



Ripon Parents Network (RPN) Annual Spring Meeting

Meeting Highlights and Minutes from the In-Person and Virtual Hybrid Meeting

Saturday, February 19, 2022

Present

RPN Leadership: Miko Gill P'23 (RPN Co-Chair), Chris Smith P'23 (RPN Co-Chair), Shelly Boelter P'25 (RPN Social Media Ambassador), Stefanie Meeker P'24 (RPN Social Media Ambassador), Ann Wendt P'24 (RPN Social Media Ambassador)

RPN Attendees: Lisa Bayer P'24, Brian and Telisa Drake P'25, Tim and Nicole Geocaris P'24, Karyn Graham P'24 and Sue Cook P'24, Kristin Hauck P'25, Becky and David Hickman P'24, JJ Johnson P'25, Chad and Jill Liptow P'23, Ron and Karen Millard P'24, Tim and Lisa O'Halloran P'24, Jean Rigden P'19/P'22, Deanne and Curtis Schultz P'23, Beverley Sadha P'24, Jennifer Von Ruden P'25, Lavelle Gill P'23, Michelle Willits P'22, Dawn Zielinski P'25

College Administration/Staff: Dustin Tessmer (General Manager, SAGE Dining Services), Amy Gerretsen '04 (Director of Constituent Engagement), Shawn Karsten '09 (Vice President for Advancement and Marketing & Communications), Chris Ogle '80 (Vice President and Dean of Students), Kedren Hardee (Executive Chef, SAGE Dining Services), Jolene Schatzinger '07 (Associate Director of Engagement), Michele Wittler '76 (Associate Dean of Faculty and Registrar), Michael Zink (Catering Manager, SAGE Dining Services)

Welcome and Greetings (10:15 a.m.)

Attendees settled in and those who attended in-person enjoyed light refreshments provided by the Office of Constituent Engagement.

Called to Order and Introductions (10:25 a.m.)

- Jolene Schatzinger '07 opened the meeting with a brief welcome, followed by a welcome from the RPN Leadership Team: Co-Chairs: Miko Gill P'23 and Chris Smith P'23, Social Media Ambassadors: Shelly Boelter P'25, Stefanie Meeker P'24, and Ann Wendt P'24.
- All attendees who joined the meeting in person or virtually took turns introducing themselves.
- Meeting Schedule Overview and Explanation of RPN Purpose and Mission
 - Smith P'23 drew attention to the RPN Constitution and recited the RPN Mission Statement for the group.
 - The RPN Fall 2021 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as written.
 - Future opportunities to volunteer with the RPN were shared, along with an explanation of how families can engage with the College and other members.
 - Meeting materials were briefly reviewed (in a folder for those meeting in person or included in an email for those joining virtually).
 - The schedule for the day was reviewed and all were encouraged to ask questions to the presenters.

- Gill P'23 was re-introduced and led all presenter introductions.

Shawn Karsten '09, Vice President of Advancement and Marketing & Communications (10:45 a.m.)

Karsten '09 provided updates on the following:

- The search for Ripon's 14th President that is being led by Russell Reynolds - search committee is reviewing candidates and initial interviews will begin in late March
- A campaign feasibility study to understand the viability of future fundraising initiatives including infrastructure priorities and projects.
 - Farr Hall new construction and renovation - conversations with principal gift donors will begin by this summer with a goal of breaking ground in the summer of 2023
 - Residence hall upgrades - conversations with student leaders are actively stadium facility for the football and soccer fields (currently share facilities with the local school district)
- These updates have only yet been shared internally, and will soon be shared externally
- As a reminder, prioritization of student scholarships, faculty support, and the Ripon Fund, as a whole, are always fundraising priorities no matter what new initiative the College has
- Encouraged parents to be partners and advocates for the vision and mission of the College
-

Meeting attendees took a short break and participated in a “get-to-know-you” activity with fellow attendees.

Chris Ogle '80, Vice President and Dean of Students (11:15 a.m.)

