MICHIGANROSS
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MICHIGAN ROSS ALUMNI CLUBS
2018 Report

# STATE OF THE CLUBS M HAIL

he Ross School of Business alumni network consists of more than 50,000 alumni across the globe whom the Michigan Ross Office of Development and Alumni Relations is dedicated to engaging, educating, and connecting throughout their lifetimes. Integral to bringing together this worldwide Ross community are the Ross alumni clubs.

The Ross alumni clubs:

- Provide alumni networking opportunities;
- Create lifelong learning and professional development events that advance the mission of Michigan Ross;
- Engage with current and prospective students, furthering the immense power of the University of Michigan network.

Each year, Ross alumni clubs complete an Annual Report describing their activities, leadership organization, and volunteer engagement over the past fiscal year. In addition to providing candid insight into club successes and areas for growth, the Alumni Clubs Annual Report is a critical benchmarking tool for tracking Ross alumni engagement and helps the Alumni Relations team understand how we can continue to most effectively support Ross clubs and club officers.

This year, 27 of Ross' 50 international and U.S.-based alumni clubs responded to the Annual Report survey, providing us with a wealth of valuable information we believe our club officers will find just as useful. While each club serves an alumni demographic unique to its region or affinity, club officers can still learn much from their peer clubs' most successful events and practices as well as areas of challenge.

The Ross Development and Alumni Relations Office's initial State of the Clubs Report utilizes information from the Annual Reports of the 27 participating clubs, along with data the Alumni Relations team collected throughout the year, to present a baseline portrait of the Ross alumni clubs' FY2018 performance. The first two pages following this introduction present data on club leadership, volunteer recruitment tactics, and operations. Club events are spotlighted next, with analysis of common club event planning practices followed by brief descriptions of this year's most salient club activities, grouped by event type.

Throughout the report, we leverage club leaders' thoughtful Annual Report responses in "In Their Own Words" sections, including officer-shared quotations describing this year's domestic and international club highlights, successes, and challenges. Serving on an alumni club board is a substantial commitment, and the time, energy, and dedication of Michigan Ross alumni club presidents, leaders, and volunteers is incredibly important. We hope our alumni club volunteers, and the Ross community at large, finds beneficial this straightforward snapshot of the Ross Alumni Clubs' operations and activities in 2017-2018.

Tom Wamsley Chief Development Officer Tawnee Milko Associate Director of Alumni Relations

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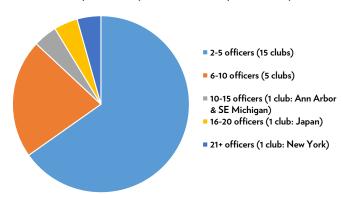
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# **LEADERSHIP AND OPERATIONS**

# **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

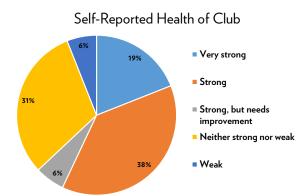
- 149 Ross Alumni Club volunteer officers:
   96 domestic: 53 international.
- 23 clubs have more than one officer.

Officers per Club (clubs with multiple officers)



# **CLUB HEALTH**

**57**% of clubs self-report their health as "very strong" or "strong."



# **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT**

The primary method for recruiting volunteers varied widely across the clubs:

- E-mail invitations, social media, direct calls, and/or surveys, followed up by a meeting over a meal: 25%.
- Constantly looking for/recruiting new board members at all club events: 20%.
- Through personal networking: 17%.
- Recruiting new/recent alumni, including grads who were student club leaders: 17%.
- Tapping alumni who consistently attend club events or demonstrate an eagerness to connect with fellow alumni: 14%.
- Word of mouth: 5%.
- Tabling at Ross-sponsored events like RossTalks: 2%.

