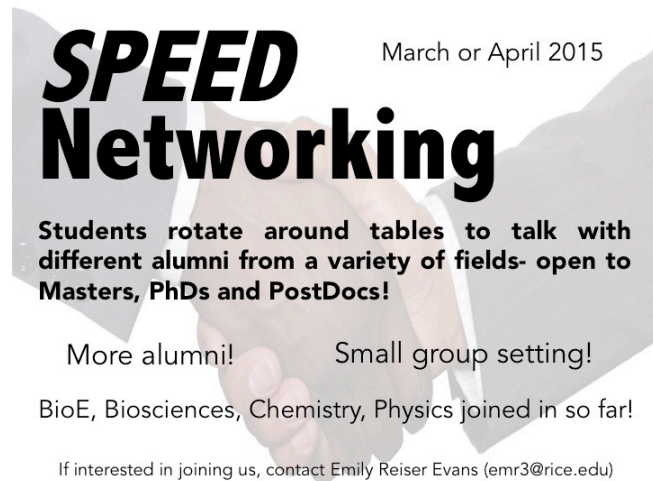




PROJECT TITLE: Speed Networking: Graduate Student & Alumni Networking Mixer

PROJECT TAGLINE/CAPTION (160 characters): Connect with alumni: advice, industry opportunities, build relationships

IMAGE:



Primary Contact: Emily Reiser Evans

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Primary Contact Department: Bioengineering

Name of Group/Organization: BioE-GSA (lead), BCB-GSA, CGSA, PAGSA

PROJECT DETAILS

Provide a description of the project.

Following the success of the Innovation Symposium, the BioE-GSA is looking to host a Spring 2015 event to bring more alumni back to campus to provide information and advice to graduate students. The way we thought to incorporate many alumni and departments was through a speed-dating style networking mixer.

We will partner with various department GSAs, postdoc associations, and alumni relations groups to ensure maximum visibility and support. We hope this event will set a precedent of a major alumni networking event to take place every Spring and will contribute to our continued efforts of establishing networking and professional development events that engage alumni.

The event will start with a brief intro to the alumni (Name, current affiliation, department/major, basic career path). We will then progress to the speed dating portion, where individuals will rotate through to talk with the alumni in a small group setting. Finally, we will finish with a casual networking mixer with refreshments served.

GRAD starter

Timeline: *If the project will take place at a specific time and place, please give details. Is it a one-time event or a series?*

This event will take place in late spring. It will either take place around beer bike (March 19th, when many alumni will be around), or if that will be too difficult logistically, then in early April. This event will be a one-time per year event, though it may serve as a good outline for future related events in the pipeline, such as the fall Graduate Research Showcase that GSA (Cat) is planning for next fall.

Audience: *Who is your target audience? (e.g. program-specific, interdisciplinary, or university-wide? Will undergraduates, faculty, staff, or postdocs be involved? Any off campus participants?)*

This event will be interdisciplinary. The following departments have confirmed contributing to the event: Bioengineering, Chemistry, Physics. The speed dating will be reserved for graduate students, post-docs, and alumni. The networking mixer portion of the event will be open to the university.

How many people do you anticipate will participate?

I anticipate 200-250 people will participate in this event. This number is based on the Innovation Symposium (~90 from BRC) and Career Workshop (about 120). I anticipate increased numbers over both of those events due to better alumni contacts and earlier planning.

Marketing Plan: *How do you plan to publicize the project?*

The BioE-GSA is a lead host of this event but we have recruited help from other departmental GSAs including Chemistry, Biosciences, and Physics. Rice GSA has also been kept in the loop of the development of this event and the GSA professional development committee will have the opportunity to contribute to planning this event as well. Those outlets will help us disseminate the information to department student listservs and social media pages. Flyers in Duncan Hall, RMC, and the BRC will also help bring students together for this event.

We will also use our improved connections with Rice Alumni Association and other Alumni groups that we are currently building relationships with in order to better bring alumni back for this event. Early notification will be key, and we will start reaching out to these alumni groups by the end of January in order to give alumni at least 2 months notice prior to the event.



ADVANCEMENT

What are the goals of the project?

The goals of this project are:

1. Connect graduate students with alumni
2. Improve relationships with alumni
3. Foster more professional development events to provide students with information about careers other than academia

Briefly explain the need for the project and how it will promote excellence in scholarship, training, and/or development?

Rice students are well positioned to succeed following their completion of their masters or PhD degree or postdoctoral training. However, there are few resources available to connect students with those in industry who can provide advice, mentorship, or information about other degrees that are not in academia.

Events that bring back alumni not only provide a resource for students to access this information, but also provide a way for these alumni to connect positively with their alma mater.

If this is an existing project/event or a similar one exists, describe how the project/event is being expanded or enhanced.

This project bears resemblance to the Innovation Symposium from fall 2015 and to the Graduate Showcase planned for fall 2016 but is distinct from either in that it is university-wide in scope or provides significant opportunity for alumni engagement. Lessons learned from the execution of this event can help inform planning of the Fall 2016 Graduate Showcase.

If your proposal is for a pilot project, suggest how it might develop over a three-year period.

I think that there is a great opportunity for an alumni networking event in the spring, planned to coincide with beer bike, commencement, or standalone. While our relatively early planning of this event (compared with past events) and our improving relationship with alumni relations offices will contribute to the success of these events, I anticipate that both of these factors will improve in the future, allowing for even bigger events in years to come. I also envision an opportunity for graduate students to give short 5 minute talks as part of this event, which were well received and attended at the innovation symposium.

Describe how you will measure the success and impact of this project. Please, provide quantitative targets, if possible.

This success and impact of this project will be measured by attendance of students and alumni. Our goal is to secure at least 25 alumni, which will be more than have attended related events in the past (Innovation Symposium, Career Workshop). We would also like to engage 150 students/post-docs and 25-50 faculty and staff members.



BUDGET

Itemized Budget

Please, provide an itemized budget. List each item, a description, and the anticipated cost.

Item	Description	Cost
Catering	Drinks and heavy apps for 250 people	4400
Photographer	Take event photos	600
Space reservation	Room reservation + custodial fees	300
Name tags	And other misc. supplies	200
Total Expenses		\$5500

Funds from other sources

Please, provide any information on funds from other sources that you have secured or potential funds that you plan to apply for.

Source	Status	Cost
Bioengineering Department	Unconfirmed- previously expressed interest in supporting events like this	500
Other participating departments	Unconfirmed- will ask for \$200-\$500 per department or dGSA if funds are available	1500
Student Activities Presidents' Programming	Unconfirmed- will apply by Nov 18 or Jan 20 deadline	1000
GSA Enrichment Grant	Multi-department grant or remaining professional development budget Unconfirmed- will apply in 2015	1000
REA, Alumni Affairs	Unconfirmed- Will request support from alumni associations; Already have working relationship and interest from REA	1000
Total Amount		\$ 5000

If the project/event has been offered in the past, how was it supported?

The Innovation Symposium was funded by IBB, Bioengineering, GSA, and Gradstarter. The Career Workshop was funded by GSA. REA helped fund Screech 2015. GSA is planning to fund a career expo in fall 2016.