



THE CITY UNIVERSITY
OF NEW YORK



**College of
Staten Island**

ALUMNI

2024 - 2025 Grant Report

College of Staten Island Alumni Association
College of Staten Island Alumni Networking Club
August 2024 - June 2025

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Project Scope

The College of Staten Island Alumni Association (CSIAA) is an all volunteer organization. In 2024 during our Board Recruitment period, we opted to try something new to attract and meet applicants. We hosted a small mixer at a local bar- sharing a drink and family style appetizers with our alumni guests. This mixer was used as inspiration to create a series of casual micro events to reconnect with alumni and the community. Board Members of the CSIAA hosted these events at restaurants, recreational spaces and/or local attractions to engage with alumni in an easygoing way with the goal of professional networking and outreach for the Association.

Our mission is dedicated to promoting a lifelong spirit of pride, fellowship, loyalty, and learning among alumni, students, and the community. The CSIAA goal was to re-engage alumni who have had little or no contact with the College in many years and reach those who are open to getting involved but weren't sure how. Additionally, we wanted to see how consistent local outreach and activities affected our engagement on social media, with our Alumni office, and at our events.

The targeted constituency group for this series were alumni of all ages. This program helped us reconnect with alumni who had lost touch with the College and the CSIAA. These events enabled those interested in reconnecting with the CSIAA to have a low cost way to meet new people and get more involved with our group. For half of our events, we requested a nominal donation to ensure those who RSVP'd would have a commitment to actually attend, especially when the CSIAA was responsible for paying their costs regardless of whether they attended or not. This helped eliminate no shows.

Process, Methodology, and Timeline

Event Timeline:

August 20: Organic Farm Rooftop Tour and Dinner
November 7: CSI Staff Alumni Networking Bingo Lunch
December 6: Holiday Party
January 30: Liberty Science Center After Dark
March 7: Karaoke Dinner
March 10: Board Recruitment Mixer
April 29: Pizza Making Dinner
May 8: Class of 2025 Senior Toast
June 8: Volunteer Beach Cleanup

We used a mix of digital promotions to spread the word about our events. For each event we sent emails to several databases including the alumni database and the College's faculty/staff email lists. We posted to the CSIAA social media accounts on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.

Additionally, we utilized various groups on Facebook focused on community events and neighborhoods to spread the word about upcoming events. We also touched on some neighborhood apps such as NextDoor to reach alumni. Board Members also posted to their personal social media pages and spread information through word of mouth.

For our first mixer we focused on a specific alumni group- those who were graduates of one of the College's specialized honors programs (Macaulay Honors College and the Verrazano School). The mixer brought together a business and community powerhouse- The Nicotra Group- and CSIAA Board Members, CSI Executives including the President, and staff and alumni from the honors colleges. Our group toured the organic rooftop farm followed by an outdoor dinner at their on-site restaurant. In total we had 37 people mingling, enjoying a unique experience, and reconnecting with the CSIAA. Direct outreach to individuals from the current honors programs staff made a big difference in the participation. The night turned out to be a huge success.

Our second mixer was also a unique spin on an event. Although the College does not have a database designating how many employees are also graduates of the College of Staten Island, 4 of our Board Members who are also staff at the College, created a networking Bingo lunch on campus to bring together this special group. It helped us start a database of CSI graduates who are employed by their alma mater. The feedback our group received from participants was extraordinary and all wanted to know when we could do another event.

We celebrated the end of the calendar year and holidays by hosting a holiday mixer featuring an ugly sweater contest at a local brewery. We catered food, enjoyed a drink, played board games, and even awarded prizes for the best attire. This was the first mixer without a specific target of alumni. What stands out is hearing from an individual who traveled from across the city to attend the event because he was looking to reconnect with the College and CSIAA and this event gave him the perfect chance.

