

BSC

Birmingham-Southern College

Birmingham-Southern College FY20 Funding Opportunities “Registry”

Submitted by Sarah-Kate Masters Roberts, Director of Annual Giving



BSC has created its own registry list with items you can “purchase” through your tax deductible gift, such as:

- 
SEED FUNDING FOR STUDENT-LED STARTUPS
- 
BUILD SUSTAINABLE WATER FOUNTAINS
- 
DIGITAL MOTION CAPTURE EQUIPMENT
- 
A NEW SUIT FOR ROWDY THE PANTHER

This allows you to direct your gift toward current programs and projects that mean the most to you. These needs are typically supported through the Forward Ever Fund, but with our new detailed list you can choose exactly where you want your donation to go. You’ll know that your gift made a difference, and in many cases, you’ll be invited to see exactly how it was put to work.

Select an area of interest below to view current funding opportunities:

[Business & Accounting](#) | [Humanities](#) | [Education](#) | [Fine & Performing Arts](#) | [Interdisciplinary Experiences](#) | [Library](#) | [Sciences & Mathematics](#) | [Social Sciences](#) | [Student Experience](#) | [Religious Life](#)

If you prefer to leave the shopping to us, your gift to the Forward Ever Fund will provide flexible resources for these and many other opportunities that will make this academic year the best yet.

About Birmingham-Southern College

Founded in 1856, Birmingham-Southern College is a residential, baccalaureate liberal arts college with just over 1,200 students and a student/faculty ratio of 13:1. BSC is the only nationally ranked liberal arts college in Alabama, one of only three Phi Beta Kappa sheltering institutions in Alabama, and the only Alabama institution listed among “Colleges that Change Lives.” BSC has been named in the Fiske Guide to Colleges 2021, The Princeton Review’s 2021 Best Regional Colleges List, and as one of the top National Liberal Arts Colleges by U.S. News & World Report in “Best Colleges” for 2021.

Through highly personalized teaching and mentorship, BSC prepares students for careers that relate directly to their majors and for detours that lead to fulfilling work on less obvious pathways. With a focus on service learning, a BSC education also prepares graduates for life outside of work through roles in civic and charitable organizations.

About Birmingham-Southern College Annual Giving

Birmingham-Southern College has approximately 50,000 solicitable records, including just over 16,000 solicitable alumni. Solicitable segments include alumni, current and former parents, current and former faculty and staff, and friends of the College. BSC’s annual giving programs include:

- Crowdfunding (Giving Tuesday, day of giving, etc.)
- Online outreach
- Direct mail
- Phonathon
- Student philanthropy
- Matching giving
- Text-to-give initiatives
- Leadership annual giving

These programs generate both donor-restricted and unrestricted revenue. We define annual giving as any support under \$25,000; therefore the “price tags” associated with this project reflect a variety of opportunities that fall within that range.

Registry Project Background Information

In Fall 2019, Birmingham-Southern College piloted a new “Funding Opportunities” initiative that compiled fundable projects within academic departments and strategic campus areas into a centralized “registry” of giving opportunities. Our objective was twofold. First, we aimed to demonstrate to donors the tangible impact of their annual gifts. To accomplish this, we identified budget-relieving and budget-additive fundable projects, with the goal of publishing these items in order to allow donors to browse the descriptions and costs themselves.

In doing this, we aimed to encourage increased giving by demonstrating the power of what larger gifts could accomplish. Our primary target for this project was leadership-level annual giving donors, which we define as any donor giving between \$5,000 and \$24,999 in a single fiscal year.

For internal purposes, we define budget-relieving items as any gift supplementing annual operational costs, while budget-additive items provide funding for projects above and beyond those budgeted for during the current fiscal year. For the purposes of this project, we expanded our definition of leadership annual giving to include opportunities between \$500 and \$25,000.

We designed this initiative as a direct response to the growing industry trend away from “unrestricted” giving, allowing BSC to address our donors’ desire for specificity and accountability. Our vision was that by packaging these projects in an experience that mimicked the ease of modern online shopping, donors would feel informed and empowered, selecting projects that spoke to their individual interests and passions.

By partnering with academic department chairs and campus leaders, we were able to compile a list of funding opportunities that were both relevant to specific departments and interesting to our donors. As items were “purchased” by a donor, we notified each department and provided stewardship direction. Faculty members were grateful for the opportunity to thank donors who impacted their department, and donors expressed to us their appreciation for the personalized stewardship they received.

We began communicating with pre-identified donors in September 2019 through a series of targeted and segmented emails (samples below). The initial communications had a “Back to School Shopping” theme that was fitting for the time of year, and allowed us to succinctly explain the concept of the campaign within a pre-existing framework.

This approach caught the attention of our constituents and enabled gift officers to initiate follow-up conversations both with loyal and lapsed donors, facilitating thoughtful and transparent discussions about the projects each donor found motivating and impactful.

We sent additional emails about the registry over the holidays. Gift officers then continued to work one-on-one with potential donors throughout Spring 2020. During these conversations, some donors chose to continue their support of the Forward Ever Fund (Annual Fund), although many expressed appreciations at being given the opportunity for greater specificity.

