

Staying Connected (Part 1 of 2)

As a recently graduated college alum, your attitude may be one of go forth and conquer. And if this is so, then may the wind be at your back, the ground rise to meet your feet, and all that good stuff. Just be sure to keep one thing in mind – it pays to stay connected to your school. **By Justine Simon**

Graduates who remain connected with their schools get to enjoy all sorts of advantages. Alumni organizations exist to offer graduates the opportunity to meet other alums, in order to create a rich and diverse professional community with deep links to its alma mater. Recent graduates can explore these networks for a variety of reasons like:

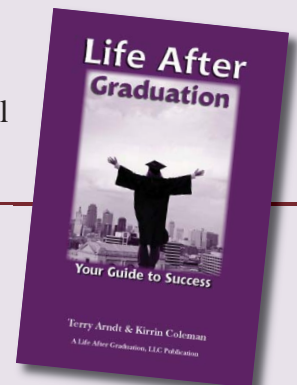
- Meeting people in their particular industry
- Getting advice from experienced peer professionals
- Discovering job leads
- Exchanging ideas with other energetic and creative people

Young alums are also eligible for a variety of services through their alumni organization – yet another reason to stay involved! Common perks of staying connected to your alumni community include:

- **Career Planning Services.** Whether job boards and resume tutorials are what you need, or if an informational interview with an alum in your field would really help, look no further. Most colleges have extremely resourceful career planning centers that help you find jobs and prepare yourself for your developing career.
- **Relocation Support.** When you move to a new city, it really helps having a way to connect with your new community. Alumni organizations have many resources to help with this transition in your life. It can put you in contact with other alums in your area, and some national alumni associations have programs to help spouses and children with their move.
- **Business Development.** If you're looking for a loan for your company or employees for your business, alumni associations are great places to check out. Keep in mind that people starting new companies can get a lot of free press and advice simply by connecting with other alums.
- **Discounts.** Everything from pizza to life insurance to carpet cleaning to travel, alumni organizations offer it all. Stay connected to find out how you can save money.

So get involved! Check out your alumni association's webpage, and find out where your region's alumni club meets. You can join a shared interest group, take advantage of its mentor programs, or find love at a college single's meeting. You'll find that once you're connected, the possibilities become endless.

Part 2 of the "Staying Connected" article will be available in the next issue of College Transition Times. For more information about maximizing the benefits available from your college after graduation, read *Life After Graduation: Your Guide to Success*.



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