Ogle '80 provided an overview of the current state of student affairs including:

- COVID-19
 - Discussed COVID-19 numbers throughout the year, the College's testing protocol, and why decisions were made for procedures and practices at the College.
 - Shared that the current masking practices were being reviewed by the College administration in consultation with local health officials.
 - Reminded parents that the campus does have a nurse practitioner on staff, and several current students are employed as EMTs through the City of Ripon.
 - Vaccination rates were addressed, as well as the COVID-19 dashboard.
- Student activities remain strong and there are many ways that students can get involved on campus. Involved students are often those who matriculate at a higher rate. Reminder to parents that appointments with mental health counselors are available on campus at no charge to students.
- Provided a facilities update as to the current challenges and opportunities for the College.

Michele Wittler '76, Associate Dean of Faculty and Registrar (11:30 a.m.)

- Ripon College Plus Semester(s) Program is designed to help students deal with the COVID-19 disruption to academics.
 - Tuition may be waived for students who extend their academic career and who qualify under the program's guidelines.
 - The College had ten students participate in the program in the fall and eight students participated this spring semester.

- Information was shared regarding recent tenure-track faculty hires at the College: Politics & Government, Business Management and Economics, and Exercise Science.
- Discussion of how mid-semester grade reports are handled for students receiving a D or F in a course, as well as how parents may have access to grades keeping in mind FERPA compliance

SAGE Dining Services Overview (11:45 a.m.)

Introduction of SAGE Dining Services' new general manager, Dustin Tessmer.

- Provided an overview of SAGE and where they plan to go in the future at Ripon, as well as options across campus and hours of food availability.
- Encouraged attendees to utilize the Touch of SAGE app and encouraged parents to have their students use this app too.
 - Features include the daily menu, allergen information, nutritional values, and accessibility.
 - Students are encouraged to advocate for their needs by using the Touch of SAGE app menus and filters first, and then by speaking with a member of the SAGE staff if preferences and needs are not being met.
- Reviewed meal plan information and shared that the number of meals a student has can be checked at the register when they swipe their card.
- Grab n' Go options were explained to members of the RPN.

SAGE Tour of Pickard Commons (Noon) SAGE personnel guided RPN members through each food station in the Main Dining Room.

Recognition of Outgoing RPN Members with Graduating Students (12:25 p.m.)

- RPN members who are parents/guardians of seniors who were present at the meeting and who will be ending their service to the RPN were acknowledged and thanked.
- Recognized and thanked the outgoing RPN Leadership Team: **Cheryl Bair P'22** (RPN Co-Chair), **Jean Rigden P'19/P'22** (RPN Co-Chair), and **Amy Fischer P'22** (RPN Social Media Ambassador) for their service.

Local Community Overview, Stefanie Meeker P'24 (12:30 p.m.)

- Attendees were asked to write down what they wish they would have known earlier about the Ripon community and what they wish they still knew; answers were collected to be answered on the RPN Facebook group
- Meeker P'24 provided a testimonial as to why the downtown is a great place to shop and visit with their students. Meeker P'24 is a business owner of a downtown boutique (Blue Sparrow) and she shared how she sees businesses welcoming students and their families.
- Ripon Community links:
 - Ripon Area Business Directory: ripon-wi.com/ripon/connect/find-a-business/
 - Historic Downtown Business Directory: riponmainst.com/riponmainst/
- A short informational session was provided about Ripon's local grocery store, Webster's Marketplace. Students can order food and other items online and have it delivered to campus for a minimal fee.

Meeting Wrap-Up (12:40 p.m.)

Reminder, please be active in the RPN Facebook group, and look for opportunities to volunteer at Summer Orientation (late June), Move In Day (August), and Family Weekend (October 7-9).

Adjournment and Invitation to Attend Parent Social (12:45 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jolene Schatzinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Jolene" on top and "Schatzinger" below it.

Jolene Schatzinger '07
Ripon Parents Network Executive Secretary
Associate Director of Engagement
Ripon College