For our fourth event we crossed the river to Jersey City, NJ to attend an adults only event at the Liberty Science Center that featured a presentation by popular CSI Astronomy professor Dr. Charles Liu. This was our smallest mixer of the batch possibly because of the travel outside of the borough, however we were still able to reach one older alumnus (Class of 1985) who attended his first CSI event. The rest of the clientele for this event was a mix of CSIAA Board Members, alumni they knew, and a representative from the College.

Next, we took over a private room at a restaurant for a karaoke dinner. We enjoyed a wonderful meal, great company, and some musical entertainment from the alumni. Several of our guests came solo without knowing anyone which was always the ideal of our events. It felt great to host an event that brought people to make the leap and attend despite not knowing anyone. The

karaoke night brought together many new faces—alumni who were excited to share their stories, reconnect with the College, and participate in our community.

In March, in the middle of our Board Recruitment period, we hosted another casual drinks and appetizer event in the private room of a local bar. Our guests came to hear more about the CSIAA and learn how to get involved. We met some great candidates at this event and three applied to serve on the Board and all three were recently inducted. The first half of this mixer was a networking opportunity where people casually chatted in small groups before we all sat down and heard introductions from each person in the room. The CSIAA also took the opportunity to summarize past activities and upcoming initiatives.

We celebrated next with a pizza making event where several Board Members hosted a group of alumni. This event attracted a wide array of individuals- several who came solo- as well as some who joined with their former classmates for a fun night out.

This year we also represented the CSIAA to welcome the Class of 2025 with a 'senior toast' event held on campus about two weeks before the official commencement. Seniors who RSVP'd to attend were able to take home a custom Class of 2025 CSIAA champagne glass. This unique event was a great chance for our Board Members to connect with those on the verge of being inducted into the CSIAA.

For our final event, we put on our community service hats and honored our dolphin mascot by organizing a World Ocean Day beach cleanup at a local park. The CSIAA provided snacks and refreshments to kick off our day before we grabbed gloves, garbage bags, and trash pickers and walked along our shoreline collecting litter and debris. Once again, we met a wide array of alumni (and friends) who were eager to be included and get involved. At the end of the clean-up we gathered to chat and gave away some CSI Alumni merchandise and gift cards in a trivia contest.

Following each event, participants received a thank you email from the CSIAA Board of Directors and we then added the email addresses we captured into our alumni database.

Findings and Conclusions: Results, Impact, Recommendations

We received great feedback from alumni, executives from the College, current students, faculty, and community members for the initiative. In addition to the actual event providing great content for CSIAA's social media pages, the promotional posts we created leading up to the event to re-engage alumni on our social media helped provide great publicity for our organization. The completed events also became great talking points for the CSIAA on how we keep alumni

engaged with the College. We also had the benefit of patronizing local businesses and it has enabled us to build better relationships within the community.

The various networking events and mixers we hosted both on campus and at local venues engaged alumni, recruited new Board Members, and reignited a sense of community. These events have filled a critical gap by offering alumni a welcoming space to reconnect with the College, share their experiences, and contribute to its continued success. They offered opportunities for volunteering, networking, and giving back—reaffirming the role the College has played in our personal and professional journeys. These events have not only strengthened alumni involvement but have also successfully brought in new members ready to support our mission. We can continue to grow this initiative, enhance our presence on campus, and inspire more alumni to support higher education and community engagement.

After dissecting analytics from the past year on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, we found there are too many variables in the data to make a conclusion on social media engagement/views. On LinkedIn, the CSIAA page had higher than average impressions overall on the days immediately following 7 of our 8 events. Additionally, 7 of the 8 specific posts with photos of the mixers received higher than average impressions. We increased our followers by 31.5% in the last 365 days on LinkedIn.

Although we could not conclude without a doubt the causation we have found these events were extremely beneficial for our organization to host. It gave us great talking points, photos, content, a purpose, and so much more. The attendees also offered great feedback and testimonials which we have shared in the Appendix.

