targeting areas of interest for international alumni
- research the options for a program to identify current K-State students studying abroad who could be invited to meet with alumni living internationally or traveling abroad through our alumni travel program

The intern completed these tasks described in detail in the following subsections:

Contact Information

Obtaining the most current addresses and contact information for international alumni has always proved to be difficult. The Association's Information Services staff corrects and updates all contact information for international alumni. Methods for obtaining recent contact information include:

- emailing the constituent's past academic advisor, if they graduated in the last three years, to see if they can provide any information
- contacting constituents from smaller countries and asking for their assistance in locating graduates from their country
- using social media such as Linked In, Facebook and Google to locate constituents
- determining constituents' employers, and searching their websites for a current email address
- contacting universities that employ graduates to obtain recent information changes
- engaging current students to seek information for graduates currently residing in their country
- utilizing only official and verifiable documents to update information

In September 2012 alone, the Association acquired an additional 111 constituents, updated information on 101 current constituents and obtained an additional 215 emails. Because postal mailing systems around the world are not always reliable, email may be the most effective method for reaching international alumni. Although the above procedures proved to be successful, the task of updating information will be an ongoing process. More staff time will be needed to devote the level of attention that this task requires.

To supplement the contact information, the Association also developed maps and a cultural synopsis for the 23 countries most densely populated by K-State alumni and friends. The maps serve to direct faculty, staff, and traveling scholars to specific cities where the highest number of K-State constituents reside. Since the Association maintains all information for K-State alumni, it assumes the responsibility of sharing this information for university purposes. For example, K-State has utilized the mapping information to help direct travel plans for the university's president and first lady.

In addition to developing the maps, the Association also researched the 23 countries to compile a cultural synopsis for each country to benefit traveling faculty and staff. The synopsis of nation-specific information includes: geographical location, type of government, official languages, major religions, major ethnic groups, manners of greetings, communication styles, personal space and touching, eye contact, views of time, gender issues, gestures, taboos, gift-giving, and meeting protocol. These outlines are intended to help foster good relationships between those representing K-State and the international alumni they interact with.

Alumni Contacts

The Association seeks to establish an alumni club in each nation where K-State alumni are living. These clubs serve as an avenue to host meetings and events, encourage networking relationships, and help alumni stay connected with their alma mater. As K-State faculty travel abroad, alumni club members also have the opportunity to meet and interact with distinguished scholars.

Key in developing these alumni clubs is the Association's voluntary partners who serve as alumni contacts. Alumni contacts are asked to provide a public email address to allow other K-State alumni in their country to correspond, share information and become better connected with K-State while living abroad. The Association also encourages the alumni contact to update contact information for alumni residing in their country.

To help encourage alumni connections, the Association provides the name and email of each country's alumni contact on the international clubs webpage of the Association's website. The Association also linked its international clubs webpage to the university's Office of International Programs (OIP) website to further enhance networking within the K-State family.

To increase the number of international alumni contacts, the Association's International Programs staff met with the Information Services staff to identify possible candidates who would be willing to serve as alumni contacts. Currently the Association has nine international alumni contacts and is seeking more volunteers. Unfortunately, communication can be difficult, making the process of finding more contacts quite a challenge.

Funding International Alumni Events

With approximately 160,000 domestic alumni and 4,000 international alumni, the Association must appropriately allocate its revenue to meet the needs of alumni clubs. Each year, the Association budgets about \$50,000 dollars to spend on alumni events. Although the Association would like to spend more on financing international alumni events, Association staff must distribute financial resources in a proportionate manner.

The domestic model for alumni clubs does not fit the need for international constituents, especially in the area of funding. In the United States and other Western countries, it is culturally acceptable for constituents to help cover their portion of the cost for alumni events. In the majority of East Asian countries however, it is expected that the Association provide the means and all expenditures for alumni events. Although the Association aspires to meet this need for international alumni clubs, the cost is not feasible with the Association's budget. It is therefore recommended that the Association's board of directors devote attention to the allocation of budget spending on alumni events and move forward with strategic plans.

In addition to this challenge, a number of excursions abroad only give faculty and staff one to two months to plan and prepare for their travels. Because of short notice and funding obstacles, Association staff does not have the opportunity host alumni events abroad. For this reason, the Association seeks to extend networking partnerships with faculty and staff already traveling abroad. Faculty members who are interested and able to meet with international alumni and/or speak at an alumni event are encouraged to do so. If however, this requires additional funding outside of their travel budgets, covering such costs would again pose a challenge.

