Geneva High School Alumni Engagement

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Introduction

Geneva High School has a diverse, talented alumni base that should be celebrated. The Alumni Engagement project is the vision of Geneva City School District Social Worker Susan McGowan. Susan began this project with a well-received poster campaign at Geneva High School that highlighted Geneva High School faculty and staff who are Geneva High alums.

The purpose of the Geneva High School Alumni Engagement Project is the development of a database system that would allow the Geneva City School District to track past graduates. Having this information consolidated and easily accessible will allow the district to:

1) Celebrate alumni accomplishments
2) Illustrate to current students the range of possibilities available to them after they graduate

Current students at Geneva High School could benefit from learning about what Geneva High alums have gone on to do after graduation. Through building a relationship between alumni and students, students will be able to connect the work they are doing in high school to their future.

Alumni Database

My work on the Alumni Engagement Project focused mainly on developing the alumni database. I first set up a Gmail account ghsengagedalums@gmail.com in order to create a central place where alumni data could be stored and shared amongst the various parties involved with this project.

I started with some previously collected data on Geneva High alums which I organized and formatted so that it could be easily sorted by various criteria, such as class year or state. The data was organized into three spreadsheets: alumni with e-mail addresses, alumni with street addresses, and alumni with no contact information.

Outreach

In order to get the word out, I employed a variety of different means:

1) E-mailed information about the project to alumni who were listed on the Geneva City School District website. I asked them to forward the information to the other alumni with whom they were in contact with.
2) Wrote an article about the project for the Geneva City School District’s spring newsletter.
3) Created a Geneva High School Alumni LinkedIn group. This group provides an opportunity for alums to connect with one another. It can also be used as a platform to update group members about developments in the Alumni Engagement Project.

Survey

The second phase of the project was developing a survey for alums in order to attain more information about the best way to contact them, as well as about their post-high school education, current employment, and availability to participate in alumni projects.

In order to encourage alums to participate in the survey, I organized a small raffle. Susan was able to get a couple of Geneva hats and I reached out John Eades, the CEO of Vere Sandals and a Geneva High alum, and he generously donated a pair of Vere sandals for the raffle.

The GHS Alumni Survey

Dear Geneva High School Alumni,

CONNECTING: This survey is part of the Geneva High School Engagement project. The purpose of this project is to better understand alumni engagement and in order toconnve with Geneva High alums, the range of possibilities available to CURRENT STUDENTS: GHS ALUMNIS. Connect with fellow alumni on LinkedIn by searching the group: Geneva High School Alumni.

First Name *

Last Name *

Graduation Year *

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone Number

E-mail Address *

Relation to Geneva High School

College/University

Graduate School

Job *

Other Projects

If you would like to make your e-mail address available to other alumni in the GHS alumni database, please indicate:

Yes

No

Other

Will you be available to be interviewed or to share your skills with a current student?

Yes

No

Other

Would you be interested in running a small raffle as a way to encourage participation in alumni projects?

Yes

No

Other

Results

Out of the 257 alums who were received the survey by e-mail, 66 responded. The majority of respondents indicated that they would be willing to do an interview, while about half indicated that they would give a presentation or mentor a current student.

A number of the survey respondents are employed by well-known organizations such as the Department of Defense and the Buffalo Bills. Others have started their own businesses, such as Vere, or are employed locally by the Colleges.

Moving Forward

The next step for this project will be connecting Geneva High School alumni to students. Susan McGowan has the survey information and will be reviewing it with Geneva High School teachers to pinpoint alums to reach out to.

Beyond the interviews, presentations, and student mentoring, I have ideas for other projects that could be implemented:

a) Alumni panels:
   - Young Alums, Life after Geneva High School
   - Running a Business
b) Connect Geneva High School teachers with relevant alumni working in a field that correlates with class topics

Connecting the Alumni Engagement Project to the Geneva City School District website will be another important step. If information about the project can be found directly under the alumni section of the school district website, it will hopefully be more visible and accessible for Geneva High alums.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my community partner Susan McGowan and my faculty advisor Professor Freeman for working with me on this project. I would also like to thank GHS Alums Erica Cosney-Connor and Karen Ilacqua Reuscher who were both valuable sources of information. Finally, I would like to thank John Eades for donating a pair of Vere sandals.