

Involvement in student groups offers unique benefits, support

By JD Sullivan
Staff Writer

Some say involvement in student clubs and organizations is good for a resume. But it can also be a great way for students at Olivet College to explore interests. Students can enjoy social, spiritual and intellectual enrichment, and have a chance to make a difference.

Spending time with elderly adults is how Alpha Xi Omega or "Elite" has worked to make a difference, according to Curtis Pettway Jr., senior. He said his fraternity attracts a lot of students studying business-related degrees, but also others who want to focus on keeping their GPA up to at least a 2.5 (higher than the 2.0 college requirement to be a member of student groups).

Common Ground is the gay-straight alliance group on campus who has been working to raise awareness about GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) issues. Common Ground group member and self described "small town girl," Joanne Osborn, senior, said "being involved in student groups has opened her eyes" toward other people.

Student Activities Director Jason Meadows graduated from Olivet College in 2003 and was a member of Free Yo Mind, a creative arts group. He said, "[The club] helped me do my current job, and to be a leader on campus."

If a student has an interest not represented in the student groups, they can start a new group. Students need 10 other members and a constitution to submit to the Student Activities Office.

Ted Pick, junior, knew others on campus with a common interest – fencing. Pick founded the Olivet Fencers and Swashbucklers group. He also co-founded Fan Club, in which anyone who is a fan of something can share it with the group and find someone else who is also a fan. Pick said creating a group "allows you to do something leadership-wise before you meet the real world."

"If there is student interest we want to make sure we accommodate them," said Meadows, who emphasized that the creation of groups "should be based on the students' interest."

This year Olivet is enhancing expectations of student groups. Administrators want to encourage student groups to strengthen their ability to empower students with leadership skills and membership recruitment efforts.

The college hopes to do this is by involving students in the decision making process when choosing student activities. "We want their input," said Meadows.

Groups and clubs will be required to attend monthly meetings. Students will learn leadership and organizational skills, which can then be put into practice through participation with student activities.

There are about 45 student clubs and organizations chartered with Olivet College. Each student group has a faculty advisor to provide continuity as members graduate or change their interests. A complete list of student groups, what they are about and how to contact their advisors to get involved can be found in the student handbook, available from the Student Life Office, Mott 204.



Mike and Judy Fales

Nicki Babcock/ECHO

International coffee connections made

By Echo Staff

In an effort to form new friendships, Mike and Judy Fales, International student advisors, hosted a coffee drawing pairing international students and Olivet College employees. In order to redeem their coffee coupons at the Comet Cafe these folks must savor the moment together: Eric Ross and Sue Settle; Tanja Rupert and Diane Kirkham; Tham Doan and Tammy Walters; Philipp Cannons and Lori Britton; Jean Paul Cortes and Barb Spencer; Brock Gleadall and Bob Kubiak; Lucas Godin and Tammy Eaton; Gikai Clarke and Jim Goonoe; Justin Lesansky and Ponja Vahs; Judith Tellez-Gonzalez and Kirk Hendershott-Kraetzer; Shyam Shrestha and Marty Jennings; and Nathaniel Nyagol and Phil Reed. The coffee is courtesy of Chartwells food service.

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