



Working with Parent Prospects and Donors

Everything MGOs and Other Frontline Fundraisers Need to Know

Advancement Forum

1

The 'Why' of Expanding into Parent Fundraising

2

Key Differences Between Parents and Alumni Prospects

3

Best Practices for Engaging Parents and Holding Ourselves Accountable



The Meteoric Rise of Parent Giving Programs

A New Source of Fundraising Revenue

A Growing Landscape

500+

Institutions invest
in parent programs

59%

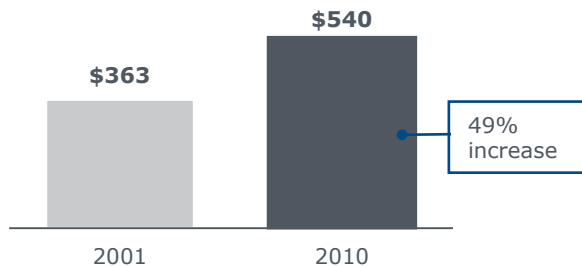
Started their
programs between
2001 and 2013

50%

Increase in attendance
at CASE parent
program conferences
from 2009 to 2013

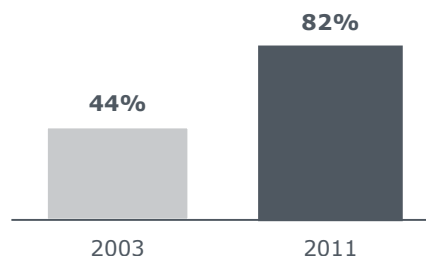
Parent Giving to Higher Education

*Voluntary Support of Education
Survey¹, in Millions*



Percentage of Parent Programs that Fundraise

*National Survey of College and
University Parent Programs*



Sources: Savage M, National Survey of College and University Parent Programs 2011, University of Minnesota, <http://www.aheppp.org/assets/Parent-Program-Research/2011.pdf>; Council for Aid to Education, *Voluntary Support of Education Survey* (2010), <http://vse.cae.org>; Lydia Lum, *The Family and Friends Plan*, CASE, 2011, http://www.case.org/Publications_and_Products/2011/NovemberDecember_2011/The_Family_and_Friends_Plan.html; Advancement Forum interviews and analysis

Grounding the Helicopter Parent

Institutions Funnel Parent Enthusiasm into Giving

An Excess of Enthusiasm

25% Of young adults keep in touch with their parents several times per day

17% Of parents attended a career fair for or with their student

31% Of parents submitted a resume on behalf of their student

From Hovering Parents to Donors

“Bringing parents close to your academic and philanthropic mission helps you deal strategically with helicopter parents. It’s better to have them close and giving than having them on the outside poking in. Bringing them into a donor role can help us answer their questions while also keeping them invested in the institution.”

*Evan Bohnen, AVP of Development
Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

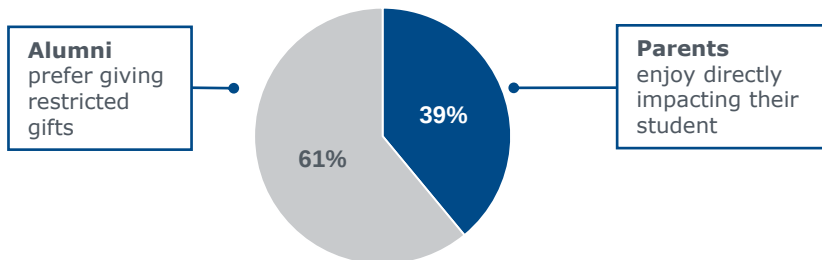
Sources: Lois Collins, *Helicopter parenting cramps young-adult lives*, Desert News, October 16 2012, <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/765612119/Helicopter-parenting-cramps-young-adult-lives.html?pg=all>; Jonel Aleccia, *Helping or hovering? When 'helicopter parenting' backfires*, NBC News, May 26, 2013, <http://www.nbcnews.com/health/kids-health/helping-or-hovering-when-helicopter-parenting-backfires-f6C10079904>; Advancement Forum interviews and analysis

A Boon to Unrestricted Giving

Parents Have a Vested Interest in Providing Current Use Dollars

Percentage of Annual Fund Provided by Parents

Public University, 2009¹



The Icing on the Cake

“Unlike alumni annual gifts, parent annual gifts are largely unrestricted. This year, 75% of parent annual gifts were unrestricted. Parents like giving unrestricted gifts especially to the individual schools/colleges. And since deans are very dependent on annual fund dollars, they are very grateful to the parents’ fund. Although parent fundraising is the icing of the cake for the overall fundraising machine, we are very important in the annual fund.”

