Paula Calhoun, Director of Grants & Prospect Management
Megan Mauck, Director of Alumni & Constituent Engagement

Project Title: Increasing Alumni Engagement through Affinity Driven Philanthropy

Purpose of the Grant Project

Our goal was to increase alumni engagement and support for the university by focusing our philanthropic education (graduating students) and efforts on specific affinity groups with a concerted effort. Crucial components of this goal were to engage students sooner by increasing their philanthropic awareness before they graduate and focusing on specific affinity groups that we had not previously reached in a strategic way.

Grant funds assisted with the purchase GiveCampus software. We are a small staff having only 8 employees total in our Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations to service more than 20,000 living alumni. Because of our staff limitations, we are working to streamline our efforts and be more efficient in the ways we reach out to alumni.

Several highlights of the GiveCampus software:

- ability for alumni to issue challenges to one another by major, class year, sport, clubs, etc
- mapping feature showing the location of donors
- ability to set goals by dollars and number of donors, allowing for a greater focus on participation

Scope of the Grant Project

We planned to utilize GiveCampus software to help with 2 goals:

1. Educating current students on philanthropic efforts and the critical role that alumni play in supporting them during their time at the university.
2. Increasing philanthropic engagement with alumni by targeting specific areas of affinity (with a strong emphasis on young alumni).

The four specific areas we planned to focus on were Homecoming/Class Giving (new program), Day of Giving, Senior Class Giving (new program) and Athletics. By concentrating on areas that

focus on strong affinity, we hoped to increase engagement not only financially but by encouraging young alumni to stay involved with areas on campus that were of importance to them while students. The goal of the increased engagement was to result in greater networking between young alumni and current students and faculty, providing opportunities for them to connect and network to raise funds for programs.

Process, Timeline, and Methodology of Grant Project:

Each campaign utilized GiveCampus software to help connect with alumni. The networking features and ability for the donor to create his/her own challenges for other alumni was a great way to allow alumni to engage more organically with one another.

Implemented campaigns:

1. Battle of the Decades campaign – This was done in conjunction with Homecoming (September 13-14, 2019) and featured a giving competition between graduation decades (ex: 1950's, 1960's, etc). Due to legal departments from the university and GiveCampus going back and forth on contract wording, we did not get access to GiveCampus software until the week of Homecoming. This obviously didn't allow time to fully execute a campaign but we did advertise it on campus/social media the weekend of Homecoming to have a trial run with the GiveCampus software. This resulted in 7 gifts totaling $385. While this wasn't a success from a dollars perspective, we were pleased with the functionality of the software and received some positive feedback from donors in regards to their experience.

2. Volleyball Team Day of Giving – Our volleyball team has done some sort of digital campaign in the past but welcomed the opportunity to use GiveCampus this year. Their campaign on November 29, 2019 resulted in 31 gifts totaling $2,545. Of the 31 donors, 3 were first-time gifts, 8 were lapsed donors that re-engaged, 20 were alumni (7 of which were lapsed donors). This was a nice increase from the previous year's efforts by the team (2018 = 15 donors totaling $900, 8 of which were alumni). Of particular interest was the networking capability to help reach more donors (particularly alumni who are not currently engaged with the university). Having this capability resulted in 175 clicks, 4 donors and $180 in gifts. A highlight was a personal plea video that an alumna did on her own that was very heartfelt and generated more activity. With permission of this donor, we shared her video with other donors so they could know the impact their investments had on her Malone University experience.

3. Day of Giving – March 17, 2020 was Malone's 128th birthday and our fifth annual Day of Giving. We collaborated with EAB who was assisting us with our annual giving campaigns this year to help with efficiency in regards to email, social media ads and targeting alumni donors who are more likely to engage. We secured $50,000 in challenge funds. Our goal was 200 donors and we exceeded our goal totaling 255 donors for a total

of more than $91,000. This was a little lower than our previous total in 2019 of $108,000 however, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the university shut down days before our Day of Giving. There was much conversation about whether or not to postpone this event but we did not anticipate there would be a better window between March and the end of our fiscal year (June 30, 2020) so we proceeded with our March 17 date. We considered this a huge success given the many challenges and did not have one critical response in regards to us having the campaign at this time.

Postponed Campaigns:

1. Senior Class Giving – Our goal was to focus on participation of graduating students during the spring 2020 semester, encouraging them to make their first gift. In exchange for their first alumni gift, they were to receive a zipper pull to be worn on their graduation gown and be acknowledged in the commencement program as a philanthropic student. Our Alumni Executive Board was in full support and donated the funds to cover the cost of the zipper pulls. Due to coronavirus our campus was forced to shut down, commencement was pushed back to August and then the August date was cancelled. Because of these changes we did not feel comfortable implementing a new giving campaign. However, we have all the components in place and plan to implement this program in spring 2021.

2. Athletics – We had planned to have a competitive fundraising campaign with our athletic teams where teams would complete to have the most donors to their program. We were to secure a "prize" gift from a donor to award to the team with the greatest amount of donors. Due to coronavirus, our winter and spring sports were cancelled and student returned home when the campus closed. Because of these extreme circumstances, we did not feel implementing a new competitive fundraising campaign would be well received. We hope to implement this type of program this year, assuming athletics are able to continue to compete in the midst of the pandemic.

The coronavirus drastically altered our plans for this past year. The good news is we were able to renew our subscription to GiveCampus and plan to implement the campaigns that were postponed last year. So while we did not complete all the programs we had hoped, we have the foundations prepared and are ready to forge ahead this year.

Grant Project Budget:

Total cost of Project: $9,540

Total amount of grant: $3,500

Malone's project contribution: $6,040

Budget outline for the project:

      $6,340 platform fee

$3,200 payments services fee

$9,540 total ($100,000 subscription level – allows for up to $100,000 funds raised)

This includes all credit card and processing fees so 100% of funds raised went directly to the university.

Findings and Impact to Future Alumni Programming:

Overall we were very pleased with the functionality of GiveCampus and how alumni were able to issue their own giving challenges and identify with their graduation class, geographic location, etc. We found that donors enjoyed the more real-time, interactive software and it gave us the option to focus on participation (number of donors) rather than just dollars. This is encouraging to young alumni in particular as they may not be able to contribute large amounts but enjoy being part of a larger project to benefit the university.

We felt it was successful enough that we have opted to renew our subscription for the coming year and plan to implement the campaigns that we were unable to due to the pandemic. Of course it was extremely disappointing to only get to complete some of the projects we had planned but given the pandemic, drastic changes in our approach were required. In spite of the many unexpected obstacles we were able to exceed our unrestricted fundraising goal of $1.03M by over $50,000. This was the highest unrestricted amount raised in the history of the institution. So while it wasn't the year we had planned, our ability to adjust and leverage the resources and programs available to us proved to be valuable and ultimately resulted in a successful year.