July 2, 2017

Pitt AAAC Members and Friends,

Greetings and welcome from the University of Pittsburgh African American Alumni Council (AAAC) FY 2017-2019 Board of Directors. As we begin this new term, we are very excited about serving you as we continue to make the AAAC a welcoming organization for our alumni members and Pitt community.

Our goal is to support the many experiences of Pitt's African Diaspora whether we identify ourselves as African-Americans, Africans, African-Caribbean, or any other identification of the African Diaspora. We take pride in our diversity and the fact that we share a common ancestry and Pitt experience. As an umbrella organization representing thousands of alumni of African descent, the AAAC seeks to unify and support each group around shared purposes, goals, interests and activities. The challenge before us is to maintain our unity and earnestly service the needs of our constituent groups.

As we prepare for the FY 2017-2019 program year, our theme, “Building a Sustainable Future for Our Enduring Legacy” is predicated on five strategic programmatic goals and priorities, which are outlined below. I encourage you to carefully read each one of the goals and offer any ideas or suggestions on how we might best accomplish them. I have also included steps on how you can get involved with the AAAC and also listed a few upcoming activities for your participation.

- **STRATEGIC GOALS**

The five overarching strategic goals for the AAAC for the next 2 years include.

1. **Student Engagement:** In the area of Student Engagement, it is important that the AAAC establish and engage in a program to empower undergraduate and graduate students by involving them in the structure, leadership, and activities of the AAAC. Students are the future of the organization and an effective succession plan begins with them. Our strategy
would include, but not be limited to, identifying our key stakeholder organizations and connecting with the leadership of these organizations, including such groups as the Black Action Society (BAS), the Caribbean and African student groups, faith-based organizations, e.g., SOGC, Islamic as well as fraternities and sororities, professional societies – Roberto Clemente Multicultural Business Association (RCMBA), the Student National Medical Association (SNMA), Premedical Organization for Minority Students (POMS), the black Law Students Association (BLSA), Student Chapter of National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Pan-African Graduate & Professional Student Organizations, School of Education Educators, Athletics, etc.

**Alumni Cultivation:** It is critical that the AAAC set annual goals for membership growth and develop processes for reaching those goals for the national organization and its local affiliate chapters. Expanding our alumni footprint within and across the Pitt alumni community will help guide our outreach. Our strategy for growth will involve reclaiming alumni who were once active, retaining the current alumni membership and recruiting new members to join our ranks.

The strategy will also include conducting an inventory of our existing affiliate chapters across the country and with various Pitt schools and colleges, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each of these groups to build their capacity to serve at the local level and to support the national AAAC organization.

2. **University Partnership:** AAAC’s success is attributed, in large part, to the critically important partnerships we have established with Pitt’s senior administrators. It is our intent to continue to develop, nurture and enhance those partnerships. We will work in tandem with the Chancellor, Provost and other leaders of the University, especially as it pertain to important priorities such as students, faculty and staff diversity. We want to ensure that our voices are represented and heard at the table as we become active partners in the life of the University. We will also create a data base of "Friends of the AAAC," to include those who align with our values and principles and support our mission, goals, objectives and positions.

3. **Organizational Sustainability:** The AAAC will continue to build upon the work of past administrations to ensure the future and sustainability of the organization operationally and financially. Operationally, we will conduct an inventory of existing documents and materials to store them in a secure
location (i.e. Cloud) that will be easily accessible and reliable for leadership succession. Financially, we will build a reserve to support our ongoing operations and to support our student scholarship efforts.

4. Fundraising / Financial Campaign: Of the five goals, the highest priority is for the AAAC is to build financial sustainability that will support the ongoing operations of the organizations and the AAAC scholarship program which includes, the AAAC Endowed Scholarship Fund, The AAAC, OAFA and PAA Matching Scholarship award, AAAC Book Grants, the Jack L. Daniel Scholarship For Undergraduate Degree Completion, the Graduate Incentive Scholarship, Part-Time Student Incentive Scholarship, Robert Agbede Fund and others.

Please feel free to email me directly (vclag@bellsouth.net) with your thoughts and recommendations on each of the above strategic goals and how we might implement them.

- NEXT STEPS - Get involved and Get Connected

So what are the next steps? The answer is simple, *Get involved! Get connected!*

1. **Get involved!** We encourage EVERYONE to become involved with your AAAC organization. One way to get involved and get connected is at the local level. We have established AAAC Affiliate chapters in several geographical areas. Getting involved with an Affiliate chapter is a great way to connect and fellowship with other Pitt alums. Many of our Affiliate chapters host alumni events; engage in community service and support Pitt students in various projects. Don't be afraid to encourage new and innovative approaches to how we communicate with you, lead, and operate! We exist because of you and your suggestions and involvement are welcomed.

   If there is no affiliate chapter near you, then start one!! We welcome the opportunity to work with you to establish one. Contact our Membership Committee chair, James Gleaton or Affiliate chapter coordinator, Tracy Floyd, for more information AAAC membership and the affiliate chapters. James Gleaton can be reached at jgleaton@davidmason.com. Tracy Floyd can be reached tf4pitt@gmail.com.

2. **Get connected!** We are currently collecting information to build the AAAC membership database; this action will allow us to keep you informed about important news, events and activities. Please join the AAAC database at [www.alumni.pitt.edu/alumni/group/councils-mailing-list-form/](http://www.alumni.pitt.edu/alumni/group/councils-mailing-list-form/)
You may also contact our Membership Committee chair, James Gleaton at jgleaton@davidmason.com. Please provide him with:

- Your Name
- Year attended at Pitt / or graduated
- School / Degree(s)
- Contact information (email and phone)
- Address
- Area of Interest in working with AAAC (optional)

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

There are several dates of importance that should be marked on your calendar.

2. **Pitt Send-Offs** ([https://www.alumni.pitt.edu/students/pitt-sendoffs](https://www.alumni.pitt.edu/students/pitt-sendoffs))
   The Send-Off events are annual gatherings held around the country for incoming freshman from major metropolitan areas. I encourage you to participate in them and welcome incoming students to our alma mater. The AAAC Affiliates have special events specifically geared for African American students and parents. Please check the AAAC website for listings in your city. ([http://www.alumni.pitt.edu/alumni/groups/african-american-alumni-council/](http://www.alumni.pitt.edu/alumni/groups/african-american-alumni-council/)).

3. **Pitt Homecoming 2017** (October 9-15) ([http://www.alumni.pitt.edu/news-events/homecoming/homecoming-2017](http://www.alumni.pitt.edu/news-events/homecoming/homecoming-2017)). Homecoming is an important weekend in the life of our university and it offers a tremendous opportunity for alumni to return home and reconnect with friends and college mates not seen in some time. The AAAC annual membership meeting is held during homecoming weekend and we invite you to join us, meet your leadership team and get connected.

Again, it’s our pleasure to serve you and we look forward to working with you to build a powerful organization that meets your needs and those of the larger African Diaspora community at Pitt.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you and the AAAC!

H2P

*Vaughn*

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