

Power Base

Association aims to increase membership

JIM POCHE RECRUITED NINE members for the UL Lafayette Alumni Association — without ever leaving his office.

The president of Poche Prouet Associates, a Lafayette-based architectural firm, pays annual membership dues as a perk for nine UL Lafayette graduates who work for him. “We are encouraging members of our staff to stay active with university programs,” he said.

Jeanine Haller Piskurich lives in Houston, a four-hour drive from Lafayette. Twice in the past year, however, she arranged for her employer, BP America, to match contributions she made to university programs. “Had it not been for the university, none of the opportunities that I have been blessed with would have been available to me,” she said.

Sonny Launey graduated from UL Lafayette three decades ago. But when its College of Engineering faced accreditation in 1996, he and fellow members of the Engineering Alumni Chapter returned to campus in force, to act as advisers in the process. With their help, the college won a top rating. “It needed to be done and I feel great we could do it,” he said.

These are just a few examples of stewardship that UL Lafayette Alumni Association leaders can cite. Dan Hare, the association’s executive director, knows that as membership grows, so will the organization’s influence, on campus and off. He would like to increase membership rolls by tapping into the largest pool of potential members — UL Lafayette graduates.

Only a small percentage of graduates are members of the Alumni Association. Hare compared the organization to a “sleeping giant.”

“Many association members recruit new people all the time. Ideally, more members would start doing that, selling the university and the association to other graduates,” he said.

“Let’s say each member of the Alumni Association gets two friends to join. If every member did that, we could increase our membership substantially. What a difference that would make.”

Hare said he would like the association’s growth to track that of the university’s. He listed the \$130 million in construction projects that pepper the campus; the success of CajunBot, the university’s entry into the U.S. Department of Defense’s Grand Challenge; and the spring opening of the Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum as examples.

“Everything is growing on campus,” Hare continued. “You see new buildings going up. You see strides being made on the athletic field. You see departments and colleges making great gains nationally. Let’s see what we can do as alumni.”

‘ONE SMALL WAY’

Jim Poche encourages members of his staff to stay active in UL Lafayette programs.

Nine of 13 full-time employees at Poche Prouet Associates architectural firm are UL Lafayette alumni. He also has three part-time employees who are enrolled at the university.

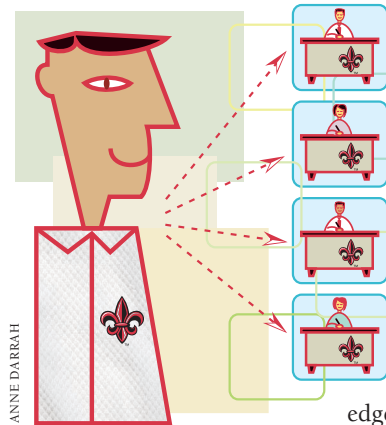
So, purchasing Alumni Association memberships for those staff members just made sense, Poche said.

“Paying dues for the Alumni

Association is one small way for us to thank the university for the role it has played in supplying our firm with the type of staff that is needed in today’s market,” said Poche, the company’s president and a 1970 graduate of the university.

Poche said the need for community involvement in the university will increase as UL Lafayette continues its growth in stature.

“Our firm and others have recognized that the university provides its graduates with strong, technical skills and a well-rounded practical knowledge that will enable them to compete virtually anywhere.”



‘KICK IT UP A NOTCH’

As a land manager for oil giant BP America, Jeanine Haller Piskurich is based in Houston and handles oil exploration throughout the western United States. She said her heart, however, remains at UL Lafayette.

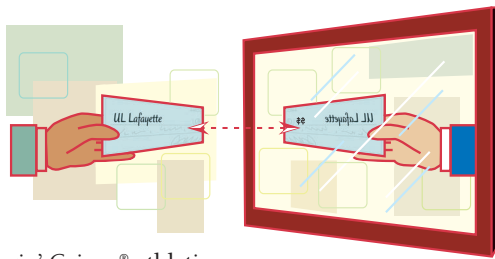
She has been a member of the association since graduating from the university in 1988. Earlier this year, when she received a promotion at work, Piskurich decided to “kick it up a notch,” and make a contribution to the Alumni Association’s Spring Gala. Her company matches donations made to worthy causes, so her contribution immediately doubled in value.

Later, she again took advantage of BP's corporate generosity. The company matched her contribution to ongoing efforts to refurbish and improve Ragin' Cajuns® athletic facilities.