Through consistent outreach on social media and personal invitations, we've welcomed alumni who were eager to re-engage but lacked the means or knowledge of how to do so. Several alumni who did attend the event commented on how they wanted to get more involved with their alma mater but did not know how and they were thankful to see this event pop up.

Lessons Learned:

After completing the year we will keep the following in mind for future events:

- Find ways to maximize each event
- Did the Board Members do everything they could to ensure success?
- Personal connection- asking people to attend makes a big difference
- The people looking found us and we inspired some of them, however, in order to reach the masses we needed to do way more to make a splash.

APPENDIX:

Budget
Testimonials
Event Photos
Giveaways
LinkedIn Analytics

Budget

College of Staten Island Alumni Networking Club			
8/20/2024	Macaulay/VZ Honors Mixer Organic Rooftop Farm Tour	\$1,421.00	Pienza
11/7/2024	CSI Staff Alumni Mixer Networking Bingo	\$630.00	CSI Dining Services
12/6/2024	Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery	\$519.17	Catering Bill
12/6/2024	Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery	\$40.00	Delivery Tip
12/6/2024	Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery	\$76.75	Decorations
12/6/2024	Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery	\$162.00	Bill Flagship Beverages
12/6/2024	Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery	\$85.00	Flagship tip
12/6/2024	Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery	\$100.00	Rental Fee
1/30/2025	Liberty Science Center: After Dark mixer	\$144.00	Liberty Science Center vouchers
1/30/2025	Liberty Science Center: After Dark mixer	\$60.00	Board Tickets
3/7/2025	CSI Alumni Karaoke Dinner	\$1,026.00	Tokyo Bistro
3/10/2025	CSI Alumni Board Recruitment Mixer	\$445.54	District
4/29/2025	Alumni Pizza Making Mixer	\$1,330.00	Barios
5/8/2025	CSI Senior Toast	\$323.52	Toasting Glasses giveaway
6/8/2025	CSI Alumni Volunteer Beach Cleanup	\$96.62	refreshments and gift cards
	TOTAL	\$6,459.60	

Testimonials

"It was a great event! It was nice to network with other staff that went to CSI. We all enjoyed spending time with each other and chatting about work and the college!" Emily Cummings

"My wife and I had a wonderful time! The rooftop garden was beautiful and we took such wonderful pictures. The food was fantastic and it made me revisit the place many times afterwards! It was also so nice to meet up with many CSI alumni." Michael Luppino

"It was such an engaging event and I even got to make professional networks! Definitely attending more!" Aqsa Naz

"My first alumni event for CSI was the pizza making at Barios. I have always wanted to go to an alumni event. It took me 25 years to finally do it! I had such a nice time talking to the other alumni. Everyone was really kind & made me feel very comfortable. I look forward to going to my next CSI event." Mary Ellen Ryan

"Very fun and loved doing something new with the board!" Nicole Liebman

"It was such a great time! Everyone was very nice and easy to talk to. It was fun to hear what people went to school for vs what they're doing now!" Nikki Gennaro

"The Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery on December 6 was the perfect way to close out the year—great drinks, festive energy, and so many new connections! Then in the spring, the Pizza Making Night at Bario's on April 29 was just as unforgettable. Learning to make pizza from scratch while sharing laughs and stories with others made it feel like a big, warm family dinner. These events are more than just fun—they build real community." Allan Feldman

"It was a great event to network with fellow alumni and an opportunity to do some volunteer work in the community and for the environment." Crystal Deosaran

"November 7th CSI Staff Alumni Mixer at Park Cafe: Being able to partake and volunteer at the mixer was enjoyable and a great experience. Getting to see all of the staff that were once CSI Students themselves, was truly amazing. We had a nice turnout at the event, which met with good company, great food provided by dining services, and a nice CSI bingo game, which was led by me. Everyone, including members of the association, had a really great time.