Traveling Faculty and Staff

The Association met with Interim Associate Provost, Dr. Marcelo Sabates, from the K-State Office of International Programs (OIP) to discuss the development of a procedure that would create greater awareness of faculty traveling abroad. During the meeting the OIP informed Association staff of the current process for documenting travel plans and locations for faculty and staff.

This process requires each individual to complete an out-of-state travel request form if they are seeking reimbursement from the university. This form records the dates, location, finances and means for the trip and is reviewed solely by central administration of their particular department for reimbursement purposes. However, if the traveler is not seeking reimbursement or receives funding outside of the university, the form is not completed and the university remains unaware of their travel plans. The travel request forms that are completed are reviewed and kept by administration staff, without the notice of department heads.

Two areas for improvement were identified in the existing process. With limited reviews of the travel request forms, many department heads are unaware of the travel plans of their faculty,

and because forms are completed only by individuals who seek reimbursement for their travel costs, there is limited notice of many who travel abroad.

In order to create greater awareness of international travel, the Association and OIP discussed the idea of establishing a requirement for every faculty or staff member to complete a travel request form when traveling abroad. They also recommend the University Provost have access to these documents and international travel plans be shared with the Alumni Association to improve communication and enhance collaboration and networking.

To preserve confidentiality, the Association requests only information concerning travel locations and dates for individual faculty and staff. It's recommended that an additional section be added to the travel request form asking faculty and staff to indicate whether or not they would like to participate in alumni events, undergraduate and graduate recruitment, and inter-institutional relations while traveling abroad. This would allow the Association to assist in facilitating alumni and faculty interaction for the purpose of partnership, alumni outreach, and possible recruitment.

One possible challenge with connecting faculty and staff with alumni while abroad is financing any additional costs associated with travel to reach the destination of alumni club members. The Association does not currently have funding to cover these costs.

Dr. Sabates also manages international incentive grant proposals for faculty at K-State to foster a greater depth in global education and integration. Through the grants, international lecturers are encouraged to come to the university to host their lectures. The Alumni Association would like to see alumni relations integrated into the international incentive grant proposals for increased awareness and communication with the Association. Additional staff would be needed to implement this process.

International Alumni Survey and Social Media

The Association created a survey specifically for international alumni and friends asking them to update their contact data and provide information on their interest and needs related to the Association and university.

The Association also used the survey communique to increase awareness of membership benefits such as career services, networking, and the quarterly *K-Stater* magazine. Another point of emphasis in sending the survey was to identify individuals willing to serve as a country contact for the Association.

The Association also sought to connect with international alumni using social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The survey informed international constituents that they may access these sites through links on the Association's website homepage. With the use of social media, international alumni have the ability to stay engaged with K-State and the Association.

Current Students

Engaging current international students to build a relationship with the Association while still at the university may be one of the most effective ways to stay in touch in the future. The Association connects with several international student clubs to become more acquainted with students who are close to graduating. By introducing them to programs such as the Multicultural Alumni Council (MAC), international students are encouraged to stay in contact with the Association even before graduation.

MAC, formed in 1993, consists of K-State alumni, friends, and current students. Each year it coordinates several multicultural events including a Community Cultural Harmony Week which is devoted to developing greater understanding and appreciation for diversity at K-State. Outstanding multicultural students are recognized by MAC with the Multicultural Leadership Award given to four students each year.

The Association also seeks to reach out to non-traditional students at K-State such as Ecuadorian students from the *Go Teachers* Program. With more than 300 Ecuadorian students at K-State, the Association was able to connect with students while they were in the US in order to establish an alumni chapter in Ecuador. The Association values international students and wants to build lasting relationships with them while they are at K-State.

Because a number of international students are uncertain of their next location upon graduation however, it is difficult to keep contact with international graduates. Email addresses also commonly change after graduation, leaving the Association with few contacts to maintain communication with. Further exploration of partnerships with additional international student groups is planned for the future.

The Association also looked into partnering with current students studying abroad who might like to meet with international alumni during their experience abroad. Keeping track of individual students going abroad would require extra staff time. Assessment would also need to take place to survey students' interest in meeting with alumni. Faculty led programs would have the best capacity to connect K-State students with international alumni, however it is unlikely that students and faculty would be in the same city as alumni that the Association has the ability to communicate with. With nine international alumni contacts world-wide, it may not be feasible to connect students studying abroad to alumni in the same country. The Association seeks to encourage the collaboration of current students with the current international community during their time at K-State.

