

EVENT TIMELINE

FOUR TO SIX MONTHS AHEAD

- ☐ Create an estimated budget
- ☐ Select the date
- ☐ Meet with Special Programs and Sodexo to reserve facilities, discuss theme and overall concept of event.
- ☐ Draw up preliminary guest list and addresses for save-the-date mailing.
- ☐ Develop a rain plan if the event is to be held outdoors
- ☐ Reserve a block of hotel rooms, if necessary
- ☐ Select and order recognition items (award, honor, citation)
- ☐ Confirm a master of ceremonies and the program speakers
- ☐ Plan promotion and publicity

TWO TO THREE MONTHS AHEAD

- ☐ Write copy and design printed invitations and all other printed materials
- ☐ Finalize guest list
- ☐ Send save-the-date announcements to guests (3-5 months prior to the event)
- ☐ Make contact with program participants
- ☐ Meet with a Special Programs and Sodexo to review menu, menu cards, audio visual needs, set up, event concept and decor
- ☐ Decide on music, book entertainers and talent
- ☐ Begin publicity
- ☐ Hire a photographer

ONE MONTH AHEAD

- ☐ Send out invitations 4 – 6 weeks prior to event (included RSVP date 2 weeks out from date of event)
- ☐ Finalize decor and facility arrangements
- ☐ Make hotel and transportation arrangements for out-of-town dignitaries and guests
- ☐ Mail an itinerary to dignitaries
- ☐ Write and print the program and time line of events
- ☐ Continue publicity on schedule
- ☐ Recruit volunteers to staff registration or assist as escorts, greeters, etc.

TWO TO FOUR WEEKS AHEAD

- ☐ Record and acknowledge RSVPs as they are received and dietary requirements (vegetarians, children, etc.)
- ☐ Determine the intentions of anyone who has not sent an RSVP (follow up with phone call or email)
- ☐ Prepare registration packets if necessary
- ☐ Double-check publicity progress with Communications. Revise and update plans if necessary.
- ☐ Send detailed instructions to all program participants with tickets, parking permits, and maps (4 weeks prior)
- ☐ Finalize details with Special Programs and Sodexo
- ☐ Write speeches and introductions
- ☐ Get table numbers made
- ☐ Enlarge a diagram of the room to be used as seating chart if necessary

ONE WEEK AHEAD

- ☐ Print out the guest list in alphabetical order and include relationship to the college (i.e. trustee, spouse of trustee, faculty, staff, VIP guest, etc.)
- ☐ Finish place cards, table cards, and/or name tags
- ☐ Create the seating chart
- ☐ Brief the greeters, escorts and volunteers on their duties
- ☐ Designate one person to gather and deliver all events items to the event site (name cards, gifts, etc.)
- ☐ Plan an arrival briefing for VIPs if necessary
- ☐ Prepare the briefing packet and send along with the guest list (with full names, titles, business and professional

affiliations, and other specific interests), biographies, and the final schedule of events to the academic or administrative leadership or official host.

- ❑ Make catering guarantees and specific dietary needs (vegetarian, gluten free etc.) 10 business days prior

THE BIG DAY

- ❑ Set up event venue with place cards, signs, favors, awards, etc.
- ❑ Assign volunteers to escort VIP's and staff place card table to greet guests