

March 27th, 2021

EnviroAlums Steering Committee Minutes

In attendance:

Susan Bernat, Kristin Braziunas, Krista Egger, Walt Galloway, Aviva Glaser, Taiyo Scanlon-Kimura, Abe Kruger, Stephan Lezak, John Petersen, Paul Safyan, Molly Samuel, Harriet McSturdy, Howard Sinclair, Andrew DeCoriolis, Else Paeffgen

Minutes recorded by Lauren Holmes, EnviroAlums Onsite Intern

1. Member Check-in and Introductions
2. Announcement
 - a. Senior virtual connection fair
 - i. April 14th, 2021
 - ii. From 7 pm – 8 pm
 - iii. Unfortunately, the same time as one of the Careers in the Environment Series events
3. Career Days (John, Molly, and Lauren)
 - a. Overall, going well so far
 - i. 3 more events scheduled for the series throughout March and April.
 - ii. Event schedule: www.edash.site/careertalks
 - iii. Recordings from all events will be posted later.
 - b. First event with Molly Samuel and Marissa Ortega-Welsh (Careers in Communications and Journalism)
 - i. Probably didn't see as much student attendance (18) in the first session because of midterms.
 - ii. Work more on promotion and publicity for the events.
 - c. Things to consider in the future:
 - i. Start thinking about events for next year from now on.
 - ii. Working on finding someone to take over Lauren's position (EnviroAlums Intern). John has a few candidates to consider.
4. Fundraising Report; Consideration for a finance committee (Paul)
 - a. Finance committee
 - i. This committee to discuss and handle the money we receive and spend.
 1. Nominate Elise, Aviva, and Kristin to work with Paul and Harriet on reviewing a proposal in addition to regular summer fellowships.
 - b. Our finances
 - i. Overall, there hasn't been any large rises and falls in our Endowment over the years.
 - ii. Board of Trustees makes decision on how much of funds are able to be spent. This is usually between 5k and 7k of the proceeds from the principle.
 1. In July, we receive these proceeds from the endowment.

- 2. This amount informs our spending for the next year.
- iii. Last summer, we spent around \$11,000 of a planned \$14000 on fellowships.
 - 1. This was an increase in money allocated from previous years.
- iv. Part of the budget also goes to the payment of the EnviroAlum intern which is not shown on budget.
 - 1. This amount is around two thousand per year.
- v. **Our Current balance: \$18,784**
- vi. John has presented a proposal an environmental dashboard project for funding from a 2020 graduate. THIS IS NOT A FELLOWSHIP
 - 1. This project is going to be considered amongst the finance committee (See above)
- vii. In recent years, we have been spending more of our proceeds, so fundraising is necessary.
- c. Fundraising (continued)
 - i. Last November there was supposed to be a fundraising letter.
 - 1. Letter was completed, but there was some miscommunication with the alumni office and the letter was never sent out.
 - ii. We want to proceed with fundraising efforts and sending out fundraising letter.
 - 1. Timing
 - a. Letter should be sent out in June, end of the fiscal year.
 - b. All in for Oberlin, April 22nd
 - i. In addition, we may do a challenge or match event for All in for Oberlin. **(no conclusion at this time)**
 - c. Oberlin has a crowdfunding tool.
 - 2. EnviroAlums listserv
 - a. Over 1,700 names
 - i. Comprised of former ENVIS majors, minors, and those who have expressed an interest in the environment.
 - b. Use the ENVIS newsletter for this and also other EnviroAlums communication.
 - c. We can send out communications to this listserv, Alumni office does the official sending of the correspondence.
 - 3. Donations on the Oberlin website
 - a. There is no official option on the “donation” website to give to affiliate groups like the EnviroAlums.
 - b. To donate, click the “other” option and write in EnviroAlums.
 - 4. Communication
 - a. Want to have a clear and concise message from the EnviroAlums, especially concerning fundraising.

