

Communicating Gift Impact

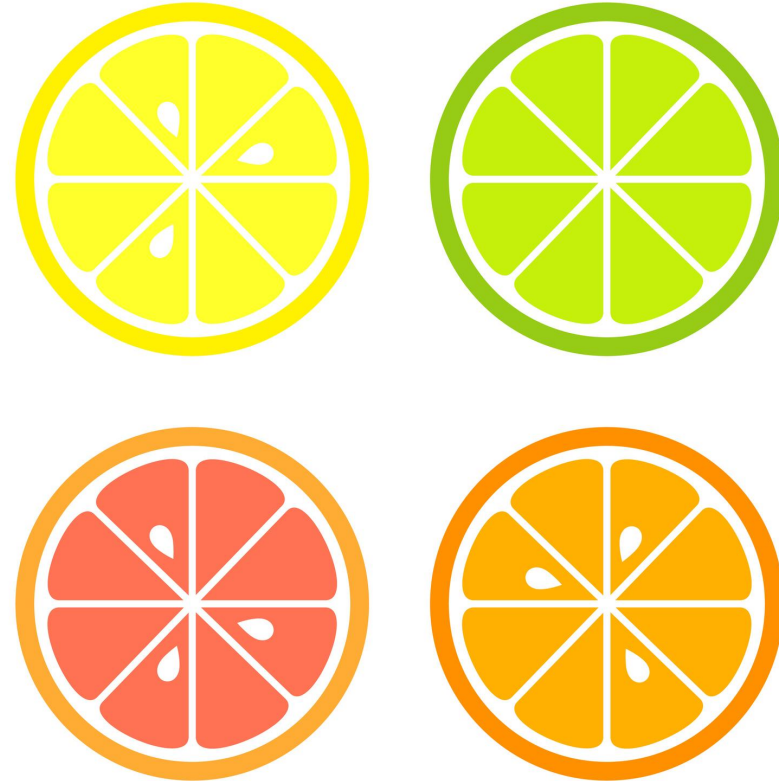
Agenda

- Explaining the role of annual giving
- Crafting messages about impact
- Developing content for different donor segments
- Conveying impact across multiple channels

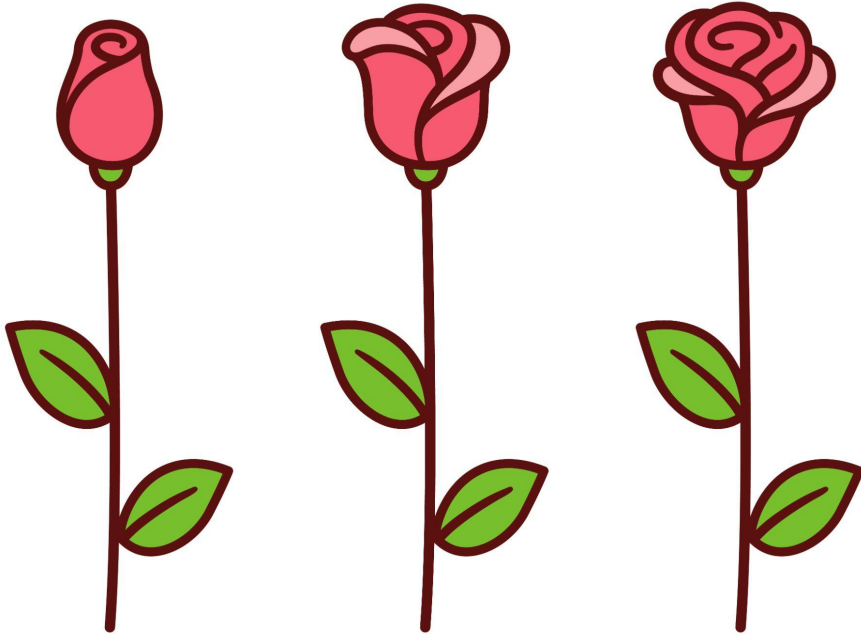
EXPLAINING THE ROLE OF ANNUAL GIVING

Understand differences in annual giving definitions

- Unrestricted gifts
- Gifts < \$ amount
- Gifts from a direct appeal
- Any current-use gift
- Non-endowment, non-capital gifts



Appreciate commonalities



- Spendable
- Operating support
- Immediate impact
 - \$5k annual fund gift = \$100k endowed gift
- Repeatable/reliable

Compare unrestricted and designated support

Unrestricted

- Supports institutional priorities
- Flexible
- Broad
- Immediate

Designated

- Aligns with donor interests
- Direct
- Specific
- Immediate

Consider what “annual giving” is not

- **Annual fund:** financial accounting term
- **Major giving:** larger; takes time to cultivate; often supports endowment or capital
- **Membership:** implies quid pro quo vs. act of philanthropy



Know your audience



- Assume that most donors don't understand annual giving as well as you do
- Appreciate varying levels of familiarity with annual giving
- Develop common language to help all donors grasp how your institution defines annual giving

Take trends into account

- *Unrestricted* support is becoming less popular—especially with younger audiences
- Alumni participation rates are in decline nationally
- Competition from other nonprofits is increasing as the # of NPOs grows
- Solicitation and communication channels are changing as new technologies are introduced



