



## **Annual Report to the Penn State Alumni Association**

**March 7, 2006**

### **Introduction**

The Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (CCSG) Alumni Interest Group (AIG) has had a remarkable first year. While the concept of developing such a group to reunite past members has been in the planning and execution stages for some time, the overwhelmingly positive response in its inaugural year, among both alumni and current students, provides exciting and ambitious goals for the future and insightful benchmarks for improvement. We, the Board of Directors for the CCSG AIG, feel that we have successfully accomplished the group expectations set forth by the Penn State Alumni Association and are excited to take this opportunity to share our progress with the Alumni Council.

In April 2005, the CCSG AIG successfully held its first election for board membership. While the board has understandably seen some turnover during the past year, we currently have full membership and are actively working to further the group's mission. We have seven members currently on our board, each of whom is fulfilling their responsibilities as outlined in the AIG's constitution and bylaws. The Board of Directors has met via teleconference and in person four times during the last year. The meeting on October 29, 2005 (Homecoming weekend) also served as the group's first meeting for the entire membership. We have also been able to piggyback on these business meetings with social events. From these communications, we have compiled an ambitious set of goals that not only seek to support the current students of CCSG and the Penn State Alumni Association, but also bring together alumni from across the country who share the special experience of their involvement with student government.

### **Layout of Annual Report**

The layout of this report, and the information contained therein, will follow the format of the June 6, 2003 memo entitled "Group Expectations" as sent out by Roger Williams of the Penn State Alumni Association Volunteer Management Team. This memo highlights both the expectations and requirements of alumni interest groups in bullet fashion.



## **Expectations**

As outlined by the Penn State Alumni Association bylaws, all alumni interest groups must complete the expectations listed below:

### ***1. Complete an Annual Report***

The CCSG AIG is submitting its annual report within this document.

### ***2. Hold an Annual Meeting and Provide Agenda/Minutes to Regional Director***

The CCSG AIG held its first annual all-member meeting on October 29, 2005 over Homecoming weekend. The minutes from that meeting are attached, and were also sent electronically to our regional director, Cheryl Stringer.

### ***3. Provide Regional Director with Copies of All Mass Communications, Both Paper and Electronic***

Our regional director, Cheryl Stringer, has been carbon-copied on every mass email communication sent out from the CCSG AIG Board of Directors. A sampling of some of those mass communications is attached at the end of this report as well.

In accordance with the bylaws of the Penn State Alumni Association, the CCSG AIG has met all three outlined expectations for calendar year 2005.

## **Requirements**

As outlined by the Penn State Alumni Association, all alumni interest groups are required to complete at least three of the program requirements listed below:

### ***1. Student Support and Interaction***

- The Board recently made an informative presentation to over 100 students at CCSG's February 2006 Council meeting. Similarly, in April 2005, Tim Daniels (the then newly-elected AIG Board president) made a presentation to CCSG Council to inform them of the establishment of the CCSG AIG and the ambitious goals set for the group. Mr. Daniels was also in attendance at CCSG's 2005 end-of-year banquet honoring all Commonwealth students involved in the organization.
- Additionally, Richel Perretti, the current advisor for CCSG, also serves on the board of the CCSG AIG, and has been a valuable conduit for information sharing with the current CCSG leadership.



- Lastly, the board has encouraged current students involved with CCSG to contact us with questions, concerns and opinions of a non-political nature (i.e., non-CCSG election issues, questions, etc).

## ***2. Networking and Fellowship***

- Following the AIG's presentation to CCSG Council in February 2006, an informal survey was conducted which showed a very strong interest from current students in connecting with alumni for professional networking opportunities. Robert Hughes (AIG Board Treasurer) has been developing an ambitious mentoring program that will utilize the experience and diverse array of occupations amongst CCSG AIG members to benefit current students. We have had strong interest from current alumni who would like to serve as mentors as well. The board is hoping to have this program up and running by the beginning of summer 2006.
- Mike Cooper (AIG Board Parliamentarian) has started organizing both formal and informal events to reunite alumni for social interaction. In 2005, the AIG held and participated in the following social events: an AIG alumni picnic over Arts Fest weekend in State College, PA; a PSU Homecoming tailgate in October 2005 at Beaver Stadium; participation in the annual 'CCSG vs. USG Broomball' game in February 2006; and, a Sunday morning brunch involving current AIG board members and CCSG members in February 2006. Other events include the Liberty Ball in Philadelphia, PA, as well as morale support in Dance Marathon. Smaller regional events have also taken place in Washington, DC, Philadelphia, PA and Pittsburgh, PA. The social committee is currently working on holding the following events: tailgates and block-ticket purchasing for Penn State football games (specifically All-U Day in the fall, an important occasion for Commonwealth students), community service events, participation in the Homecoming parade, another picnic for Arts Fest 2006, and more regional mixers.

