



STARTING A VMI ALUMNI CHAPTER

As you know, there are a number of alumni chapters across the U.S. and within different countries. Here at the Alumni Association, we are constantly looking for ways to energize our alumni in different places and establishing an alumni chapter can help organize those efforts in your area. Many people may ask about the size requirement of a chapter, but the important aspect to the Alumni Association is alumni engagement. We have chapters that range from a handful of alumni to hundreds of alumni. Our goal is not to be big but rather to be active.

TO BEGIN

First, we will want to find alumni in your area. The Alumni Association can run a search through our database to find alumni in your area. We can provide information for these individuals so that you can find out if the interest for a chapter is there.

INTEREST

Now that there is interest, let's get it started. Determine a location and a time for a gathering (breakfast, brunch, lunch, dinner, happy hour). We can get the word out via an email blast and/or a snail mailer. Our goal is to make the process of event planning as easy as possible on your end. Make it a simple pay-as-you-go event where there is not any kind of fee to attend. At this point, you only want to promote attendance; it is not about raising funds.

CHAPTER ACTIVITY

Many of our chapters are very active. Some chapters are not as active. There are different events that bring VMI alumni together throughout the year. Many chapters have rat send-offs, summer family picnics, Founders Day events, holiday gatherings, information session events, New Market Day events, Old Corps gatherings, young alumni gatherings, etc. In addition to these kinds of gatherings, the Alumni Association also assists chapters in organizing events around other VMI related happenings in chapter areas (networking opportunities, sporting events, awards banquets, club sports, band events, etc.)

PLANNING EVENTS

Communicate the desire to have an event with the Alumni Association. Let us know when and where you would like to have the event. If you want any kind of online RSVP or registration to be set up, we can do that. We can develop marketing and communicate the information about your event on social media, through email and sometimes (dependent upon the scale of the event and size of the audience) by snail mail. If there is a cost associated with the event, we can set up online payment through the registration process. We are more than happy to help with these items.

SUSTAINMENT

Once the chapter is established, the Alumni Association wants it to stay active in the years to come in order to fully support the alumni who move to the area, so it will also be important to think about a leadership succession plan. Attached, you will find the VMI Chapter President Handbook, which should address a number of items in regards to operations of a successful chapter. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to go over anything in more detail.

Again, thank you for your willingness to get an official chapter started.