Realize why it's important to communicate impact



- Humanize your efforts
- Educate and excite donors
- Dispel myths
- Build trust
- Center and focus your stewardship strategies
- Increase donor retention

CRAFTING MESSAGES ABOUT IMPACT

Identify who/what benefits from annual support

- Students
- Faculty
- Programs
- Facilities
- Projects



Focus not on the money, but what it *does*



- Avoid bragging about arbitrary gift totals
 - *We raised \$100,000!*
- Provide context
 - *Your support helped raise \$100,000 to increase student access!*

Develop a library of impact stories and examples

- Collect all impact stories you come across—not just the ones you seek out
- Be sure to catalog important information (e.g., name, affiliation, date, source)
- Don't be afraid to repurpose
- Look to beneficiaries and insiders



Solicit input from students

- What is your background?
- How did you end up here?
- What are you studying?
- What role did financial aid play in your experience here?
- What facilities, places, or technologies are you enjoying the most?
- What do you plan to do after graduation? What are your long-term plans?
- What do you want to say to donors who support you?



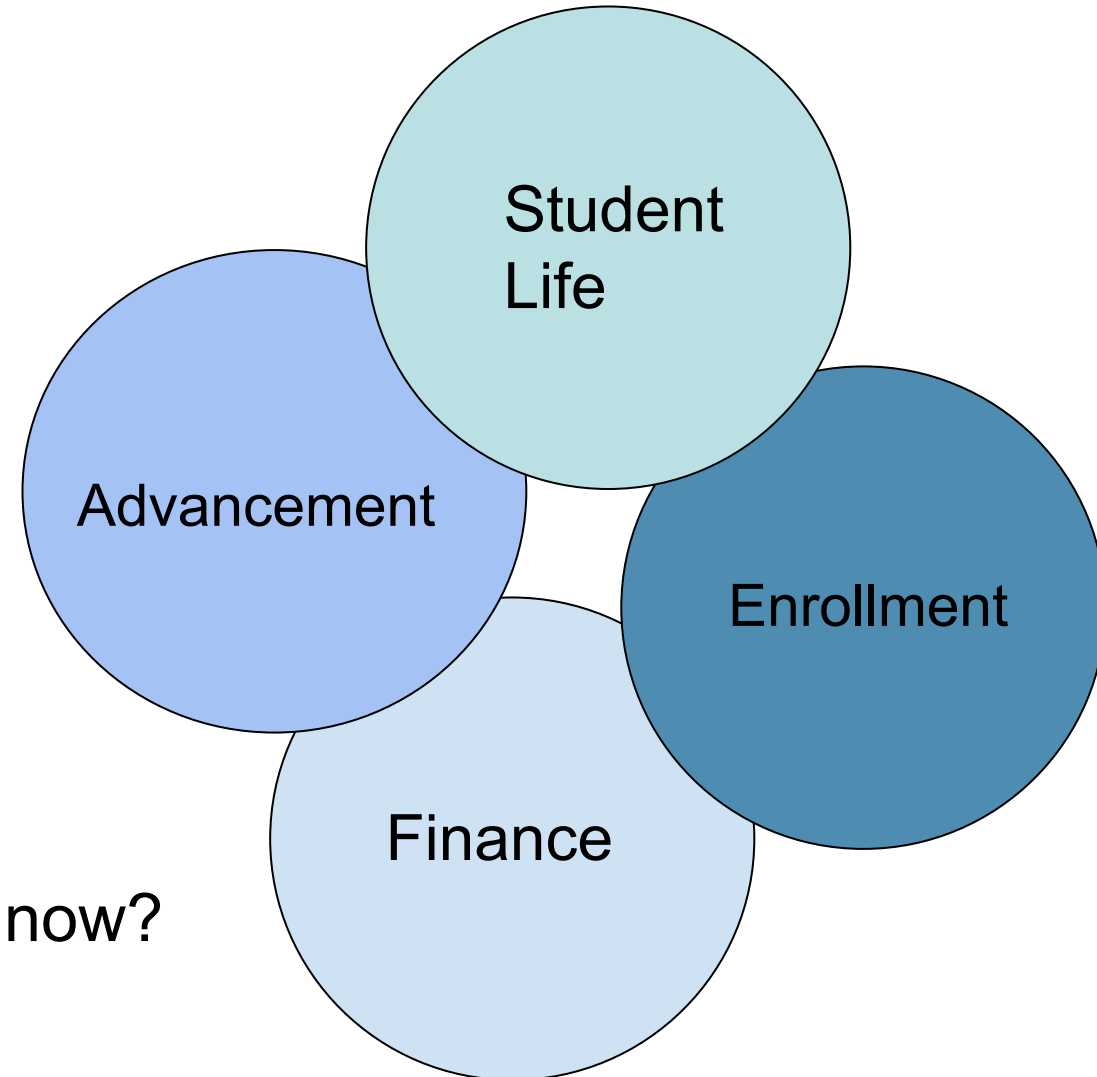
Include faculty perspectives



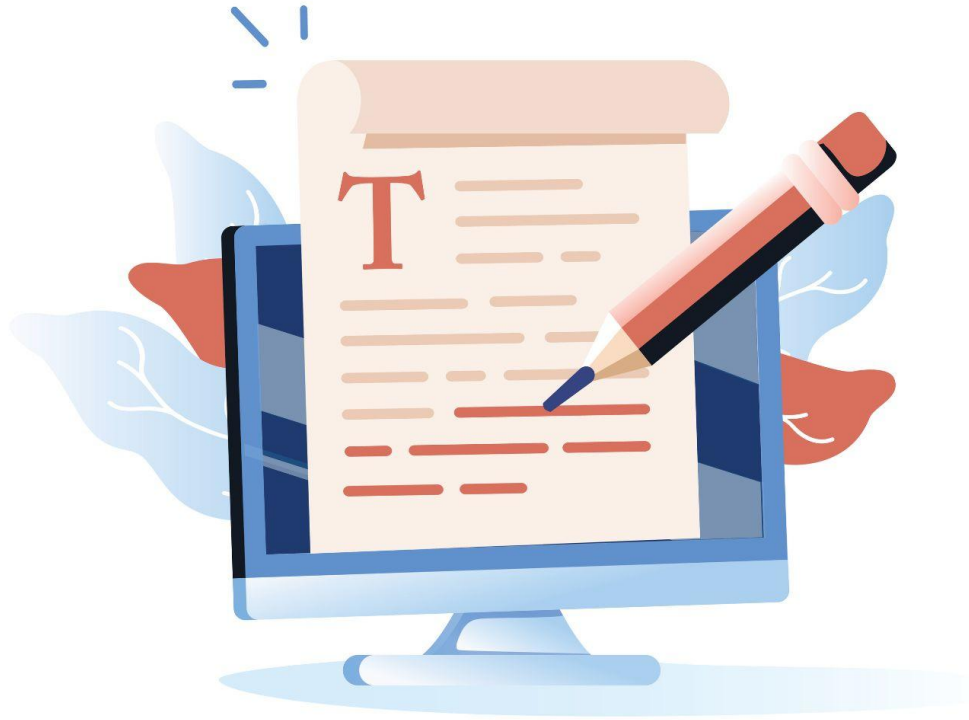
- What is your background?
 - How did you end up here?
 - What are you working on/focused on now?
 - What are you most proud of about your work here?
 - What stands out to you when you think of today's students?
 - Why do you think annual giving is important?
-
- How would you be affected if annual support were not available?
 - What do you want to say to donors who support you?

Don't forget to ask administrators

- What sets this institution apart from other schools?
- Why is the annual fund and/or unrestricted support important?
- What are some specific examples of people/things that are impacted by unrestricted support from donors?
- What would happen if annual support were not available?
- What is the institution's greatest need right now?



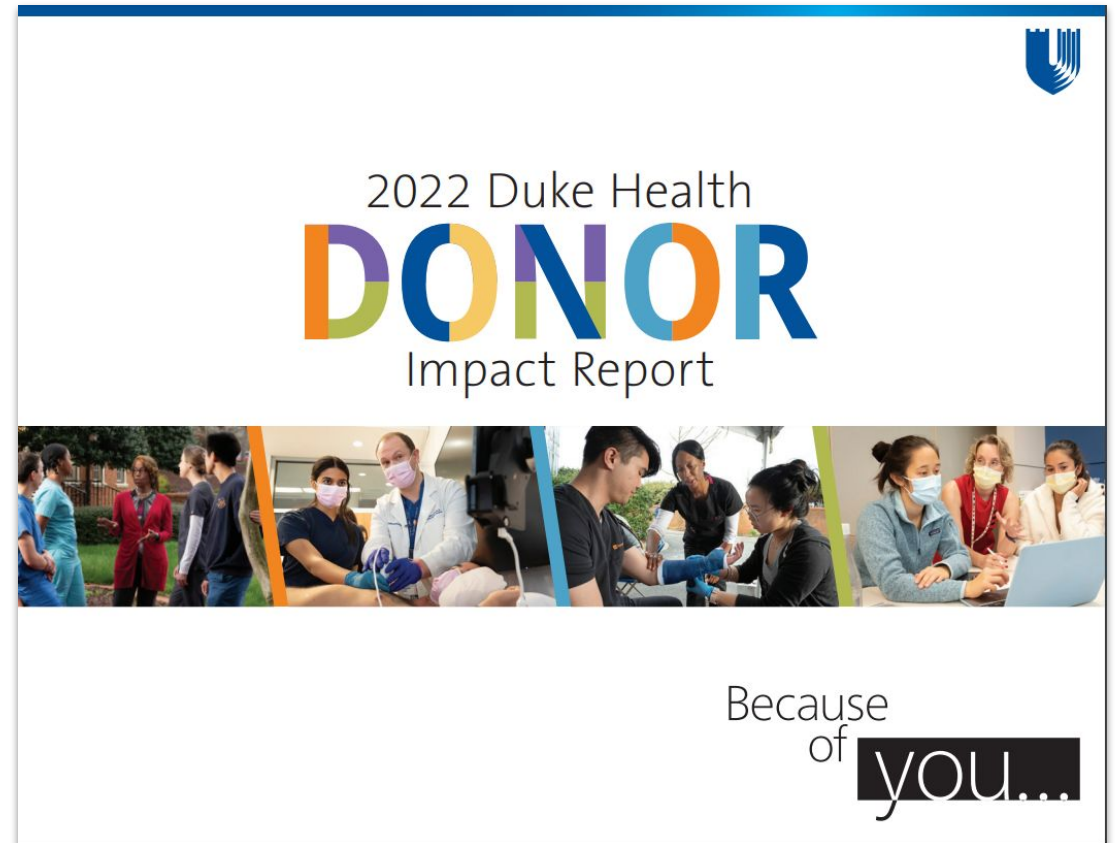
Choose your words carefully



- Immediate
- Today
- Helps
- Provides
- Empowers
- Access
- Tomorrow
- Future
- Flexibility
- *You*

