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## **Schools should tap into alumni power**

**To the editor:** Schools should tap into alumni power

**To the editor:** On Oct. 4, I hosted a roundtable discussion at Eli's Pizzeria on alumni involvement in the Attleboro schools. As the Class of 2000 representative to the Attleboro High School Alumni Organization, I asked members of that group to serve as panelists. We talked about developing a robust alumni network that benefits students and graduates, and how, given the troubling economic climate, Attleboro needs to think creatively about ways to achieve this objective.

There is a vast network of AHS graduates spanning generations, geographic regions, and career paths. This is a resource reservoir that, with proper organizing, could yield beneficial connections for current and former students. Unlike colleges and universities, the Attleboro schools will not be able to fund a full-time alumni relations administrator, but perhaps a rotating group of faculty members could work with the Guidance Department to serve as an alumni relations committee to cultivate a stronger partnership between the schools and alumni. Perhaps extracurricular organizations and athletic teams could work with the alumni organization to establish "alumni chapters," fostering greater communication and cohesion amongst the alumni network. Perhaps minimal, voluntary portions of the dues students pay during "Senior Week" could be used to help the alumni organization expand their visibility, attract more donors, and accomplish their programming goals.

We need a system that gives high school seniors immediate access through a database to alumni who have attended that college, served in that branch of the military, or worked in that field. A substantially improved economic climate is not imminent. In the meantime, we must think creatively to serve our students and the Attleboro community at-large well. It is the best way to keep our schools moving forward and continually improving.

**David Murphy, Attleboro**

**THE WRITER** is a candidate for Attleboro School Committee. A schedule of roundtable discussions is available at [www.murphy2011.com](http://www.murphy2011.com).