



Event Tips for Regional Programming

Effective club programming is essential to the success of every regional alumni group. Programs and events work best when they are well timed, and planned and communicated far in advance. Programs may target a specific audience, but should remain inclusive of most alumni interests. Each regional group's leadership team is responsible for planning and managing the annual calendar. Many different volunteers can and should work together on events and activities.

A successful regional group is the result of long-term programming. The following are a few tips to make your annual calendar useful and easy to follow:

- **Timeline** – The Leadership Team should plan, publish, and communicate a calendar of events early. If possible, 3-6 month calendars are helpful for promotion purposes.
- **Variety** – In order to attract the most alumni possible, plan a diversified calendar of events that will be appealing to a variety of interests, ages, and budgets. Include social, professional, educational, and family events in your annual plan.
- **Annual or Traditional Event** – Consider starting a new tradition by establishing an annual event such as a business breakfast, summer BBQ, or other activity.
- **Check Event Dates** – Check local, Fuqua, Duke and religious calendars for conflicts.
- **Plan realistically** – It is better to have one successful event on which you can build than it is to have six poorly attended events. Scheduling events by season makes this easier.

SAMPLE ANNUAL CALENDAR

- **Summer (June/July):** Consider hosting a summer social to welcome interns and recent graduates to your city. This is a great way to expose them to the regional alumni group and provides a fun way for students and alumni to connect.
- **Fall (Sept/Oct/Nov):** Plan a content driven event (Table for Six, Business Breakfast, panel/speaker), family event, or host a "Week-in-Cities Mixer" for traveling students
- **Winter (Dec/Jan):** Host a winter social gathering
- **Early Spring:** Fuqua Around the World (March)

EVENT IDEAS

Once the timing of events has been determined, the nature of each event should be defined. The following list represents a variety of events and activities that have proven successful in the past. Each description covers suggestions for event management. Please [follow this link](#) for a more comprehensive list of event pocket guides.

Business Breakfast or Table for Six

These are increasingly popular formats, offering the opportunity for alumni to connect in a more intimate and educational environment. Events planned for breakfast help limit conflicts that people might have with work and family. Consider inviting a prominent local alumnus, an industry expert, or a faculty member to speak. Table for Six events allow alumni to connect with an alumnus of his or her choice during a seated dinner. Events of this structure typically last about 2 hours. Sample event agenda:

- 30 minutes – Networking and Welcome
- 1 hour – Presentation/Interactive Programming
- 30 minutes – Q&A and Networking

Barbecues, Picnics, Sporting Events

Family-oriented events are popular among alumni of all ages and offer a great way to start a local tradition. Most central locations have fields available for low or no cost. Many major or minor league sports teams have great deals for large groups.

Happy Hours

These events are typically informal and low cost, but can be as formal as a planned harbor cruise or other outdoor venue. In areas with a high concentration of young alumni, happy hours and other social events are popular.

Partnering with Duke Events

Joining forces with your local Duke Regional Club is the most effective method of staying connected to Duke University. More information and events can be found on the [Duke Alumni Affairs website](#). Follow the link to the events pages where you will find a comprehensive list of regional groups throughout the world.

Popular Duke Events:

- Hoops/Game Watches
- Duke Alums Engage (community service)
- Women's Forum
- Send-Off Parties (summer)
- Welcome Parties (fall)

HELPFUL HINTS FOR EVENT PLANNING

- Advance advertising is critical to event success. To increase attendance, plan early to allow multiple avenues of promotion (emails from alumni volunteers and/or from Fuqua, peer-to-peer invitations, and social media)
- Do not be afraid to charge for events – this minimizes attrition
- Piggyback off popular events and venues in your geographic area
- Following your event, request feedback from attendees to help with future programming. Also, consider sharing photos and post-event highlights with the entire regional list and Fuqua to let encourage attendance in the future.