



VSUConnection

For the Faculty, Staff and Members of the Valdosta State University Community

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The Man Behind the Vision

L. John Trombetta II — VSU's New Director of Alumni Relations

He was the sidekick voice on the FM 96 morning show as a student. He planned events as a member of the university's Campus Activities Board and was instrumental in building the Student Recreation Center. John Trombetta, '01, invested himself in university activities and influenced positive change during his undergraduate career beneath the stately pines.

He returned to VSU in February as the university's director of Alumni Relations to continue his devotion to advancing VSU's mission. The political science graduate, who received a Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix in 2004, said he plans to develop a student alumni association, focus on alumni programming and establish alumni chapters.

"Valdosta State University means a lot to me. The opportunity to come back and engage other alumni is one I could not pass up," Trombetta said. "I very much look forward to growing our Alumni community."

His Vision:

A Student Alumni Association

Trombetta plans to reestablish a student alumni group to help determine the programming needs of young alums and to promote personal connections among students and alumni through networking and other social events. The student alumni association, Trombetta said, will also introduce students to the resources and benefits of the organization.

"The only way to build a strong, active alumni base is to involve current students in alumni events to get them familiar with and excited about continuing to be a part of the association and its mission," he said.

Student alumni association members would exemplify VSU's values and mission. Trombetta said fostering



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relationships among students and alumni enables students to network and feel more comfortable attending chapter events after graduation; alumni feel as though they are giving back to the university by serving as mentors.

He also wants the student alumni association to help student organizations develop successful alumni events.

"I can't connect with every alum, and I know that many campus groups have reunions and other alumni functions," Trombetta said. "We want to make it known to those student groups that the alumni association is here for them when they are planning to bring alums back to campus."

Programming

"Our alumni base is relatively young. They are busy with families and jobs. They may not be able to take time off for an extended vacation, and it may be cost prohibitive," Trombetta said. "I want to focus on moderately priced, family oriented events such as family picnics, mother-daughter shopping trips and father-son baseball trips. I also want to look into short cruises, and weekend destinations like Biloxi. That said, I would like to send a group to China in 2009, however, we need to put our energy into engaging younger alums and their families."

Young Professionals

Discount programs, networking functions and financial planning seminars are just a few of the programming ideas Trombetta said he intends to promote among recent VSU graduates. He also plans to establish relationships with businesses to offer discounts to VSU alums. Trombetta hopes to supply each alum with a card listing the discounts.

Chapters

Trombetta has established what he calls "hot spots" for potential alumni chapters. He is working with board members and energetic alums in these regions to establish alumni chapters.

"We may help some alumni chapters grow to hold large functions and set up scholarship funds," Trombetta said. "But other chapters may consist of a handful of people getting together for bowling leagues, book clubs and service projects."

Trombetta said he wants each chapter to host a send-off celebration for freshmen headed to VSU each fall, and then a "welcoming party" for graduates. Trombetta said send-off parties will connect students with alums in the area who may offer personal and professional support. The welcoming parties will help convert graduates into active alums.

Trombetta continued —

For more about Trombetta's professional background, go to; www.valdosta.edu/news/releases/trombetta.011108/. He will also be featured in the March VSU Alumni News.

"The Fantastic Return of the Fabulous Fable Factory"

VSU Theater students took to elementary school cafeterias and jr. high stages more than 20 years ago to present the university's first children's tour, "The Fabulous Fable Factory." The spring 2008 tour revisits the charming musical with the play's sequel — "The Fantastic Return of the Fabulous Fable Factory" — a musical that features Aesop's Fables, including "The Boy



Who Cried Wolf" and "The Daydreaming Milkmaid."

Area schools delight in the opportunity to expose their students to live theater, especially performances with moral lessons and historical significance.

The cast of nine and stage manager, Nikki Slaton, experience the rigors of touring schools, a common occupation for young actors, as the group meets — sometimes as early as 5 a.m. — to travel to area schools. The students construct a portable set, perform the one hour and 20 minute show, meet with students, repack the set and return to VSU.