Two Ross clubs in particular expressed that their biggest challenge in recruitment is how to maintain volunteer interest over longer periods of time. As an example, shortly after an initial meeting or one large event, volunteers would disperse. The Ross Alumni Club of New York faced a similar challenge and offered:

"There is undoubtedly a clear opportunity for us to better leverage our large leadership team as well as fine-tune some of the positions. The challenge for us was a really good one: finding satisfactory and fulfilling assignments and tasks for individuals to sink their teeth into. The plan is to recruit and engage as many young alumni as possible and to prepare engaged volunteers for key senior leadership positions. This will give us a solid pool of candidates who will hopefully decide to run for office."



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS: BEST PRACTICES, BOARD RECRUITMENT

I recruited two new board members during their transition to Denver. Both reached out to me on their own for pointers on getting established in Denver. During both conversations, it was clear they had a passion for Michigan and Ross and were interested in helping out, so I pitched the board to them and they signed up.

My philosophy has been that we need to have an open door for those who want to get involved, so basically anyone interested in joining and picking up an event is 'in.' Our initial board was recruited through a 'relaunch survey.' We tried recruiting this year via our election announcements but did not have any serious interest. Regardless, we will continue to have an open and transparent process for joining the board. The last thing we want are barriers to volunteerism, so we welcome all."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Denver

# **VOLUNTEER MOTIVATION**

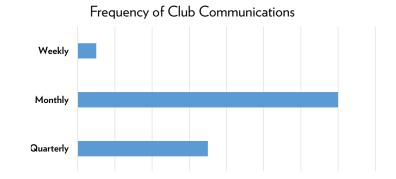
Clubs often offer a number of perks to keep officers/volunteers motivated, such as:

- Distinct leadership roles/titles/responsibilities.
- Annual board lunches and dinners.
- Reduced/free attendance to any event the board member has organized.
- Regular board calls and meetings (with snacks, if in person).
- The opportunity to expand one's personal network while organizing a speaker event.

See more volunteer management tips: rossclubresources.com

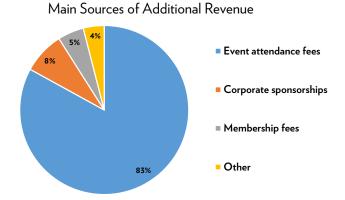
# **COMMUNICATIONS**

Most clubs communicate with local alumni monthly.



# **ADDITIONAL REVENUE**

83% of clubs generate additional revenue through event fees.



One club, Ann Arbor and Southeast Michigan, offers free and paid club membership. Paid club members receive member benefits, reduced prices for events, preferred seating at events, club/group newsletter for members only, priority access to limited-capacity events, and member-only event access.

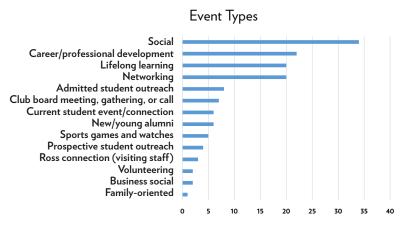
# **CLUB EVENTS**

# **NUMBER OF EVENTS**

136 club events in 2017-18: 104 domestic; 32 international.

# **EVENT TYPES/THEMES**

- The most popular event types were "social," "career/ professional development," "lifelong learning," and "networking."
- While nearly 40% of events focused on networking, other event themes included entrepreneurship, summer interns, technology, investing/finance, recent graduates, general career development, leadership, student engagement, admitted students, healthcare, real estate, social impact, young alumni, marketing, business networks, non-profit boards, sustainable enterprise, technology and operations, women in business, private equity, and social.



# **EVENT REACH**

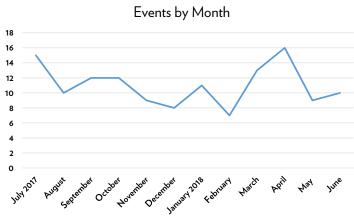
- 2,060+ alumni attended U.S.-based alumni club events
- 44 event speakers were engaged throughout the year.
- 24% of events were collaborations with or hosted by partner organizations or clubs, such as a local chapter of the U-M Alumni Association or the local club of another business school.

