

PIEDMONT ECONOMICS CLUB

Post Office Box 8895 • Greenville, SC 29604

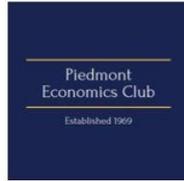
2019 Season Ending Report 2

Membership

Our roster of regular members for the 2019 season totaled 19. This follows a regular season membership total of 27 in 2018, 34 in 2017 and 24 in 2016. Our collegiate sponsors fully funded students and faculty from five area colleges and universities. We have a problem of balance in two areas. First, our student/member ratio often appears out of balance. Here's the percentage distribution of member, member guests and students attending our meetings over the last several years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Members %</u>	<u>Members Guests %</u>	<u>Student/Faculty %</u>
2016	62	14	24
2017	53	22	25
2018	51	14	35
2019	42	23	35

There's a lot of consistency in the above referenced table. A decline in regular membership has created an imbalance that can only be cured with more members. The collegiate crowd has been consistent through time, both during the period of 3 colleges/universities (2016-2017) and 5 colleges/universities in (2018-2019). We should also note the imbalance of age in our regular membership. Without defining the ranks of the older vs younger club members, I think it would be safe to say we have 3 members under the age of 55. This presents a significant challenge for the future of the club. We must find a way to attract young adults as well as mid-career adults.



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To combat the falling numbers in the membership base we need to build a list of potential invitees. We are asking each member to provide as many leads as possible of individuals that would find our product offering worthy of a membership investment. It may be that a guest introduction to the club will do the trick but we have to communicate the benefits of club membership to those we hope will join. We can do this in a number of ways. We can increase the number of member- sponsored guests with invitations to one of our meetings. Likewise, we can use our list to communicate all things good about the club including driving traffic to our website and social media landing pages on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The product content in these areas including who we are, what we do, past speakers, future events, meeting photos, news articles of interest and more say something about our culture and quality product. But first, a solid list of potential invitees is key.

Appy is correct – we have a solid product that lacks recognition. Likewise, Bruce is correct. We should begin with some simple things like sending out a notice to everyone who has ever attended a meeting with a note about future events, club news and so forth. And to Tom’s point, we have to do a better job marketing ourselves.

Just recently, we have developed an Invitee Contact Form that members can link to in order to upload the names, email addresses and employers of those who may have an interest in our club. Once the names have been submitted the list is populated automatically into a spreadsheet to use for any and all communications to these parties going forward. As we attract more meeting participation from invitees, we will follow up with thanks, information regarding future events, website, social media and membership information. Our communication effort must leave an impression of quality with people who enjoy good conversation, food and informative speakers.

We will send a note out to everyone soon requesting that they link to the contact form and submit the names of as many invitee contacts possible. We wish to put a June 15 hard deadline on this activity.