

RSE 3.0 – The Mission for the Next 150 Years

April 2021 Update

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to update to the Alumni since the Retreat in February 2021 and to provide an overview of the concept of RSE 3.0. The framework outlined in this paper will be presented at the April 24, 2021 RSE Society and Trustees meeting for review and approval. For those who have not already done so, please plan on attending the Society Meeting. You can get more information on the Spring meeting by going to the RSE.org website.

Executive Summary

RSE is at a crossroads. The societal changes influencing U.S. universities and the events of the past years at RSE have created a need for us to evolve RSE in a direction that will make it more relevant to future student members and to our alumni network. We have an opportunity to create a role-model organization for the evolution of fraternities/sorority organizations at US universities.

The RSE Board of Trustees has formed the RSE Alumni Advisory Committee (AAC) to help create a strategy and executable plan for the “Future of RSE” i.e. RSE 3.0, to ensure that RSE remains relevant going into the future. The AAC has 32 alumni and student volunteers that have been meeting since last summer to gain alumni, student and Rensselaer input to RSE 3.0 including an alumni survey, and two Alumni Retreats in November of 2020 and February 2021. The AAC has taken an iterative approach to developing a new mission and set of activities for RSE 3.0 and has been holding near-weekly meetings to gather input and refine these plans. The result of this effort is outlined in this paper.

The vision for RSE 3.0 is to create a revitalized organization at Rensselaer that focuses on the core values of our historic Society and uses our independence and unique Rensselaer relationship by:

- Implementing an innovative model, student-run, living-collaboration community.
- Supporting the development of well-rounded, academically, professionally, and personally successful future technology leaders.
- Enabling students to pursue their interests and passions beyond the classroom.

- Creating deep, life-long ties between students, our alumni and Rensselaer.

RSE 3.0 seeks transform the organization around three key pillars that will form the basis for the mission and activities of RSE 3.0.

- **Leadership/Teamwork/Collaboration** - Through academic achievement, professional and personal development through networking, student-run organization and community activities.
- **Innovation** - Through entrepreneurship, research, product development, process improvement.
- **Social Responsibility** - Through activities involving sustainability, green design, community service, and philanthropy.

The core pillars of RSE 3.0 will be supported by the strong assets of our organization that include:

- **A central campus facility** supporting residential and non-residential Rensselaer community activities.
- **Student-run organization** with leadership and life skill development.
- **Diverse and eclectic membership** where people feel enabled to pursue their interests and passions.
- **Strong collaboration with Rensselaer** faculty and administration
- **800-person strong RSE alumni network** that can support alumni mentoring and networking and engage other Rensselaer alumni.
- **The RSE Foundation, Inc.** that manages four scholarships and support educational activities at Rensselaer.

This paper will discuss the details of RSE 3.0 plan to include the following:

- Enablers of RSE 3.0.
- RSE 3.0 stakeholders and their value proposition.
- Potential core activities of the RSE 3.0 organization.
- A breakdown of key components of the RSE 3.0 plan including engagement with the Rensselaer administration and faculty, recruitment, selection, new member education, student operations, alumni operations, governance, facility plan, the financial business model, and the capital plan.
- The plan moving forward.

The RSE 3.0 plan will be presented at the April 24th, 2021 RSE Society and Board of Trustees for review and endorsement. The AAC and the Board of Trustees would like to thank all of the alumni who have participated in this process through filling out the survey, by participating in the two Alumni Retreats, and by providing us direct feedback.

We have an opportunity to create a role-model organization for the evolution of fraternities/sorority organizations at US universities. The success of RSE and RSE 3.0 will require substantial support and involvement of the alumni. We are confident with the support of our 800 members, we can put RSE on a positive course for the next 155 years.

Background

Over the past 30 years there have been many changes at RPI and in society that have impacted fraternity life and the future existence of RSE. As we all remember, RSE was formed in 1866 as Pi Eta – A Scientific and Technical Society (changing the name to The Rensselaer Society of Engineers in 1873 to separate itself from the cliquish of Greek lettered organizations). Think of this as RSE 1.0. In the early 1900s, the Society transformed into a social fraternity, in the Greek format, that has existed until today i.e. RSE 2.0. The RSE Trustees have formed the RSE Alumni Advisory Committee (AAC) to help create a strategy and executable plan for the “Future of RSE” i.e. RSE 3.0, to ensure that RSE remains relevant going into the future.



RSE 1.0

**Pi Eta
Scientific Society
1866**



RSE 2.0

**The Rensselaer Society of
Engineers
Social Organization
1900's to present**



RSE ?

RSE 3.0

**Transformation to
remain relevant**

It is important to note that all of our current Junior Members are seniors and will be graduating this Spring. We will need to recruit an entirely new set of undergraduate members and a pipeline of future members to support a RSE 3.0. The social environment that most of us are familiar with at RPI and RSE no longer exists. 28% of the 29 Greek organizations at RPI are currently on long-term suspension. Even though undergraduate admissions at RPI are up 39% from the 1980's, participation in Greek life is down 60% with only 14% of the undergraduate student members of fraternities and sororities. Surveys of RPI students show that students are much more interested in the “Return on Investment” of their education and want to be sure they get value for the time they spend participating in activities while in college.

