

Starting a UK Alumni Club

Interested in starting a UK Alumni Association club in your area? Follow these eight steps, receive help from the Alumni Association along the way, and share the spirit of the Wildcats with your community in no time! Establishing a UK Alumni Club in your area is a rewarding experience and a wonderful way to serve your alma mater.



1. **Why do you want to start a club?**

Clubs aren't just about game watch parties. UK Alumni Clubs across the country do so much more – they are advocates for UK, helping to recruit future students, supporting scholarships for current students, assisting young alumni with job searches, doing community service in the local area, and cheering on the Wildcats!

Events that UK Alumni Clubs host include:

- Dinners with UK guest speaker
- Student send-off parties
- Derby parties
- Intramural sporting events
- Game watch parties
- Community service
- DanceBlue participation
- Fundraising for scholarships
- Student recruitment
- Joint SEC alumni club events
- And much more ...

Once you have determined why you want to start a club in your area, call Alyssa Thornton, UK Alumni Association program coordinator, to discuss your ideas. Alyssa can be reached at 859-257-3801 or 1-800-269-ALUM or via e-mail at alyssa.thornton@uky.edu.



2. **I am willing but would welcome assistance.**

To start an alumni club in your area, we strongly suggest that 250 UK alumni live within a 60 mile radius of you. We want your club to be active and effective – usually about five percent of the population will participate in club events. (This is true across most alumni associations.) When you call the Alumni Association office, we can look up this information for you or you may visit the Web site at www.ukalumni.net keyword: alumni maps for this information.

If there are enough people in your area, start recruiting other alumni to help you. You will need five to 10 people who are willing to organize the club, act as leaders and plan the initial event.

If you don't know other UK alumni in your area, the office can send out a broadcast e-mail to area alumni, to ask for volunteers and gauge interest for an established club in your area.



3. **Lead the first organizational meeting.**

Once you have interested volunteers, set up an initial meeting for the leadership committee. At this meeting:

- Determine where and when you will hold your first club meeting.
- Plan your marketing efforts (with the Alumni Association office).
- Set an agenda for the first club event.

This meeting could be as simple as a conference call, if everyone can't get together.

Remember, at the first club event, the leadership committee should be a united group representing the university's best interests in the club area. Be prepared to discuss why you want to start a club in the area, the purpose of a club, and some activities you see the club participating in each year.



4. **Do** your research.

See what other clubs in your area are planning. Are there other SEC clubs in your area? Be prepared to discuss this research at your first event. Create healthy competition. For example, if the Louisville Alumni Club in your area is working hard in the community, use it as a challenge to your group. Challenge UK alumni to volunteer in your community as well.



5. **Club** expectations and support.

The goals of a UK Alumni Club activity are to provide a social atmosphere where alumni and friends away from the university can gather together to renew old acquaintances, make new UK friends in their community, and be brought up-to-date on all aspects of campus progress.

The UK Alumni Association asks that each club host one alumni gathering each year, that is non-athletic, and engages and connects alumni. This could include hosting a university speaker, holiday parties, picnics, scholarship dinners, cultural performances, career development or more.

Clubs are encouraged to:

- Award scholarships to a student from your area
- Give a scholarship gift to a university scholarship account
- Host a student recruitment event, such as attending college fairs or hosting a student send-off party.
- Host an athletic event.
- Include diversity in your events, whether recruiting students from under-represented high schools or attending cultural fairs in your area.

You may visit our club event log located at www.ukalumni.net under the clubs icon to get ideas based on what other clubs have done this year.

The club may expect the following from the Alumni Association office:

- Staff support for event planning, UK speaker scheduling, scholarship administration, etc.
- Marketing for events (invitations, broadcast e-mails, online registration, etc.).
- Graphic design for marketing materials.
- PDF file of members and nonmembers in the area.
- Eligibility for annual club awards and athletic tickets (when meeting expectations).



6. **Attend** your first event.

This is what you have worked for. Enjoy this event, but stick to your agenda.

Here are some things to keep in mind for your first event:

- Allow for social time. Get to know the other alumni in your area.

- Introduce your leaders. You may want to appoint these leaders as your club officers for the first year.
- Be clear about the purpose and expectations of a club.
- Discuss ways the club can be involved in your area. Share ideas and ask people for suggestions.
- Be prepared to announce the next meeting – date, time, place, and agenda. (This could be as simple as a game watch party followed by a planning meeting for a community service event or a happy hour followed by a planning meeting for a networking event.)
- Ask for updated contact information. Send this to the Alumni Association so that we may update our records.



7. Take time to review your first event and plan for the future.

Contact the Alumni Association to review your first event.

To make your club official, there are a few organizational things to complete within the next year. Remember the Alumni Association will assist you with all of this. The club officers may also assist.

- Set up a club bank account.
- Submit a press release to the local paper about the club's establishment.
- Submit a request for a broadcast e-mail to be sent to area alumni, announcing the new club and your next event.
- Have club leaders make plans to attend the board of directors meeting and summer workshop each June, and the club presidents training each fall.
- Over the next year, work with the Alumni Association to develop a constitution and bylaws for your club. The office has sample constitutions that can help start this process.

Again, congratulations! Your hard work has paid off and the Alumni Association is very proud of the work you have done on behalf of the University of Kentucky.

Go Cats!