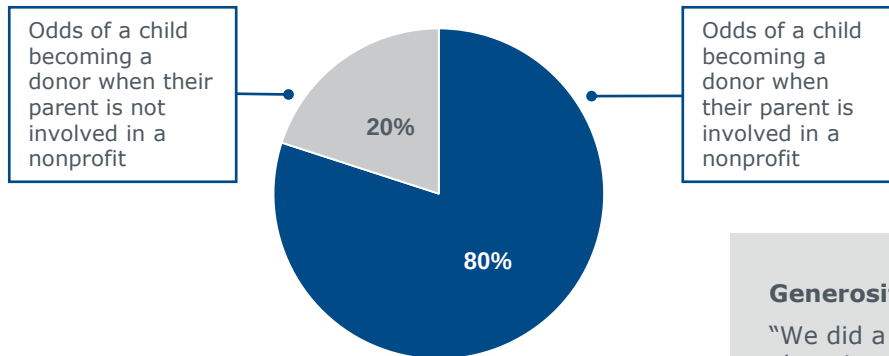
*Penny Chick, Director of Parent Programs
Cornell University*

1) Anonymized contact university

Parents Influence Their Children

Young Alumni Donors Follow Their Parents' Examples

Parents Greatly Influence Their Children



Generosity Across Generations

"We did a focus group with young alumni and asked the donors why they were donors. One by one, they said 'Well, my parents give. They managed to pay \$50K a year in tuition and still support the university. How could I not?'"

*Senior Director of Parent Philanthropy,
Private University*

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Best Practices for Engaging Parents and Holding Ourselves
Accountable

Targeting the Top of the Pyramid

Focusing on High-Capacity Parents

Status Quo Approach Challenges



Skeptical of Giving

"Parents are already meeting rising tuition costs. Do we dare ask them for additional gifts?"



Too Little Time

"Parents are with us for only four years. Alumni are with us for their entire lives."



Minimal ROI

"How do we justify reaching out to all parents when our major gifts office wants to hire another MGO?"



New Approach Opportunities

Primed for Philanthropy

Past giving to private secondary schools and other charities set expectations about support.

Inclined to Give Quickly

High net worth and instant affinity shorten the cultivation timeline.

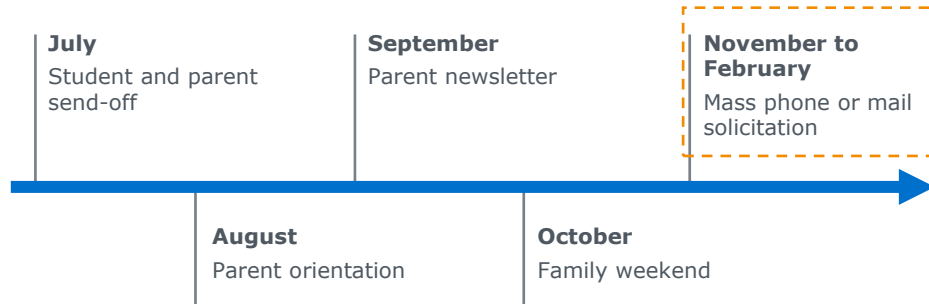
Smarter Use of Resources

Staffing and other resources are dedicated to prospects who bring the greatest returns.