RSE 3.0 will need to be clearly differentiated from other options that are competing for students' time and commitment. The type of social attraction of a fraternity as most of us knew no longer exists, so we will need to transform into something that offers the new student members a clear “value for money”. RSE 3.0 should include a set of core activities that foster valuable personal growth opportunities while still providing them with an environment for social interaction and bonds created by belonging to a focused organization.

The Alumni Advisory Committee (AAC) has been working since last summer with 32 volunteers ranging from the classes of 1960s through 2021 to develop the new RSE 3.0 long-term strategy for a transformed organization. The AAC set about identifying potential future states for RSE 3.0 using input from the alumni and current Junior Members. With the input of the Alumni Survey, the AAC explored many different possibilities. Most of these options had common themes that centered around refocusing RSE on our founding principles from 150 years ago. These themes included continuing a student-run operation, supportive environment to develop RPI students into well-rounded, academically, professionally, and personally successful future technology leaders.

Since last summer, the AAC has held two virtual retreats on November 14th, 2020 and February 20th, 2021. The AAC has been making good progress on RSE 3.0 since our Alumni Retreat in February and has continued to meet multiple times per week for the past several months in preparation for the April 24th, 2021 Society Meeting. The AAC received a lot of great feedback from the alumni and the input has been incorporated into the following concept for RSE 3.0.

In addition to alumni input, the ACC has been soliciting input from current students. Current Junior Members are participating as part of the AAC and providing direct input. In addition, the AAC has been engaging Rensselaer faculty to gain their input on the current situation at Rensselaer, assessing gaps in the student experience, and identifying ways that RSE 3.0 can fill those gaps. The AAC has spoken with over a dozen faculty members and several have been highly engaged in this process. One professor, Clint Ballinger of the Lally School has engaged one of his Spring classes, “Starting a New Venture”, to help us to collect current student input on RSE 3.0 in a more structured way. There are two enthusiastic and well-connected students, one sophomore and one junior, who have been running a student survey and canvassing activity. The results of this activity have been used to inform the following concept for RSE 3.0.

Concept for RSE 3.0

The Rensselaer Society of Engineers (RSE) is an organization that has enjoyed a 155-year relationship with the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. It was originally started as a scientific and technical society and has been operating solely as a social fraternity for over 70 years. The members of the Society are interested in transforming the organization into one with a broader mission on campus. The AAC has gathered feedback from students, faculty and alumni on the structure and mission of this transformation.

To remain relevant, the organization has tried to assess the needs of the Rensselaer community and the ability of a RSE 3.0 to address those needs summarized in the following statement:

“In a competitive and dynamic world, Rensselaer students could benefit from support in achieving academic success, launching their careers and becoming better prepared for the professional environment. In addition, innovation is a key to enduring success in this competitive and dynamic world. Rensselaer students need to be prepared for this environment though developing a passion for innovation (Innovation in this context covers a broad array of

activities including entrepreneurship, and innovation in technology, science, sustainability, and philanthropy).”

The following sections of the paper will outline the key components of RSE 3.0 and progress to date.

The Mission of RSE 3.0

The mission of RSE 3.0 encompasses three missions associated with Rensselaer spanning the past, present, and future.

- Stephen Van Rensselaer's original mission - *“...for the purpose of instructing persons, who may choose to apply themselves, in the application of science to the common purposes of life”.*
- The Rensselaer Society of Engineers' motto – *“In time, through friendship, science and knowledge will [rule] lead the world”.*
- Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D. President, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute - *“Why not change the world?”*

The vision for RSE 3.0 is to create a revitalized organization at Rensselaer that focuses on the core values of our historic Society and uses our independence and unique Rensselaer relationship by:

- Implementing an innovative model, student-run, living-collaboration community.
- Supporting the development of well-rounded, academically, professionally, and personally successful future technology leaders.
- Enabling students to pursue their interests and passions beyond the classroom.
- Creating deep, life-long ties between students, our alumni and Rensselaer.

RSE 3.0 seeks transform the organization around three key pillars that will form the basis for the mission and activities of RSE 3.0.

- **Leadership/Teamwork/Collaboration** - Through academic achievement, professional and personal development through networking, student-run organization and community activities.
- **Innovation** - Through entrepreneurship, research, product development, process improvement.
- **Social Responsibility** - Through activities involving sustainability, green design, community service, and philanthropy.

The core pillars of RSE 3.0 will be supported by the strong assets of our organization that include:

- **A central campus facility** supporting residential and non-residential Rensselaer community activities.
- **Student-run organization** with leadership and life skill development.
- **Diverse and eclectic membership** where people feel enabled to pursue their interests and passions.
- **Strong collaboration with Rensselaer** faculty and administration

- **800-person strong RSE alumni network** that can support alumni mentoring and networking and engage other Rensselaer alumni.
- **The RSE Foundation, Inc.** that manages four scholarships and support educational activities at Rensselaer.

