

MOVING FORWARD 2009 – 2011

Recommendations of the Class Advisory Senate to the Board of Directors

References

1. Articles of Incorporation, 1/15/68, as amended.
2. Bylaws, 4/4/06.
3. Member Survey 2006.
4. Strategic Plan, 10/26/06.
5. Assessment of AOG Strategic Goals, 10/21/07.
6. Moving Forward, 2/1/08.
7. Carver, John: Boards that Make a Difference, 3rd Ed., 2006.
8. BOD Governance Policies, 2/21/09, as amended.
9. Donor Report, 3/8/09.

I. INTRODUCTION: NEW BOARD, OLD CHALLENGES

A new CEO, a new Board, a new Superintendent, a new Chief of Staff who has taken a personal interest in the Academy and AOG, the adoption of a new governance process, the continued dialogue between the AOG and the USAFA Endowment (UE), the emergence of the Athletic Association 501(c)3, and the continued economic turmoil mean that the ground has shifted since our original “Moving Forward”. Nevertheless, many of the old challenges remain as new ones have emerged that the Board will have to address. It is therefore appropriate for the Senate to “...inform the Board ...” of the challenges and recommendations that the AOG members feel that the Board will have to deal with over the next two years and beyond. Some of the recommendations in this document may be incorporated into the Policy and Procedures Manual. Some may require By-Law changes. Others may be referred to the CEO or to the appropriate Committee or Task Force for further consideration and action. Part II identifies the primary challenges faced by the Board. Part III identifies other challenges that require Board action.

II. PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Full implementation of the new governance process and resolution of the fundraising issue are the overriding challenges faced by the AOG.

GOVERNANCE

- The Board voted to adopt a new governance process at its December 2008 meeting.
- Development of a “Board Policy & Procedures Manual,” which provides strategic framework to guide the activities of the AOG leadership, is complete.

THE SENATE RECOMMENDS:

1. That the Board fully implement and act in accordance with the new governance model.
2. That the Board review the By-Laws for consistency with the new governance process and recommend any needed changes to the membership.
3. That the Board consult with the Senate before submitting any By-Laws change to the membership.

FUNDRAISING:

- The AOG has moved to harmonize all fundraising functions in support of the Academy, the graduates and our heritage.
- The AOG leadership is considering a variation of the basic fundraising model, under which all parties can join, that supports the Academy, the graduates and our heritage.
- A comprehensive fundraising strategy is also required.
- Control and accountability are critical issues.

THE SENATE RECOMMENDS:

1. That the Board, through the CEO, continue to work with the other fundraising organizations to find an appropriate and effective fundraising structure, under which all parties can join, that supports the Academy, the graduates and our heritage without compromising the independence and integrity of the AOG and without compromising the Vision, Mission or Core Purpose of the AOG.
2. That the AOG take the lead in developing a comprehensive strategy, under which all parties can join, for the support (monetary and non-monetary) of the Academy, the graduates and our heritage.
3. That the Board consult with the Senate before a final decision is made.

III. OTHER CHALLENGES

The following challenges will have to be addressed regardless of the outcome of the challenges identified in Part II.

ENSURE THE FINANCIAL STABILITY AND VIABILITY OF THE AOG.

- Termination of the Comprehensive Capital Campaign, migration of many major and some minor donors to the UE, and general reduction in giving due to the economy have limited the ability of the AOG to fully fund all of the existing programs as well as limiting its ability to undertake new programs, services or major capital projects.
- According to the 2006 Member Survey 89% of graduates greatly valued their Academy experience. Yet this is not reflected in their giving back to the Academy. On a class by class basis our sister Academies out give our graduates by a ratio of two or three to one.
- The CEO is moving aggressively to rationalize and increase existing income streams as well as develop new streams.
- The Board is currently revising the FMIP to provide up to date guidance on financial investment.

THE SENATE RECOMMENDS:

1. That the Board, through the CEO, develop and communicate to the AOG members a comprehensive fund raising strategy.
2. That the Board, through the CEO, continue to increase income from existing income streams as well as developing new sources of income.
3. That the Board, through the CEO, work with the USAFA staff to instill a sense of “giving back” (monetary and non-monetary) among cadets, parents and friends.
4. That the Board establish a Task Force to determine why financial support from our graduates is so much less than that of our sister Academies and to make additional recommendations.

FOSTER AND BUILD CONFIDENCE AMONG SENIOR USAFA STAFF, DONORS AND NON-DONOR MEMBERS.

- Internal turmoil in recent years has eroded the confidence of some senior members of the USAFA staff, donors and non-donor members in the ability of the AOG to manage its affairs.

THE SENATE RECOMMENDS:

1. That the AOG leadership demonstrate and communicate the AOG dedication to and support of the Academy mission by working with the USAFA leadership to identify challenges faced by the Academy where the AOG can make a positive contribution. At the same time the AOG leadership should “inform” the Academy leadership of issues of concern to graduates that may impact the Academy.
2. That the AOG leadership continues to demonstrate and communicate good stewardship of funds and management of services and projects.
3. That the AOG leadership continues to demonstrate and communicate cooperation with the other fundraising organizations and USAFA senior leadership
4. That the AOG leadership continues to demonstrate and communicate its responsiveness to appropriate member needs and expectations and that it is open to member input through the Senate.

INCREASE MEMBERSHIP, MEMBER PARTICIPATION AND GEOGRAPHIC REACH OF THE AOG.

- AOG members must “take ownership” of the AOG. Only 12.9% of members voted in the recent election and voting was disproportionately low among the younger classes.
- According to the 2006 Member Survey, 89% of the members said that they would recommend membership in the AOG to their classmates. However, this has not translated into active recruiting or participation in the AOG and Academy events.
- Chapters, Parent Clubs and Affinity Groups provide the principal means of expanding the geographic reach of the AOG and the AOG has a wide range of programs to support these groups.

THE SENATE RECOMMENDS:

1. That the AOG leadership continues to identify and rationalize those services of greatest perceived value to various segments of the graduate community.
2. That the AOG leadership takes every opportunity to communicate to all graduates the value of membership to the end that graduates “take ownership” of the AOG.
3. That the AOG leadership continues to promote and show the value of Chapters, Parents Clubs and Affinity Groups. This includes providing access to AOG services and benefits when it supports the mission of the Academy and the AOG.
4. That the Board continue to demonstrate its support of and responsiveness to the Class Advisory Senate and to support Senate efforts to get all classes represented and actively involved in the CAS.
5. That the Board establish a Task Force to determine why member participation is so low and to make additional recommendations.

INTEGRATE THE AOG INTO THE USAF FAMILY.

- The AOG recently partnered with the Air Force Association on the selection of scholarship winners.
- The AOG, through the CEO, is also seeking to establish working relationships with members of the aerospace industry and other businesses.

THE SENATE RECOMMENDS:

1. That the AOG leadership continues to seek opportunities to partner with businesses and other members of the Air Force family of organizations.

DEVELOP “MEASURES OF SUCCESS” FOR MEETING THE CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED ABOVE.

- The AOG has a wide range of programs in place or in development to meet the challenges above. However, having a program and having a successful program is not the same thing. Every program must have some process by which to measure its success in order for the AOG leadership to determine where we are getting “the most bang for the buck.”

THE SENATE RECOMMENDS:

1. That the Board develop “measures of success,” including specific milestones, for each of its programs in order to determine where programs can be adjusted to provide the greatest benefit.