Doing Too Little, Too Late

Low-Impact Appeals Follow Engagement Efforts

Status Quo Appeal Timeline

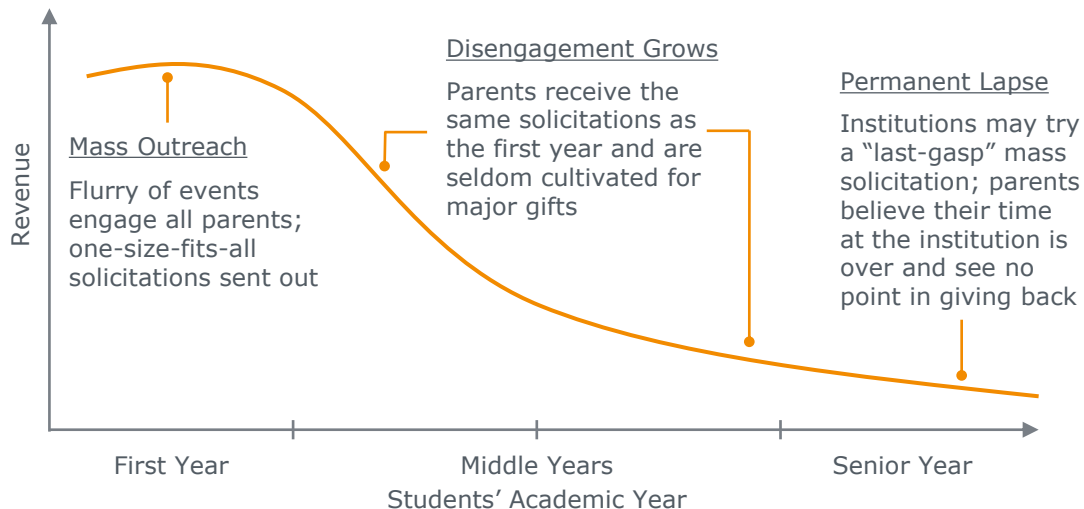


Acquisition Window for Parents Shrinks Over Time



Enthusiasm Wanes After the First Year

Current Mass-Outreach Parent Giving Misses the Mark



Second- and Third-Year Parents Are:



Less likely to come to campus



Less concerned about their child's adjustment to college



Less likely to have questions and want to connect with university administrators for answers

Diminished Parent Excitement

A Very Limited Window on Which To Capitalize

“Parent engagement starts to drop off after freshman year. Parents often don’t come back for another move-in or another family weekend.”

*Matt Burrows
Senior Director, Parent & Family Giving
University of Michigan*

“We want to be able to screen, identify, and get in front of the right parents within the first three semesters that their child is here. After that, it’s much more of a challenge. That window is open widest early on, when parents are still feeling excited.”

*David Lieb
Senior Associate Vice President for Development
Pennsylvania State University*

New Qualification Strategies Needed

Parent Giving Demands Quicker, Less Costly Discovery Tactics

Qualification Methods	Benefits	Challenges
Wealth Screenings	Reveal estimated capacity	Do not capture hidden wealth, family details, and affinity
One-time Mass Solicitations	Reach many donors and determine baseline affinity and inclination to give	Take a long time to sift out the most promising prospects and fail to capture true capacity
Frontline Fundraisers	Conduct alumni discovery visits to determine true capacity	Don't have the time to do parent discovery visits

Getting on the Fast Track

“The Best Way to Qualify is to Solicit”

The Solicitation-Qualification Model

Key Advantages



Fast-tracks parents with high capacity and giving inclinations to major gift cultivation



Demands fewer resources



Secures gift revenue immediately while filling long-term pipeline

Appeals Can Raise a Positive Flag

“Qualification happens all along, and segmented appeals are a large part of that. Any gift of \$5K or more means that they will get more research and attention, and that we will look at where and how they gave.”