Key Activities of RSE 3.0 – Don Thoma ‘83/Dave Hall ‘80

The mission of RSE 3.0 will use the core assets of the organization to enable successful implementation of the mission. The table below outlines some potential ways that RSE 3.0 will use the core assets to support the pillars of the mission and activities of the organization.

	Mission of RSE 3.0	Academic Success	Professional, Career and Personal Development	Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Social Responsibility Through Sustainability and Philanthropy
Key Assets and Enablers	Central Campus Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study and collaboration areas • Host events and programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host events and programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host events and programs • Collaboration and maker space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use facility as project for sustainability upgrades • Host events and programs
	Student run organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic success function as part of management and operations of RSE 3.0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical management and leadership skills in running RSE 3.0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a new, role model organization for universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to develop and manage social mission
	Diverse and eclectic membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit high potential members who share goal • Internal and external programs geared to academic success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multidisciplinary membership to support balanced development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multidisciplinary approach to innovation • Benefits of natural collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables students to pursue social responsibility interests in supportive environment
	Collaboration with Rensselaer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising and Learning Assistance Center • Faculty engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCPD, Archer Center, and faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severino Center • Rensselaer Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Architecture, Civil Engineering project on facility upgrades • Collaboration with clubs
	Alumni mentoring and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni mentors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring and networking • Summer Arch, internships and career placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni engagement and innovation conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni engagement on specific projects (e.g., facility upgrades)

Key Enablers of RSE 3.0

To fulfill the mission of RSE 3.0, the organization proposes to operate a series of key activities that promote the career and professional development of its members and foster innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit. These activities would include:

A central campus facility – 1501 Sage Ave could serve as a focal point for its members and foster the mission of the organization including residential space, collaboration, and office space, chill out space for study and social interactions, maker space, dining and banquet capabilities, and premium event space for lectures and seminars. The facility will be used by both residential and non-residential members to support the mission.

Professional and career development – Specific activities for its members and the Rensselaer community supporting undergraduate, graduate, and alumni members. For example, RSE could host events with support of Rensselaer faculty, alumni and external resources to assist in the academic, career and professional development of its members. The focus of these events could be around leadership, professional and career development, guest lecturers, internships, summer arch, and job search activities. This can also include local and regional events for alumni and families to maintain networks and to support personal and life-skill development.

Mentoring and networking – A dedicated and deliberate program for alumni networking and mentoring for career, professional and personal development.

Innovation and entrepreneurship – A program supporting a central theme around innovation and entrepreneurship by hosting seminars and events in collaboration with the Severino Center, the Rensselaer faculty, alumni, and external organizations including activities such as business plan development workshops, entrepreneur alumni mentorship, startup space, and an annual Innovation and Entrepreneurship Conference. Innovation can include activities supporting any of the Rensselaer schools. For example, RSE could explore innovative projects in sustainability supporting RSE facility enhancements in collaboration with the School of Architecture or Civil Engineering.

Student-run organization that provides real-life leadership roles for running a facility and organization, teaching valuable organizational and management skills.

The AAC has identified some initial potential activities for the RSE 3.0 organization outlined in the table below.

	Academic Success	Professional, Career and Personal Development	Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Social Responsibility Through Sustainability and Philanthropy
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic success seminars with ALAC • Student academic mentors • Academic criteria and governance • Lecture Series • RSE Foundation Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni, student and faculty networking events • Dedicated Summer Arch and Internship placement with alumni • Alumni mentor program for all members • Collaborative, tailored program with CCPD • Archer Center program for members • RSE Foundation Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Innovation Conference cosponsored with Severino Center and other Schools • Collaboration and maker space • Alumni mentors for innovation and entrepreneurship • Business plan competition • RSE Foundation Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Architecture, Civil Engineering project on facility upgrades • Host events and programs in collaboration with clubs • Student defined philanthropic projects • Alumni mentors and involvement in projects • RSE Foundation Scholarship