Select the right images

- Strike a balance between people and things
- Highlight smiling faces
- Match the story: If you're talking about a scholarship recipient, then include their picture
- Avoid stock imagery
- Make sure photo quality is high
- Be sure to get permission



Source: Duke Health System

Use compelling statistics



400+

students made gifts
on Rutgers Giving
Day



36%

of all donors made
their first-ever gift to
Rutgers



\$322K

for scholarships and
college access,
keeping students on
track to realize their
dreams



\$27K

for Rutgers Summer
Service Internships to
help students pursue
the common good in
communities
nationwide

- Keep it simple
- Use round numbers
- Focus on good news
- Feature positive trends
- Describe outcomes

*Source:
Rutgers University*

Incorporate video often



Source: New York University

Focus on the future



**Our
Appreciation
for you
Keeps
Growing!**

Thank you for planting the seed for **Marywood's bright future** with your generous donation this past year. Because of your support, **Marywood students continue to learn, thrive, and grow to be influencers for good in the world.**

Thank you for a blooming year!

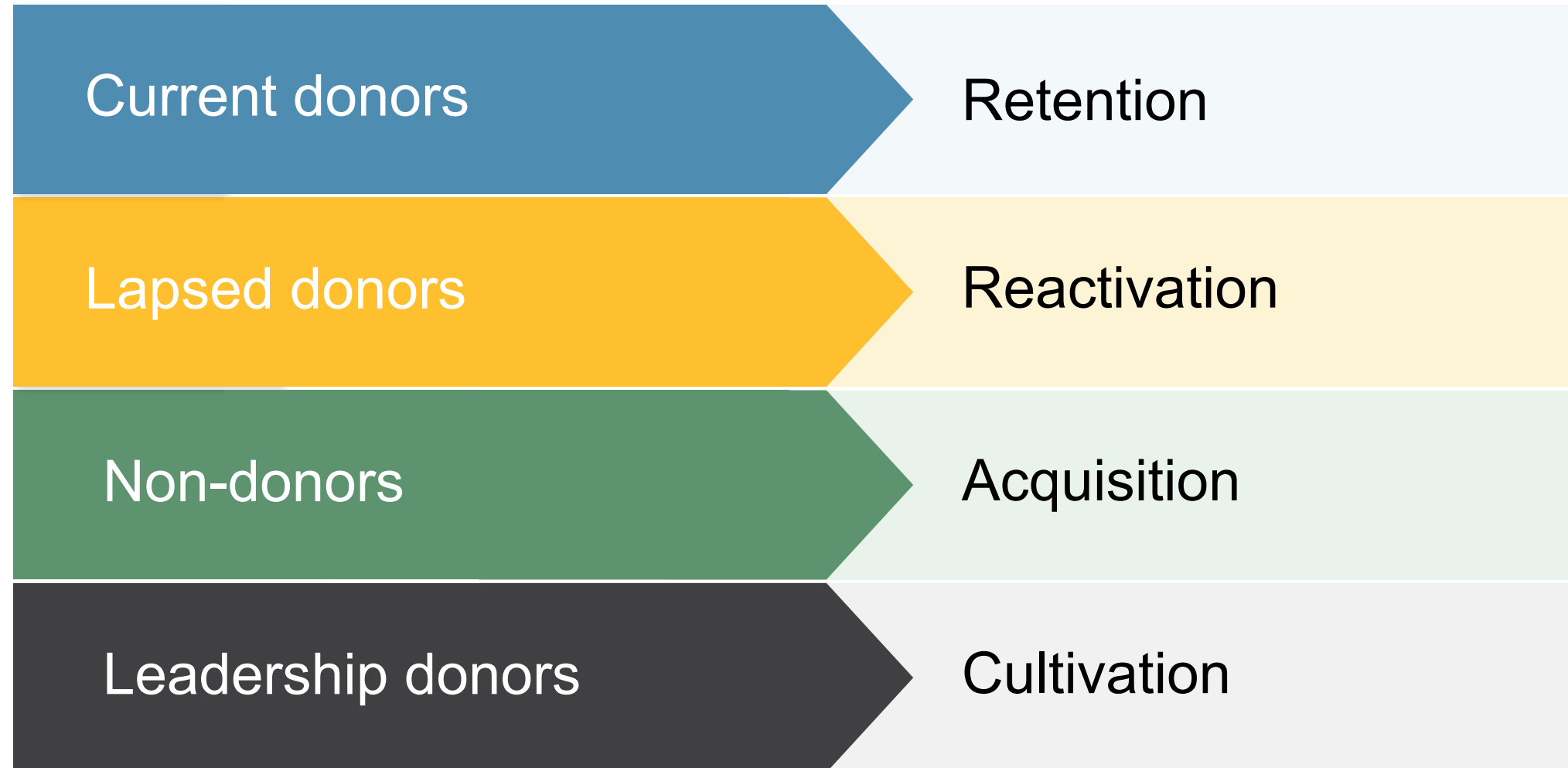
The paper flowerpot is embedded with annual and perennial wildflower seeds. Plant under a thin layer of soil and water daily until seedlings are well-established.

