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Successful Fundraising for the Academic Library

Philanthropy in Higher Education

Kathryn Dilworth and Laura Sloop Henzl



Successful Fundraising for the Academic Library

*Philanthropy in Higher
Education*

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About the Authors

Kathryn Dilworth is the director of advancement for Purdue Libraries and the University Press. She has more than 10 years of fundraising experience in libraries, healthcare, conservation, museums, and other nonprofit organizations. Her library experience includes public relations and marketing for a large public library system, international marketing for a library vendor, serving as a librarian in a community college library, and leading the fundraising efforts for a major academic library. As a career fundraiser and passionate advocate for the mission of libraries, Kathryn's fundraising perspective and strategy in an academic library is unique to the traditional higher education fundraiser. Kathryn earned a bachelor of arts and master of arts in English and is currently a Ph.D. student in philanthropic studies at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University.

Laura Sloop Henzl is the director of foundation relations for the Purdue University College of Engineering with the Purdue Research Foundation. She has more than 17 years of experience in marketing, communication, and freelance writing, with more than 15 years of experience in fundraising, managing relationships with foundations, corporations, and individual donors, and event planning in higher education. Laura has experience working with private and public higher education institutions, nonprofits, small businesses, and daily and weekly newspapers. With extensive experience in all areas of fundraising and development work, Laura's

passion for collaborative teams and proposals along with a successful track record of closing major gifts make her a leader in her profession. Laura earned a bachelor of science in communication with a concentration in media studies and a minor in journalism from Manchester University. Laura is currently taking graduate classes in philanthropic studies at the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

Foreword

It would be difficult to think of a more worthwhile effort in education than raising funds for the academic library. It has been my honor to support Kathryn and Laura in their mission to explain how the library is as deserving of philanthropic attention as any other component of the university, and it is my hope that capturing the hearts and imaginations of donors in *supporting the library* will become a popular and mainstream activity. Kathryn and Laura have provided the academic community a valuable gift in the form of this engaging and timely book; may it be read with tangible results!

Ulla de Stricker, April 2016

Acknowledgments

I want to thank my dear friend, Ulla de Stricker, for encouraging my writing for many years and celebrating my passion for libraries. Her guidance through the process of conceiving and writing this book has been invaluable and is appreciated beyond measure. I'm grateful for my co-writer and colleague, Laura Sloop Henzl, whose partnership has provided strength, humor, and inspiration throughout the journey. It has been my great pleasure to see her embrace the mission of the library with a passion that rivals my own! Thank you to Dr. Dwight Burlingame, my professor at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University, for your guidance and oversight of the research that informs the content of this discussion and for your own, valuable scholarship on this topic. To my colleagues in the library and in the small but supportive world of library development: Your willingness to contribute to this book through your success stories and your encouragement has been so meaningful. To my friends and family who have seen very little of me the last few months as I spent weekend after weekend in my yellow chair surrounded by papers and books typing away furiously: I promise that I will see you again very soon! I want to thank my development colleagues at Purdue for their willingness to let the library into their proposals and their cases for giving to their own donors. You have helped me communicate the value of the library to more people than I would ever have been able to do on my own. I thank my colleagues in the

Purdue Libraries who provide the amazing stories I get to tell to donors. Without your passion and sense of mission for your work, my job would be an impossible task. Finally, I want to thank the donors who give their precious dollars to support libraries throughout the world. Your support is what makes the magic happen. Thank you all for your part in giving library users the tools and expertise to do what no other institution does—provide access to knowledge for everyone. There is so much information out there, and librarians and information professionals evaluate it and deliver it to anyone who asks for it. They believe, as I do, that information is the key to leveling the playing field—to allowing all students and scholars the opportunity to do their best work and become the best versions of themselves.

Kathryn Dilworth,
April 2016

I want to thank my parents, Dean L. and Joyce E. Sloop, for introducing me to God, teaching me about servant leadership, and empowering me to follow my dreams. Although my Dad is no longer with us, I carry him in my heart every day. He taught me to see the good in the world, to embrace challenges, to give back to others, to never give up, to pursue education, and to never stop learning. Thank you to my husband, Jeffrey L. Henzl, for your support and for taking on extra hours with our toddler boys, Owen Dean and Landon James, while I typed away in my home office. To my co-writer and colleague, Kathryn Dilworth, for introducing me to “library world” and for listening to my long-winded visions of igniting passions in higher education and making fundraising more collaborative across disciplines and with colleagues. Working with her on this book has been an invaluable and enjoyable experience; and I will be forever grateful for her

