Lycoming College
Alumni Association Executive Board Meeting
October 5 & 6, 2017

AAEB Members Present: Holly Andrews, Jamie (Rowe) Brown, Bobby Cook, David Dearing, Len Hahn, Paul Henry, Bill Hessert, Nancy Hoerner, Jordan Hollander, Jack Lea, Phil Levesque, Bob Martin, Chuck McCall, Ron McElwee, Brad Myhre, April (Sparks) Orwig, Mary-Louise Paucke, Tanner Paulhamus, Michael Ruddy, Gary Samuels, Jasmine Sanders, Christian Shaffmaster, Chris Spadoni, Gary Spies, Phil Sunderland, Erica (Dohner) Vargo, Brad Webb

Ex-Officio Members Present: Melanie Gerhringer, Michael Panczyszyn

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5

Call to Order/Announcements

AAEB President Mary-Louise Paucke called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mary-Louise then yielded the floor to AAEB Secretary Bill Hessert, who presented the minutes from the Spring 2017 meeting (attached).

Action Item: Bill Hessert moved that the minutes be approved as presented; Brad Webb seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Welcome/Board Introductions

Mary-Louise introduced and welcomed Holly Andrews, Len Hahn, and Erica (Dohner) Vargo, all of whom were attending their first meeting as board members. Mary-Louise then invited the Board members to go introduce/re-introduce themselves.

New Business

Warrior Coffee: Paul Henry updated the Board on efforts to sell/provide Warrior Coffee to churches. He started by noting that Lycoming is one of only three college nationwide marketing its own coffee brands. He also noted that Lycoming ran out of the supply of coffee it had to sell to churches (150 lbs.) in May. Caroline Payne has purchased 6,600 lbs. of coffee for the upcoming year – at least 3,000 lbs. will be used on campus, and Paul has committed to selling at least 1,600 lbs. to churches in the upcoming year as well. Paul invited Board members to contact him if they are interested in purchasing coffee for their churches.

The success of the project to date has enabled Lycoming to help improve the water system in the village in the Dominican Republic where the coffee beans are grown and harvested; it has also allowed farmers to plant macadamia nut trees and avocado trees to provide shade and grow additional crops to harvest.
AAEB Board Changes: AAEB Vice President Bob Martin indicated that Denise Carlin had resigned from the Board due to huge work commitments. The Recruitment and Recognition will review candidates to fill Denise’s unexpired term during its committee meetings.

Alumni Relations Update

Mary-Louise yielded the floor to Amy Reyes, Lycoming’s director of alumni relations, to provide an update on alumni/advancement activities.

Advancement Staff/Office Updates: Amy started by sharing that Lara (Collins) Breon ’04 has been hired to replace Jen Walter as associate director of annual giving. Lara will be working primarily on Lycoming’s phonathon, but will also have some travel responsibilities.

Amy also shared that the Alumni Office will soon be creating an Instagram account.

Warrior Coffee: Following up on Paul Henry’s presentation, Amy noted that Warrior Coffee can be ordered online via Alabaster Coffee.

Center for Enhanced Academic Experiences: CEAE will soon be using a new web-based program, Symplicity, in the College’s first attempt to “digitize” its job search and career services. The CEAE staff will provide a demonstration to Board later today.

AAEB Committee Updates: Amy took a moment to thank Michael Ruddy for his service as chair of the AAEB Communications and Career Services Committee for the past several years. Beginning with this meeting, Brad Webb will serve as the committee’s chair.

Campus Events: Amy noted that the restrooms in Skeath Hall were renovated this past summer. The restrooms in Asbury Hall will be renovated next summer.

Richard Erickson led a workshop and viewing of the total solar eclipse in August that was well received by those who attended.

The College’s marketing department is working on developing a “Community Events web page” that will be an easily accessible resource for anyone looking to find out what’s happening at Lycoming. The department hopes that the page will be live by the end of 2017.

The next “Open Lycoming” Community Seminar – The Pursuit of Happiness, led by Associate Professor of Psychology Susan Beery – will begin next Wednesday. Amy noted that 35 people had registered for the program.

