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Volunteer work strengthens bonds

Todd Malo '95
Furman University

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Furman alumni news

ALUMNI ACTIVITIES

Volunteer work strengthens bonds

My recent volunteer work at Furman has provided a perfect opportunity to rekindle my Furman connection and to feel a part of all the great things that are happening at the university.

I graduated from Furman in 1995 and just a few short months later married Suzanne Cioffi '94. But throughout college and my first few years of marriage, I rarely thought about volunteering or doing much outside of career and marriage.

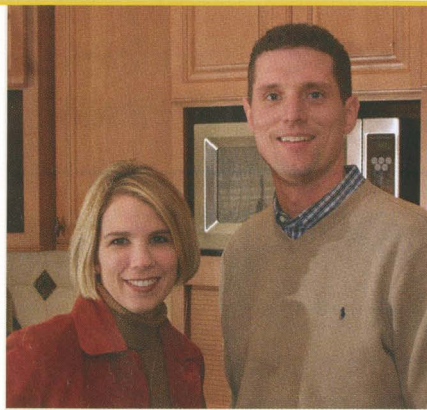
Almost five years ago we started a family; we currently have two wonderful boys, Jack (4) and Graham (1). When Jack was 2, I began looking for ways to become more involved in volunteer activities.

I attended a program sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce called Opportunity Greenville, which introduces you to the city's history, government and non-profit efforts. I learned a lot, but I was also overwhelmed by the hundreds of organizations in Greenville County. I had no idea who needed help most or where my talents could best be utilized. So I did what most people do — I waited for something to come to me.

Soon thereafter, Suzanne and I attended a Boston Pops concert (featuring Keith Lockhart '81 as conductor). There we ran into Furman president David Shi. After catching up, I asked him how I could become more involved with Furman. His eyes lit up!

The next day I received an e-mail from Tom Triplitt, director of the Alumni Association, offering a host of possibilities. The result: I have worked with the Young Alumni Council, Annual Giving Council and Alumni Board, and Suzanne works with the Young Benefactors.

We have thoroughly enjoyed reconnecting with Furman.



A major benefit has been the opportunity to meet so many alums from different cities and different years, ranging from 1930 to 2005, and to hear their stories about their Furman days.

More significantly, we have developed a better understanding of the overall mission and direction of the university, and we have grown to appreciate the importance of fund-raising and alumni support. We also attend sporting events and university-sponsored gatherings, where we enjoy meeting even more of the Furman faithful and deepening our ties to the university.

A fellow alum from outside Greenville recently asked me how he could get involved at Furman. Location is not a problem; alumni throughout the country can contribute in a variety of ways, such as acting as class agents, working on a reunion committee or volunteering to host Furman Club events, to name a few options.

Just as attending Furman was a very special experience, Suzanne and I feel that our involvement as alumni is equally enriching. We encourage you to join us! All it takes is an e-mail (alumni@furman.edu) or telephone call (1-800-PURPLE3) to the Alumni Office.

Furman is ready when you are!
— Todd Malo '95

The author works with SYS Constructors of Greenville and is president of the Young Alumni Council. Suzanne Cioffi Malo works with Staffing Partners LLC.

You can help with Homecoming 2006

"I'll always remember with joy the months we worked together on our reunion," says Jessie Fowke Sims of the Class of 1950. "My head and my heart are forever bound to the committee and the Alumni Office."

The Alumni Office is currently looking for volunteers to serve on reunion committees for Homecoming 2006, October 20-22. Classes ending in a "1" or a "6" will be in reunion.

Why serve on your reunion committee? Sentiments like those of Jessie Fowke Sims are typical of our volunteers. Every class reunion is special and offers an opportunity for alumni to reconnect with old friends and with Furman. Serving on the committee heightens that connection.

Each year, reunion committees seem to become more creative with their planning. And the nice thing is that the nitty-gritty work — mailings, registration, collecting money — is handled by the Alumni Office, leaving the committees free to focus on planning a fun weekend that will encourage people to attend.

So if you are looking forward to your reunion in the fall, please consider volunteering with your class reunion committee. To learn more, contact Melanie Krone Armstrong '94, associate director of alumni programs, at 1-800-PURPLE3 or by e-mail, melanie.armstrong@furman.edu.

Furman Club update

Furman Clubs from coast to coast stayed busy in 2005! The groups enjoyed a variety of activities, from career networking socials to picnics, receptions, summer sendoffs for new Furman students, and such football activities as tailgates and viewing parties for Paladin games broadcast on television.

Among the end-of-the-year highlights was the 10th annual Charleston (S.C.) Furman Club Holiday Gala, held at the William Aiken House. The Alumni Association also hosted its first Holiday Gala for Greenville area alumni. And the new year began with the return of the Atlanta Furman Club Winter Gala, held February 4 at the Commerce Club.

Spring is an active time for Furman Clubs, with groups throughout the country planning picnics, career networking socials and other Furman-related activities. To discover what's happening at a Furman Club near you, visit the Alumni Association Web site at <http://alumni.furman.edu>.

If you would like to help arrange a Furman Club event in your area, contact Jane Dungan, associate director of alumni programs, at 1-800-PURPLE3 or e-mail jane.dungan@furman.edu.