2018 High School Class: Focus on Yield

The Office of Admissions continues to implement yield initiatives for the 2018 fall semester. We are continuing to be aggressive in our messaging/outreach to students that have confirmed their enrollment to reduce the summer melt. There are three mailings that confirmed students/parents will receive from our office this summer:

- Mark your calendar postcard mailed in June
- Letter to promote services provided by ZipAssist mailed in early July;
- Letter from Interim President Green to parents of confirmed students mailed in early August.

E-mails and text messages will focus on congratulations on their graduation from high school, Akron Adventures, on-campus housing move-in, and New Roo Weekend. We also have two events planned:

- Akron RubberDucks baseball game on June 23
- Cleveland Indians baseball game on July 6

These two events are an opportunity for the confirmed students to bring one guest to the game and engage with other confirmed students, as well as members of the UA community.

A new initiative planned for this year is the UA Scavenger Hunt in collaboration with Downtown Akron Partnership.

We also are continuing to work very closely with students that have applied for admission after April 1 to move them through the enrollment process quickly.

The students that apply to UA after April 1 tend to be from the six-county service region.
2019 High School Class: Focus on Inquiry and Application Generation

The Office of Admissions is working with the students and parents of the 2019 high school class as well. During this time of year, we are assessing our strategies, processes, communication, events, etc. to determine what modifications may need to be made to recruit the 2019 and the 2020 classes.

We are re-engaging with EAB for in-state inquiry and application generation. The activities will include at least three distinct mailings, as well as a robust e-mail campaign. The e-mail campaign aligns the marketing and technology.

We also are engaging with Fathom (in collaboration with University Communications & Marketing) for out-of-state inquiry and application generation. The initiatives will include digital marketing, geo-fencing, and retargeting that will support and enhance the university’s overall messaging efforts to our out-of-state markets.

We will continue to have a blended approach to communicate with students and parents using print, electronic, digital marketing, phone calls and text messages. Through these various channels we will reinforce UA’s benefits and features. Through many of these efforts, we also will learn as much as we can about the students to help drive more personalized messages.

We have several mailings planned this summer:

- Teaser brochure mailed in May that focuses on the features and benefits of UA with the “call to action” to visit campus
- Invitations to visit campus mailed in May and June
- Senior Mailer brochure mailed in July with the ‘call to action’ to apply.

There also are a series of e-mails that will be sent that will focus on the Akron Advantages, academic programs, the Williams Honors College, opportunities for real-world experience, and campus life.

Campus Events: Focus on Engagement

Spring Visit Day on April 21, 2018
We hosted 524 students (juniors and sophomores in high school) at our Spring Visit Day. There were 581 students that attended Spring Visit Day in 2017

Tau Sigma Induction Ceremony on April 25, 2018
Tau Sigma is an organization for students that have transferred from one institution to another and have made high academic achievement during their first term. The purpose of the organization is to recognize and promote the academic excellence and involvement of transfer students. Twenty-eight transfer students were inducted into this national honor society. The new inductees included transfer students from both community colleges and other four-year
institutions such as Tri-C, LCCC, Columbus State, Ohio University, and University of Cincinnati.

**Guidance Counselor Advisory Board Meeting on April 27, 2018**
We were joined by 74 high school counselors at our Spring Advisory Board meeting. Presentation topics included ZipAssist, criminal justice academic options, esports and college credit plus. We also received input from counselors regarding the feedback students/parents are providing about UA.

Upcoming Events:
- Summer Visit Day on Friday, June 22, 2018
- Summer Visit Day on Friday, July 27, 2018
- Summer Visit Day on Friday, August 10, 2018.

We also are working with colleagues within the Williams Honors College (WHC) to coordinate an event this summer to promote the features and benefits of the WHC. Please note that we will continue to host information sessions and campus tours Monday through Friday in the morning and afternoon; we also will continue to host personal visits.

**Transfer and Adult Students: Focus on Outreach**

We have increased communication with our community college partners to share events, deadlines, transfer pathways, articulations and AGS scholarship information.

We recently worked with University Communications & Marketing to develop and print a **poster** that is specific to transfer students. We mailed copies of this poster to community colleges in Ohio.

We are meeting with representatives from Tri-C, Lakeland, and Stark State Community Colleges to renew and develop articulation agreements and dual enrollment agreements.

We are expanding our communication through social media with some specific targeted transfer messaging.

We worked with University Communications & Marketing to update the content on the UA website devoted to transfer and adult students.
Technology: Focus on Service

TargetX CRM
The Admissions Office continues to make progress with the implementation of the CRM. The focus of the efforts within the first year of the contract was geared toward the online application for admission, as well as interfacing PeopleSoft with the CRM. We also have entered all of the Admissions Officer territory assignments in the CRM.

The current priority involves securing all of the 2019 high school prospects in the CRM by June 1. This will provide the Admissions Officers with the ability to run reports to communicate with students within their recruitment territory in a more efficient and effective manner, as well as provide the ability to document all of the communication. We also will launch the inquiry generation campaign using the CRM on June 4.

The next priority will involve having the off-campus events (high school visits and college fairs) supported through the CRM in early fall to support the efforts of the Admissions Officers during the fall recruitment season.

Financial Aid Support Center
The University of Akron has partnered with Blackboard Student Services for the operation of a comprehensive Financial Aid Support Center. We have been working diligently over the past several months to develop this center in preparation for our go live date of Wednesday, May 23.

The enhanced services that will be provided to students include:

- **Telephone**: Students will be able to reach a live agent 24/7/365.
- **Chat**: Students may choose to chat with an agent.
- **Submit a Ticket**: If a student is having difficulty that is not easily resolved by a phone call or chat, they can submit a support request (or “ticket”) and we will provide resolution within one business day.
- **Articles**: Students can browse a vast knowledgebase of topics and questions at their leisure.
- **Escalations**: If a student has a particularly difficult issue, the case will be escalated to the Associate Director—and the student will be contacted within one business day.

The Financial Aid Support Center is branded and will be integrated with The University of Akron’s web page. We will update our communications to encourage students to visit the student support center for assistance. When students call the Office of Student Financial Aid, the call will connect with Support Center agents. The service will be seamless to students.
At its spring conference last week, the Ohio Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA) awarded the 2018 Alex Murdoch Service Award to Carrie Short, our associate director of student financial aid.

Short, who joined UA in February 2015, is pictured here holding the award. With her is the 2017-18 OASFAA president, Susan Kannenwischer.

This award, established in 1999, is presented annually to “a member of OASFAA who has given outstanding service to the organization, its members and who has made OASFAA a better organization through their many efforts and contributions.”