» marywood.edu/makeagift | 570.348.6238

Source:
Marywood University

DEVELOPING CONTENT FOR DIFFERENT DONOR SEGMENTS

Consider the primary donor segments



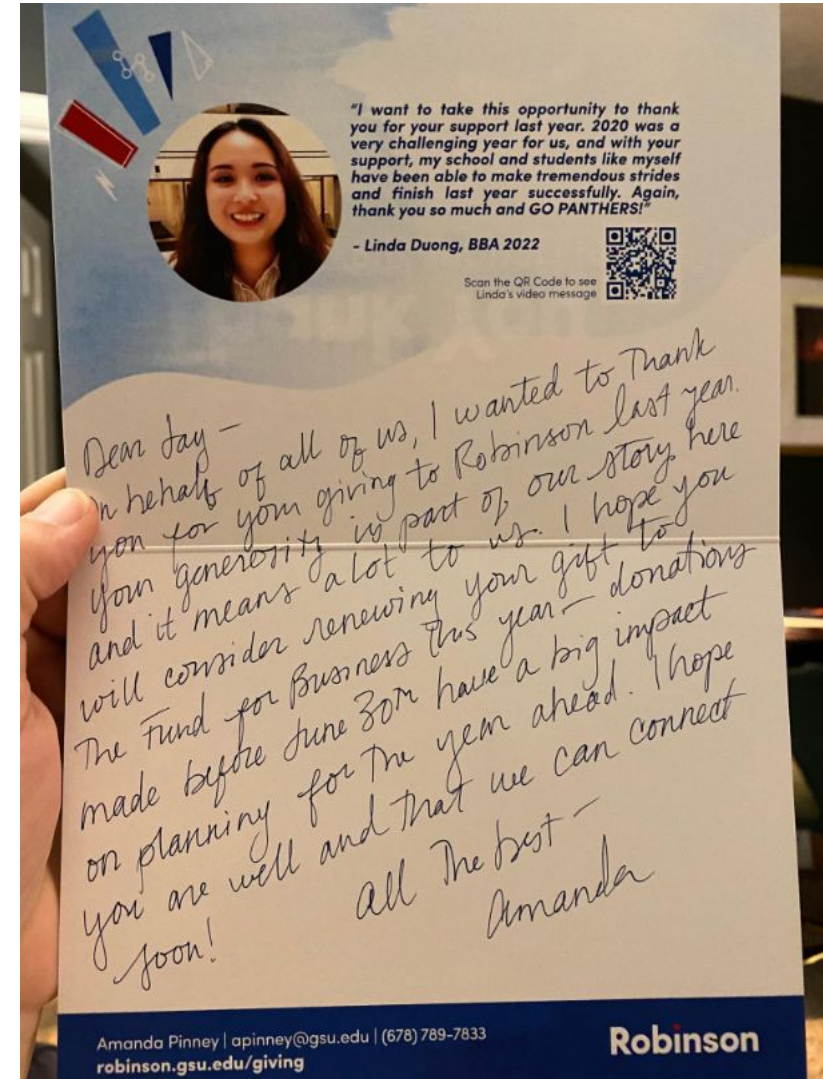
Frame your core message for each segment



Increase personalization for most important segments

- Determine who you consider to be the most important segments
- Scale personalization as much as possible without seeming inauthentic or risking inaccuracy
- Use simple handwritten notes, emails, or video messages regularly

Source: Georgia State University



Pay special attention to first-time donors



2022 TORCH FUND

Thank You
for making your
FIRST GIFT
to Chaminade!

Your first gift to the Torch Fund for Chaminade High School will shape the experiences of our students, faculty, and staff.