*Tammie Brush-Campbell
Assistant Director of Parent Relations
Gettysburg College*

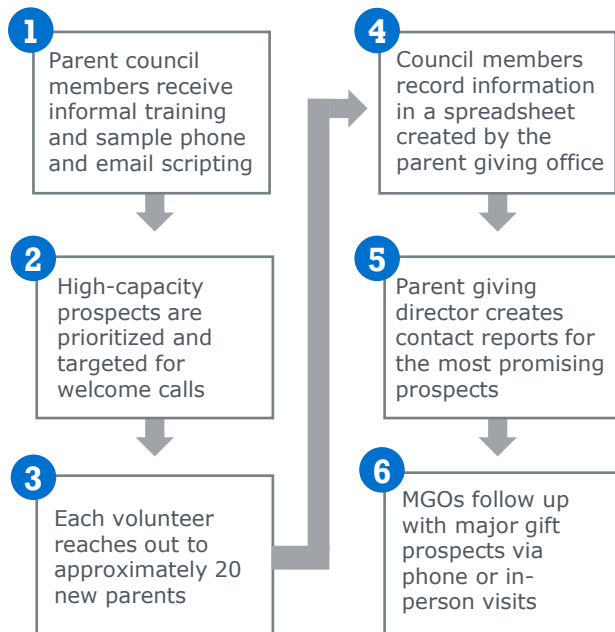


Institutions use appeals to determine prospects' capacity and propensity to give

Two Approaches for Discovery Solicitations

Approach One: Utilizing Volunteers for First Asks at Tufts

Welcome Call Process at Tufts University for Parent Leadership Council Volunteers



Benefits

Engages Parent Leadership Council Members

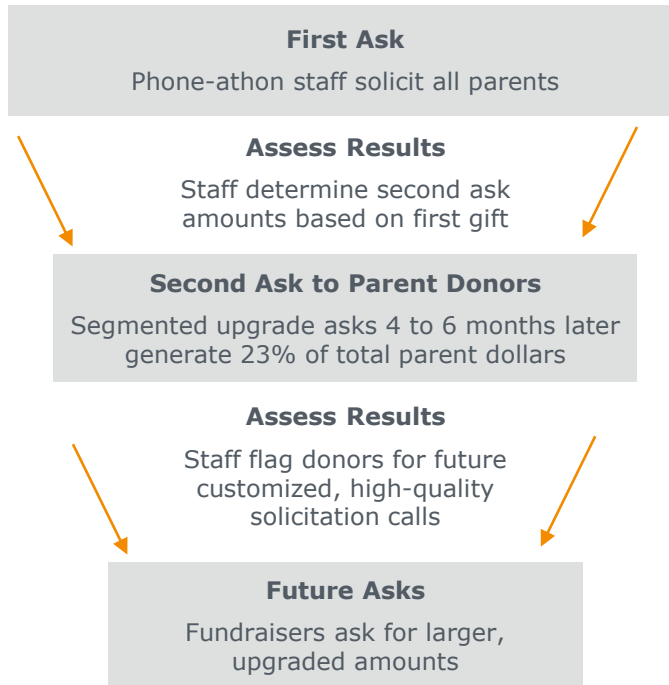
"It is as great a tool for identifying prospects as it is for stewarding and cultivating parent leadership council members."

Starts Conversations with Future Parent Donors

"It's an opportunity to get in front of freshman parents and say hello really early when they are feeling good. We want to build that relationship as quickly as possible."

Qualifying Through Multiple Channels

Approach Two: Surfacing High-Quality Prospects at CSU-Chico



Unexplored and Uncertain Terrain

Gift Officers Unsure of How to Cultivate Parents

Top-of-Mind Concerns



Primary “Pain Points”



Lack of Tools

- Fundraisers have few parent-specific engagement opportunities to point donors towards
- Fundraising collateral fails to address parent interests



Minimal Expertise

- Professional development opportunities focus on engaging alumni, not parents
- Fundraisers have years of experience soliciting alumni, but few with parents

"What do I say when parents have questions or concerns about their child?"

