

The University of Miami

Student now
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FOR LIFE

The Student Alumni Ambassadors

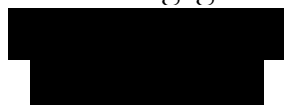
<http://www6.miami.edu/alumni/students/ambassadors.htm>

<https://vimeo.com/umannualgiving/theumsaa>

Casey E. Rea
President



Kate Lake
Co-Advisor
Senior Director,
Alumni Engagement



Taylor E. Stayton
Co-Advisor
Assistant Director,
Annual Giving



The Mission and The Purpose

The Student Alumni Ambassadors (SAA) have been promoting philanthropic values to students and others at the University of Miami since 1992. The mission of the SAA is to support the student body by establishing and enhancing a mutually beneficial and enduring relationship between the University of Miami, its alumni, current, and future students. Our purpose has several key functions including:

- Serve as an active liaison between the student body and University of Miami Alumni
- Sponsor a wide variety of educational and philanthropic programs to increase student awareness
- Foster a spirit of loyalty, involvement, annual giving, and a life-long commitment to UM amongst students
- Solicit students and give them an opportunity to give back to the next generation of 'Canes

Structure & Management

As of February 25th, 2015, there are 32 active Student Alumni Ambassador members. To allow students the opportunity for service in leadership roles, there are seven executive board positions which include one president, two vice presidents, one secretary, one treasurer, one public relations chair, and one recruitment chair. While these seven students manage the whole organization in various capacities, all decisions regarding programming, marketing, volunteerism, or new initiatives for the group are discussed openly at bi-weekly all member meetings. Diversity is valued at UM, and we seek to include as many points of view as possible so that all members can equally contribute to the success of the organization.

We have two co-advisors, the Senior Director of Alumni Engagement and the Assistant Director of Annual Giving. Ultimately though, we support the entire University of Miami Alumni Association, and work with staff across the university when requested. The SAA is a departmental organization, and does not receive funding from the UM Department of Student Activities and Student Organizations, SAFAC, Student Government, or the Committee on Student Organizations. Each year, our co-advisors use whatever they can spare from their departmental Alumni Relations & Annual Giving budgets to fund SAA costs, which amount to roughly \$3,105 for non-event related costs (*see attachment A*). This amount changes on an annual basis, and is never guaranteed.

Motivation

Many students fail to realize that the scholarship dollars offered to them through the University of Miami are the result of annual donations, or endowment interest. They also fail to realize that student tuition only covers 80% of the per annum cost of education at UM, and that the remaining 'tuition gap' is filled by donations from generous alumni, parents, students, and friends. After building awareness, first of the necessity for fundraising in general and then the immediate needs of UM students, the SAA solicits current students for donations and empowers them to leave a lasting, living legacy at UM. Beyond being able to offer scholarships to students who need financial assistance, the SAA hopes to instill a culture of philanthropy, generosity, and purpose among the student body. As we like to say, "Every gift...every donor...makes a difference".

Core Awareness Building & Philanthropy-Centric Efforts

Senior Class Gift Scholarship Fund

Established in March of 1992, the Senior Class Gift Scholarship has remained a primary, annual focus of the SAA's student philanthropic efforts. Each and every year, rising seniors fail to re-enroll at UM because of financial difficulty - the Senior Class Gift Scholarship seeks to help as many of those students as possible by raising funds directly for these need-based scholarships. When those first students approached the Office of Annual Giving to create the program, their goal was simple: Scholarships for students, by students. Our founders understood that leaving a truly meaningful legacy to UM could be more than buying an engraved brick or a bench. Indeed, the most significant acts are the kind that touch someone's life, and show camaraderie to students.

Philanthropy Awareness Day

In addition to fundraising directly for scholarships or other urgent, unrestricted UM needs, the SAA hosts Philanthropy Awareness Day (PAD) in the fall semester. Created in 2009, PAD serves to acknowledge alumni donors and other friends of the university who've made donations and paved the way for current students. Over the course of the day, we invite our peers to sign our giant "Thank U" board, which is placed at the center of campus and then moves to our Newman Alumni Center. While students are signing either the board or thank you cards to donors, the SAA is on hand to explain the difference between tuition costs versus the full cost of the UM experience, and the impact that regular giving plays in students' lives. A subconscious education also takes place among the student body, as they learn about stewardship, the courtesies extended to UM donors, and how the UM community celebrates philanthropy.

First Annual Charter Day

This semester, the SAA will be partnering with other SAFAC student organizations to celebrate the University of Miami's ninetieth anniversary of its chartering. A philanthropy and tradition scavenger hunt will be created, and will send students around campus to various locations to learn about the impact of donations. Other events include a 'Throwback Thursday' edition of Patio Jams featuring an alumni band, and an all-out birthday party on the Green, where the SAA will be marketing the tradition of the Senior Class Gift Scholarship program, and where students can make a gift in tribute of our outgoing university President, Donna Shalala, honorary alumna '02.