Registry Website

You may view the completed registry here: www.bsc.edu/fundingopportunities. The concept was to closely mimic a wedding registry, with goals of ensuring the site would be easy to navigate and have the ability to link to a giving form. The direct link to the giving form is www.bsc.edu/give/fundingopportunities.

Sample Messaging

Birmingham-Southern College has the ability to impact individuals in many different ways. By reflecting this in our philanthropic efforts, we are able to give you, the donor, power to determine how your gift

will be used. Beginning this academic year, we have provided a way for donors to see the specific projects and needs of all departments and organizations at the College, allowing you to show support in the areas where you are most passionate.

Email Sample 1 (can be provided as a .pdf): Distributed to all leadership annual giving prospects as defined by the data parameters of the project.



Back-to-School Shopping with BSC

Back-to-school shopping brings to mind new pencils and crayons, notebooks and paper, glue sticks and scissors, a backpack or book bag – the feeling of preparation for a new year!

To bring back these special memories, BSC has assembled its own back-to-school shopping list, full of **tangible, affordable items** that set students up for a successful year on the Hilltop.

BSC Back-to-School Shopping List

Because you're among BSC's loyal supporters, we want to give you the opportunity to **feel the power of your giving**. This year, with the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#), you can **direct your gift** toward specific programs and projects that mean the most to you.

Browse the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#) to see what you can underwrite this year, including options such as a **new robotics station, theatre and music performances, and lab supplies**. These expenses are typically covered through the Forward Ever Fund, but the details in our [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#) allow you to decide exactly where you want your donation to go.

Regardless of the projects you choose to support, every gift in any amount will **enrich the BSC experience for students**.

If you have questions about the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#), or don't see what you would love to support, please call us (205) 226-4979 or email us at advancement@bsc.edu. BSC is grateful for your generous support.

Forward, Ever!



Birmingham-Southern College
900 Arkadelphia Road
Birmingham, AL 35254
(800) 523-5793

Email Sample 2 (can be provided as a .pdf): Distributed to all faculty and staff, making those not involved in the initial stages of the project aware of the registry.



Dear BSC Faculty and Staff:

Tomorrow, many of our alumni and friends (including many of you) will receive an email about the [BSC Back to School Shopping List](#) – an opportunity to direct gifts toward tangible, affordable items that set students and faculty up for a successful year on the Hilltop.

Many of these opportunities are typically funded through the Forward Ever Fund, our unrestricted giving program. The [BSC Back to School Shopping List](#) gives donors the option to direct their gifts toward the specific programs and projects that mean the most to them.

Donors who prefer to leave the shopping to us can still make their unrestricted gifts to the Forward Ever Fund, of course. But we know that many of today's donors want choices and specificity, so we are giving them that. Either way, every gift will make a difference for the students we are honored to serve.

Department chairs and others on the faculty and staff were asked over the summer to help compile this list. We asked for items ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars, and we are so grateful to all who provided such great ideas that are budget-relieving or even budget-plus. For some items, the submitted gift level has been adjusted to best fit the giving abilities of our donors.

Please note that everything submitted is not on the published list, at least not in its first iteration. Once we see what donors respond to, we'll help Santa make a holiday shopping list and promote that as part of our year-end giving effort. Thanks to your help, we now also have a more robust list of projects and opportunities to discuss with donors in one-on-one meetings, especially those at higher dollar levels. If you have fresh ideas for what might go on the rebooted list, let us know.

Communication about these giving opportunities will be targeted toward selected donors who are already giving at the leadership level, as well as those whose loyal support indicates they may be ready to increase their giving. Even though not everyone will receive the email, since you are in touch with many former students and others who love BSC, we wanted you to know the plan and be a part of this effort.

Thank you – let us know if you have questions or ideas.

Forward, Ever!

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Birmingham, AL 35254

Email Sample 3 (can be provided as a .pdf): Follow-up email distributed to all leadership annual giving prospects as defined by the data parameters of the project.



Back-to-school shopping brings to mind new pencils and crayons, notebooks and paper, glue sticks and scissors, a backpack or book bag – the feeling of preparation for a new year!

To bring back these special memories, BSC has assembled its own back-to-school shopping list, full of **tangible, affordable items** that set students up for a successful year on the Hilltop.

[Click here to browse the BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#)

In an effort to increase transparency, the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#) details exactly where gifts will go, allowing you to see the power of your giving.

Browse the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#) to discover what you can underwrite this year, including options such as a **new robotics station, theatre and music performances, and lab supplies**. These expenses are typically covered through the Forward Ever Fund, but the details in our [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#) let you direct your gift toward the specific programs and projects that mean the most to you.

Regardless of the projects you choose to support, every gift in any amount will enrich the BSC experience for students.

If you have questions about the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#), or don't see what you would love to support, please call us (205) 226-4979 or email us at advancement@bsc.edu. BSC is grateful for your generous support.