Homecoming and Family Weekend/Alumni and Reunion Weekend: Amy asked for volunteers to help hand out “rally towels” in the Alumni and Student Section at the football game on Saturday. She noted there will be a parent breakfast on Saturday morning (although the RSVPs are down from previous years), and that several departmental “clusters” will be hosting receptions on Saturday morning as well.

Amy indicated that the 2018 Alumni and Reunion Weekend will take place June 1-3, and that the 2018 Homecoming and Family Weekend is tentatively scheduled for October 19-21.

AAEB Board Vacancies: Amy reminded current Board members to share the names of other alumni to fill future vacancies on the Board. Bob Martin added that although anyone interested in serving will be considered, the Board could use better representation from alumni who graduated between the late 1970s and early 1990s, and better female representation as well.
Mel Zimmerman (Director) and Bob Smith (Research Associate), Clean Water Institute

After a short break, Amy introduced Mel Zimmerman and Bob Smith and invited them to provide an overview of the Clean Water Institute. Although CWI was “officially” formed in 1999, Mel indicated that the institute has existed in some form for more than 30 years. During that time, CWI has received more than $2.5 million in grants and has provided high-impact research experiences for more than 250 students. CWI is also one of six higher education institutions involved in the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition of Environmental Studies. (See attached flyer for additional information).

Anne Landon and Lori Lyons, Center for Enhanced Academic Experiences

After a brief question-and-answer session with Drs. Zimmerman and Smith, Amy next introduced Anne Landon and Lori Lyons, career advisors with the Center for Enhanced Academic Experiences (CEAE) to provide a Symplicity overview. Launched earlier this spring, the resource – being promoted as “I Am Launching” to students – opens new doors for the College in connecting students with local and national businesses. Anne and Lori indicated Symplicity is being promoted especially strongly to incoming freshmen.

Committee Meetings/Meeting Suspension

Following a brief question-and-answer session with Landon and Lyons, Mary-Louise invited members of the Board to break into their respective committees. She also reminded everyone that they were invited to a tour of the Community Arts Center, with dinner to follow, at 6:30 p.m.

Mary-Louise officially suspended the Board meeting until 8:25 a.m. on Friday, October 6.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6

Call to Order

AAEB President Mary-Louise Paucke officially reconvened the meeting at approximately 8:25 a.m.

Treasurer’s Report

Mary-Louise then yielded the floor to AAEB Treasurer Jamie Rowe Brown who presented the Treasurer’s Report (see attached).

Action Item: Phil Levesque moved that the Treasurer’s report be approved as presented; Gary Spies seconded the motion. Motion carried.
Melanie Harris Taormina, Foundation Relations Officer

Mary-Louise then introduced Melanie Harris Taormina ’94, who provided an overview on the College’s grant activities. Foundations and grant activity highlighted during her presentation included:

- Stabler Foundation, which provided its first grant to Lycoming in December 2012 ($1 million) and its most recent grant to the College in December 2016 ($540,000);
- Alden Trust, which has provided $310,000 to date to provide physics and biology laboratory support. The most recent support was a $110,000 grant in June 2015;
- ATT, which has provided $135,000 in corporate gifts (including $30,000 in May 2017). All but $20,000 of that support has been in support of Lycoming College Prep;
- First Community Foundation Partnership – the most recent traditional grant ($300,000, March 2015) was for planetarium instrumentation and outreach to county K-12 schools; the foundation also provided a $500,000 strategic grant in January 2017 in support of the Gateway Project;
- Hearst Foundation, which provided $75,000 in October 2015 to support a spend-down scholarship fund;
- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which awarded Lycoming a three-year, $100,000 grant in September 2014 to support student and faculty research in the arts, humanities, and humanities-focused social sciences. Also in conversation with the foundation about a new initiative to preserve the liberal arts;
- Gladys Krieble Delmos Foundation, which provided $10,000 in June 2016 to support the Idalion Project in Cyprus;
- Booth Ferris Foundation, which provided a two-year, $110,000 grant in June 2017 to support the new “Lycoming Academy” launching in August 2018;
- The National Science Foundation, which provided a five-year, $994,971 grant through its Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program in May 2017. Lycoming has also applied for a five-year, $648,915 grant to support high-achieving, low-income STEM students;
- Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women, which awarded Lycoming a three-year, $300,000 grant in September 2017 to reduce sexual assault, domestic violence, and dating violence on campus.