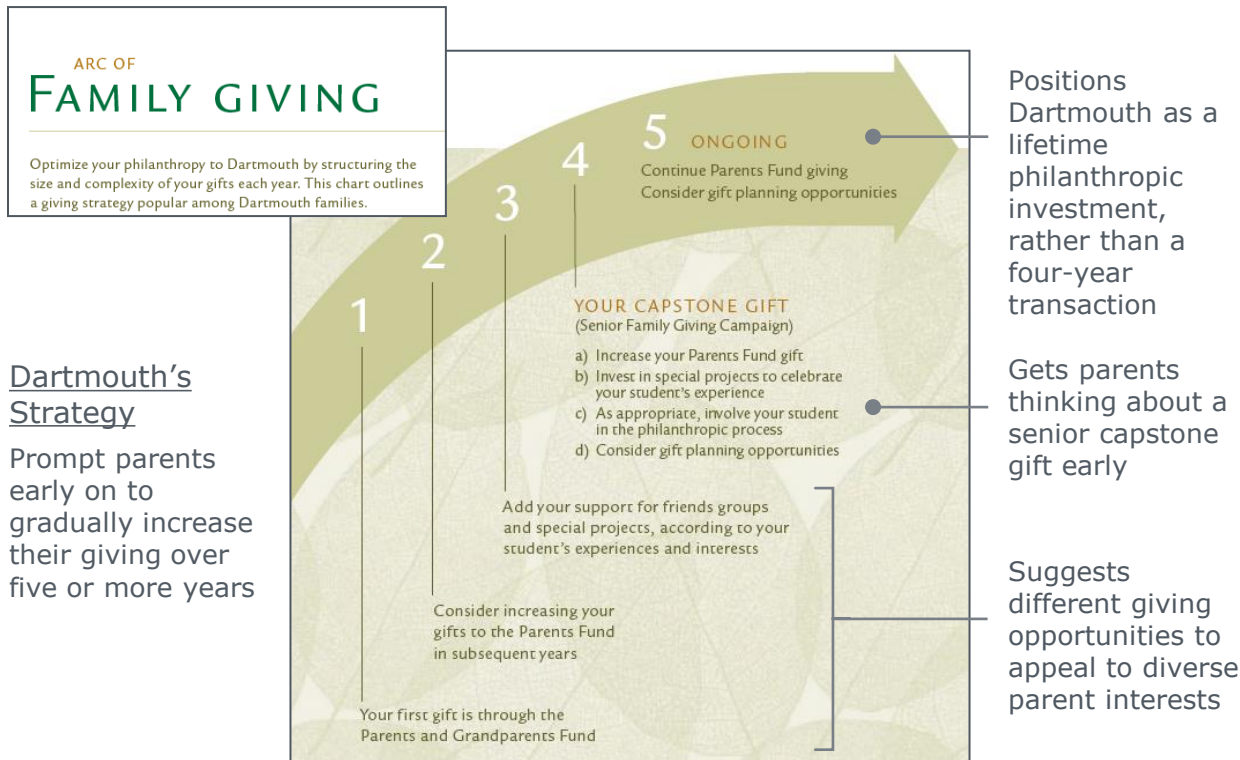
"I've rarely spoken with parents. What are they interested in?"

"How am I supposed to cultivate parents within four years, I have a lifetime of cultivation with alumni"

"All of our engagement opportunities are for alumni. What can I show parents?"

A Parent-Centric Tool to Set Expectations

Dartmouth's Giving Arc Outlines a Five-Plus-Years Giving Plan



Dartmouth's Strategy

Prompt parents early on to gradually increase their giving over five or more years

Creating a Roadmap

Giving Arc Tool Guides Fundraisers and Parents

Tool Touch Points

Fundraisers use tools to have personalized giving conversations with parents before or right at the start of the **first academic year**

Fundraisers use tools to structure discussion about **senior year capstone gift**

Fundraisers briefly revisit tools in giving conversations in the **middle years**

Parent giving office periodically **trains** fundraisers on how to use tool

Sharpening Giving Discussions

“Before the giving arc tools, conversations were nebulous. But when we started using them, conversation became cleaner. Parents liked it because they knew what to expect for the next nine years. Fundraisers liked it because it made them feel comfortable talking with parents.”