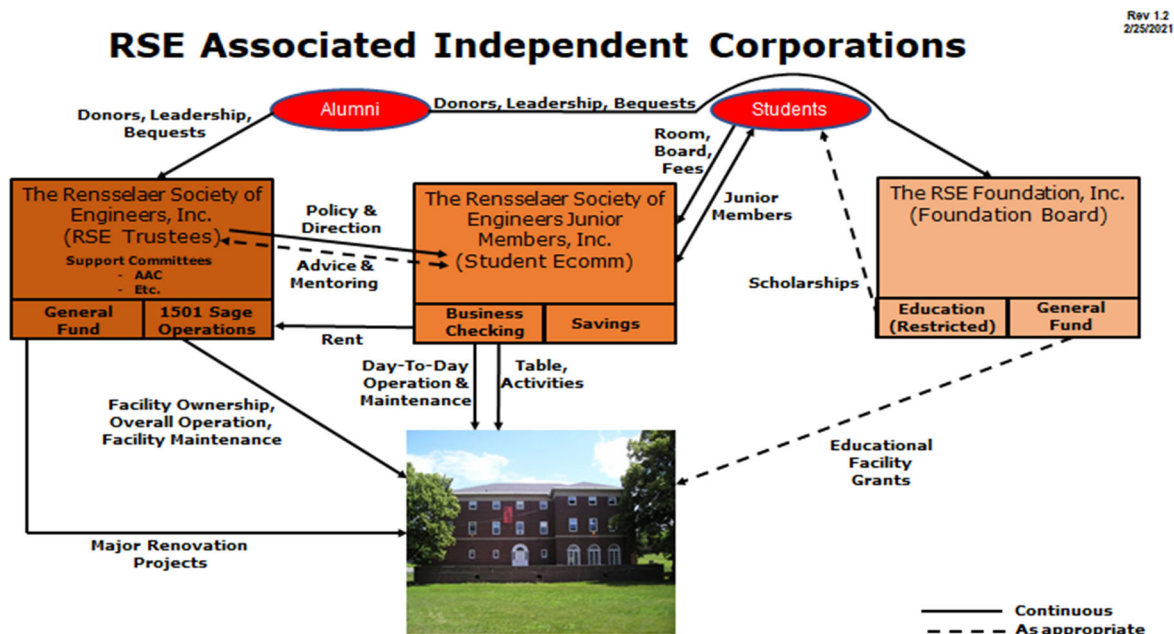
Potential Initial Activities

RSE 3.0 Stakeholders - RSE 3.0 has several important stakeholders. The following is a list of these stakeholders and the value they can gain from involvement with RSE.

- **Students** – RSE 3.0 provides career and professional development through access to a network of students, faculty, alumni, and external resources to support their objectives. It can be a focal point for activities of shared interests around innovation and entrepreneurship. RSE reaches students through direct recruitment, recruitment through participation in events, a dedicated communications program using direct communication, social media, school channels, and word of mouth.
- **Faculty** – RSE 3.0 creates a platform for direct support and amplification of academic programs of the Rensselaer faculty. RSE 3.0 can also involve faculty in student mentoring and networking. It can foster alumni involvement in academic programs. RSE reaches faculty through direct outreach by students and alumni regarding areas of cooperation and the creation of a Faculty Advisory Board.

- **Campus organizations** – RSE 3.0 provides a collaboration partner to help campus organizations deliver their services and achieve their missions. RSE reaches campus and external organizations with supportive missions through direct outreach and engagement by the student leadership and responsible alumni.
- **Rensselaer Administration** – RSE 3.0 can be a positive evolution of fraternity/sorority organizations to a new type of organization with a mission more directly aligned with Rensselaer’s. RSE 3.0 supports the Administration in the core mission of preparing students for their careers. RSE 3.0 provides another way to connect alumni back to the school through active engagement. RSE reaches the Rensselaer Administration through a deliberate and consistent communications plan between students, the alumni and Administration.
- **Alumni** – RSE 3.0 provides a life-long network for career and professional development. RSE 3.0 provides alumni a way to give back to Rensselaer through involvement with the students and the school and provides access to a network of qualified employers. RSE reaches the Alumni through direct communications with a variety of media such as print, electronic and social media. The alumni operations function will be a critical element to ensure consistent and deliberate engagement. The Alumni Advisor Committee (AAC will act as a coordinating committee for the organization).
- **Parents** – RSE 3.0 supports the educational experience, increasing the value of their child’s education and their future employability. RSE 3.0 will also support student advancement through Summer Arch opportunities, internships, career development and scholarship programs.

RSE Organization Structure - RSE 3.0 will continue to be run and supported by assets of organizations that provide key governance, operational support, and guidance to the Society.



These organizations include the following:

- The Rensselaer Society of Engineers Junior Members, Inc. (RSEJM) – The independent student member corporation responsible for running the day-to-day on campus operations of RSE 3.0 through volunteer and paid positions.
- The Rensselaer Society of Engineers, Inc. (RSE) – The RSE Alumni Corporation with an elected, volunteer Board of Trustees responsible for the overall implementation of the RSE 3.0 mission, administering the 1501 Sage Ave facility, providing guidance and oversight of the Student Organization, and assisting in the outreach to and involvement of the Alumni.
- RSE Alumni Advisory Committee (AAC) – A volunteer committee reporting to the Board of Trustees.
- The RSE Foundation, Inc. – A non-profit corporation responsible for supporting educational missions through volunteer activities and administration of the Foundations donations.
- Alumni Volunteers – RSE and other Rensselaer alumni who support the RSE 3.0 mission through volunteer activity.

