

Conference Services FY10 Annual Report

FY09 Objectives

- 1) To make the move and transition to the Alumni Center as smooth as possible for our clients.
- 2) To establish guidelines and procedures for scheduling the meeting space within the Alumni Center and utilizing the new software for this purpose.
- 3) To initiate new projects and teamwork with Alumni Services and other entities that will be housed at the Alumni Center.
(Educating Illinois: Teaming up with Alumni Services to generate business through alums and promoting campus to outside affiliations).
- 4) Continue to focus our marketing efforts internally by pursuing leads from the campus-wide sales blitz and to extend that effort to alumni.
- 5) To further develop our relationship with external markets, in particular the Marriott in uptown Normal.
- 6) Senior Professionals will support the University and the community by continuing existing programs while pursuing additional opportunities of contribution.
(Educating Illinois: Senior Professionals program continues to mentor, conduct mock interviews and interact with students. Membership is high and attendance for classes has increased supporting life-long learning at Illinois State).
- 7) Continue to generate funds through non-academic scheduling of general revenue space across campus.
(Educating Illinois: Conference Services collects general revenue user fees and contributes funds to both lab schools and facilities management for facility upgrades and overall campus projects).
- 8) Continue our excellent customer service with ongoing programs and youth services.
(Educating Illinois: Our repeat programs account for over half of our annual conferences and College for Youth continues to grow with attendance and class enrichment).

Results from Objectives

- 1) The move to the Alumni Center was a smooth transition while keeping our programs running as efficient as possible. We designed and sent two postcard mailings to our clients announcing the move; an announcement that we are moving with our new address, and an announcement to “start scheduling the meeting space.” The cards were sent both internally and externally.
- 2) Prior to the move, we purchased new scheduling software to schedule the meeting space at the Alumni Center. EMS seemed to be the best choice to handle the tasks that we demanded and the most user- friendly for campus use. We held training sessions for those in the Alumni Center for their virtual use and trained them on sending scheduling requests through the system. We established guidelines and policies on scheduling and a rate schedule to fit our needs for both internal and external groups. This seems to be an ongoing process as we work through new situations along the way.

- 3) We have worked closely with Alumni Services since being house at the Alumni Center. We have been involved in many of their ongoing projects such as Homecoming and worked out a few new initiatives. Our Senior Professionals program is working closely with this entity to offer Dinners with the Professors this spring. Also, we are working on a brainstorming idea to pursue a sales blitz to alumni to bring their associations to campus and hope to kick off this program in the fall.
- 4) The blitz continues to produce leads and bookings. New business booked this fiscal year: Innovative Partnerships with the Provost Office; 2nd Pacific Rim with the College of Education; Illinois Teachers of Hard Hearing Conference ; Illinois Council on Family Relations with Heartland Community College; Illinois Farm Managers Association with the Convention and Visitors Bureau; Biomath Conference with the Department of Mathematics. Again, we are pursuing a similar sales blitz with Alumni Services for a fall kick off.
- 5) Our office has been in close contact with both the Uptown Renewal Office and the Marriott Sales staff. I am positioning our office to be extremely involved in the sales team development with the hotel and its opening festivities. We have so far booked a few of our continuing groups with this hotel property. We are also in constant contact with the Convention and Visitors Bureau regarding the hotel and all other issues.
- 6) Senior Professionals continues to be strong with high attendance and class participation numbers. The mentor program along with mock interviews stood strong with numbers and interaction with students. The program contributed a \$500 service learning grant to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority this past year.
- 7) The user fee account through non-academic scheduling continues to grow as we again contributed to Facilities Management on misc. items such as tables, chairs and garbage cans for distribution across campus. The lab schools received a significant contribution to help with the new locking system at both sites through this fund.
- 8) Ongoing and repeat client activities continue to be an important source of revenue: College for Youth, Music for All, Illinois Young Authors, Connections, Hearts at Home, Future Problem Solving Bowl, and Actuarial Prep Courses. College for Youth continues to grow and has become known as the "original summer youth program" within the community. Partnering with the Children's Discovery Museum has proved to be beneficial in enhancing the class offerings.