Conclusion

Through the NEAT Grant, the Association has played a vital role in helping K-State become more engaged with the international community. In accordance with the 2025 visionary plan, the Association has helped improve and maintain effective communication between the university and international alumni. By improving methods for contacting international alumni, obtaining

the most recent contact information, mapping alumni locations, enhancing cultural relations, acquiring new alumni contacts, refining traveling procedures and documentation, surveying the needs and interests of international alumni and friends, and building relationships with current international students, the Association has successfully reached out to the international community on a variety of levels.

The Association has taken very seriously K-State's aspiration to internationalize the university. Although there are still challenges in staying connected with international alumni and friends, the NEAT Grant helped pave the way for the K-State Alumni Association to be reunited once again with international alumni and friends and to help K-State meet its goal to internationalize the university.

Kansas State University Alumni and Friends

Dear Kansas State Alumni and Friends,

The mission of the K-State Alumni Association is to enhance our Kansas State University family through lifelong involvement.

For the 17th consecutive year, the K-State Alumni Association ranks No. 1 in the Big 12 for percentage of alumni who are members. We want to ensure we remain No. 1 in the years to come, but more importantly, ensure that our organization is of value to all K-Staters, no matter where they live.

Your opinion is critical in helping define the Association's role in the lives of K-State graduates, friends and current and future students. Kansas State University is currently taking strategic initiatives to become one of the top 50 public research universities in the United States by 2025. Part of the 2025 visionary plan includes becoming more engaged with the international community. Your participation in this survey will allow the Association to better serve you.

This survey will only take a few minutes and your answers will be kept confidential. Your feedback is vitally important to the Association, as well as Kansas State University.

Thank you,
Amy Button Renz '76, '86
President and CEO
K-State Alumni Association

1. The K-State Alumni Association can serve you better with updated contact information. Please provide the following:

Name	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 2	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 3	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 4	<input type="text"/>
City/Town/ZIP/Postal Code	<input type="text"/>
Region (State, Province, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Country	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	<input type="text"/>

2. What year(s) did you graduate from Kansas State University?

3. How interested are you in connecting with K-State alumni who live in your area? Please rank your interest from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest interest.

1

2

3

4

5

4. A K-State alumni contact is someone who is willing to provide their contact information to other alumni in their country of residence for the purpose of connecting and networking. No financial commitment is required for those serving as contacts. Are you willing to be a contact for your country of residence?

Yes

No

Maybe, please contact me with additional information

5. K-State Alumni Association clubs serve as an avenue to connect all Kansas State alumni in a particular geographical location. Special events and occasions are organized by club members and are available to all alumni and friends. Are you interested in starting or joining a club in your country of residence?

- Yes
- No

6. In what ways can the Alumni Association keep you better updated and connected with what's going on at Kansas State? Please explain.

7. Are you currently engaged with the Alumni Association's social media? Please check all that apply:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Linked In
- I was not aware of these
- Not interested

8. Are you aware that the Alumni Association is a member-based organization?

- Yes
- No

9. The Alumni Association provides many services to its members such as: career services, networking, access to the online quarterly K-Stater magazine and more. Are you familiar with these membership services?

- Yes
- No. Please explain

10. Are there additional services you would like to see the Alumni Association provide? Please explain.

11. What would influence you to become a member of the Alumni Association?

This survey was created to help the K-State Alumni Association better serve Kansas State alumni and friends. Thank you for participating.