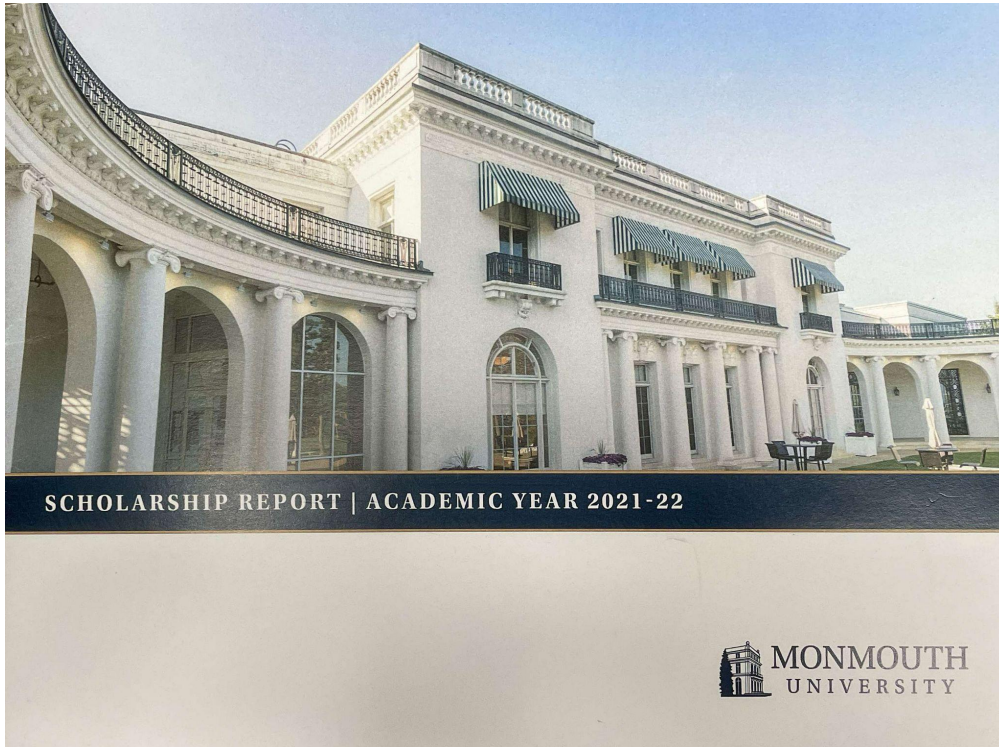
Source: Chaminade College Preparatory

Consider what each constituent group cares about

- **Alumni** → future generations, access, institutional reputation
- **Reunion** → nostalgia, competition
- **Recent grads** → participation, cause
- **Parents** → their child's experience
- **Students** → their experience, cost
- **Faculty/staff** → community, stability
- **Friends** → athletics, special projects, people they know



Leverage current-use scholarships



Source: *Monmouth University*

- Understand the difference between endowed and current-use scholarships
- Define gift requirements (e.g., minimum amount, # years committed)
- Clarify who is responsible for stewardship
- Define a process for connecting donors to beneficiaries

Highlight collective efforts

LOYAL DONOR COMMUNITY

Loyal Donor Community

For years, undergraduate alumni have celebrated the Penn traditions that make them proud to be Quakers. Your ongoing support is more than a testament to your time on campus—it is a *commitment to ensuring every student enjoys the same amazing experience that created lasting connections.*

Thank you very much for keeping this tradition alive with your renewed gift to The Penn Fund this fiscal year.

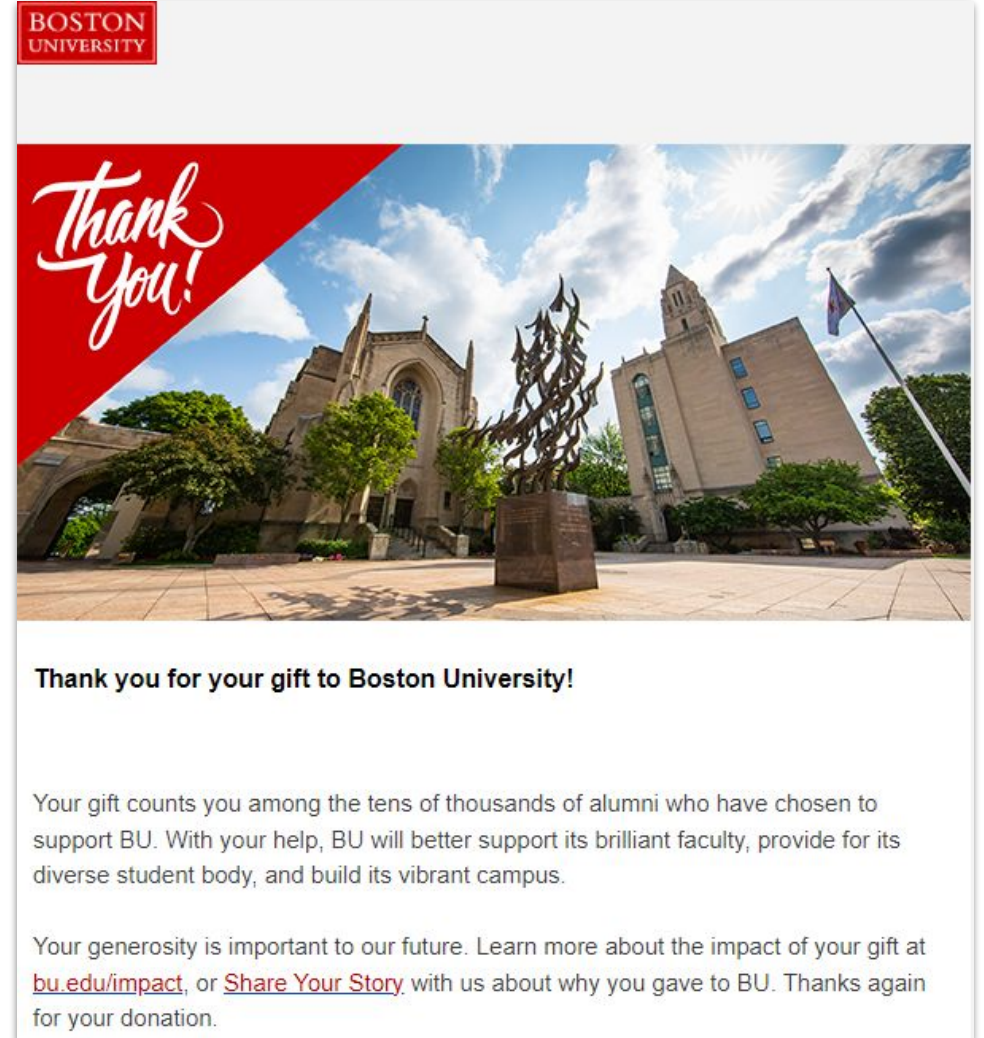
Loyal donors, *like you*, have helped us provide critical aid to current Quakers where and when it is needed most. Your exemplary support does more than further our collective efforts—it *inspires others to do the same, as well!*