*Heidi Anderson, Director of the Parents and Grandparents Fund
Dartmouth College*

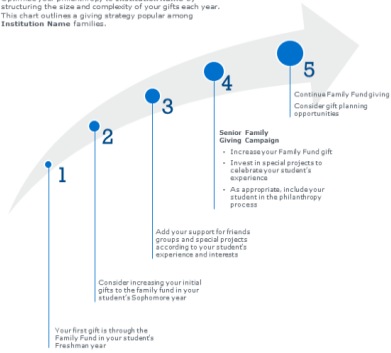
A Customizable Template

Just One Part of Our Suite of Parent Resources

DELETE AND PLACE LOGO HERE

The Arc of Family Giving

Optimize your philanthropy to **Institution Name** by structuring the size and complexity of your gifts each year. This chart outlines a giving strategy popular among **Institution Name** families.



1

2

3

4

5

Senior Family Giving Campaign

- Increase your Family Fund gift
- Invest in special projects to celebrate your student's experience
- As appropriate, include your student in the philanthropy process

Consider Family Fund giving

Consider gift-planning opportunities

Add your support for friends groups and special projects according to your student's experience and interests

Consider increasing your initial gifts to the family fund in your student's Sophomore year

Your first gift is through the Family Fund in your student's Freshman year

Box Style 2 Title - Verdana 9pt Bold

"Include quote from family council member or academic leader about the impact of family giving."

Quote Source

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Making an Impact – Overview of Family Giving at **Institution Name**

Use this area to thank parent donors and capture their attention by clearly summarizing philanthropy's impact on the funding priority that parents are being asked to support.

"Thank you for your gift to the XYZ fund, which is directly supporting XYZ initiatives that have XYZ impact."

Aggregate Impact to Date

- Summarize impact of philanthropy dollars on quantitative project outcomes and milestones
- Compare to projected impact
- Revise expected impact as needed
- Describe chart/graph to right or campus image
- Additional support details

DELETE AND PLACE CHART/GRAPH OR PICTURE HERE

Personal Academic Leader or Parent Donor Story

- Summarize impact of philanthropy dollars on current use funds to enhance the student experience, etc.
- Explain why parent philanthropy funding is a priority of the college or university.
- Highlight key insight or lesson learned
- Additional support details

DELETE AND PLACE PICTURE HERE

Family Council Benefits

- Prewire family donors for any special stewardship/cultivation activities that will take place here.
- Highlight lessons, challenges, and future opportunities that will prime donors for reinvestment conversations.

Thank you for your investment in **Institution Name**. Your partnership plays an important role in the life and aspiration of not only your student, but all students at **Institution Name**.

For more information, please contact **ADVANCEMENT STAFF NAME at ###-###-#### and name@c/u.edu**.

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Access the PowerPoint tool via **EAB.com**

Source: Source: Advancement Forum interviews and analysis;
<https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/advancement-forum/tools/2015/parent-fundraising-implementation-guidance#6>

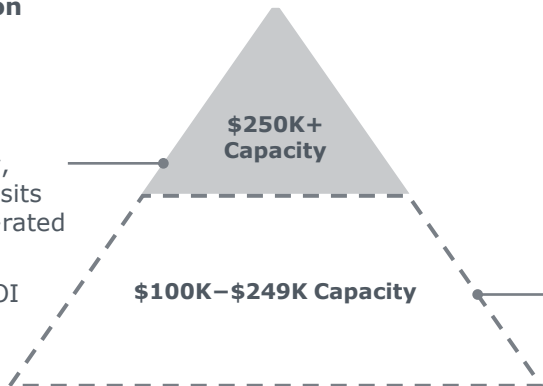
The Old Model: Missing Prime Prospects

Cornell's Previous Visit Approach Resulted in Low ROI

Effective Parent MGO Position



- High quality, in-person visits with all top-rated prospects
- Excellent ROI



Ineffective Additional MGO Position



- High quality, in-person visits to a fraction of prospects
- Little or no cultivation for the remaining prospect pool
- Low ROI

Capacity Ratings Are Not Enough

"We were leaving money on the table because we weren't finding the right prospects. There are factors outside of capacity ratings that we will never know, like how much debt parents have, how many children parents have. We needed something more than just capacity ratings."