International Alumni Map Analysis

Updated 04/04/2013

Country	Most Concentrated City	2nd Most Concentrated City
Australia	Sydney 28%	Melbourne 23%
Alumni Contacts	Sydney 35%	Perth 18%
Brazil	Sao Paulo 70%	Rio Grande do Sul 12%
Alumni Contacts	Sao Paulo 60%	N/A
Canada	Toronto 36%	Vancouver 18%
Alumni Contacts	Toronto 34%	Vancouver 21%
China	Bejing 26%	Shanghi 24%
Alumni Contacts	Shanghi 39%	Bejing 26%
Costa Rica	San Jose 86%	N/A
Alumni Contacts	San Jose 72%	N/A
Denmark	Copenhagen 67%	N/A
Alumni Contacts	Copenhagen 80%	N/A
Ecuador	Quito 37%	Guayaquil 24%
Alumni Contacts	Quito 33%	Guayaquil 23%
Egypt	Cairo 82%	Asyut 16%
Alumni Contacts	Cairo 100%	N/A
France	Paris 28%	Lyon 11%
Alumni Contacts	Paris 50%	Toulouse 15%
Germany	Frankfurt 29%	Dusseldorf/Cologne 11%
Alumni Contacts	Frankfurt 25%	Munich 9%
India	Hyderabad 22%	Bangalore 17%
Alumni Contacts	Bangalore 41%	Hyderabad 12%
Indonesia	Jakarta Capital Region 48%	South Sumatra 14%
Alumni Contacts	Jakarta Capital Region 43%	N/A
Iran	Tehran 58%	Shiraz 15%
Alumni Contacts	Tehran 50%	Shiraz 50%
Japan	Tokyo 37%	Osaka 19%
Alumni Contacts	Tokyo 44%	Osaka 12%
Jordan	Amman 100%	N/A
Alumni Contacts	Amman 100%	N/A
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur 39%	Johor Bahru 24%
Alumni Contacts	Kuala Lumpur 41%	N/A
New Zealand	Auckland 26%	Wellington 26%
Alumni Contacts	N/A	N/A
Nigeria	Kaduna 23%	Jos 15%
Alumni Contacts	N/A	N/A
Pakistan	Islamabad 31%	Karachi 21%
Alumni Contacts	Islamabad 67%	N/A
Paraguay	Asuncion 89%	N/A
Alumni Contacts	Asuncion 100%	N/A
Puerto Rico	San Juan 49%	Caugas 14%
Alumni Contacts	San Juan 66%	Caugas 17%

Saudia Arabia	Bahrain 46%	Riyadh 23%
Alumni Contacts	Bahrain 62%	Riyadh 15%
South Korea	Seoul 47%	Changwon 13%
Alumni Contacts	Seoul 39%	Daegu 9%
Switzerland	Zurich 46%	Basel 19%
Alumni Contacts	Zurich 56%	N/A
Taiwan	Daalan/Shilin 48%	Bertun 8%
Alumni Contacts	Shilin 18%	Gushan/Sanmin 12%
Thailand	Bangkok 79%	Chiang Mai 6%
Alumni Contacts	Bangkok 62%	N/A
Turkey	Istanbul 30%	Ankara 25%
Alumni Contacts	Manisa 13%	N/A
UK	London 58%	Liechester 10%
Alumni Contacts	London 53%	Liechester 9%

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
REQUEST FOR OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

Travel Request No. _____

This is to request that the following travel be approved. Approval does not necessarily mean that the total estimated expenses may be claimed for reimbursement. Reimbursement is made in accordance with applicable regulations and can be determined only after the travel voucher has been processed by the Division of Financial Services and the State Division of Accounts and Reports.

Section 1

Traveler: _____ Department: _____

Destination: _____

Date Leaving _____ Returning on _____

Meeting Dates: Beginning _____ Ending _____

Please indicate your interest in participating in or coordinating during your travel:

Alumni Events Undergraduate and Graduate Recruitment Inter-institutional Relations

Section 2

Purpose of the travel: _____

Work Days Out of Office _____ Days of Annual Leave _____ Regent's Code _____

ESTIMATED EXPENSES: (Include all trip costs) Subject or Exempt _____

TRAVEL: Private Car <input type="checkbox"/> At lowest regular air fare <input type="checkbox"/> At state mileage rate <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Commercial Plane <input type="checkbox"/> Special Conveyance <input type="checkbox"/> Motor Pool Charge <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ State Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Justification: _____ _____ SUBSISTENCE: Meals: No. of Quarters _____ Rate Per Quarter \$ _____ Lodging: No. of Days _____ Rate Per Day \$ _____ REGISTRATION FEE: _____ MISCELLANEOUS COSTS: Explain _____ _____ _____	All Travel \$ _____ Meals \$ _____ Lodging \$ _____ Registration Fees \$ _____ Misc. Costs \$ _____ TOTAL COSTS \$ _____
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KSU Account(s) Funding Travel:	Number	Amount	Optional – Dept. Acting APO/TV Number
Name _____	_____	\$ _____	_____
_____	_____	\$ _____	_____
_____	_____	\$ _____	_____
_____	_____	\$ _____	_____

Names of other KSU travelers: _____

Approval Requested by: _____ Date: _____

Department Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____

The completed form is to be maintained on file in the authorizing official's office for five years. The authorized signature and traveler cannot be the same person.

ADMINISTRATION STAFF: Please send a copy of SECTION 1 ONLY to the Office of International Programs **insert email or fax number