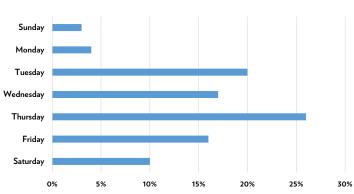
# **EVENT FEES**

- 33% of events charged fees.
- For those events that charged fees, the average fee was \$21, with 8% charging \$5, 45% charging \$10-\$15, and 42% charging \$20+.

# **EVENT SCHEDULING**

- April was the most popular month for scheduling events; February was the least popular.
- Thursday was the most popular day for scheduling events; Sunday was the least popular.
- Evening was by far the most popular time for scheduling events (72%); lunch was second at 13%.





Events by Day



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS: DOMESTIC CLUB HIGHLIGHTS

"I really enjoyed featuring Professor Paul Clyde and getting his insights from the William Davidson Institute as well as Jeff Smith's lecture on artificial intelligence trends/applications. The joint events were both held at Morningstar's beautiful downtown office. We were able to pull off these events with a minimal budget largely due to the generosity of Morningstar as well as our speakers."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Chicago (2018 Ross Domestic Club of the Year)

"Our Detroit-area happy hour was the most successful event from an attendance and engagement standpoint. We typically held this event during the busy holiday season, but this year we postponed it to a Tuesday in February, which was vastly more successful than prior years. This will be our new strategy going forward.

We will continue to promote our membership-only benefits (members received drink tickets whereas nonmembers did not). We grew our membership by 22 new members leading up to and post event.

Our entire board was present, which made the event even more successful, and we tied it to a board meeting post event to discuss our annual goals and fill out a calendar of planned events for the year."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Ann Arbor and Southeast Michigan (2017 Ross Domestic Club of the Year) "We held an alumni event in Conshohocken, PA, that had decent attendance but was more importantly used to plan multiple events for the 2018-19 year. We also learned that all Philadelphia-area events should be held in the city as the suburbs are hard to reach for some."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of Philadelphia

"The most successful Ross Alumni Club of LA events were the unofficial March Madness events around the tournament games. They were low/no cost and engaged a larger subset of the alumni base that normally does not come out to events. It was lightning in a bottle as the occurrence of these events in LA is rare, but we made the most of it and engaged the general Michigan Alumni Club of LA as well for collaborations."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of Los Angeles

"We are very proud of the 'Seattle Ross MAP happy hour' that we put together in a matter of a few days' notice for the MAP students visiting Seattle. It was our very first event, and we had a very good turnout of current students on MAP, alumni, and even Microsoft MAP coordinators."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of Seattle

# **EVENT SPOTLIGHT**



Ross Alumni Club of Boston

# LIFELONG LEARNING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Anatomy of a Data Breach: Identifying, Responding to, and Preventing the Next Cyber Security Incident (Detroit). The event will begin with a welcome reception and continue with the following topics: background, data security risks, threats & real-world examples, identifying the breach and containing it, disclosing and remediating the breach.
- Joint RossBoston & Michigan Real Estate
  Event: L Street Station (Boston). Come hear
  Megha Vadula, Senior Project Manager at Redgate
  Real Estate, speak about how they are going to
  transform a previously walled off and inaccessible L
  Street Station into a vibrant, mixed-use development.
  The rooftop venue has a great view of the
  redevelopment site.
- Conversation with Farina Mir (India). A meet and greet at an alum's home to chat with Professor Farina Mir to talk about his research for the Center of South Asia Studies.
- Women in Leadership: A Conversation with Kristin Berry '94 & Carmen Oviedo '99 (DC).
   Please join the women of the Michigan Ross alumni chapter for an exciting conversation about two alumnae's lives and careers two decades post-MBA.
   Discussion topics will include navigating major career transitions, founding a company, and the unique challenges faced by women in leadership positions.
- RossChats London (London). This event will be a wonderful opportunity to engage with fellow alumni and Ross faculty and staff, including Gale Amyx of the Ross Action-Based Learning Office and Hilal Koc, MBA '10. Formerly a program lead at LinkedIn, Hilal will share best practices to enhance our online personal presence.

