



# Building Department-Alumni Connections



Most anthropology programs do not have practices in place to help them maintain connections with their graduates. Alumni are often an untapped resource willing to assist students from their alma mater with career advice and preparation, and networking.

## How does your program benefit?

- Dedicated pool of potential speakers and workshop presenters
- Source of class projects with an alum's organization as client
- Professional input on program features
- Pipeline to internships and job opportunities
- Co-teaching or teaching a course

## How do your students benefit?

- Learning to form professional relationships
- Workplace knowledge and skill acquisition
- Advising on professionalization skills, internships, and job search

## How do your alumni benefit?

- Ability to "pay it forward" to the next generation
- Access to campus resources (e.g., meeting with faculty, library electronic access)
- Continued connection to the discipline, academia, and other alumni
- Exposure to current student ideas and input
- Expansion of their networks with the next-generation workforce
- Pool of applicants for internships and jobs

## What are strategies for staying in touch?

Many strategies work well in alumni outreach and in building long-term relationships with them. (Such strategies also demonstrate to administrators alumni value and departmental career preparation efforts.) While in-person may be preferred, much programming can be virtual, so start experimenting:

- **Launch a LinkedIn Group** of alumni that can be accessed by both instructors and students to network and build community
- **Ask an Alum to be a Speaker or Workshop Presenter** for a particular course or the anthropology program as a whole
- **Create an Alumni Advisory Board** that meets with departmental leaders on a recurring basis to discuss emergent career fields, student preparation for a changing workplace, and relevant skills, methods, and experiences among new hires—all of which can help shape your anthropology program
- **Welcome Alums Back to Campus** annually for a day of scheduled programming and/or informal conversations
- **Convene an Alumni Panel** mid-semester that focuses on career preparation, skill development, and careers highlighting anthropology
- **Seek Alumni Advice** on a range of topics such as case studies of ethical workplace dilemmas, teaching methods relevant in organizational research, and building an internship program
- **Invite Alumni to Campus Career Fairs** where they can represent their organizations, advertise for open positions, and speak with students
- **Ask Alumni to Serve as Judges** for best capstone portfolios; annual departmental poster contest based on local organizational or community research; or short podcasts of an "amazing anthropologist" working in industry, non-profits, or government