Theater Professor Jacque Wheeler directs and Assistant Professor Michael Elliott music directs the musical, which tours throughout February. ■

VSU Theater children's tour cast:

(Bottom row, from left) Megan Wheeler and Kelly Murray. (Middle) Melissa Porter, Elizabeth Dunn and Carla Olivar. (Top) Shelina Smith, Joel Mosely, Shelby Nichols. Not pictured: Lana Grube.

Award Nomination Deadlines

Annie Powe Hopper Award

DEADLINE: February 29

VSU's Most Prestigious Academic Honor is awarded to a senior who best exemplifies the traditions of the university as well as the character, dignity and charm associated with the memory of Annie P. Hopper, VSU's first Dean of Women.

Criteria

- Overall GPA of 3.0 or better
- Minimum of 60 semester hours by the end of fall 2007
- Student's graduation should occur between December 2007 and August 2008.

In addition to the nomination form, please submit a cover letter of nomination and support that explains how the nominee exemplifies the traditions of the university.

Please submit nominations to Nanci Scheetz, Chair of the Academic Honors and Scholarships Committee, via campus mail to the Department of Middle, Secondary, Reading, & Deaf Education, e-mail them to nascheet@valdosta or fax them to (229) 333-5963.

The awards are among Valdosta State University's most prestigious academic honors. They are awarded annually at the Honors Day Dinner, which will be held May 1.

Mac & Marga Awards

DEADLINE: February 27

VSU's oldest honor society, Sigma Alpha Chi, seeks nominations for the Mac and Marga awards presented each year to one male and one female student of outstanding achievement. Winners receive a plaque and a \$100 prize.

Criteria

- Senior standing
- GPA of 3.00 or better
- Participation in at least three campus organizations.

Please provide the following information:

- Nominee's name, address, major and GPA
- Organizations and Honors
- Nominee's parents' and/or spouse's name and address
- Statement by the nominator explaining the nominee's qualifications
- Nominator's name, signature and department or organization.

Please send nominations via campus mail to Dr. Marta Kvande, Department of English. Nominations also may be sent via e-mail to mkvande@valdosta.edu. Call Kvande at (229) 333-7338.

Trombetta continued —

Induction Ceremony

Prior to each VSU graduation, Trombetta would like to hold a VSU Alumni Association induction ceremony to invite graduates into the association and to share with them the importance of being active alums. During the ceremony, graduates will receive VSU alumni lapel pins unique to their graduation years and an Alumni Handbook, which Trombetta plans to fill with lists of alumni chapters' contact information, an overview of ways to get involved as well as discounts and benefits for VSU alums.

Homecoming Lawn Concert

The homecoming lawn concert is a big draw to campus, and Trombetta said he plans to build on its success.

"I want the concert to be a giant pep rally that people look forward to all year," said Trombetta. "A time for VSU alums and students to come together and celebrate this great school." ■

"Doing What's Right"

The University System of Georgia established the "Doing What's Right" program to provide System employees with an anonymous, effective means to report suspected fraud, waste and abuse as well as harassment that may directly affect stewardship responsibilities.

The Network, an independent information collection company, will monitor the toll-free number and online report submissions, which may be filed at www.valdosta.edu/hotline. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The hotline is not a 911 or emergency service to report issues in need of immediate attention.

**"Doing What's Right" Hotline:
1-877-516-3470**

For additional information regarding this program click on the Web site at;

www.valdosta.edu/hotline

VSUConnection

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The VSU Connection is a semimonthly newsletter designed to inform VSU personnel and students about the latest campus-wide news. Check out the Connection online at www.valdosta.edu/news/.

For more information about the Connection or to submit a story idea, email Kate Heine, Communications Specialist, Communications Unit, at kahaine@valdosta.edu.