- Luncheon with Leaders (Chicago; series). Please bring your questions and be ready for a fun, informal, and interactive session. This series presents small-group opportunities to learn from and meet with local business leaders over lunch. Sample speakers include Bryan O'Rear (BBA '01), Co-founder and CEO of ShapeLog, a business-to-business fitness technology company with patented strength tracking hardware and the world's first strength training data API; David Kalt (AB '89), Founder and CEO at Reverb.com, the online marketplace for buying, selling, and learning about music gear; and Anna Haghgooie (BBA '03), Managing Director of Sandbox Industries, a Chicagobased venture capital firm focused on implementing innovation by connecting established corporations with innovative startups and entrepreneurs, as she shares her views on investing in the future of healthcare.
- Foundations for Startup Success with Stewart Thornhill (Ann Arbor). The club is proud to present an evening with Stewart Thornhill, Director of the Zell-Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies, as he talks about what it takes to "swim with the sharks" and be successful in launching and growing a startup in today's business environment, followed by opportunities for networking and light refreshments.
- Hot Button Hangouts (New York). This series of events offers intimate, small-group learning experiences around "hot button" topics. Each event will feature one to two Michigan alumni within the field. Come hear them speak about their career paths, experience within the hot button topic, and favorite moments from their time at Ross.

- Initial Coin Offering Discussion (San Francisco).
   Join us for a discussion with Anthony Mandelli, a
   blockchain journalist and cryptocurrency expert from New
   York, to discuss current trends in Initial Coin Offerings
   (ICO).
- Ross Alumni Get Together Dinner (Thailand).
   This event featured U of M alumni Burit Kittirungsi, PhD, who spoke on "Data Science in Action." It also welcomed new Global MBA students of the Class of 2019.
- Evening at Pear Plum Cafe (DC). Alum Emily Friedberg has offered to host a small group at her new Pear Plum Cafe in Mt. Pleasant. We'll enjoy a food and drink tasting and hear from her about her experiences opening not one, not two, but three local businesses.
- Artificial Intelligence: Impact on Traditional Industries with Jeff Smith, MBA '80 and CEO, Arago US (Chicago). The Ross Chicago Alumni Club is pleased to host Jeff Smith, CEO of Arago US, the leading artificial intelligence and intelligent automation solutions company. Together we'll discuss the current Al and Machine Learning landscape and human + machine partnerships as well as mid-career training for this new reality.
- Blockchain 101 (Los Angeles). The Michigan Ross Alumni Club of LA, along with the Chicago Booth Alumni Association of LA and LAMBA, invites you to learn about blockchain from industry experts. An expert panel will be followed by a Q&A and networking session.

# **NETWORKING/SOCIAL**

- "Second Tuesday" Cross B-School Happy Hour (Boston; series). This event is designed to give peer business school graduates and their friends (work colleagues, "significant others," etc.) a monthly opportunity to socialize and network in a relaxed but elegant setting.
- Brunch and African American Museum (DC).
  Have you been meaning to visit the new National
  Museum of African American History and Culture? We
  know tickets are hard to come by still, so we've lined
  up group tickets. We're hosting brunch for Ross alumni
  at Woodward Table, and then we'll walk over to the
  museum together.
- National Black MBA Association Conference: Ross Reception (Black Business Alumni Association). All Michigan alumni, current students, and staff are welcome to join the BBAA for food, drinks, and the opportunity to connect with Rossers at the annual NBMBAA Conference Ross Reception.
- Holiday Happy Hour Celebrations, Dinners, and Mixers (Ann Arbor, London, Chicago, DC). From London: The Ross London Alumni Christmas Dinner has been a popular event recently. It's held at a private room at a glamorous London hotel. What was particularly encouraging this year was the number of "first-time" alumni who were engaged.
- Boulevard Brewing Company Tour and Networking (Kansas City). This event was the first the club held in a long time, and many alums expressed their gratitude for the chance to reconnect with the Ross community. It worked well since it involved an activity (brewery tour and tasting) and then time to network over food and drink.