- b. Want to keep the campaign for the betterment of students at the forefront of our efforts.
 - c. Need to make sure we are in direct communication with the ENVS department.
 - i. The ENVS department may be contacting the same listserv for donations. We want to clarify and codify our message and fundraising intentions, so there is no miscommunication.
 - d. Want a unified message from EnviroAlums and ENVS department
 - i. John and Andrew to meet and discuss those details. Communication subcommittee will help flesh this out.
 - ii. Want to make sure this is done before we start fundraising in June.
 - e. Communication sub- committee (more information in later section)
- 5. Fellowships Report (Kristin and Others)
 - a. Purpose of Fellowships: This program is to support Oberlin students and recent grads in getting involved in professional experience and development in the environment fields.
 - b. Application is up and live, deadline is April 12.**
 - i. New focus this year
 - 1. Trying to focus on how to improve the student experience.
 - 2. Want a more interactive relationship not only between fellows and Enviroalums, but also between the fellows themselves.
 - 3. New features
 - a. Orientation and exit interviews.
 - b. Agreement forms with host organizations
 - i. Want organization to commit to their end of the bargain through hosting students.
 - c. Want to be more hands on
 - 4. Fellowships can be completed through the school year to accommodate for the new trimester year.
 - a. Only requirement is that hours are completed before May 2022.
 - ii. Deadline is later than normal.
 - iii. Trying to target more students in different avenues and promotion tactics.
 - c. Last year, we supported 4 fellows.
 - i. This year we would like to support 4 fellows as well.
 - d. Can recent grads be considered for fellowship funding?
 - i. Yes, 2021 graduates can be considered for funding.
 - ii. Cannot fund anyone who graduated before that.

- e. Would there be an additional application deadline for students doing internships throughout the year versus the summer?
 - i. Possibly if there are not enough applications.
 - f. **Motion** by Abe Kruger, second from Krista Egger to allocate \$14,000 for fellowships for 2021 fellows. This would be applied for the April deadline until the end of their fellowship or until May of 2022.
 - i. These funds would be distributed by the end of spring.
 - ii. **Motion carries with one no vote from the chair.**
 - g. Suggestions of Fellowship Refinements brought up by steering committee members:
 - i. Tracking experience from fellows at their various organizations
 - 1. Could then compile a list of good organizations that have worked well with students.
 - 2. Could be incorporated into the exit interview portion of the program.
 - h. Student reports are online on the EnviroAlums website from 2020 fellows.
6. Nominating/Membership Report (Paul)
- a. Note: Only 1 candidate offered for Chair and Vice Chair. This will be an approval/discussion of that slate.
 - b. Those stepping down from Steering Committee
 - i. Steven, Taiyo, Kristin, and Andrew will be stepping down.
 - 1. Thank you for all your contributions to EnviroAlums!
 - ii. Student members of steering committee (Harriet and Howard) are only contracted for a year of service, but the steering committee offered to extend their membership to the following year. **Both have agreed to stay on with full consent of the SC.**
 - c. Nominations for chair and vice chair made by Kristin Braziunas and seconded by John Petersen.
 - i. **Walt for Chair**
 - ii. **Abe for Vice Chair**
 - iii. **Motion carries unanimously.**
 - d. Working onsite intern and upcoming graduate, Lauren, has been asked to join steering committee with thanks for her excellent work as an intern.
7. Wisr Community for Alumni (Lauren)
- a. EnviroAlums Wisr community in the works
 - i. Taiyo will be serving as community leader.
 - ii. Steering committee members were asked to check and update their Wisr accounts.
 - iii. Guides on how to use Wisr and the Wisr committee will also be coming out with the Wisr community.
 - b. Collaboration with onsite intern Lauren and communications subcommittee
 - i. Want to narrow our focus on communication for Enviroalums.
 - ii. Lauren and communication to schedule a meeting soon.
 - c. Communication subcommittee

- i. Paul to be communications subcommittee chair.
 - ii. Subcommittee members: Susan, Paul, John, Molly, Lauren, Howard, Taiyo
- 8. "On campus news" (Harriet, Howard, and Lauren)
 - a. Third years back on campus for the first time since last March
 - b. Harder to connect with other students, but warmer weather may offer new opportunities to connect with others.
 - c. Sophomores are currently off campus.
 - d. Oberlin is having in person class, but most other activities are online.
 - e. Students can be vaccinated starting March 29th, the campus will be shifting with this change.
 - i. Little to no COVID spread during this year.
 - f. Have had more applications to Oberlin this year than any year prior.
 - g. John stated a study shows that Oberlin faculty are being under invested and underpaid from other competitive peer institutions.
 - i. Some faculty leaving, and John expressed concern that Oberlin will be continuing to have a hard time retaining faculty if this trend isn't addressed.
- 9. Meeting adjourned after 100 minutes by mutual consent!