



Yale SCHOOL OF FORESTRY & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

A Yale graduate school Alumni Association Overview

OVERVIEW

The Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies (F&ES) Alumni Association exists to connect our alumni with all parts of the School and Yale University—building bridges to faculty, students and staff—and to promote and support connections among alumni by class year, area of professional interest and geographic location.

ORGANIZATION

The F&ES Alumni Association *membership* includes every living graduate of the School. Supported by the F&ES Office of Development and Alumni Services, the work of the Association falls under the leadership of the *Alumni Association Board*—alumni volunteers who are elected annually by the alumni at large to serve three-year terms. These volunteers meet virtually and in person eight to ten times a year. The Board is governed by elected officers, President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

A decade ago, a few alumni leaders and a single-person alumni affairs staff undertook and completed a comprehensive strategic plan to serve as a common vision and to inspire broader alumni involvement. The alumni board was enlarged and diversified to create an array of new opportunities for alumni volunteer activities. A quinquennial reunion (see photo) was instituted for the first time in the school's history and it has quickly grown into far more than a reunion—it provides an array of programs and activities, including seminars featuring leading speakers addressing some of the most pressing environmental challenges of our era, and drawing alumni and students from throughout the university community. The F&ES alumni association reaches out to alumni from across the country and around the world, using new media to make it possible for a much broader and more diverse group of alumni to engage and stay involved.



The alumni board recently modified its constitution and bylaws to institute fixed board terms, term limits, and a standing nominating committee to involve as many alums as possible as board members and keep the board itself continually refreshed with new people, fresh ideas, and representation from younger classes, older classes, and current students. The alumni board proactively engages students as active alums even before they graduate, and gives them reason to stay involved. The board has significantly increased the percentage of alums supporting the School through annual giving.



YALE GLOBAL ALUMNI LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE

The F&ES alumni association has transformed itself from being a perfunctory body to being widely recognized as an important asset to the students, staff, and faculty, and one that continues to play a vital role in the ongoing life of the School. It is still on an upward trajectory towards greater service and new opportunities for alums and students—and through active outreach and involvement, greater service to alumni of Yale overall.

IMPACT

Consistent with one of the key goals in the strategic plan, the transformed F&ES alumni program has reached out and re-engaged alumni of all vintages, across the country and around the world, with programs and services that make them want to stay involved and remain a vital component in the ongoing life of the School. Alumni are now networking more closely with one another, with current students, and with prospective students, to become an asset to the School and to one another. This re-engagement has been reflected in greater alumni support for the School and its new dean, both financially through contributions to the School's annual fund, and through an increasing number and diversity of volunteer activities.

Closer integration of the Graduate & Professional Schools, including F&ES, is a key element of the current AYA strategic plan. The transformed F&ES alumni program has helped open F&ES to the entire university community and AYA through the educational programs developed in conjunction with its quinquennial reunions (see photo), and through involvement in the development of the core program for a recent AYA annual assembly. The F&ES alumni program has also raised the profile of AYA programs with F&ES alums, and has strongly encouraged their involvement with the local Yale Clubs and with volunteer activities such as the Yale Day of Service, Yale Service Corps, Bulldogs (domestic and international), and the Yale Career Network.



The F&ES Alumni Association's serves the needs of the alumni and supports the work and outreach of the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies itself. The following examples highlight some of the valuable contributions of the Association to the overall mission of the School:

- Developed an online network to generate summer internships from alumni for students
- Visited the School individually and as panelists to offer lectures and presentations to enrich student experience
- Mentored individual students and student interest groups
- Organized and hosted regional alumni events across the United States and around the globe
- Assumed leadership roles for the F&ES annual Reunion Weekend
- Served on the Association of Yale Alumni Board of Governors to create closer ties between F&ES and the greater Yale University community
- Honored exceptional contributions of alumni, faculty and administrators with Distinguished Alumni and Distinguished Service Awards
- Developed online and social networking opportunities to enhance communication among alumni and with the School
- Promoted alumni volunteer community service as leaders in such efforts as the Yale Day of Service