- Michigan Ross Golf Competition (Japan). Fun sporting event for alumni.
- Young Alumni Event (DC). Meet up with other young alumni (last five years) for Phillips After 5 and dinner at Emissary! Phillips After 5 is a lively mix of art and entertainment, including live music, food, and cash bar, on the first Thursday of every month -- but your \$25 gets you admission to the gallery and dinner with other Michigan alums at Emissary afterwards.
- Regional Summer Meet-Ups (Black Business Alumni Association). As Ross's only nationally dispersed group, the Black Business Alumni Association annually works with volunteer hosts in five to ten cities across the U.S. to organize summer "meet-ups" for local underrepresented minority alumni and students.
- **Big Onion Walking and Culinary Tour (New York)**. Join fellow Michigan Ross alumni, students, and friends for a fun and educational guided tour of the Jewish East Side, Chinatown, and Little Italy. Explore the historic and gastronomic delights of these diverse immigrant neighborhoods.
- BBA Alumni Happy Hour (DC). Calling all Michigan Ross BBA Graduates! Meet, socialize, and expand your network with other DC-area BBA alums.
- Ross First Thursdays Monthly Networking (Denver). This series takes place the same day and time each month and provides an opportunity to meet and reconnect with Ross grads. Includes light appetizers and drinks. Note that we have some limited funds to pick up part of the tab, so get there early to take advantage; when the budget is dry, we will shift over to buy-your-own.



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS: INTERNATIONAL CLUB HIGHLIGHTS

"The whole leadership team contributed to the organization of Ross Talks Tokyo both before the event and onsite, working closely with the Alumni Relations Office at Ross and UMAAJ, which concurrently held the Tokyo Alumni Reception right after Ross Talks. This was the first time in nearly 20 years that the Dean of the B-School came to visit Japan and spent his time with Ross alumni. We were so glad and proud of having Dean Scott!"

-- Ross Alumni Club of Japan (2018 Ross International Club of the Year)

"The activity that has been most successful is the Michigan Bicentennial Conference that was held in Mumbai, India. We were able to operate with four core team members who were responsible for putting the conference together. The event was a huge success because we were able to bring together over 200 alumni from all over India to participate in the conference."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of India

"Due to the small number of Ross Alumni in Spain, we just have a lunch with a few members. This coming year, we want to organize a dinner around wintertime and invite exchange students from IESE Business School who visited Ann Arbor and now live in Madrid."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Spain

"In the past, I have done wine and cheese or met people at a local club."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of Benelux

"We host a dinner or a barbeque. Best one was an MBA soccer tournament."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of Chile

"Reasonably successful with Go Blue meetings featuring Michigan speakers, co-sponsored with other Michigan clubs."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of Seoul

"We reestablished our collaboration with Ross Executive Education in Hong Kong. We invited Ross Executive Education students/clients to our alumni events and vice versa."

### -- Ross Alumni Club of Hong Kong

"We hosted a happy hour for admitted MBA students and alumni, sponsored by the Michigan Ross admissions team. I am certain this event worked out well because it enabled several admitted students to ultimately choose Ross over other MBA programs. These students noticed not only Ross' strong alumni network, but marveled at the achievements and experiences of Ross alumni (either through direct contact at the event or through referrals made at the event)."

### -- Řoss Alumni Club of Peru



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS: BIGGEST SUCCESSES

I am very pleased with how our relatively new board has performed and developed extremely high-quality programming. The feedback from alums has been overwhelmingly positive. We have always strived to offer high-quality programming generally once a month, and I am glad to say we have accomplished that."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Chicago

"The biggest driver of our success is we have a sizeable board (~10) that allows members to flex throughout the year based on their capacity (i.e., one person might have a 'busy season' at work and take a back seat while someone else steps up). That said, one of our biggest challenges is to make sure we have critical mass at any given time (need at least ~3 people engaged to operate smoothly). I think we also do a good job of spreading the load with rotating members taking the lead on events with the expectation that everyone leads at least one throughout the year."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Denver

"The goal for me, personally, was to put on more events than we had in the past and to grow engagement personally and digitally by our Facebook group. I think we accomplished those."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Los Angeles

"I think we did well with engaging non-active alumni by hosting regular alumni events that culminated in the Michigan Bicentennial Conference, which was well attended by both active and non-active alums. It was an overwhelming success!"

