

# Leadership Giving



**AMY HUNT**  
*MAJOR GIFT OFFICER*  
**HAMILTON COLLEGE**

**ALEX GRISWOLD**  
*GIFT OFFICER*  
**DAVIDSON COLLEGE**

# What is leadership giving?



- **Stewardship recognition for donors at min. level.**
- **90+/10% principle:**
  - 10% of leadership donors
  - 90% of dollars raised annually

# Why leadership giving societies?



- Challenges donors to increase giving.
- Helps to create a culture of *philanthropy*.
- Narrows focus for development officers' attention.

# Significance



- Engagement → Leadership Giving → Major Gifts
- Davidson
- Build a *community* around philanthropy

# Growing the pipeline



- **Mass appeal -> Self-Selecting**
- **Volunteer Engagement**
- **Prospect discovery and cultivation  
("the donor relationship")**
- **Young Alumni Leadership**
- **Reunion Giving**


# Mass Appeal



- **What matters most?**
  - Variable text vs. unique appeal
  - From who?
  - Timing & Frequency
    - ✦ Young alumni
    - ✦ Reunion
      - Year on year
      - Milestone
- **Donor research**
  - Hamilton: Arts and Sciences Group
    - ✦ what vs. why

# Volunteer Engagement



- Cultivating new volunteers
- Strategic opportunity to increase engagement
- Positioning: peer influence
- Moves management  long view: Board level
- Volunteer Management: MGO vs. AFO
  - Open question: what works? (consider long view)

# “Development” :: Donor Relationship



- **Why not leadership donor?**
  - #1 answer: Not asked!
- **Step 1: Establish Capacity + Inclination + Readiness**
- **Step 2: Learn donor motivation**
- **Step 3: Create awareness of leadership society**
  - **Investors** seeking to establish themselves as alumni leaders.
  - Open question: What else compels donor?



# Young Alumni Leadership



- Current young alumni are the school's future leaders and major gifts prospects.
- Engages young alumni immediately
- Gets young alumni thinking about philanthropy
- Step one in the donor cultivation process

# Reunion Giving



- Opportunity for alumni to think about their annual giving level
- One time increased gift vs *Sustained Leadership Giving*

# Motivation



- **How?**
  - **Recognition**
    - ✦ Exclusive dinners
    - ✦ Small group cultivation events
    - ✦ 1:1 stewardship
    - ✦ Honor Roll
  - **Access**
    - ✦ Senior staff
    - ✦ Board of Trustees
    - ✦ Other
  - **Information**
    - ✦ Conference calls (senior staff / BOT)
    - ✦ What matters to donors? (Think: *Insider*)
  - **What else?**

# Participation vs. Giving



- **Participation = Feel Good**
  - Donors
  - Prospective students
  - *Community*
- **Does participation focus hurt us?**
  - Under-performance
  - # Solicitations: donor fatigue
  - Sight-setting (campaign)
- **Does it help?**
  - Build a habit
  - Reminder to donors: think *philanthropy*
    - ✦ *Where are we in your priorities?*

# Questions/Discussion



- **How does it work at your organization?**
  - Matrix management: gift officers / volunteer / ask / goal
  - Gift officers and soliciting for Leadership Giving
- **How do we grow the leadership pipeline?**
  - Improving volunteer management
    - ✦ Training :: Make. *The*. Ask. (please!)
  - Ask amounts
    - ✦ Donor-by-donor vs. Pyramid-focused (Goal)