EVENT PLANNING TIMETABLE

It is important for all local event organizers to try and adhere to the following timetable. We are happy to help you with the logistical details, but it is important to allow enough time for planning.

12 WEEKS PRIOR
Finalize plans for the event. This includes securing the location, price, and billing/payment arrangements. Always have something in writing that confirms the address, date, time, and price. Make sure to confirm if there are any facility rentals fees, catering charges, delivery fees, and audio/visual charges.

10 WEEKS PRIOR
Please submit the copy and all information for the invitation to the Alumni Relations liaison. Along with this information, please request the group parameters for whom you would like this information sent. The Marketing Coordinator will develop an email invitation to send to the specified group and will pull the specified group from the Alumni & Development database. A draft will be sent to the chair for approval. Alumni Relations is unable to share contact information.

6 WEEKS PRIOR
The initial event email blast is sent to the appropriate audiences. The event information and registration link is posted to applicable social media outlets including Facebook and LinkedIn. Please consult Social Media Tips for volunteers guide for ideas and best practices.

4 WEEKS PRIOR
Registrations should be coming into the Alumni Relations Office. Your Alumni Relations liaison will keep in contact with you about the number of responses received.

2 WEEKS PRIOR
A second email reminder is sent to the appropriate audiences if more registrants are needed.

Work with your Alumni Relations liaison to write a confirmation letter to registrants with all the necessary information. Your liaison will have samples to use as a template.

1 WEEK PRIOR
The Alumni Relations office will send a confirmation email to all registrants. Contact the venue and caterer to ensure all details are finalized and final counts are provided and all payments have been made. Confirm your address with your liaison for the location which you would like to receive a FedEx package with all the event supplies.
2 TO 3 DAYS PRIOR

If your Alumni Relations liaison is not attending the event, you will receive a package from the Alumni Relations Office. The package will contain name tags, attendance list, sign-in sheet, pens, signs and handouts. If your Alumni Relations liaison is attending the event, he/she will bring these items along. In addition, make sure you have copies of any contracts: banquet event orders (menu selection), audio/visual equipment ordered, and all contact names and phone numbers that may be required during the function.

EVENT DAY

Arrive 45 minutes to an hour prior to starting time. Review the room to see if everything meets approval. Introduce yourself to the caterer and venue contact. Confirm the caterer is ready to go at the scheduled time with the items agreed upon from your banquet order. Check and test the audio/visual equipment. Set up the registration table immediately and make sure someone will staff the table during the entire event. If your Alumni Relations liaison is attending the event, he/she will arrive an hour early and will assist with all details.

Here are some additional suggestions:

- DESIGNATE an additional volunteer to arrive early to make sure the site has provided everything promised, to greet early arrivals and direct them to drinks or seating.
- Your assigned Alumni Relations staff member will provide you with a WELCOME SCRIPT. This script can be customized to accommodate your speaking style.
- During the event, try to INTRODUCE YOURSELF to as many guests as you can. You can ask for feedback about the network, suggestions for new events or recruit new committee members.
- ARRANGE for participants to be seated during the speaker’s presentation, if applicable. For receptions, either move to another room with theater-style seats or have chairs set up in the reception area.

WRAP-UP

YOU DID IT! The event has concluded. If a Washington University staff member is not present at your event, send the attendance sheet and/or leftover nametags, money collected at the door (do not send cash through the mail), and all unclaimed name tags to the Alumni Relations Office in the business reply envelope which was included in your packet sent from the Alumni Association.

Your Alumni Relations liaison will contact you following the event for feedback. Please be honest about the event – what worked well and what didn’t. We want to repeat our successes and learn from our events that are not as successful.

Consider drafting an email thank you to all attendees. The Alumni Relations office can send this thank you along with a survey link to all attendees via email. Please work with your liaison if you would like to retrieve specific information from the survey questions. Alumni Relations will automatically send a survey to all registrants if they don’t make other arrangements with the onsite volunteer.