"With BP's support, I was able to help remodel an office in the Athletic Department to ensure that UL has facilities to remain competitive in the NCAA Division I-A. While a student, I worked for several years in the Sports Information Office and was also a hostess in the department, so that's another area that is near and dear to my heart."

ALUMNI HELP OUT

Without UL Lafayette, Sonny Launey claims, he wouldn't have an engineering

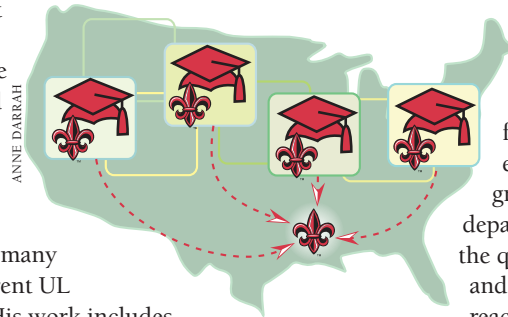


degree — or a wife.

"I received a wonderful education, was taught by a faculty that challenged me, met my future wife at a crawfish boil in Girard Park and married her in (Our

Lady of) Wisdom Chapel," Launey said. "I think you'd agree that UL Lafayette has played and continues to play an important role in my life."

A 1968 graduate of the university and a civil engineer with New Orleans-based Denson Engineers Inc., Launey has become a mentor to many prospective and current UL Lafayette students. His work includes



volunteering with the Discover UL recruitment program and staying active in the Engineering Alumni Chapter of the Alumni Association.

Through his work with the alumni chapter, Launey and fellow members served as advisers to the College of Engineering during its accreditation process eight years ago. The college earned full accreditation.

"Alumni acted as members of the departments' advisory committee, which provided feedback and critical reviews for the department heads and faculty," Launey said. "The alumni also provided feedback as employees, employers and graduates, to assist the departments in evaluating the quality of programs and whether they are reaching their goals." ■

TEN WAYS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

There are scores of ways to help the UL Lafayette Alumni Association. Here are a few. Pay no attention to the order. They are all important.

- 1. JOIN THE ASSOCIATION.** It's a great way to network with old friends and make new ones, all while helping UL Lafayette continue its remarkable growth in stature. And while you're signing up, make it a group activity. Get a friend or two to do the same.
- 2. GET INVOLVED.** The association's annual events run on the fuel volunteers provide. Homecoming and Spring Gala wouldn't happen without them. And who says education stops at graduation? By helping out at events, you'll develop leadership skills that are vital in today's competitive job market.
- 3. SPEAKING OF SPRING GALA . . .** This annual black-tie event raises funds for the upkeep of the Alumni Center. Donating items for the silent or live auctions, purchasing a table or just attending the party can help the association.
- 4. DONATE TO THE ALUMNI ANNUAL FUND.** The association presents 10 endowed

- scholarships annually, one for each of the nine colleges and one for an Association of Future Alumni member. Funding for the endowments comes from the Alumni Annual Fund.
- 5. SELL UL LAFAYETTE, PART I.** If you know a high school student who's planning to attend college, why not tell him or her about all UL Lafayette has to offer? Start by talking about the university's top-notch researchers, nationally recognized athletic and academic programs, award-winning faculty and spirited student body. UL Lafayette wasn't named one of *The Princeton Review's Best 357 Colleges* for nothing.
- 6. SELL UL LAFAYETTE, PART II.** The Alumni Association sponsors a speakers' bureau and the Talkin' UL program. Both are ways for graduates and friends of the university to brag a bit about what's happening on campus.
- 7. BUY SEASON TICKETS AND RAGIN' CAJUNS® MERCHANDISE.** Wherever Ragin' Cajuns gather, there's bound to be a party. So, put on your red and pack the stands to cheer on UL Lafayette's athletic teams. You are guaranteed to have a good time.

- 8. NETWORK.** It's all about who you know, right? The association provides the opportunity to make contacts. Hiring UL Lafayette students and alumni is another way to show allegiance to your alma mater.
- 9. REUNITE.** The association sponsors a 50-year class reunion every year, among a host of other annual events that bring alumni together. Again, volunteers can play an integral part — from contacting graduates to helping coordinate reunion-day activities. The association also organizes annual cruises, day trips and activities closer to home. Call the Alumni Center for a comprehensive list of activities and to find out how you can help.
- 10. JOIN A CHAPTER.** Feeling depressed in D.C.? Alone in Alabama? There's probably a little slice of home closer than you think. The association has chapters from the Carolinas to California and also maintains a network of specialized chapters for engineering and education graduates, among others. *For more information or to join the association, call (337) 482-0900 or go to www.louisianaalumni.org* ■