Key Partners will provide support and collaboration as part of the mission of their respective organizations. In general, none of these organizations are fee-for-hire and only support activities that are consistent with their mission. They will only be engaged when such a synergy exists. Where activities require expenses, the RSE organization will fund it out of operating cash flow, capital reserves set aside for this purpose, or contributions from the RSE Foundation. Some potential partners and their role are as follows:

- Severino Center – Collaboration, advice, and content.
- Archer Center – Support and content through connection with existing programs and resources.
- Center for Career and Professional Development - Advice, collaboration and content with existing programs and resources.
- Faculty – Advice, collaboration, and content.
- Other campus organizations as appropriate - collaboration and content with existing programs and resources.
- NACE - National Association of Colleges and Employers – Content and cooperation.
- Engineers for a Sustainable World – Cooperation and content.
- External resources, e.g. Rotary Club, Tech valley, etc. - Advice, collaboration, and content.

Rensselaer Administration – Tom Keating '75/Cary Nadel '77

RSE 3.0 will require a strong relationship and collaboration with Rensselaer Administration and faculty. The Rensselaer Administration and Faculty can support RSE 3.0 by:

- Being advisors, mentors, and resources to the student management and RSE 3.0 to

ensure consistency and relevance to the Rensselaer mission.

- Providing access to campus and external organizations to collaborate with RSE 3.0 to create content in support of the key activities of RSE 3.0.

RSE 3.0 will create a committee of Rensselaer Administration, Alumni and Student members who implement a deliberate and continuing collaborative discussion. The committee, at a minimum, should include the current RSE Society President, a former RSE Society President or Trustee, the current RSE student organization President, the Rensselaer Dean of Students, and the Rensselaer Vice President of Student Life. The committee should prepare a written charter and set up regular communications. Formal minutes and actions will be documented for appropriate administration of the committee. A potential schedule is outlined in the following:

- Twice monthly meetings to provide updates and receive additional thoughts/guidance through end of the Spring 2021 semester (monthly during the Summer 2021)
- Beginning Fall 2021 Once monthly meetings to provide updates and receive additional thoughts/guidance, switching to monthly in Spring 2022.

Alumni Operations – Nick Corazza '19

A dedicated alumni operations function is needed to support mission activities including alumni engagement management and potential paid positions and external support.

- Leadership and management of the alumni organization
- Advisors to the student management organization
- Mentors and resources to the student consumers
- Content creators for the key select activities
- Alumni consumers of the content
- Financial support through RSE and the RSE Foundation

The alumni operations committee has several goals aimed at the unity between the student members and alumni, as well as continuous engagement within the alumni members.

1. Provide an engaging experience for alumni with regular communication and events.
2. Encourage networking between all RSE members.
3. Provide career development tools to junior members.

Key elements include:

1. Delivering an updated and modernized alumni database.
2. Improving communications across all members through better use of current tools.
3. Obtaining frequent alumni feedback to help improve the organization and role of alumni.
4. Supporting career development through assistance in Summer Arch, mentorship, internships and job placement.
5. Improving alumni networking opportunities through local/regional chapters and decade coordinators.

Career development will be a cornerstone of RSE 3.0. When inducted into the society, each student will have access to a newly improved alumni database. This comprehensive database will allow students to find alumni in their industry. Once identified, the students can reach out to them with their included contact information. This tool connects students to alumni and alumni to each other, allowing for a life-long networking experience. In addition to expanding their network, students will be assigned a personal alumni mentor to help them navigate through the critical years they will be discovering their careers. Alumni mentors will provide general career advice, but also assist in building their resume and searching for intern and full-time positions.

RSE 3.0 will provide other ways for alumni to get involved as well. Regularly scheduled networking events will take place in Troy for students and alumni to meet and share experience. The alumni database will provide opportunities for alumni to reach out to old friends and meet new ones in their area. In areas where there are large clusters of alumni, a local alumni president will establish meetup events to keep alumni active and engaged with RSE. The informal networking function that includes local chapters and decade coordinators will introduce a more structured approach to creating opportunities for members and their families to interact contributing to the social and lifestyle benefits of RSE 3.0 membership.

Recruitment, Selection and New Member Education – Mike Tillou '94/Zach Alexander '21

RSE 3.0 recruitment activities will substantially change from how they were conducted in the past. No longer will the Society be looking to simply fill the Clubhouse, but instead will try and identify a strategic group of students that embody the new ethos of RSE 3.0. The ideal candidates will embody the following RSE 3.0 values:

- Academic Excellence
- Leadership
- Fellowship and Community
- Innovation
- Honor
- Philanthropy

To this end, the updated recruitment plan has detailed a set of recruitment goals for Spring 2021 and Fall 2021 which support the following activities necessary for the success of RSE3.0.

- Gather essential feedback from the Rensselaer Community on the proposed structure and activities of RSE 3.0.
- Finalize the detailed activities of the recruitment program for the Fall of 2021 including substantial engagement from RSE alumni.
- Identify and select 5-10 new members that share this vision for RSE 3.0.
- Develop a detailed member education and operations plan to ensure we can attract and maintain a motivated student run Society.