CONVEYING IMPACT ACROSS MULTIPLE CHANNELS

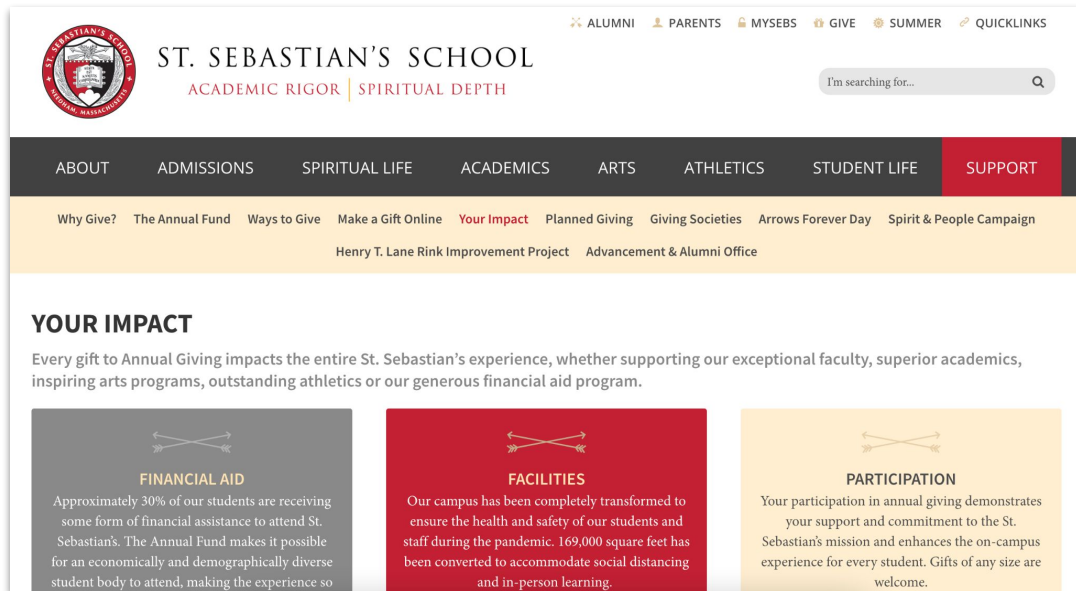
Begin with gift acknowledgements

- Be direct in linking recent gift to immediate impact
- Develop processes that allow for segmentation by gift level and designation
- Don't feel obliged to be very detailed about impact
- Provide links/opportunities to learn more



Source: Boston University

Develop informative and accessible web content



Source: St. Sebastian's School

- Maintain a dedicated page about impact
- Drive donors there from other places (e.g., emails, letters, ads)
- Include beneficiary photos, stories, testimonials, and videos
- Avoid providing too much information
- Refresh with new content regularly
- Incorporate impact content onto other pages as well

Publish regular donor newsletters

- Position newsletters (email or print) as a benefit to donors
- Treat recipients as insiders
- Send 2–4 times a year
- Don't feel that you need a lot of content; prioritize quality over quantity

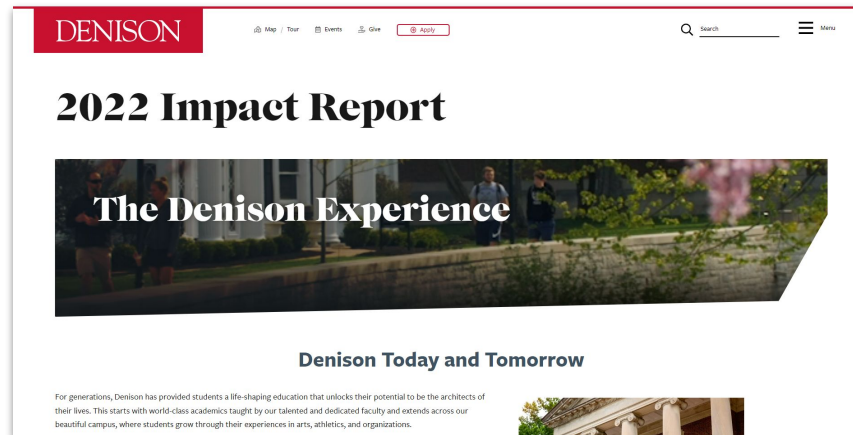
Source: *Principia College*



Produce impact reports



Source: SUNY Oneonta



Source: Denison University

- Produce in print or online
- Include:
 - Cover message
 - Financial information/stats
 - Images
 - Stories
 - Testimonials

Share impact stories through social channels



Source: U. Houston



Sources U. Pittsburgh



Source: U. Virginia

Support crowdfunding efforts



Source: Rutgers University Foundation

- Know that crowdfunding donors are notoriously difficult to retain
- Work with campaign leaders and volunteers to ensure that they follow up after the project is over (many overlook this!)
- Communicate with crowdfunding donors regularly after the project to share updates and highlight impact

Share results from special campaigns



Photo taken before March 2020.

