



Ripon Parents Network (RPN) Annual Spring Meeting
Meeting Highlights and Minutes from the Hybrid Meeting Held Saturday, February 25, 2023

Present

RPN Attendees: Deirdre Elliot P '26, Judy Bukstein GP '24, Jenn Koetz P '26, Dan Koetz P '26, Stefanie Meeker P '24, Chris Meeker P '24, Dawn Zielinski P '25, Patti, John Johnson P '25, Kristin Hauck P '25.

College Administration/Staff: Victoria Folse (President), Dustin Tessmer (Manager, SAGE Dining Services), Amy Gerretsen '04 (Director of Constituent Engagement), Savannah Cousert '22 (Engagement and Communications Specialist), Shawn Karsten '09 (Vice President for Advancement, Marketing and Communications), Mary Hatlen (Director of the Center for Career and Professional Development), Chris Ogle '80 (Vice President and Dean of Students), Michele Wittler '76 (Associate Dean of Faculty and Registrar), Jill Cardinal (Assistant Director of Admission/Campus Event Coordinator).

Welcome and Introductions (10:05 a.m.)

Amy Gerretsen '04, Director of Constituent Engagement, opened the meeting and provided a formal welcome on behalf of the Office of Constituent Engagement, which serves parents, families, friends, and alumni of Ripon College. Gerretsen thanked families for attending. Staff and parents introduced themselves and their roles.

Mary Hatlen, Director of the Center for Career and Professional Development (10:10 a.m.)

- Hatlen introduced herself to the group as the Director of the Center for Career and Professional Development. She brings more than 20 years of experience in higher education with her to Ripon.
- Resources offered by the Center for Career and Professional Development include: resume and cover letter help, interview preparation, mock interviews, personalized career assessments to help explore career paths and/or majors, meeting spaces to connect with employers, job shadowing and internship exploration, and areas to study.
- Parents were encouraged to ask their students how they are engaging with the Career and Professional Development Center which is located in the lower level of the Commons. There are

often employer spotlights held in the Center, as well as numerous other events for students.

- Hatlen teaches a course called Interdisciplinary Studies 130: Self Identity and World of Work. The course offers a deep dive on self and a career path, and is offered on Monday evenings in the fall semester.
- Rally's Career Closet offers professional attire free to students for interviews was highlighted and shown on a tour of the Career Center.

Dr. Victoria N. Folsie, Ripon College President (10:50 a.m.)

- President Folsie provided updates regarding the new infrastructure projects, breaking down budgets for each project:
 - ◆ Science Center: \$24.5 M
 - Opens up new major/minor area: Engineering
 - ◆ Campus Stadium: \$8.5 M
 - Parking is a large city discussion and Folsie and others are continuing to communicate and discuss, as well as noise and light that might be coming from the area
 - ◆ Residence Halls Living Spaces: \$2 M
- Among Ripon College students, Exercise Science is the most popular major. The College has developed an opportunity for students to continue their education by offering a Masters Program in Exercise Science. One year finish time for enrolled students, one plus for part-time learners.
- The Strategic Planning Process is going well. There have been many meetings, and there was even a retreat which students were allowed to attend. Classes were canceled that day to encourage participation and there was a pretty good turnout. The retreat gave everyone a chance to speak on what they felt was important, or what wasn't working well.
- 2026 marks the 175th anniversary of Ripon College
- Study Abroad opportunities TBA, there will be a proposal to EPC (Educational Policy Committee) by faculty for a Barcelona, Spain experience in Spring 2024. Plans for international internships are being discussed now.
- Marian Partnership Update
 - ◆ Open registration for 2022-23 occurred, but there wasn't robust enrollment, as expected. There will be a reevaluation in summer 2023.
 - ◆ There are shared services opportunities, and there is still some exploration with that portion of the potential partnership.
 - ◆ Transportation: Students have been allowed to use College Cars to Marian, but most of the courses are/have been online
 - ◆ Registration for fall 2023 courses will open up after Spring Break.

Chris Ogle '80, Vice President and Dean of Students (11:20 a.m.)

- Ogle '80 talked about some of the big concerns among students as per the campus counselors:
 - ◆ Eating, cutting behaviors, anxiety/grief, time management, money, incarceration, single parents, connections, social experiences, depression, suicide ideation, TikTok diagnosis (ADHD, Depression, OCD)
 - ◆ A higher percentage of student athletes are going into counseling because coaches are referring students
- Students can get an appointment within five days, with crisis referral moved to first priority
- There is a security system/cameras on campus with an outside provider, Securitas. There are new cameras outside, showing doors, and parking. Currently, there are two residence halls with cameras and all pathways are visible. Every residence hall will eventually have cameras. Securitas provides:
 - ◆ Two Officers on call, 24/365
 - ◆ Responds to callers - escorts available (Has not been utilized yet to date)
- There is a new Director of Multicultural Affairs, Yazmin Doroteo, and there is a plan to add a Multicultural Commencement Ceremony to the weekend's traditional events.
- Student wages are being re-evaluated to be higher and more competitive with Ripon community jobs.
- Weekend activities are happening constantly. The events are sent out on Mondays from Student Activities, posted on the large chalkboard by the student mailboxes, and shared with flyers posted all around campus. Past/Upcoming events include: Yule Ball, RAD, Extrava-game-za, Concerts, Art, Theatre, Political Talks, and Greek Life.

Dustin Tessmer and Kedren Hardee, SAGE (11:40 a.m.)

- The past three-six months there has been a lot of communication between SAGE and the students. Tessmer encouraged feedback from students because it can be given anytime. It is challenging to eat the same three times a day, seven days a week, so feedback will allow for more options for students from SAGE.
- There has been Student Senate feedback, as well as student surveys. SAGE reaches out through email, as well as socials (Instagram Polls), and the Touch of SAGE app.
- The Touch of SAGE app is accessible by all students and features filters to search for food items that fit certain food preferences and allergies.
 - ◆ 75 (5+) ratings on meals received through App
 - ◆ Students can rate and comment on items and adjustments can be made in real time (i.e., the noodles are cold).
 - ◆ Performance Spotlight at the Commons, Willmore, and adding to the Spot for pre

and post athletic performance meals.

◆ Students need to share feedback!

- Food committee started last month and students get to test menus/food (FREE!!) and offer their opinions. Not many signed up, but it is becoming more popular through student word of mouth
- Food events have included: Mardi Gras, Fondue Fest, Around the World, Cornapalooza, and Pork-pocalypse, both local.
- Double Swipe Night returned to Friday Night Dinner and turnout has been around 100 students each night.
- Willmore options have been very popular, and there is now fresh food daily to grab and go.
- Inflation has been 12%-18% over the last 12 months and there has been an impact on student meals. SAGE is aware and doing their best to provide for student dining options.
- SAGE dining is now open to the public for meals.

Meeting Wrap-Up (11:55 a.m.)

Final acknowledgements of appreciation were shared for the meeting presenters and all parents who were able to attend.

Reminders:

- All members are invited to stay active on the RPN Facebook group sharing positive content and support of prospective and current parents: www.facebook.com/groups/RiponParentsNetwork.
- Contact the Office of Constituent Engagement with any questions and/or to express interest in getting more involved with RPN volunteer opportunities at alumni@ripon.edu or 920.748.8126.

Adjournment (12:00 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,



Savanah Cousert '22

Engagement and Communications Specialist