For most of us, the new recruitment policy will be vastly different than what we may have experienced when we were recruited back in our day. RSE 3.0 will have a zero-tolerance policy for any alcohol, illegal substances or hazing as part of new member recruitment and education.

The success of the RSE 3.0 model depends heavily on an active alumni group, this support will also be critical during recruitment. The following new recruitment activities have been identified specifically as a way to improve the interaction between new members and alumni. Additional feedback and input from RSE alumni is welcome as these activities get developed.

- Alumni Night - 3-4 alumni give a short presentation about what they do now, how RSE helped them achieve that, and how the alumni network will be involved in the new RSE. Group discussion afterwards.
- Speed mentoring - virtual event where candidates get to spend 10-15 minutes getting to talk with one on one with a group of JM/alums. Feel like this would be geared towards serious candidates that are interested but not committed.
- Virtual event in partnership with the Severino/Archer Centers on innovation and entrepreneurship program
- Alumni/Guest lecture - Evening lecture by a prominent RSE alumnus. - Event geared towards larger audiences to find interested students. These could be live Zoom type events or recorded events.

The recruitment plan and activities will continue to evolve as RPI and the rest of society transitions back to in-person activities as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Governance – John Guerci '74

The current RSE Inc. organization employs a structure in which the Board of Trustees and the line management of RSE are the same individuals. Under consideration is an option to create an independent advisory committee to provide advice and recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The current RSE Inc. bylaws will also be updated to include changes in the new RSE 3.0 organization.

The proposal would establish a separate committee of "independent" advisors to provide input to the organization in the areas of governance and oversight of RSE. The chair of this committee would be a RSE Trustee. The independent membership (a small group of about four individuals approved by the RSE Trustees) would consist of non-board RSE alumni, RPI staff/professors, other industry and Rensselaer organization executives, etc. The Rensselaer administration would not be members of the committee since they are "regulators" of organizations such as RSE 3.0 which may create a conflict of interest.

The advisory committee would be focused upon the operations of RSE and the Junior Members. The specific areas of responsibility for providing oversight and advice are yet to be determined but are anticipated to include the operations and programs pursued by RSE 3.0 and the value provided. These areas would also include any emergent issues identified by the RSE Trustees. The committee would report directly to the RSE Trustees. Additional advisory committees may also be set up for financial governance and project control, such as an audit committee. A financial governance committee would not need to be independent of the Trustees.

Student Operations – Kevin Ahearn '84

RSE 3.0 will maintain the student-run organization component that provides important, real-life leadership roles for running a facility and organization, while teaching valuable organizational and management skills.

The Student Operations of RSE 3.0 will include many of the traditional leadership roles required to run the organization 1501 Sage Avenue. These legacy positions include:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Treasurer
4. Property Manager
5. Table Manager
6. Secretary/Academic Chair
7. Recruitment Chair

The new expanded mission of RSE 3.0 will require many additional student leadership positions to facilitate the new objectives and activities of the organization. These positions include:

1. Career Development Chair - This student will be the primary contact between the alumni and the Junior Members. The Chair will match JM's with alumni mentors, post on LinkedIn and Facebook pages as needed and work to ensure that each JM has an internship for their summer ARCH semester.
2. Entrepreneurship Chair - This student will be the main organizer of innovation and entrepreneurship seminars and events in collaboration with the Severino Center, the Rensselaer faculty, alumni, and external organizations. Events might include business plan development workshops, entrepreneur alumni mentorship, startup space, and an annual Innovation and Entrepreneurship Conference.
3. Sustainability Chair - This student will work with the alumni Facility Plan coordinator to integrate sustainable energy projects to make 1501 Sage Avenue a model for energy efficiency..
4. Networking Event Chair - This student will be the main organizer of the networking event at the clubhouse or another location designed to bring alumni and current students together.
5. Philanthropy Chair - This student will coordinate the JM's philanthropic efforts within the RPI and the Troy Community. These efforts might include volunteer work with Troy civic organizations or RPI charity groups, sponsoring campus fundraising events or raising money for charity.
6. Mentorship Chair - This student will be the JM's coordinator for the mentorship program. Tasks will include introducing the program to the new JMs, matching up the JM's with an appropriate alumnus who will provide advice on how to best leverage time at RPI into a promising career.

The specific definitions of these new positions are being refined. More positions may be added and responsibilities may be modified as the plan for RSE 3.0 is fully developed. The new mission for RSE 3.0 will create many leadership and management roles for the students that will provide the opportunity to build their skills. This is an important part of the experience of being a member of RSE and will be critical to the success of RSE 3.0.

