



Managing Free and Inexpensive Events – CEC VOX session
Tuesday, February 25, 2025
12-1pm

Panelists

Todd Golden '06, Vice President, Dartmouth Club of San Francisco
Kim Buresh '90, Dartmouth Club of Los Angeles
Shamus Hyland '11, Dartmouth Club of Greater Boston

Key Strategies for Organizing Low-Cost Alumni Events

Event Purpose and Engagement

Inclusivity is Key: Focus on planning events that are cost-effective to ensure accessibility for all alumni. This fosters a sense of belonging and community.

Regular Scheduling: Host events once or twice a month to keep alumni engaged and informed about the club's activities. Consistency helps build a routine and encourages participation.

Types of Low-Cost Events to Consider

Flexible Formats: Organize informal gatherings such as happy hours, outdoor events, or casual meet-ups which do not require tickets. This reduces logistical challenges, allowing attendees to arrive late or leave early. A small group of 3 people can count as an event!

Diverse Activities: Introduce a mix of events, from hiking and picnics to crabbing outings, ensuring there's something for everyone. Encourage volunteers to suggest activities that resonate with local interests.

Collaboration and Community Building

Partner with Local Institutions: Build relationships with local arts and cultural organizations to co-host events. This not only enhances the event's reach but also integrates the alumni experience with the community.

Leverage Local Venues: Utilization of libraries, community parks, and Colleges (other Ivy Peer Institutions) can provide accessible spaces for gatherings without incurring high costs.

Overcoming Challenges

Addressing Space Constraints: Space remains one of the most significant obstacles. Consider venues such as local bars or alumni homes to facilitate gatherings. Establish partnerships with venues that can accommodate gatherings with minimal fees, asking in-person can be the most effective way to connect.

Innovative Solutions: Charging a nominal fee for events can help manage costs while incentivizing attendance. Creative event ideas like beach bonfires or themed hikes can draw large crowds with minimal expense.

Panelist Insights

Todd Golden: Emphasized the importance of community service events and reflected on the long-standing traditions of the Dartmouth Club of San Francisco. He shared that collaboration with other Ivy League institutions could enhance participation and broaden the impact of events.

Kim Buresh: Advocated for a flexible definition of success, noting that even small gatherings of 2-3 alumni could be considered valuable. She highlighted successful events such as beach bonfires and quarterly hikes that engage diverse demographics.

Shamus Hyland: Stressed the significance of small meet-ups for fostering connections. He encouraged adapting local events into Dartmouth-themed experiences, emphasizing proactive outreach to local organizations for potential partnerships.

In Closing

Small, informal events can lead to meaningful connections among alumni. Personal invitations often gain positive responses, fostering community engagement. Consider both family-friendly and community service-oriented

events, such as send-off gatherings or seasonal celebrations, to connect alumni and promote Dartmouth values.

To connect with our panelists or for further insights and strategies on enhancing your alumni engagement efforts 'Managing Free and Inexpensive Events', please email Volunteer Engagement at volunteer.engagement@dartmouth.edu for more information.