

## Tips for alumni newsletters

University Marketing and Communications (UMC) offers many services to help you and most are available at no charge. They include:

- Photography
- Feature writing
- Copyediting
- Graphic design
- Coordination of design, printing, and delivery of your newsletters to the mailroom
- Cost estimating, quantity control, and vendor arrangements

### How to get started:

- Plan several months ahead. Determine a target mailing date. Do you want your newsletter to reach alumni shortly before Telefund calls for your college begin? Contact the Development Office at 438-8184 to find out your Telefund date.
- Determine your quantity by calling Advancement Services at 438-2018 to find out how many alumni are on the mailing list.
- Contact Mary Cowdery, 438-8719, to initiate your project.
- Plan on six weeks to two months production time between turning in the newsletter copy to UMC and mailing of the finished newsletter. It could take an additional two weeks for newsletters to arrive in mailboxes.

### How to figure out what to include:

- Your audience – alumni – is most interested in what other alumni are doing, changes in their college or department, new programs and degrees, their favorite professors, favorite student organizations, outstanding achievements of current students, and ways in which they can contribute to or get involved in their college or department.
- Alumni like to read things that make them proud to be associated with the college or department.
- We recommend using a cover feature story about a successful alumnus, a new program or aspect of the college or department, or an outstanding faculty member. UMC staff will help you develop the idea and write the story for you. Contact Kate Arthur at 438-8725. Please allow at least six weeks for a story to be written.
- Photos engage readers. To schedule photos, call Amaris Pettie at 438-8404, and please allow as much advance time as possible. Because we have only one University photographer, it often is best to supply your own photos.

## How to gather copy and turn it into UMC:

- Assign stories to those in your college or department, with a firm due date for copy.
- Keep a list of stories and photos as you assign or gather them. UMC has a newsletter worksheet that may help.
- Build your newsletter copy in a single Microsoft Word file, using regular paragraph format. Please don't use caps, columns, boxes, shading, or any other special formatting because it will have to be removed in the editing process.
- As you create your Microsoft Word file, please don't put two spaces after sentences or spaces after the periods at the ends of paragraphs.
- Collect your photos. If they're available electronically, they can be e-mailed to Mary Cowdery or provided on disk.
- Indicate on your newsletter copy where you would like stories to appear or how you would like them to be treated. For example, you could make a note above a story that you would like it to appear on page one, and you could make a note that you would like the department chairperson's letter to go on page three with a head shot of the chairperson. You will have an opportunity to discuss these preferences with the graphic designer when you turn in your copy.
- Write headlines at the tops of your stories.
- When you have the following, call Mary Cowdery, 438-8719, and she'll set up a meeting with you to review your copy with the graphic designer.

## What you'll need:

- **All your copy in a single Microsoft Word file**
- A printout of your newsletter copy
- Your photos – both hard copies and electronic
- A worksheet listing all your stories and photos
- Before going to your meeting with the graphic designer please e-mail the newsletter copy file plus electronic photos to Mary Cowdery at [mccowder@ilstu.edu](mailto:mccowder@ilstu.edu).

## After you have turned in your copy:

- Obtain an MS number from the Illinois State University Mail Service Web site. Give your MS number to Advancement Services, 438-2018, which will allow them to create your mailing list and deliver it to Mail Service.
- You will receive proofs of your newsletter from UMC – review and return them as quickly as possible to keep your newsletter on schedule.
- UMC will give you a printing request form. Fill out and sign it with your account number, quantity, delivery instructions, Mail Service number (MS#), and fiscal agent's signature.
- Enjoy your completed newsletter and all the positive feedback you will receive! UMC staff will be happy to answer questions or discuss concerns at any point in the newsletter production process. Please call Mary Cowdery at 438-8719.