-- Ross Alumni Club of India

# STUDENT-CENTRIC

- Seattle MAP Reception (Seattle). Join the Ross Alumni Club of Seattle as we welcome MAP teams in Seattle. The reception will allow you to reconnect with Ann Arbor as you engage with current Rossers. Heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served and there will be a cash bar.
- New Grad/Summer Intern Alumni Welcome BBQ (Chicago). We are welcoming current Ross students/ interns, Class of 2017 graduates, incoming Ross students, and alumni to a roofdeck BBQ in Lakeview.
- Meet the Seattle Tech Trek! (Seattle). The U-M Ross Seattle Tech Trek is in Seattle! Over 60 Rossers are headed our way to visit different tech companies in the area and would love the opportunity to meet and mingle with local alumni. Join the Michigan Ross Alumni Club of Seattle for a happy hour to welcome the Trekkers.



# **FAMILY-FRIENDLY**

- Bruce Springsteen Cover Band Concert at Dallas Arboretum (Dallas). The Cool Summer Concert Series at the Dallas Arboretum is a great way to experience the Arboretum with its stunning views of White Rock Lake and downtown Dallas. Tickets will be provided to DFW alumni at a significant discount.
- Michigan Ross & Penn Wharton Alumni -- Gleaners Volunteering Event (Southeast Michigan). Please join us for our second community giving event for Ross and Wharton alumni in the area. Families are welcome to join, and children are required to be nine years or older to attend. We are also planning a food drive, so please bring some canned food to donate.
- Whirlyball with Ross Alumni (Seattle). Want to relive the fun you had in Ann Arbor while also talking to like-minded Wolverines? If you answered yes to either, this event is for you! The Michigan Ross Alumni Club of Seattle is organizing an enjoyable, family-friendly Whirlyball event.
- Ross Summer Picnic (Denver). Come join us for the second annual Ross summer picnic with family and networking fun in one of Denver's pristine urban parks. We will have tasty food for the BBQ along with refreshments; feel free to bring an item to share if you are so inclined.
- Ross Alumni Tailgate: Michigan v. Florida at AT&T Stadium (Dallas). Whether you're visiting from out of town or among the thousands of Michigan alumni who live in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, we'd love for you to join fellow Ross Alumni for a pre-game tailgate near the stadium.
- Send-off Party for Class of 2020 (Full-time MBA) (Japan). Send-off and congratulations party for new students and alumni held just before the students' departure for Ann Arbor.



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS: BIGGEST SUCCESSES

We were able to raise funding through sponsorships."
-- Black Business Alumni Association

"We're on track for our first-ever election this summer and I am expecting to vote in co-presidents. This will be a great way to demonstrate that we have a good process for leadership transition, test out a more divide-and-conquer approach with two leads, and get a new point of view into our approach."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Denver

"We have proactively driven \$30 (one-year), \$60 (three-year), and \$100 (lifetime) club memberships by offering member-only benefits; this has greatly increased our revenue position and allows us to host events and re-invest our funds to benefit our members."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Ann Arbor and Southeast Michigan

"Our goal for the year was to continue to see excellent participation from our local alums in response to diverse and well-thought-out events that provide avenues to network, advance career development, and share with/learn from others."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Washington, DC

"Our country's Ross community has been growing. We started to arrange active events at least two times a year. Our attention has been noticed by local alumni."

-- Ross Alumni Club of Thailand



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS: BIGGEST CHALLENGES

In addition to their greatest successes, we are thankful to the alumni clubs for describing their biggest challenges. The Ross team would like to share some of these commonly experienced obstacles with club leadership to emphasize that other clubs may share your struggles and much can be learned from working together to overcome them.