Dr. Kent Trachte, Lycoming President

Following a brief question-and-answer session with Melanie, Amy Reyes introduced Lycoming President Kent Trachte, who started by noting the success of the men’s soccer team so far this year. The team is currently 11-1 and ranked 15th in the nation; the team has been ranked as high as #3.

Enrollment: Dr. Trachte than spoke about the “complex enrollment situation” currently facing Lycoming. He started by sharing “good news” about Lycoming’s rankings that affirm the College’s rising reputation and stature nationwide:

- Named one of the “Best 382” (top 12% of all four-year institutions) by Princeton Review;
- Ranked #147 by U.S. News & World Report (up 17 spots in two years);
- Ranked #101 by Washington Monthly (up from #137 in 2016);
- Named to list of Colleges of Distinction;
- Grants from the National Science Foundation and the Booth Ferris Foundation, and more than $3 million in gifts to date from the Stabler Foundation.

Dr. Trachte then noted that the paradigm for measuring success in higher education is shifting from a growth paradigm to one measuring efficiency and quality. He also noted that many higher education institutions are moving away from the liberal arts. According to a 2012 study in Liberal Education, 212 institutions...
met the criteria of a liberal arts institution/curriculum 20 years earlier; by 2012, that number had dwindled to 139. This leaves three options for liberal arts colleges moving forward:
1. Remain committed to the residential liberal arts model;
2. Expand the range of majors and disciplines being offered (i.e., health sciences, cybersecurity) that depart from the liberal arts; or
3. Add graduate programs and gradually transition towards becoming a small university.

While not “departing” from the liberal arts, Dr. Trachte said Lycoming is integrating new enrollment segments (enhanced recruitment in music, majors in astronomy and astrophysics, neuroscience, and Latin American archaeology, minors in energy studies and energy science, program in entrepreneurship), and exploring other opportunities (possible majors in environmental science and biochemistry, adding track as a sport, increased marketing of the Outdoor Leadership and Education program).

**Chip Edmonds, Vice President for College Advancement**

Dr. Trachte then yielded the floor to Chip Edmonds, who followed up by discussing enrollment marketing and communication strategies being considered. He started by acknowledging that parents and prospective students utilize multiple sources in studying potential colleges. So, while print materials are as important as they’ve always been, the online recruitment resources are also necessary and important.

With that in mind, the College is contemplating a redesign of its home page, academic landing page, and academic program pages to simplify the web structure and provide a clearer, more intuitive information path for visitors to the College website. The College is also hoping to improve copy that appears on the website, and to build a more robust “pipeline” to communicate with prospective students before they apply. Lastly, the College is exploring the possibility of launching an Alumni Ambassador Program that will help engage alumni more in the recruitment and enrollment process.

**Capital Campaign:** Chip shared that since its public launch, there have been more than $11 million in total commitments and more than $6 million in cash gifts to the capital campaign. To date, there has been a 19 percent participation rate in the campaign by Lycoming alumni – more than twice the national average.

**Gateway Project:** Chip indicated that the College and its partners spent most of the summer tweaking the project design, and that the primary emphasis at this point is on garnering financial support for the project.

**Committee Meetings**

Following Chip’s remarks, Mary-Louise again invited members of the Board to break into their respective committees. The committees met, and the Board then reconvened for the presentation of committee reports at approximately 11:00 a.m.

**Committee Reports**

**Communication and Career Services:** Committee chair Brad Webb reported on behalf of the committee.

Brad noted that the committee reviewed a more thorough tutorial for “I Am Launching” after CEAE’s presentation to the Board yesterday. The committee thought it would be beneficial to find a success story of a student who used “I Am Launching” to secure an internship or job that could be shared in the alumni magazine.
The committee also thought it might be a good idea for the College to consider creating a newsletter focused specifically on recruiting/engaging young alumni.