Measures of Productivity

Attendance numbers have been at a high in the last few years staying close to the same range as in FY09. The trend for event and conference attendance by youth over the past ten years began at 4,250 and has continued to grow with a constant over the last two years at a high of 7,346 participants. For adults, the ten year trend indicated greater usage with 4,980 to begin and ending with a high this year of 10,599. Total attendance this fiscal year was 17,945. Attendance and revenue numbers were enhanced by many new business clients in the past year.

Much of Conference Services continued success is attributed to marketing and business networking efforts conducted on a regular basis. We have built a strong relationship with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the new Marriott Hotel in uptown Normal. Working closely with the Bone Student Center Scheduling Office has proved to bring new business to campus as well. We have been awarded for the second time the "One Stop Shop" certification from the Association of Collegiate Conference and Event Directors.

FY10 Objectives

- 1) To aggressively market the Alumni Center meeting space both internally and externally.
- 2) Initiate internal campus blitz on departments to market the Alumni Center encouraging meetings at the facility.
- 3) Continue to enhance the guidelines and procedures for scheduling meeting space at the Alumni Center.
- 4) To produce a new look for Conference Services updating our marketing kit and website.
- 5) To continue to enhance our relationship with external markets, in particular the opening of the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center.
- 6) Senior Professionals will continue to support the University and community with existing programs while pursuing new opportunities.
- 7) Continue to generate funds for the lab schools and Facilities Management through non-academic scheduling.
- 8) Continue our excellent customer service with existing programs and enhancing our College for Youth program with the addition of new classes and teachers.

Illinois State University
Academic Affairs
Provost Enhancement Request for Program Support

Unit submitting request: Conference Services

Priority number of request: 1

Short title of proposed initiative: Annual Tech Fee for Administrative Information Systems

Enhancement Dollars Requested: \$15,000 annually

Contact information: Rebecca Lee Rich, 438-2160, ralee@ilstu.edu

Conference Services is in need of funding to support the annual fee assessed by Administrative Information Systems. Since moving to the Alumni Center last July, we have been under the support of AIS. As Conference Services is a self supporting unit, this annual fee will impact our bottom line substantially. AIS supports all units at the Alumni Center including the five conference rooms in which we schedule. The association proves beneficial as we are an entity of the Alumni Center and support the clients that are meeting in the facility. This annual fee covers support personnel, on and off-site event support, computer upgrades on a rotating basis, and support of our two unique operating systems: EMS-scheduling software and Peopleware-registration software. Our goal is to provide excellent customer service as we facilitate programs on and off campus. Our mission is to assist faculty and staff in bringing their associations to Illinois State to showcase our campus and to extend our vast resources to outside groups. This enhancement will allow us to serve the Illinois State community with efficiency and excellent customer service without taxing our unit financially.

This funding will allow us to continue our excellent customer service. As stated above, AIS supports our needs off-site as well, allowing us to meet the needs of existing clients but also meet the demands of acquiring new clients and bringing new groups to Illinois State. The new Marriott in uptown Normal presents us with an opportunity for many new clients and we need to stay competitive with the services that we offer.

Permanent funding requested: \$15,000.00

Budget Justification: The funding would provide the annual support we need to maintain and enhance our excellent customer service to clients.

Illinois State University
Academic Affairs
Provost Enhancement Request for Program Support

Unit submitting request: Conference Services

Priority number of request: 2

Short title of proposed initiative: Alumni Center Personnel Support

Enhancement Dollars Requested: \$35,000 annually

Contact information: Rebecca Lee Rich, 438-2160, rilee@ilstu.edu

Conference Services is in need of funding to support the annual fee assessed by University Advancement for Alumni Center support staff. Advancement is assessing this fee annually to help cover the salaries of two positions within the Alumni Center. As Conference Services is a self supporting unit, this annual fee will impact our bottom line substantially. Our unit schedules the meeting space and provides client support to those that utilize the facility and these two Advancement positions support this endeavor.

This funding will allow us to be a contributing unit within the Alumni Center. The new facility allows us to meet the needs and demands of our client base with efficiency and excellence.

Permanent funding requested: \$35,000.00

Budget Justification: The funding would provide the annual support we need to be a contributing unit of the Alumni Center.