Impact

The Measurable

Since our inception in 1992, the Student Alumni ambassadors have raised more than \$188,000 which has been used exclusively for need-based scholarships for rising seniors. Per records from the UM Office of Financial Aid, 65 scholarships have been awarded since 2005. With an average of 6 scholarships awarded per year through the Senior Class Gift Scholarship program, the SAA has helped to raise more than \$156,000 in just the last decade. Since 2005, the number of student donors who have given to the Senior Class Gift Scholarship has grown nearly 73%, from 669 students to 1,010 in 2014.

Further, we can measure our success by the growth of our program. As our message spreads across campus, more students are stepping forward to assist in our efforts. The number of Student Alumni Ambassadors has grown significantly this year alone, as we gained 17 new members just last semester, who are primarily sophomores and juniors.

The Immeasurable

Transforming the culture of philanthropy at the University of Miami is a metric that we'd be hard pressed to measure in terms of numbers and figures. However, we know that the efforts of the Student Alumni Ambassadors today are going to directly affect our alumni & student populations tomorrow. When we bring about meaningful awareness to students of how much philanthropy really does impact campus life, and how grateful we are for that support, we create a ripple effect of generosity and goodwill. By intentionally changing the relationship between a student and their Alma Mater, we create unofficial ambassadors who champion the next generation of 'Canes, just like the 'Canes before them.

Aspirations for Future Success with Help from Generous U

We have accomplished a great deal in 23 years with limited funding. With additional funding from the Sillerman Center, the SAA would be capable of accomplishing two of our foremost goals: create more scholarships & educate the masses.

We have an internal goal of being able to award at least one more scholarship to a deserving student than last year, meaning a total of 8 awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000. At least 25% of the grant money from the Sillerman Center would be donated directly to the Senior Class Gift Scholarship Fund. After all, our primary mission is to create scholarships for other 'Canes!

The remainder of the award would be used to enhance our marketing and recruitment efforts. The Student Alumni Ambassadors would work with a video production company to produce several short videos that we would use in our emails to the student body, or could be shown at Orientation. One video concept we have of many is to record the exact moment that a senior scholarship recipient visits the Office of Financial Aid and learns about the scholarship money. The emotion and gratitude that the students we assist feel during those moments will serve as an inspiration to both students and alumni to continue to donate. Additionally, the donors from the last graduating class deserve to see and hear exactly how much their support means. This would be an amazing stewardship effort, and would create even more repeat donors.

Results from enhanced marketing & recruitment efforts would be measured annually, in terms of the growth of donors, dollars, scholarships awarded, and new ambassadors.

We would reserve \$500 for administrative supplies such as banners, paint, markers and pens for our thank you notes or board, and other expenses we incur out of pocket throughout the year.

It's All About the U – Generous U!

Culture change is elusive. Its measurement requires patience, persistence, and a dedication to indoctrinating behavior or thought change among a group of people.

The Student Alumni Ambassadors are committed to telling the stories of the people's whose lives we touch through the Senior Class Gift Scholarship. By focusing on building relationships between students, donors, alumni, and the lives who have been changed by our shared mission, we are allowing the UM community to see firsthand the value and benefit of philanthropy. Additional funding would allow our highly motivated group to achieve a greater level of engagement to reach these goals.

Thank you for your consideration of our request for the award from the Sillerman Center at Brandeis University.

Attachment A

Fiscal Year 2015 Costs		
<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Meeting Subsistence	1 Dinner per semester + holiday party + water & snacks	\$ 800.00
Polo Shirts	Allows for recognition of SAA as ambassadors to alumni & students	\$ 800.00
Name Tags	Allows for recognition of SAA as ambassadors to alumni & students	\$ 300.00
CASE Dues	Access to CASE Briefcase & other sample materials	\$ 150.00
Supplies for Tabling & Marketing	Banners, paint for banners, markers & pens for thank you board and card, printing costs for tabling	\$ 280.00
Lawn Signs for Philanthropy Scavenger Hunt	20 signs that raise awareness of philanthropy on campus	\$ 475.00
Thank U Board	DONATED from UM Advancement Office of Stewardship, Development Communications and Events	\$ -
T-Shirts & Thank You Cards	DONATED from University of Miami Alumni Association Board of Directors	\$ -
Student Organization Prizes	DONATED - Buffalo Wild Wings, SAMSUNG, UM Book Store, Chartwells	\$ -
Generous U	DONATED Editing services from alumnus Andrew Schear '12 of 5801 Productions	\$ -
Generous U	Camera rental & payment to 5801 Productions intern Jawaad Khan '15 & team for on-site assistance	\$ 300.00
	TOTAL	\$ 3,105.00