Financial and Business Model – Mark A.Vince '75

A series of models are being developed to estimate the viability of RSE 3.0. The current RSE model, two wholly financially separate organizations, will be maintained: The Rensselaer Society of Engineers, Inc (RSE, Alumni) and The Rensselaer Society of Engineers Junior Members, Inc (RSEJM, students). RSE takes overall responsibility for the long-term operations of 1501 Sage Ave while RSEJM, as a tenant, pays rent and is responsible for the day-to-day operations. The objective is to make the 1501 Sage Ave operation totally self-sufficient including escrowing sufficient funds for major repairs e.g. roof, boiler, etc.

Financial implications at 1501 Sage Ave are reasonably well known as accurate records have been kept for some time. Current operating expenses are well known. Infrastructure issues do crop up and are generally expensive.

Paid House positions e.g. Treasurer, House Manager, etc were discontinued sometime ago. The current view is to reinstate compensation for these positions as well as create additional paid positions, as stated previously the Student Operations section. This action will impose additional expenses.

On the historic income side, room rent, by far, has been the largest revenue source. Monies collected for dining or social events have usually produced break-even results. Fees from Out-Of-House members have added slightly to total revenue. Residents will continue to provide the most significant income for the foreseeable future. It should be noted that paying residents will likely not exist until the fall of 2022, at the earliest.

Potential income from non-traditional sources will be investigated. While sources like external grants can be impactful, they tend to be sporadic. RSE and RSEJM are likely 501(c)7 organizations and as such have a more limited universe for external funding.

Recruiting non-resident students can produce additional income. In combinations with a meal plan, the revenue will help support the overall operation. Faculty members may also represent a possible revenue source.

Charging for special events can generate enough revenue to cover the cost of such an event (name tags, food, refreshments). The contribution to the bottom-line may be minimal but the recruiting impact can be significant. (Getting a new resident will contribute to the bottom-line.)

Facility Plan to Support New RSE – Ed Herger '72

The RSE House at 1501 Sage Ave is recognized in the National Register of Historic Places (Ref#100003629) and was built specifically to support the RSE mission. It is the largest asset of the organization in addition to the alumni. The 1501 Sage Avenue facility represents the physical presence of The Rensselaer Society of Engineers to alumni, student members, the Rensselaer and local community.

RSE 3.0 needs to develop and implement a plan to restructure the current 1501 Sage Ave facility to better support the mission of the new organization. There is still a lot of work to be done here and several exciting ideas have been identified for consideration. Possible modification ideas include:

- Enhance the First-Floor facilities for gatherings, lectures, organization meetings, collaboration and RSE administration.
- Remodel the Second Floor to create meeting rooms, collaboration space, workspace and study space for group activities for out-house members.
- Develop the Third floor (and possibly some of the Second floor) to support an adequate number of high-quality residential spaces for the organization's leadership and members.
- Modify the basement to provide enhanced social space and chill out areas as well as the ability to use it as RSE 3.0 "maker space" such as entrepreneurial ventures, subject to local building and safety codes.
- Integrate Sustainable energy projects to make 1501 Sage Ave a model for energy efficiency.

The scope of effort required to maintain the House and improve it for the continuing benefit of RSE 3.0 requires a strong commitment from the RSE organization and alumni. A detailed plan and an implementation organization is needed to operate and maintain the facility, to repair and overhaul the facility including mechanical capabilities, and to implement capital improvements to improve the functionality and sustainability of the facility.

The facility needs to be maintained for the safe and efficient use of the Society. Important measures must include safety, security, ongoing cleaning, and maintenance to maintain the structure and installed equipment, and energy efficiency programs. Improvements will be made to the structure to modernize the facility and provide new functionality that adapt for the RSE 3.0 mission and a changing Rensselaer, student, and society environment.

There are three main components to the plan:

- Current operations: To maintain the facility to provide ongoing operations of the junior member society as well as occasional use by the Rensselaer community and RSE alumni members.

- Major maintenance and modifications: To identify and implement needed repairs and upgrades to real property functions that do not directly provide for current operations, that are not time critical and that do not exceed the economic ability of the organization.
- Capital programs: To identify, design, and estimate cost for capital improvements to the facility that will improve quality of residence experience, provide new functions/capacity to implement RSE 3.0 and to optimize the carbon footprint of the facility.

The organization has a good baseline on ongoing operational expenses of the facility and the recurring maintenance of the facility is budgeted annually with reserves for future projects. Maintenance and modifications including deferred repairs and minor updates to the facility are described in a list that is kept on the RSE Community Wiki, including estimated cost, and is updated and revised from time to time.

A capital improvement plan for the facility named the “Centennial Plan” was developed in 2016 with numerous projects to alter the structure to provide new uses of the space and to enable the facility to handle anticipated needs to the 2040 timeframe. The Centennial Plan included rough order of magnitude budgets, plans of action and preliminary milestones. This plan will form a good baseline for RSE 3.0 and will need to be updated to incorporate the mission, functionality, and activities of RSE 3.0. The facility upgrade will require an alumni facility management organization to be formed to include a program manager, business manager, finance manager, architecture/engineering manager and a sustainability/maintenance manager. The team will create and use a Plan of Action and Milestones Schedule to manage the minor Improvements and implement the revised Centennial Plan for RSE 3.0.

