

# 360Alumni Success Story

## International Fellowship Organization

Worldwide Friendships: Connected & Growing with Affinity Groups



[Princeton in Asia](#) has been building bridges between the U.S. and Asia since 1898. PiA sponsors over 150 fellowships and internships in 22 countries and regions. It is the oldest and largest organization of its kind, unique in its scope, size, and century-long expertise with an emphasis on service.

### #1 Priority - Connecting Alumni Worldwide

When Princeton in Asia first started their alumni association in 2016, they asked their members a simple question: "What is the number one thing you want out of PiA as an alumnus?" The overwhelming response was **"stay connected with other alumni through local events."**

This led to the next big question: How would PiA fulfill this expectation with meaningful experiences and limited staff resources?

### The Answer - A Community Engagement Platform

The first step in answering the question was to think through what was needed to plan local events -- list management, effective communication channels, event promotion, and registration tracking. At the end of the day, the PiA team came to the conclusion that piecing together disparate resources would leave gaps and not provide the required functionality.

The ultimate answer was partnering with [360Alumni](#). **"We knew that a community management platform was the best solution for what we wanted to provide our members,"** says Natalia Rodrigues, PiA Director of Alumni Relations. "360Alumni provided all the functionality and ease of use that we needed. And their group feature, a key driver in our decision, continues to be enhanced, which is important to us."

### The Next Step - Launching Chapters

Forming chapters that would become self-managed groups was easy using all the available 360Alumni tools.

- The [directory geo-map](#) gave Natalia a quick visual for the densest alumni populations. Nine cities were identified.
- A directory search using city and radius easily identified alumni in the areas. Lists were created and saved.
- The [chapter groups](#) were quickly set-up in the platform and members added.
- Announcements and communications went out via in-platform messaging and [Emma® email](#).

The chapter engagement took off quickly. And true to their promise, **24 local events were organized in 2016** across all the chapter cities. Not a bad start!

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Natalia Rodrigues  
Princeton in Asia,  
Director Alumni Relations



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## Empowered Chapter Leadership - The Key to Success

Today, the nine chapter leaders, selected and cultivated by Natalia, are self-managing their groups. The leaders were introduced to the full suite of 360Alumni tools and are now proactive in the management of their chapters, without needing significant support from Natalia

The leaders manage the data and lists for their chapter (a huge plus for PiA admins) and personally reach out to members using in-platform messaging and email marketing. [Event planning](#) is a breeze when you can create, promote and track registrations right from within the platform. But the connections go beyond the events. Chapter members can instantly "talk" to each other 24/7 using the discussion board. Plus they can share photos, video and other content via the media carousel and content library.

With the leaders fully empowered, the PiA staff now spends more time on other alumni engagement activities.

## Hosted Dinners - Worldwide Micro-Events

Imagine this. Intimate simultaneous in-home dinners designed for alumni to get together for a relaxed, conversation-filled evening. This idea was the brainchild of a San Francisco alum. Together with a few others, they hosted and curated the guest list for 5 hosted dinners, all happening on the same day and time. People truly enjoyed getting to know each other as an alternative to brief conversations at happy hour-type events.

The PiA team was quick to build on the success. In November 2018, they launched hosted dinners in LA, NYC, Boston, DC and locations in Asia -- 15 dinners attended by over 90 alumni. The feedback continued to be extremely positive and served as the catalyst for the next round of dinners.

Fast forward to Spring 2019. **39 same-day dinners and over 300 alumni enjoyed lively conversation in places like Nairobi, London, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, Seoul, Manila, Tokyo Almaty, Singapore, and cities across the U.S.** To share the excitement, Natalia arranged photo feeds and posted them real-time to their [Instagram account](#) (which feeds into their 360Alumni homepage for all to see). Since the PiA staff cannot personally engage with all alumni on a regular basis, the hosted dinners are a perfect way for alumni to stay active in the community. More of these hyper-local dinner events will continue each year in more cities worldwide.

## Key Metrics



**85+**  
EVENTS SINCE 2016



**49**  
WORLDWIDE HOSTED DINNERS



**9**  
SELF-MANAGED CHAPTERS



**29**  
AFFINITY GROUPS

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"360Alumni made it possible to coordinate events with the 250+ alumni in the DC area. Whether happy hours, museum tours, or expert panels, I was able to target just the right audience to attend and enjoy the events.

– Stephen Stolzenberg, DC Chapter Leader

## Beyond Chapters - Affinity Groups

Chapter groups are certainly important but affinity groups also play a critical role in keeping alumni engaged and connected. And although alumni will often self-create groups, data can drive the formation of new groups.

Case in point, Natalia discovered when looking at profession-related info from the online directory (easily exportable from the platform) that over 50 alumni were in the media/journalism field, which was perfect for an affinity group. Creating and adding members was a snap, and members quickly came to appreciate the networking value.

Hannah Bae '07 is a member of this group and shared news about her short story contribution to the anthology, *Don't Call Me Crazy*, along with launch party dates. She was able to create a NYC-based event to publicize the launch, along with a book reading event in DC. The local chapter leaders were glad to help promote to alumni in the area. What a great way to show support for a fellow PiAer!

PiA is a testament to the power the 360Alumni platform provides for connecting community members in ways that are most meaningful to them.

## Group-Building Tips from Natalia Rodrigues

**Be Patient.** It takes time to build momentum within the groups.

**Select an Alum as Organizer.** Find a volunteer to lead the group. Have them post the welcome message, promote the group, and initiate discussions.

**Provide Training.** You need to support the chapter leaders in the beginning. I suggest putting together a checklist and links to "how to" information that is available in the [360Alumni knowledge base](#). You may want to consider creating tutorials specific to your needs.

Discover how 360Alumni helps similar organizations deliver ongoing value and build long term engagement. [Visit 360Alumni.com](https://www.360Alumni.com) today to schedule a call with one of our alumni engagement experts!



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