

Can't Wait to Graduate

Student alumni ambassadors help promote loyalty to university

ALTHOUGH THE UL LAFAYETTE Alumni Association is housed in the Alumni Center on St. Mary Boulevard, it's represented all over campus, every day of the week.

That's because its student alumni ambassadors can be found in classrooms, at student organization meetings and just about anywhere else students gather.

"They truly define the word 'ambassador.' They reach out to other students and explain what the Alumni Association's impact is on the university. They have done a fine job of that," said Angela Morrison, as-

stant director of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association and SAA adviser.

SAA is composed of a dozen members of the Association of Future Alumni, which is a chapter of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association. AFA was formed by students in 1996 to promote loyalty to the university and to strengthen ties between students and alumni.

AFA members assist with Association events, such as reunions, receptions and tailgating. The AFA is open to all UL Lafayette students; it has about 110 members.

Morrison said student alumni ambassadors choose to take an even more active role in Alumni Association projects by serving as officers of AFA. But student alumni ambassadors are not elected by their peers. To be chosen for the elite SAA group, AFA members

must go through an application and selection process conducted by the Alumni Association staff, the AFA president and certain Alumni Association executive leaders, such as its president-elect.

Student alumni ambassadors are involved in a variety of projects throughout the year. One of their newest is Red Carpet Day. "It's like Preview Day, which the university holds to enable high school students to learn more about UL Lafayette and what it offers. But Red Carpet Day is a special preview that they conduct just for potential 'legacy' students, who are relatives of UL Lafayette graduates," Morrison said.

Student alumni ambassadors spearhead fundraising events to generate operational funds. Some of the money they raise is used to pay for travel to regional or national conferences.

"They came up with a brand new fundraiser this year. They're selling chrome emblems bearing UL Lafayette's logo, which can be placed on vehicles or trailer hitches," Morrison said.

Claire Pettit, who was AFA president last year, helped establish the SAA group.

She was succeeded as SAA president by Blake Cormier this year. Morrison said Cormier "has worked hard to really fine-tune the SAA, to make it even better."

The AFA has grown significantly since Morrison joined the Alumni Association staff in 2002. "Even though the students' faces have changed over the past five years, attitudes have remained the same. They want to be more connected with alumni. They can see the advantage of starting now and building networking opportunities," she said.

For more information about the Association of Future Alumni, phone the Alumni Association at (337) 482-0900 or send e-mail to alumni@louisiana.edu ■



SHOWN, FROM LEFT: Blake Cormier, president of the Association of Future Alumni; Blair Broussard, staff assistant of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association; Angela Morrison, assistant director of the Alumni Association and Student Alumni Ambassadors advisor; and Dan Hare, director of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association.

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