Capital Plan – Eric John ‘95

The capital plan is being developed in recognition of the fact that additional capital investment will be necessary to facilitate the transformation to RSE 3.0. Details for capital requirements will be driven by the AAC, including the Facility Plan, and Financial and Business Model. Initial research by the AAC has indicated that increasing financial scholarships may be desirable from a recruitment perspective and would also require additional capital fundraising.

The initial steps in formulating a capital plan is to produce a capital model with sufficient detail to identify gaps between planned capital needs and expected donations. The capital model is being designed for a 10-year planning horizon and will be populated and updated in terms capital needs and timing with the findings from related AAC planning initiatives. Donation projections are being established based on historic annual giving by RSE Alumni and friends.

The general view is that the capital requirements to facilitate the transformation to RSE 3.0 will represent a significant gap when compared to historic donation levels. The gap analysis will be a central component in establishing fundraising goals and formulating a fundraising strategy. RSE Alumni donations will be central to fundraising, but it may be necessary to solicit funding in the form of grants from outside organizations.

The mechanics of donations can currently take one of two forms: direct to the RSE Society to the RSE Foundation. Donations to the Society are unrestricted in terms of use whereas the RSE Foundation is a 501(c)3 charity and use of funds is restricted to educational purposes. The RSE Foundation also holds endowments for two scholarships which it administers annually. The Foundation's scholarship funds could be readily expanded, based on the needs determined by the AAC and funding from a capital fundraising program.

Upcoming RSE Society and Trustees Meeting

The AAC and the Board of Trustees would like to thank all of the alumni who have participated in this process through filling out the survey, by participating in the two Alumni Retreats, and by providing us direct feedback. The RSE 3.0 plan will be presented at the April 24th, 2021 RSE Society and Board of Trustees for review and endorsement. If you would like to participate in the Society Meeting, please go to RSE.org to see details on attending.

Next Steps

After the Society and Trustees Meeting, we will have a busy summer as we prepare for the introduction of RSE back into the Rensselaer community. This summer the AAC will focus on working with the Trustees to develop a detailed action plan for RSE 3.0. We will be supported by Professor Clint Ballinger's MBA summer practicum class whose task will be to help us develop the re-launch plan, details around Fall recruiting and the core activities for the Fall semester. We are planning to hold an Alumni Summer Retreat and Work Weekend at 1501 Sage Ave the Weekend of July 15-19, 2021. Please be on the watch for more information on this weekend.

The Fall semester will be coming quickly, and we need to be prepared to move out with as strong plan that will include:

- Relaunch communications and marketing plan for RSE 3.0 at Rensselaer.
- Recruiting an initial new set of members and inducting them with a new member education that embodies the mission and values of RSE 3.0.
- Launch the initial program for professional development and alumni networking.
- Begin an initial innovation program with the Severino Center on Innovation that will serve as the framework for future student and faculty collaborations.

Since we will have no undergraduate members when we begin in the Fall, we will need to focus RSE 3.0 on a small, focused set of activities. This will help RSE re-establish a presence on campus and run high-impact activities that will demonstrate the value of RSE 3.0 and function as a powerful recruiting tool. We will need to use these initial activities to build a strong foundation for RSE 3.0. It is envisioned that RSE 3.0 over time we will continue to expand and enhance the RSE mission activities in upgrade cycles creating RSE 3.1, RSE 3.2, etc. This will allow RSE to further evolve and adapt to the needs of the students and the Rensselaer community to ensure we remain relevant.

RSE is at a Crossroads

RSE is at a crossroads. The societal changes influencing U.S. universities and the events of the past years at RSE have created a need for us to evolve RSE in a direction that will make it more relevant to future student members and to our alumni network. We have an opportunity to create a role-model organization for the evolution of fraternities/sorority organizations at US universities.

However, we need to highlight that RSE is our 800-person strong alumni network. Only through the dedicated support and involvement of the alumni, can we successfully transform RSE and provide an enduring platform for the next 155 years. We all are in different stages of our careers and lives. The phase of life of an alumnus usually drives the time commitment they can provide. We hope you will continue your commitment to RSE and provide any amount of time you can to make RSE 3.0 a success. This could be as simple as taking a call from a student regarding career networking or it could be a more significant commitment of time and donations. Either way, the involvement of the alumni has always been a pillar of RSE and with RSE 3.0, it will remain so for both students and alumni going forward.

The AAC and the Trustees appreciate your interest, participation, and feedback in the RSE 3.0 plan. It is great to see RSE alumni spanning 8 decades participating and supporting our efforts to enhance RSE. We hope you will join us to secure the future of RSE as a meaningful and vibrant Society. If you have any questions or would like to get more involved, please feel free to reach out to **Don Thoma '83**, AAC Chairman at d.thoma@verizon.net.

Thy Strength is My Strength

The Alumni Advisory Committee