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Email Sample 4 (can be provided as a .pdf): Follow-up email distributed to all leadership annual giving prospects as defined by the data parameters of the project, containing a specific project example.



Support Sustainability at BSC

Have you browsed our [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#) yet? There are a variety of meaningful projects that you can directly support through your gift.

If **sustainability** is your passion, one project you may be interested in is helping SGA install water bottle filling stations all across campus!

Water bottle filling stations encourage the use of reusable water bottles instead of plastic water bottles, which take over 1,000 years to biodegrade in a landfill.

The filling stations keep a count of how many plastic water bottles are being saved through every use – showing students the positive impact they are making on the environment.

SGA has helped increase the number of filling stations on campus to five, but they need **five more** to reach their goal - you can help by directing your donation through the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#) to this effort.

"Additional filling stations would prove that BSC has become fully-invested in supplying students, faculty, and staff with a service that we most often take for granted: access to clean water," says Austin Lewler, SGA President. "This project aims to be environmentally conscious while providing clean and renewable equipment for the campus community."

Support this project and more, such as a new robotics station, theatre and music performances, and lab supplies, through our [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#)!

With this list, specific programs and projects are detailed to give you the **power to direct your gift** where it means the most to you.

[Click here to browse the BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#)

These expenses are typically covered through the Forward Ever Fund, but by using the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#), you are in direct control of your giving.

If you have questions about the [BSC Back-to-School Shopping List](#), or don't see what you would love to support, please call us (205) 226-4979 or email us at advancement@bsc.edu. BSC is grateful for your generous support.

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Internal Project Management

Sample Pledge Documentation: Below is a sample of the pledge confirmation form that was customized for each fundable project.



PLEDGE CONFIRMATION

Donor name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Donor ID:

The donors confirm and pledge the following to Birmingham-Southern College.

A gift totaling \$4,000 to be used for the following purposes:

- \$2,000 to underwrite the cost of academic tutors within the Department of Accounting.
- \$2,000 to be used by faculty within the Department of Accounting for the purchase of additional classroom technology.

Fulfillment Schedule:

The gift of \$4,000 is intended to be fulfilled by January 31, 2020.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please make checks payable to Birmingham-Southern College.
Gifts can be made online at www.bsc.edu/give/fundingopportunities

Please return this form to by mail to:
Birmingham-Southern College
Office of Advancement
Box 549003

900 Arkadelphia Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35254
or via email to: annualgiving@bsc.edu

Birmingham-Southern College qualifies as a 501c3 organization.
Gifts to the College are fully deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Appeal code: LA20

Sample Internal Documentation Form: In order for Advancement Services to internally discern between projects that were budget-additive or budget-relieving, the following document had to be completed by each gift officer as supplemental information for the donor's signed pledge agreement.



Birmingham-Southern College

FY20 REGISTRY GIFT FULFILLMENT DETAILS

Donor name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Donor ID:

The BSC Advancement staff member confirms the donor intends for their gift to Birmingham-Southern College to be designated for the following purpose:

- A gift of \$X,XXX to be used for the purchase of three compound microscopes for the Department of Biology during the 2019-20 academic year.
- This gift is: budget relieving not budget relieving (*please check one*)
- Please attach any correspondence provided by donor (e.g. email or letter)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

BSC Advancement Staff Name

Internal Registry Documentation Sample: In compiling items for the registry, gift officers worked together to create comprehensive lists of fundable items for each department. Below is a sample of items for the Department of Chemistry & Physics. This list was then used to create the registry website.

Priority	Need	Quantity (if applicable)	Cost Per Item (if applicable)	Total Cost
	Budget Relief			
FY19	Sartorius Analytical Balance	2	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 2,800.00
	Physics Lab sponsorship		\$ 700.00	
	Chemistry Lab sponsorship		\$ 2,300.00	
	Needs that are not in this year's budget			
	Spectrometers		\$ 1,300.00	
	Fluorimeter Spectrometer		\$ 15,000.00	
	Summer Chemistry research student		\$ 2,000.00	
	Summer Physics research student		\$ 2,000.00	
FY19	Lab stools	16	\$ 688.00	\$ 11,000.00
FY19	Vernier drop counters	10	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,000.00
	Wish List			
	Hood maintenance and calibration for Stephens Science Center		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
	Travel funds for pre-med students			

Additional internal communications documentation, timelines, and stewardship procedures can be provided upon request.

Outcomes

We solicited 1,162 prospects as a part of this campaign throughout FY20. Together, those donors contributed \$862,965 both to the registry and to other funds. We also saw increased gifts, which has renewed our focus on targeted moves-management with our donor base.

As a result of COVID-19, our funding priorities have shifted slightly for FY21, and the registry campaign has become less of a focal point. We are now using the registry as a talking point for one-to-one communications with leadership-level donors but decided not to move forward with a comprehensive communications plan for FY21.

Our plan is to shift focus back to the registry for FY22. This will allow time for gift officers to review new funding opportunities, especially those that have come to light as a result of the pandemic. Our updated registry will have an increased focus on classroom technology, which will allow us to expand upon the “new normal” of providing additional online resources for students.