*Penny Chick, Director of Parent Programs
Cornell University*

The New Model: Parent Qualification Fundraiser



New Approach Uses High-Touch Phone and Email Cultivation

Qualification Fundraiser's Cultivation Process For Entire Prospect Pool



Delivering Increased ROI

Qualification Fundraiser Boosts Revenue and Fills Pipeline

Impressive Early Results at Cornell



Immediate Mid-level Gifts

10%–20%

Of solicited prospects
give at the \$10K level
or above



Promising Major Gift Prospect Referrals

15–20

Strong major gift
prospects passed to
MGO between May
and July 2014



Immediate Major Gifts

10

First year parents
giving at \$100K who
would have previously
been asked for only
\$10K in the first year

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Ready-Made Cultivation Opportunities

Two Approaches to High-Quality, Flexible Parent Programming

Approach #1: Regional Parent Donor Events



Events hosted by parent council members in select cities

Benefits	
	Targets top parent donors and prospects
	Increases engagement through in-person events

Approach #2: Online Initiatives



Webinars that cover topics of parent interest, such as career services

Benefits	
	On-demand option allows for engagement at any time
	Easy-to-use tool for gift officers to point parents towards

Meeting Parent Donors Where They Are

University of Michigan Brings Underutilized Leaders to Select Cities

University of Michigan Regional Parent Programming

Travel to Top Prospects

Parent giving office brings intimate events to top prospects and donors in large cities

Includes Campus Leaders

Speakers include range of leaders who address parent interests

Vehicle for Engagement with MGOs

Two to three MGOs attend events to engage top donors in person

Hosted by Parent Council Members

Events cultivate and steward parent council members

High Attendance Rates

200+

Top donors
invited per event

90+

Donors attend
per event

Redefining Exclusivity

Duke's Web-X Provide Insider Access in an Easy-to-Implement Way

Key Elements



Parent-centric topics delivered by campus leaders



Exclusive access for parents committee members



Three to four webinars per year

Web-X Call Speaker List

- Director of Admissions
- Dean of Students
- Dean of a graduate school
- Chair of the Board of Trustees

Engagement Results



10%

Of eligible donors join per webinar

30–40

Dial-ins per webinar

Multipurpose Engagement Tools

Cornell Uses Parent Webinars Throughout the Gift Cycle

Fundraisers Can Use Webinars in Three Ways

Introductions

Identify high net-worth registrants and send an introductory email that asks how they enjoyed the webinar



Stewardship

Send personalized webinar invitation to donors to create an air of exclusivity

Cultivation

Send archived webinars to prospects who have questions about the school

A Virtual Icebreaker

“Parents don’t always know that they have access to webinars. I can easily create a personalized webinar invite for a donor. If they attend, I might also follow up with them.”

*Meghan Dauler, Parent Gift Officer
Cornell University*



Incentivizing Parent Cultivation

Private College Uses Written Goals to Focus MGOs on Parents

MGO Performance Review

Goals differ depending on MGO experience, quality, and number of parents in portfolio

- Behavior-based goals (e.g., number of parent visits with a range of 40%–70% of portfolio)
- Results-based goals (e.g., dollars raised with a range of \$50K–\$100K+ annually)

Reaching Parent Giving Goals

50% Increase in parent visits by major gift officers

100% Increase in dollars raised from parents

Making it Work on Your Campus

Use Metrics to Inspire Performance

Key Steps		Considerations for Developing Parent-Focused Metrics	
 Develop metrics		Set and stick to appropriate parent donor portfolio size to prevent portfolio bloat	
		Prioritize one to two metrics that will boost performance	
		Create a flexible system for determining goals that takes into account varying portfolio strengths and different levels of fundraiser experience	
Solidify infrastructure		Incorporate metrics into review grids and electronic tracking system to ensure accuracy and consistency	
Implement metric system		Communicate metrics clearly to fundraisers through emails and individual meetings	
		Adhere to metrics	

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Katie Stratton Turcotte
Practice Manager

Reorienting Toward the Top

Targeted Strategies for High-Value Parent Fundraising

Study | December 03, 2015


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Don't miss your chance to connect with high net worth parent prospects)

4 key steps to maximize giving from parents)

This study examines three steps to engage and solicit parent prospects to ensure a high-impact fundraising approach.

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