December 6th Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery: The December 6th Holiday Mixer at Flagship Brewery was an incredible experience! The atmosphere was warm and festive, the drinks and food provided were fantastic, and the conversations were even better. It was a perfect opportunity to

connect with new people and catch up with familiar faces in a relaxed, welcoming environment. We even had alumni wear their best holiday-themed sweater and got amazing prizes. It was a great opportunity to ring in the holiday season.

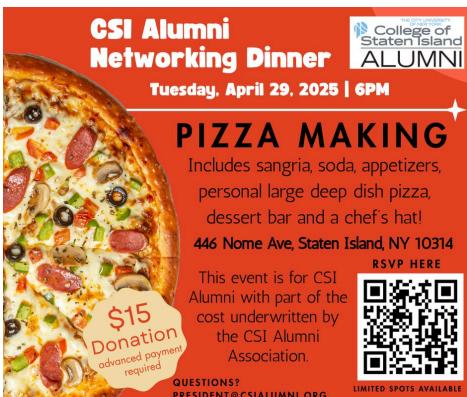
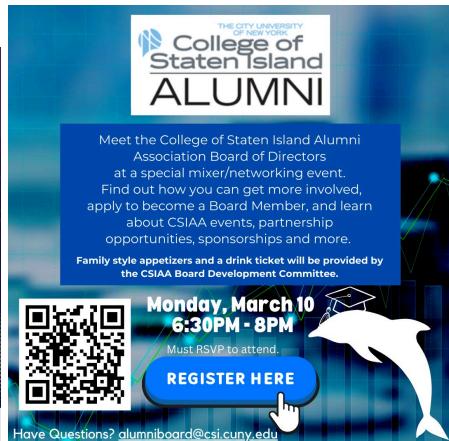
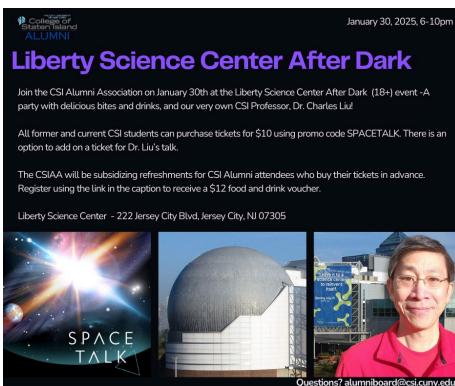
March 7th Karaoke Dinner at Tokyo Bistro: The March 7th Karaoke Dinner at Tokyo Bistro was an absolute blast! The food was delicious, the karaoke setup was top-notch, and the energy in the room was contagious. It was such a fun and unique way to meet new people, share some laughs, and step out of our comfort zones. It was great for connecting with other alumni of the college as well.

March 10th Board Development Recruit Mixer: Being able to partake in the event was nothing short of amazing. It was a great way to meet potential board members that want to give back to the college. The energy and genuine curiosity in the room were inspiring. Events like this are vital for building strong, engaged leadership—and I'm looking forward to welcoming new members into our community.

April 29th Pizza Making at Barios: This mixer was really enjoyable and had by all that attended. We had current board members, candidates for the board, as well as alumni that heard about our event online. The food and conversations lasted a very long time. Plus, who wouldn't forget that we got to make our own pizzas? This was truly a magnificent event and good mixer to meet alumni.

June 8th Volunteer Beach Cleanup at Conference House Park: This was the last event for the CSIAA for the 2024-2025 year, and it was a really nice way to help with World Oceans Day, by partaking in a beach cleanup at Conference House Park. It was inspiring to see so many passionate individuals come together with a shared commitment to protecting our environment. The event was well-organized, and there was a real sense of community and purpose throughout the day. Not only did we make a visible difference by collecting litter from the shoreline, but we also had the opportunity to connect with like-minded volunteers and learn more about local conservation efforts. I left feeling proud, empowered, and motivated to continue making a positive impact.” Anthony Rubin

Event and Promotional Flyers



Event Photos









Giveaways

