

Ideas from 2015-2016 District Meeting Discussions

- *Have a club tailgate in College Station at one of the home games
- *Smaller clubs might consider finding a larger club to go in with on ordering items for goody bags to get a better price for volume ordering
- *Use pillow cases for bags for goody bags – kids could appreciate a new pillow case
- *Sew up the bottom of tank tops or t-shirts to turn into bags for goody bags
- *Take photos of cool goody bags that you club “produces” – someday there might be a place on the Federation website to showcase those ideas
- *Go on a club field trip to visit sites in your local area as a way to socialize with other moms in your area; schedule a trip for your moms that goes to an exciting place outside of your area
- *For one of your monthly programs, bring in a Q & A panel from the University with either several students representing different organizations or with several administrators/department representatives (such as Transportation, Residence Life, Police Department, Dining) – much in the same way the January 2016 Federation meeting had a student panel
- *Have a session for mothers of Corps students to meet monthly 30 minutes prior to your regular club meeting so that they can share questions and concerns – use a “veteran” Corps mom to facilitate it
- *In January when students are likely to be at home host a family dinner or a student appreciation dinner
- *Many clubs met at a local art studio and did the “Painting with a Twist” and some called it “Painting with a Whoop!” Or “Paint and Sip” (some clubs actually painted Aggie themed paintings such as the Aggie Barn while others just painted anything that the studio suggested – other similar versions of this would include the “Clay Casa” type places where you paint a ceramic piece – these are great ways to add a social dimension to your club calendar to give moms some comradery
- *Hold an Aggie ornament exchange at your December meeting
- *One club (contact Austin for more info) has Fish Mom Mentors which is a group of Freshman moms who meet monthly about 30 minutes before the regular club meetings with a committee of 4 facilitators who are more “seasoned” moms; they cover topics such as “how to buy football tickets,” “how to tailgate,” “where to send your student for tutoring,” “how early to reserve a hotel room for Parents’ Weekend and Graduation,” and “how to go to the Rosenthal Meat Center to purchase fresh meat”
- *One club (contact Collin County for more info) does something they call Aggie Moms Connecting – they host different socials one time per month – bunco, wine tasting, Dallas by Chocolate Tour, Wine making and bottling, Stamping Up card class, book club, performances, happy hours, game watching, cookie exchange, museum tours, movie night, cooking class, Crazy gift exchange, pottery class, book signings, bowling, tours, and much more
- *Meet for a fast, casual dinner with the speaker before the meeting
- *One club (contact Austin for more info) has a monthly lunch social (on the 4th Tuesday of the month) where they meet to just eat and enjoy each other’s company – no business is transacted; this is in addition to their monthly business meetings (on the 2nd Tuesday of the month) which are held in the evening – the lunches attract some of the same moms, but also

brings out others who might not generally make the evening meetings – again, this is a great way to add a much-needed social element to your club activities; in the Austin club the Freshman moms organize the lunch dates which gives the Freshmen moms some responsibility in the club (and they plan the lunches when they meet as a group of Freshmen moms 30 minutes before each regular meeting as part of the Fish Moms Mentors program)

*For your late January or early February meeting have a Valentine's Day pretzel dip party – bring pretzels, melted dipping chocolate, and lots of sprinkles and things to be used for sprinkles (like crushed candies and cookies); dip the pretzels at the beginning of your meeting and let the chocolate harden while you meet (place the pretzels on waxed paper), then before you adjourn package the pretzels in plastic treat bags – encourage the moms to send the treat to their student (or enjoy the treats at home!!)

*One club (contact Austin for more info) purchased a JibJab subscription and sent those silly, but totally fun e-cards to the students in their area for their birthdays and for Christmas

*Be sure to consider awarding scholarships to not only in-coming freshmen, but also to upperclassmen (returning students)

*Set up a carpool to get moms to your meetings – this is especially good for freshman moms so that they do not arrive alone if they don't know many other moms – they arrive with their new friends that they met in the car; also good for clubs that pull moms from several surrounding towns – have a car come in from each of the towns bringing moms to the central location

*Start your meeting with a "Social Half Hour" 30 minutes prior to your business meeting – this is a great time for refreshments, socializing, exchanging mail and other business items between individual members outside of the main business meeting; then at the posted meeting start time you can actually get right with the program and business to be conducted and not lose time with the social-type of chatter

*One club (contact San Angelo for more info) has an Aggie Mom 101 at their first meeting of the year where they share the basics of Texas A&M and of being an Aggie Mom

*Host a chili cook-off in the summer for your Aggie families (maybe as part of your Howdy Send Off parties)

*Be sure to check the Federation Website often (www.aggie moms.org)

*Be sure to check out the Federation Facebook page "Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs"

*Some clubs use Mail Chimp as a way to send bulk emails to their members; it is free for non-profits

*Just so you know, the Federation of TAMU Mothers' Clubs is a constituent group of the Association of Former Students

*One club (contact Collin County for more info) has something they call "Aggie Angels" where they pair a seasoned mom with a new mom to act as a mentor throughout the mom's student's freshman year. All Angels and new moms meet for dinner every few months.

*When you are sending out emails to your membership, consider that many moms read their email strictly from their phones – some formats are better for mobile devices

*Consider producing more in-depth newsletters – some moms join our clubs for the information stream and like to get information from their local club – or at least show these moms the links to important departments on campus so that they can access the information themselves; help them subscribe to the various family newsletters put out by the University

*For a fundraiser hold a club garage sale – one club does this fairly often, is open for only 3 hours, and does not even put prices on their items – just asks for donations (might not work in all towns, but sounds pretty easy)

*One club creates a photo button for each mom when their student becomes a senior; the mom wears the button of their student to all functions during their student’s senior year; the club also publishes a biography of the senior students in their newsletter

*One club (contact Bastrop for more info) meets weekly to work on their Boutique items (they do the mosaic flower pots) – this is a great way to have social contact with other moms

*Host a tea for your new moms in the summer or fall – serve finger sandwiches and other fun food, have a theme, encourage the moms to dress up like the “Teas” of years gone by

*Consider including Aggie Dads at at least one of your yearly functions

*For ideas for speakers for your monthly meetings, go to the Federation website and go to “Resources” and then “Resources For Clubs” and then at the bottom of the listing is one called “List of Potential Speakers for Aggie Mom Club Meetings” – this is an excellent list of suggestions of people who are willing to drive to your meetings; one name that might not have made the list is Col. Jerry Smith in the Veteran Resource and Support Center he is an awesome speaker if you have many moms of students using veteran services

*Several clubs put refrigerator magnets on the back of a laminated card or pocket that they pass out to club members to keep their info front and center on the fridge; info on the cards or in the pocket includes meeting dates, times and locations; speakers or programs; key officer contact information; any other valuable information such as dues or goody bag deadlines or other fundraiser info (contact Friendswood, Brazos County, or Comal County for more info)

*Don’t forget to consider the Galveston campus Yell Leaders – sometimes they are easier to get to your meeting than the College Station campus Yell Leaders

*Much was learned during the 2015-2016 year regarding items and money given to students and how and when that needed to be reported. If you have any questions at all regarding this topic, please contact your District Liaison who will be able to direct you to someone who can answer your questions. General guidance is that just about everything given to a student must be reported to the Office of Student Financial Aid. Also, do not ever give a student cash; all monies must go through the Office of Student Financial Aid. And, finally, if your club gives a gift to one student, it must be made available to all students (such as paperweights given to graduating seniors or goody bags if they are given as opposed to purchased by a mom for her student). Again, direct all questions about this topic to your District Liaison.