

SUMMARY

USAHS Alumni Association Advisory Board Meeting

Saturday, March 1, 2025
Noon-3:00 PM Eastern Time

Attending: Morgan Beard, Jonathan Bray, Arkena Dailey, Katie Daniels, Stephen Elam (President), Paige Funderburk, Kristin Haas, Jackie Hardison, Nicolas Harrington, Lee Ann Hoffman, Katey Howland, Rebekah Jarrar, Bob Kentner, Tomika Lowe-Lopez, Sara Story, Linda Wise, Steve Weyandt, Polly Crabtree (Staff)

Absent: Brittany Andrade, Tiffany Hilton, Katie Hohman, Cristine Johnson, Kayla Lambert, Kellan Quigley, Shaun Reghabi

Guests: Sharon Rosenberg, FOTA Chair of Government Affairs Committee
Rosemary Whaling, Sr. Director, Brand and Content, USAHS

I. Welcome and Introductions

Stephen Elam, President, called the meeting to order at 12:01 PM ET.

New board members Jonathan Bray, Arkena Dailey, Katie Daniels, Kristin Haas, Nicolas Harrington, Katey Howland, Shaun Reghabi (absent), and Linda Wise introduced themselves. All returning board members were asked to introduce themselves.

II. Advocacy Presentation

Rebekah Jarrar introduced Sharon Rosenberg. Government Affairs Liaison, Florida Occupational Therapy Association. Sharon Rosenberg is a certified hand therapist and business owner. She has chaired the FOTA Government Affairs Committee for the past nine years.

For people interested in becoming advocates in the healthcare field, Sharon recommends starting with your state organization. Florida has more than 17,000 practicing OT's, 1,000 are members of FOTA, only 50 of those are truly active in the association. For association advocacy information, go to the website and search for the advocacy page. The page, in most cases, will list the lead advocacy volunteer. Email this person to get started.

In all cases, the first step to getting started on the road to healthcare advocacy will be to join the association. Either at the state or national level.

III. Breakout Sessions (By Committee)

IV. Committee Reports

A. Governance Committee Goals:

1. Work with the Alumni Association Advisory Board to create a 3-year strategic plan for the USAHS Alumni Association. The committee would like to consider a five-year plan instead of three. Bob will work with Polly to establish the framework.
2. Continue to maintain a full roster of at least 22 board members. Promote representation from all campuses and disciplines. The committee would like to add more nursing and SLP alumni to the board.
3. Complete the 2025 self-assessment of the Alumni Association Advisory Board by 12.31.25.
4. Conduct an annual review of all governance documents. Especially to determine governance needs to support the development and growth of Alumni Association chapters.

B. Alumni Engagement Committee Goals

1. Board members will continue to support the Geographic Mentor program. OT alumni board members will join the Upnotch Community and will help recruit fellow OT alumni to support current students looking for mentors in the OT field. Looking for 100 matches during the 2025 pilot program.
2. Move to the public LinkedIn group instead of trying to maintain separate Facebook groups. Establish a goal of 1,000 LinkedIn users by 12.31.2025. Keep Facebook groups active to support chapter communications as needed.
3. The board will help recruit volunteers to lead Alumni Association Chapters in Austin, St. Augustine, Miami, and San Diego in 2025.
4. Support participation in the planning of the Alumni Reunion & Family Weekend in Austin, Texas April 10-11, 2026. Solicit alumni to determine which alumni groups should be targeted for invitation.

C. Advocacy Committee Goals

1. Continue working to identify alumni and faculty who function in advocacy-related roles in the healthcare profession.
 - a. Survey alumni to solicit advocacy-related information
 - b. Ask advocacy experts to speak at meetings to provide insight and suggestions for improving advocacy efforts (like Sharon Rosenberg).
2. All committee members continue to monitor issues and topics of importance to healthcare organizations, calls for action from these organizations, and opportunities for alumni to join these organizations in leadership roles.
3. Update the Advocacy Committee Interest Group Recap each year to share with university leadership and post to the alumni website following Legal approval. Target date for posting to website is April 1, 2025.

V. Alumni Social Media Presentation and Recommendation

Rosemary Whaling, Senior Director, Brand and Content for USAHS provided the board with an update on USAHS alumni social media accounts. In the past 60 days, the following engagement was observed:

- OT Facebook group, 577 members, 5 reactions
- PT Facebook group, 548 members, 2 reactions
- Nursing Facebook group, 49 members, 0 reactions
- SLP Facebook group, 123 members, 0 reactions

Facebook trends overall are declining. People are not going to Facebook for professional engagement. Alumni who want to engage in professional development are going to LinkedIn. As a result, Marketing is recommending we migrate from our Facebook pages to our Alumni LinkedIn page.

Recommended posts from the board and alumni include:

- Job opportunities
- Clinical Instruction Opportunities
- Pro Bono Clinics
- Sponsorship Opportunities
- Incentives and Discounts for Alumni
- Continuing Professional Education
- Shared advice and insights from alumni

Marketing suggests board members assist with posting engaging and relevant content for alumni. We want to create a warm and welcoming environment and encourage others to share their experiences. We won't shut the Facebook groups down. Potentially we will repurpose these groups for chapter communication.

V. New St. Augustine Campus Opening and Chapter Events

There will be a Ribbon Cutting Event on Thursday, May 15 from 5:00-7:00 PM to celebrate the opening of the new St. Augustine campus. In coordination with the Ribbon Cutting, the Alumni Association will host Continuing Professional Education followed by a barbecue lunch on Saturday, May 17. These events will be open to all alumni. RSVP to the ribbon cutting [here](#). Stay tuned for more details on Saturday's events.

Atlanta Chapter event: Thursday, March 13 at Punch Bowl Social, 6:00-8:00 PM

SLP Chapter event: Thursday, March 13, El Cholo Café in Pasadena, 6:00-8:00 PM

St. Augustine events: Thursday, May 15 and Saturday, May 17

Miami Chapter event: Thursday, May 29, Bay 13 in Coral Gables, 6:00-8:00 PM

San Diego Chapter event: TBD

VI. Future Topics and Other Business

No topics discussed.

VII. **NEXT MEETING: Saturday, September 6, 2025, Noon-3:00 PM ET**

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM