

STARTING A CHAPTER
*Basic Questions To Consider In Starting An
Alumni Chapter In Your Area*

Why Start a Chapter:

Why do you want to start a BYU Alumni Chapter in your area? If you are considering starting an Alumni Chapter, what is your motivation? What do you hope to achieve by starting an Alumni Chapter? How do you feel that an Alumni Chapter can help your area and bless lives? There may be any number of reasons why we want to start an alumni chapter in our area. Consider these reasons:

- a) Promote BYU and develop uncommon loyalty;
- b) Provide service to the community;
- c) Provide scholarships for students and BYU financial support;
- d) Develop friendships and networks;
- e) Provide educational and spiritual opportunities for BYU alumni, Church members and friends;
- f) Build the Church in the area through BYU

Starting a Chapter is an exciting undertaking. There are many great things that you can do through a local Alumni Chapter, and you can have a great impact in your area!

Determining Interest:

One of the first objectives is identifying people who might have interest in BYU. Interest falls into several categories:

- a) People who want to be actively involved in the local chapter (your worker bees!);
- b) Alumni who will participate in events and activities;
- c) Friends of BYU, which may include people whose children have gone to BYU, sports fans or others;
- d) Church members and the local community who are attracted to events and activities held by the Chapter; and
- e) BYU Alumni and friends who are already involved with a constituency group such as the law or business school in your area.

Outreach: The interest in your local chapter will in part be driven by the activities and events you sponsor. Hence, your “audience” should not be limited to BYU alumni but should include the community. If you sponsor speakers, musical concerts or performances or other events, a good or significant portion of your audience may be people not affiliated with BYU – and that is a good thing!

An alumni chapter can be a great way to reach out to those in your community and develop friendships. So, while you may have a limited number of actual alumni in your area, don't think that you cannot have a positive impact on BYU, the Church and community. And, do not conclude that with a low number of alumni that there is no interest. It is what you do that will determine the success of your local Chapter!

Determining Size:

If you are excited to start an Alumni Chapter in your area, you will want to contact the BYU Alumni Office Staff and seek assistance. The staff can provide you with information, contacts and lists that will assist you.

The Alumni Office can identify the alumni who are in your area. Chapter boundaries are determined by zip codes and/or county lines not by ward or stake boundaries. If you are a smaller chapter, you may wish to take in a larger geographic area. On the other hand, if you are a larger chapter, you may want to limit your geographic area.

The Alumni Office can provide you with

- a) A data base list of alumni in your area;
- b) Information that can help you identify potential committee members such as contribution codes and service codes;
- c) Organizing materials for your new Chapter.

The Alumni Office is very helpful and will be a great resource for you in starting an Alumni Chapter.

Fill out a BYU Alumni Chapter Charter Application:

New chapters and chapters that are in need of renewing their charter with the BYU Alumni Association are to complete and submit the form "BYU Alumni Chapter Charter Application". This form is available in an Excel format.

Organizing a Committee:

One of the first things that you will want to do is to organize a committee to assist you in setting up an Alumni Chapter. You may first want to consider your friends or referrals from friends who know BYU alumni. This initial group can work together in getting the Alumni Chapter started and organized.

Your Committee will need to be more than you and your spouse. Again, there are several potential sources of helpers:

- a) Your immediate friends;
- b) Referrals from others of BYU Alumni;

- c) BYU sports enthusiasts. Every area has a few people who know everything about BYU athletics!
- d) The alumni data list for your area. You may see names on this list of people who you did not know were BYU alumni;
- e) Parents who have children attending or who attended BYU;
- f) People who have consistently given to BYU over the years from your area – this information is available from the Alumni Office;
- g) People who are known to have been active while at BYU and who continue to contribute time and money to BYU – the Alumni Office data lists can provide this information; and
- h) Constituency group members in your area.

Pick at least three (3) couples to serve on your committee. Preferably, you will have more than three (3) couples involved. As you know, with family, church and work responsibilities, schedules will change and consequently your committee will periodically shift. It is best to have plenty of help.

Once you have organized a few couples, consider doing the following:

- a) If your chapter covers multiple stakes, try to find additional committee members from the other stakes;
- b) Look for liaisons in the various wards, if this is manageable;
- c) Obtain information from the Alumni Office about setting up your local chapter and organizing your committee;
- d) Begin holding regular meetings;
- e) Begin to plan activities and events. There are a host of things that you can do, and the Alumni Office and other chapters can help you get started;
- f) Review athletic and performance group schedules to see if anyone is coming to your area;
- g) Talk to other Chapters;
- h) Plan on attending the annual Chapter Training at BYU!

You are now on your way to starting a new chapter!

Getting involved in a local alumni chapter is one of many ways that you can give back to BYU. We should all be grateful for the many opportunities that have been given to us through our attendance or affiliation with BYU. Through our continued service with the Alumni Association, we can help “cultivate the Spirit of the ‘Y’!”

GO COUGARS!!!