

January 24, 2025

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

SUBJECT: WSU Alumni Association Report

SUBMITTED BY: Katey Koehn, WSUAA Board President, 2024-2025  
Mariah Maki, WSUAA Exec Director & Assoc. VP, Advancement

### **Collaborating to Connect and Engage Cougs**

At Commencement in December, we welcomed almost 800 new alums to the Cougar network. Many of those new grads made it to our holiday open house at the Lewis Alumni Centre, where they took pictures with their families and, importantly, rang the Victory Bell to celebrate their achievement.

The Holiday Bowl PreGame was a fantastic example of expanding WSU collaboration to engage Cougs effectively. We were able to cross-promote and support Alumni Association, Foundation, and Athletic events through the bowl experience, as well as holding watch parties across the country. The PreGame alone connected hundreds of Cougs and saw increased recent grad attendance. We appreciate the support from WSU leadership, including Regents, who made it a point to attend and connect with WSU alums.

We had eleven Cougar Gold and Mistletoe holiday gatherings (and three additional holiday chapter events) in the 2024 season, with 316 Cougs in attendance. Our volunteer hosts included different components in their events, including gift exchanges, toy donations, Cougar Cheese presales, Cosmic Crisp and Cougar Gold appetizers, and more, all while dressing in Cougar holiday gear!

On February 24, Cougars of the Desert will be held in the Palm Desert, including a golf tournament and wine and cheese social for all Cougs. This event is a significant driver for scholarship donations raising almost \$300,000 since its inception 37 years ago. It is also the perfect opportunity for Cougs from across the Pacific Northwest who spend winters in the area to connect with WSU at their "home away from home."

### **Leaving a Lasting Mark**

A fantastic way to leave a legacy at WSU is through the Lewis Alumni Centre tile engraving program. Recently, the WSUAA revealed a tile to honor our Ambassador, Dash. It was a fantastic celebration of how Dash's human, Ande Edlund, used Dash's celebrity to help WSU (and many other organizations) in meaningful ways. We thought that tile dedication couldn't be topped...and then Noel Schulz honored President Schulz's lasting impact on WSU through a tile unveiled before the Utah State game. We are honored that people are supporting WSUAA and honoring loved ones through an engraved tile at the Lewis Alumni Centre. A special thanks to Regent Powell for her tile purchase this fall. Very few tiles remain—so memorialize special people, events, and more through a tile before they are gone.

### **Leveraging Alumni Expertise**

The Women's Leadership Summit—one of our annual virtual signature events—will be held on March 14, 2025. This year's engaging online program is themed around successful women navigating historically male-dominated professions. Panelists will be revealed soon.