The committee and CEAE began flushing out details for the potential creation of an Alumni Mentoring Program. Brad Webb, Drew Boyles, and Susan Ross will meet sometime before the AAEB Spring 2018 meeting to explore the possibility further.

Brad indicated that Austin Duckett had a family emergency and was not able to coordinate AAEB having a float in this year’s Homecoming Parade. To encourage more involvement in building an alumni parade float in future years, the committee felt it might be advantageous to host a Saturday morning event (Kegs and Eggs) to boost alumni involvement.

The first go-around with the Lycoming Sweethearts contest was a huge success, so plans are to do it again next year.

Lastly, Brad reminded Board members that there was a need for alumni to volunteer to be profiled for the Alumni Spotlight feature.

**Recruitment and Recognition:** AAEB Vice President Bob Martin reported on behalf of the committee.

Bob said that the committee recommended that Henry Knerr ’77 fill Denise Carlin’s unexpired term on the Board. He then presented the committee’s recommended slate of 2018 alumni award recipients. They are:

- Brenda Bowser Soder ’98 - Angela R. Kyte Outstanding Alumni Award
- Melissa (Britcher) Shaffmaster ’03 - Taunia Oechslin Young Alumni Award
- Mary Welch - Dale V. Bower Service Award
- Gwendolyn (Gehman) ’71 and Raymond ’68 Enstine - Dr. James E. Douthat Outstanding Achievement Award

**Action Item:** Phil Levesque moved that Recruitment and Recognition Committee’s recommended candidate for the Board vacancy and slate of award recipients be approved as presented; Jordan Hollander seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Fundraising and Philanthropy:** Committee chair Jamie (Rowe) Brown reported on behalf of the committee.

Jamie noted that the committee met with Leslie Larson, who provided them with an update on the Loyal Giving Society (formerly named the Benjamin Crever Society). The Society will now recognize alumni for three consecutive years of giving instead of five. The committee suggested in beneficial for the College to recognize young alumni who make their first gift. Leslie and the committee also discussed Giving Tuesday, updates to the phonathon, and an “Elements of Surprise” program which involves randomly sending out special donor thank you notes.

The “Cocktails and Cupcakes” event was a big success this year, so there may be a similar event next year.

Jamie reminded AAEB members of the importance of giving to the College each year – there was only a 97 percent participation rate among Board members last year.
Jamie concluded by discussing possible events at next year’s Alumni and Reunion Weekend and the possibility of having an AAEB at a non-Homecoming sports event in the upcoming year.

**Events and Reunions:** Committee chair Paul Henry reported on behalf of the committee.

Paul indicated that by the end of the year, the College and AAEB will have held 46 alumni events. There were some new locations visited, including an event at the Old York Wine Cellars in Flemington, New Jersey, which Jordan Hollander helped to arrange. There are also College alumni events planned for Dallas and Charlotte in the upcoming year.

**Additional Discussion/Adjournment**

At the end of the committee report presentations, Mary-Louise yielded the floor to Jack Lea, who discussed fundraising efforts associated with a scholarship fund in memory of a former soccer player killed on 9/11, and with replacing the soccer/lacrosse turf. He also noted that, thanks to the efforts of the Warrior Club, support for all of the College’s sports is growing.

Mary-Louise thanked the Board members for attending and bringing so many great ideas to the table. She reminded everyone that the Spring 2018 meeting will be held Thursday, May 31 and Friday, June 1 in conjunction with Alumni and Reunion Weekend. Bob Martin also reminded everyone that the Recruitment and Recognition Committee will entertain nominations for the Board’s next vice president at that meeting.

**Action Item:** Phil Levesque moved that the meeting be adjourned; Tanner Paulhamus seconded the motion. Motion carried, and meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

S. William Hessert, Jr. ’85
AAEB Secretary