Two regional association grant sources provide financial support towards efforts to increase participation through innovation. This edition of the Regional Roar gives an overview of the grants, and highlights several recipients and the success of their efforts.

Every year, the Alumni Council Committee on Regional Associations (CORA) offers a number of grants to Princeton regional associations seeking to achieve the next level of success. “Take your Association to the Next Level” grants contribute up to $500 for activities and initiatives that support an association’s long-term strength and sustainability. The deadline for this year’s applications is January 1, 2014. To apply, go to: http://alumni.princeton.edu/volunteer/committees/cora/CORA_Grant_Guidelines.pdf

The Association of Princeton Graduate Alumni (APGA) offers Princeton regional associations seeking to further engage graduate alumni the opportunity to apply for a limited number of grants. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. For more information, go to: http://alumni.princeton.edu/volunteer/committees/cora/APGARegionalGrantGuidelines.pdf.

The Princeton Club of Western Washington - Seattle/Eastside Princeton Entrepreneurs

The Princeton Club of Western Washington’s vibrant alumni community includes a recently-formed subcommittee called Seattle/Eastside Princeton Entrepreneurs. SEPE brings together alumni entrepreneurs in the region and those interested in entrepreneurship for panels, networking and events. PCWW President Yan Zhong ’07 explains, “venturing out on your own can be tough, so we wanted to provide a forum where Princetonians could discuss their shared interests.”

PCWW received a Next Level grant to support social media marketing techniques highlighting SEPE. Part of the grant funded Facebook ads promoting SEPE’s kickoff event, and business cards with radio-frequency identifications that permitted event attendees to quickly like or join PCWW’s Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Encouraging alumni to like or join the club’s pages creates a following of alumni on those sites who will automatically hear about future SEPE events and can easily share event details with others.

For associations trying to increase their social media marketing, a Facebook page can be a quick first step. Zhong suggests encouraging members to “like” the page. “Event info will automatically show up in their newsfeeds (for free),” she says.

As a growing club with a recently reinvigorated membership, the Next Level Grant provided an important opportunity for PCWW. Zhong explains, “We wanted to generate interest and excitement in the Princeton community again. Therefore, we wanted to expand the diversity of our offerings to members, and we wanted to reach a more diverse audience.”

The Princeton Club of Western Washington - Seattle/Eastside Princeton Entrepreneurs (Continued)

Join CORA’s discussion group for regional officers and share information and best practices.

Upcoming CORA Teleconference Call

January 2014
“Web Applications to Help You Communicate with Your Regional Association”

Hosted by Linda Haitani ’83 & Belinda Schubert ’03
Carolina Triangle Princeton Club

The Carolina Triangle Princeton Club received both a Next Level grant, and an APGA grant. CTPC President David Myers ’88 explains that the club’s efforts not only in increased participation significantly, but also brought in new volunteers for the club.

The CTPC applied for a Next Level grant in order to increase engagement of young alumni. Myers says the grant made it financially possible to offer reduced-price tickets to recent graduates.

“Pricing for events does matter,” Myers points out. “Reduced price admission to the Annual Dinner had a clear impact at that event, and achieving that engagement leads to attendance at other events.”

The APGA grant made it possible for the CTPC to plan an event focused specifically at graduate alumni. Myers said the event, held at a local art museum, was a big hit. According to Myers, “a strong focus on graduate alumni will lead to results, and the APGA grant is a helpful tool.”

Karen Rolston ’09, President of the Princeton Club of Western New York, noticed that e-mail communications were not reaching all of the alumni in her region, which includes the city of Buffalo, NY. “Our communication has been primarily through email; however, about 25% of our alumni base does not list an email address on TigerNet and some addresses that are listed are incorrect.”

In order to increase engagement, the PCWNY used its Next Level grant to send postcards to alumni by regular mail and to purchase Princeton-related items that were raffled off at one of their gatherings. They also intend to hold a phone-a-thon to call alumni about their next event.

Rolston says the postcards were helpful at increasing participation: “The postcards did reach more alums whose emails we then collected at the event. I expect the phone-a-thon to be even more successful. The raffle also attracted more attendees, including some that were invited from neighboring associations (Rochester and Toronto), and raised money for our association.”

Asked to give advice for other associations applying for a grant, Rolston, who has volunteered in several regions, says context is important. “The more tailored an initiative is to your area, the more effective it seems to be.”

Graduate alumni attendees at the Carolina Triangle Princeton Club event made possible by the APGA Regional Grant.

Apply for a “Take Your Association to the Next Level” grant by January 1, 2014.

Carolina Triangle Princeton Club

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Princeton Club of Western New York

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Committee on Regional Associations

Andrew D. Hoffman ’89, Chair, PA of New England
Richard Holland ’96, Vice Chair, PC of Georgia
Scott Alexander ’71, PC of Vero Beach
Donna Armentano *86, PA of New England
Linda Haitani ’83, PAA of Western Washington
Jessica Nickel ’98, PC of Washington, DC
Ryan Ruskin ’90, PC of Chicago
Belinda Schubert ’03, PAA of Canada, Toronto Chapter
Alexander P.G. Sittenfeld ’07, Ohio Valley Princeton Association
Gary Pai ’99, PA of New York City (CORA Resource)

University Staff Liaisons
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Jennifer Caputo
Kristin Cass