Dear Steven,

Our collective spirit and generosity were amazing on Giving Day. I am deeply moved by the great show of community by Anteaters from around the world in supporting the schools, departments and projects at UCI that mean the most to them.

Our Giving Day donors contributed to the brilliant future of over 120 campus and UCI Health programs and initiatives – over 3,500 gifts, over 2,800 donors and \$1.48 million raised. Our goal was to reach 2,400 gifts in 24 hours, and we surpassed that.

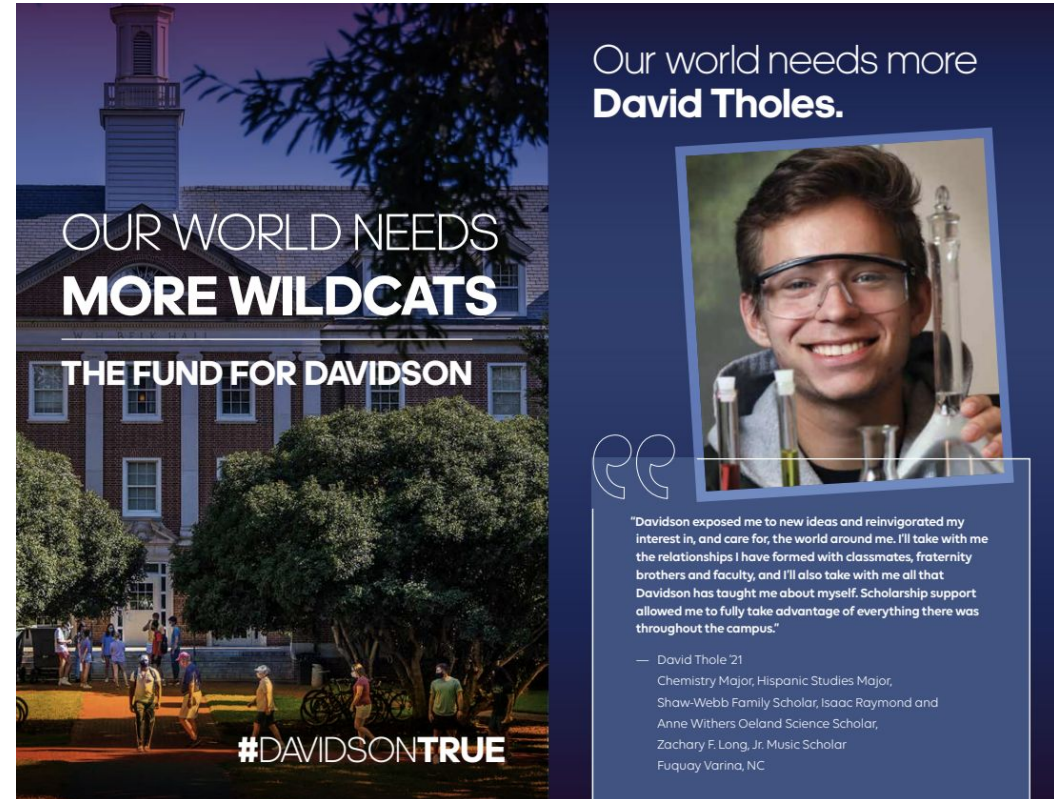
From student scholarships and leading-edge research to transformative healthcare and meaningful programs, philanthropic gifts make a tangible difference in the lives of so many of us connected to UCI.

To those who donated yesterday, and those who supported us by sharing campaign pages with their friends and families – thank you. Giving Day plays a special role in the Brilliant Future campaign, and every gift plays an important part in the success of UCI. Thank you for making it all possible.

Source: University of California, Irvine

Highlight impact in appeals

- Include in all channel
 - print
 - email
 - phone
- Feature specific individuals
- Position past impact as the case for future support



OUR WORLD NEEDS
MORE WILDCATS
THE FUND FOR DAVIDSON

#DAVIDSONTRUE

Our world needs more
David Tholes.

"Davidson exposed me to new ideas and reinvigorated my interest in, and care for, the world around me. I'll take with me the relationships I have formed with classmates, fraternity brothers and faculty, and I'll also take with me all that Davidson has taught me about myself. Scholarship support allowed me to fully take advantage of everything there was throughout the campus."

— David Thole '21
Chemistry Major, Hispanic Studies Major,
Shaw-Webb Family Scholar, Isaac Raymond and
Anne Withers Oeland Science Scholar,
Zachary F. Long, Jr. Music Scholar
Fuquay Varina, NC

Source: Davidson College

Key Takeaways

- Explain the purpose of annual giving
- Craft messages about impact
- Develop content for different donor segments
- Convey impact across multiple channels

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ANNUAL GIVING NETWORK