

## ***Dear Ross Alumni: Meet 'Gulo Gulo'***

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As you enter the northwest gate of Michigan Stadium, you can't help but notice the incredible eight foot high bronze statue of a wolverine created by the talented sculptor and artist, Ben Foster. Although a relatively new addition, it has already become a welcome sight when I venture back to Ann Arbor each autumn to meet old friends, watch a game and reconnect with my alma mater.



As an alumna who has lived abroad most of his adult life, emigrating to the UK over twenty years ago, it has become increasingly important to get back to my roots and give back as well. Like most who attended Ross, my life is hectic (being an entrepreneur while also being a father of three children under the age of 20 months was a particularly tricky patch of my life!). I know, life can get pretty crazy. But life is only getting faster, and I wanted to do more.

I was very inspired by Dean Scott DeRue's vision, and, soon after he made a trip to visit alumni in London, I knew I wanted to find a way to start giving back to my University. Fast forward two years, and I have taken on the Presidency of the University of Michigan Alumni Club of the United Kingdom, as well as was nominated and am now serving my second year as a member of the Michigan Ross Alumni Board of Governors (ABOG).

Last April, after an ABOG board meeting, I had the pleasure of attending an event at Hill Auditorium to celebrate our 200th year. Although initially disappointed that the master of ceremonies, James Earl Jones, could not attend due to illness, I was delighted to be told the 'story' of the university through a number of its illustrious alumni (and there are nearly 600,000 of us). Astronauts, poets, scientists, entrepreneurs and activists... we truly belong to an amazing group.

When our days in Ann Arbor are over, our affection for our university is evident in the vibrancy of our alumni clubs. Michigan Ross boasts over fifty clubs worldwide that keep the spirit alive through a variety of professional, social, cultural and volunteer activities. As a member of ABOG, I can honestly say that we are proud and amazed of our alumni clubs both domestically and internationally. And we



recognise excellence each year by awarding three titles: Domestic Alumni Club of the Year, International Alumni Club of the Year, and the Alumni Club Wolverine Spirit Award.

On the gridiron we fight for trophies like the Brown Jug (Minnesota) and the Paul Bunyon Award (MSU). The winner of each battle wins one trophy, steeped in history, and gets the right to display it for one year. Well, history has to begin somewhere, and in our 200th year at the University of Michigan, we at Ross are starting a new tradition. The Michigan Ross alumni clubs competing for the club of the year awards will now have the chance to earn one of two 'trophies' which we are calling a '*Gulo Gulo*' (the genus and species of a wolverine).

The trophies have been designed by the same sculptor as the wolverine in front of Michigan Stadium and hand forged out of bronze. Although similar, each trophy has a different backstory.

The Domestic Club of the Year will compete to win a *Gulo Gulo* known as "Bo." When Bo was forged, some soil from Ann Arbor was added to the bronze - representing how it is important not to forget our roots. As a proud state university, a bit of Michigan terra firma should keep us grounded!

The International Club of the Year will compete to win a *Gulo Gulo* known as "Flo." When Flo was forged, the sculptor utilized some Detroit River water, a river that, if one had the time, inclination, and sense of adventure, could lead to all seven continents via boat. Flo celebrates our international clubs that bring the Michigan Ross message to the world.

Rossers tend to be a competitive bunch, often moreso when we leave Ann Arbor to begin or continue our careers. So, if you haven't already, I hope you get in touch with your local alumni association, get involved, reconnect, have fun and do your part to help win a *Gulo Gulo* for your alumni club!