## ***3. Sports Activities***

- In 2005, the CCSG AIG participated in a Homecoming tailgate in October 2005 involving current board members as well as current CCSG members. Additionally, smaller groups of alumni in various cities (Washington, DC and Philadelphia, PA) have gotten together to watch both Penn State football and basketball games broadcasted on national television. Former alumni and students also attended the Blue and White game in spring 2005.



#### ***4. Community Service***

- Several members of the CCSG AIG, including Nikkie DeSimone (AIG Board Secretary), traveled to Dance Marathon in February 2006 to support CCSG's dancing couples. CCSG alumni were also encouraged to donate to THON and earmark that donation for their home campus total, as well as send the dancers mail for distribution during THON. In the near future, the AIG Board plans on coordinating with CCSG central staff and leadership to organize regional canning events to raise money for THON.

#### ***5. Membership Support and Recruitment***

- Nikkie DeSimone (AIG Board Secretary) has taken the task of spearheading the group's membership committee, and is currently in the process of redesigning the CCSG AIG membership application to provide the board with more data on the locations and occupations of members, in addition to keeping the group updated on exciting personal information (marriages, children, trips, etc.). Nikkie is also working on a database to house all of the membership information, which will be completed by spring 2006.
- Since the CCSG AIG's inception in March 2005, we have been able to increase our membership to 74 active alumni. Our goal for the end of 2006 is to have 100 active members.

#### ***6. Communication***

- The CCSG AIG is currently underway with developing the CCSG AIG website, which we hope will be a resource for all members. Stephen Cuppett (2003 alum) and Webmasters, Inc. are currently developing a concept and structure for the site. It will include the vision, mission and goals of the AIG, member updates, copies of newsletters, contact information, pictures, a calendar of significant dates and events for Penn State alumni, and real time message boards and online meetings. The target date of completion for the site is April 2006.
- Tim Daniels (AIG Board President) sends out monthly email bulletins to the entire AIG membership (via a listserv) updating members on upcoming events of the AIG and CCSG Council, as well as other news that is pertinent to the organization.



- The AIG has also developed a semi-annual newsletter that is sent electronically to members, keeping them abreast of the group's progress and plans. Chris Zegar (AIG Board Vice President) and Carlos Rodriguez (AIG Board Member-At-Large) have taken the responsibility of completing these newsletters. The next newsletter is slated to be distributed in May 2006.

***7. Participation in National Service Week***

- The CCSG AIG plans on getting involved with this endeavor in 2006.

***8. Participation in the Alumni Association Awards Program***

- The CCSG AIG plans on getting involved with this endeavor in 2006.

***9. Participation in Alumni Association Sponsored Training Programs***

- The CCSG AIG plans on taking advantage of this opportunity in 2006.

***10. Participation in Homecoming Parade***

- The CCSG AIG plans on expanding our role in the Homecoming festivities during 2006.

**Organizational Restructuring and Improvement**

The CCSG AIG Board has also worked continuously to improve the infrastructure of the organization to improve sustainability and maximize strengths. Tim Daniels (AIG Board President) has instituted a number of viable and efficiency-minded changes to the constitution and bylaws that he and Richel Perretti originally created, which has produced a better result to guide the group.

The AIG has also adopted a new logo (as seen in the header of each page of this report), which we look forward to prominently displaying on our website and banner, as well as on all communications. The logo represents the many sentimental themes of CCSG. The keystone represents the roots of Pennsylvania, with 19 rays (each representing one of Penn State's Commonwealth locations) converging in the center to form the organization. Rachel Schoenberg (2003 alum) created the design.



## **Conclusion**

While the board is excited by the tremendous results achieved in a relatively short period of time, we have ambitious plans to expand on our programs, increase our membership, reach out to current students, and reconnect alumni to CCSG and Penn State. We also look forward to participating in other areas, such as the Alumni Association awards program and training opportunities. We consider these important steps in garnering not only further recognition from the Alumni Association, but also being able to utilize those new opportunities to benefit our current and future members.

The CCSG AIG Board is confident that our communications, events and programs exceed the criteria for gaining full AIG status with the Alumni Association. It has been a wonderful experience for all of us over the course of this past year to see this group develop from a conceptual idea into a competent, sustainable and contributing member of the Alumni Association. We thank the Alumni Association staff for their help, guidance and continuing support with our group and we thank all members of the Alumni Council for their thoughtful consideration. We would be more than happy to answer any questions, concerns or comments should the Alumni Council or Alumni Association staff have them.

For the Glory of Old State...

With Commonwealth Pride...

### **The CCSG AIG Board of Directors**

*Timothy Daniels (Board President, 1997 alum)*  
*Christopher Zegar (Board Vice President, 2003 alum)*  
*Nichole DeSimone (Board Secretary, 2003 alum)*  
*Robert Hughes (Board Treasurer, 1995 alum)*  
*Michael Cooper (Board Parliamentarian, 2003 alum)*  
*Carlos Rodriguez (Board Member-At-Large, 2002 alum)*  
*Brian Marko (Board Member-At-Large, 2004 alum)*  
*Richel Perretti (Advisor, 1997 alum)*  
*Kathleen Streaker (Current CCSG President)*