"My primary challenges are 1) more events, 2) higher attendance."

"The biggest challenge right now is to realize a smooth passing of the baton from the current club leaders to younger team members to complete the transition of the club's management."

"The largest challenge we face as a club is finding consistent and reliable volunteers to help us make plans and run events for our alumni."

"The main obstacle is always time constraints and people's availability."

"Our only aspect we want to continue to push is hosting social events that are not only focused on happy hour (e.g., football watching parties)."

"Encouraging young alumni and recent graduates to actively participate in club meetings."

"Reach is an issue as our region is vast and members are not close to each other and few and far between."

"We had a lot of burnout this past year with members leaving the club/region, as well as inconsistent leadership from myself, the club president, due to commitments outside the club (largely my career)."

# **MICHIGAN ROSS ALUMNI CLUBS - U.S.**

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**Bold text** indicates those Alumni Clubs that participated in the Annual Report.

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# MICHIGAN ROSS ALUMNI CLUBS - INTERNATIONAL

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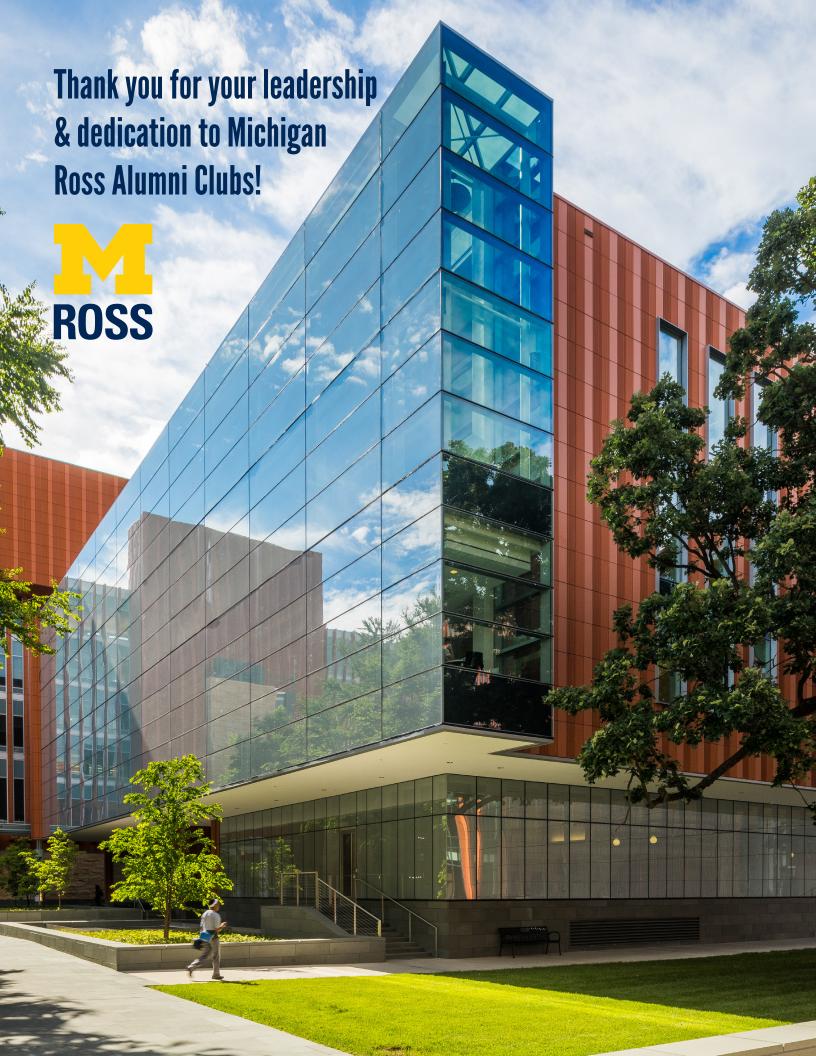
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