partnership and collaboration on such a worthy project. To Ulla de Stricker for her expertise and time invested in guiding us through this process. To my advancement colleagues and friends from my alma mater, Manchester University, thank you for introducing me to a career in fundraising and for the opportunity to work with such compassionate and collaborative colleagues. To my friend and former colleague, Timothy A. McElwee, Ph.D., thank you for showing me early in my career how to implement servant leadership into academia. To my many mentors and colleagues throughout my years at Purdue University, for teaching me invaluable lessons, for partnering on exciting and meaningful projects, for your investments and knowledge shared and most importantly, for your friendships. To my friends and family, for support and the gift of life-long friendships. To the donors who give of their time, talent and treasure, thank you for making the world a better place for the next generation! And finally, to the readers, I hope this book will empower you to do wonderful things in your fundraising careers and for your academic library. Keep following your dreams. Keep building those relationships. Donors often become life-long friends as well, and there is nothing better than friendships that share the same passion for giving back and philanthropy in all forms. Love all. Love is.

Laura Sloop Henzl,
April 2016

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Introduction

The academic library within the university environment is often the most difficult fundraising landscape to maneuver. Most higher education fundraising professionals do not seek library fundraising positions, making them difficult to fill. Lacking the traditional fundraising “buckets” of other academic units, measurable success for the university library often lags behind. In many cases, the task of library fundraising is grouped into a combination role that may include, for example, the university museum or a specific performance venue. Although such groupings might add more appeal to the position, unfortunately they also dilute the opportunity for successful fundraising. In some rare environments, the task of library fundraising is divided among a vast array of development officers within the university, even further diluting success. In a day where longevity in a position is favored, where knowledge learned is irreplaceable, and where there is admiration for loyalty and dedication to one's academic unit and committed donors, sharing the load among part-time, multifocused fundraisers can be detrimental to the fundraising effort.

Because the traditional model for higher education fundraising entails the cultivation of alumni from specific departments and colleges, the library is traditionally left out and thus becomes a low-performing development area with lower salaries for fundraising positions. Many higher education development professionals consider the library related

position a stepping stone into a higher paying position with more potential for professional advancement.

This book showcases the academic library as a viable avenue for donor engagement that translates to all academic areas of higher education fundraising. We include case studies outlining strategies that have resulted in fundraising success for libraries at universities of various size and culture. We highlight the importance of collaborative relationships and fundraising strategies with academic leaders, donors, and fundraising staff. Although our specific aim is focused on fundraising for the academic library, this book is relevant for all fundraising professionals and academic leaders looking to strengthen their programs with philanthropic support.

Growing scholarship in the academic libraries sector regarding fundraising dates back to the early 1970s with an article in *College & Research Libraries* by Andrew Eaton. He not only predicted the eventual need for private funding in academic libraries at a time when the institution met the funding needs, but he also suggested in addition avenues to pursue with donors that are still relevant today (pp. 358–360). His article, however, was directed toward library leadership and staff, and this continues to be the trend. There is little scholarship directed toward the higher education fundraiser. The significance of the lack of literature aimed at fundraisers cannot be overstated, because the fundraiser position for the academic library is, in many ways, a very different challenge than the traditional university development model where development officers are placed within specific colleges, departments, or units. In the centralized and decentralized development models, the main focus for donor research and cultivation is alumni of the college, department, or unit. While the argument can be made that all alumni fall under the umbrella of the academic library, the reality is that prospect lists for development directors working in libraries are not constructed

in this way. Lacking an understanding of the full scope of development opportunity in the library, researchers typically don't understand how to look at the alumni data in a way that is meaningful for the library.

Collaboration in many forms is an ongoing theme when looking at solutions to the challenge of fundraising for the academic library. In her article from 1998, Joanna Olson Alexander warns against operating in isolation on the university campus and suggests partnerships with other colleges, boards, and alumni (p. 134). This is a great place to start in setting the unique strategy necessary to bring in the funds needed to support the broad range of services and technology provided by the library to the university environment. But before that can happen, the entire development structure (starting with the fundraiser tasked with the library) must understand the unique challenge and opportunity of the academic library in order to begin building collaborative development strategies resulting in successful fundraising for the library and for the partnering university units.

The best thing about existing scholarship is that much of it does a wonderful job of making a case for fundraising and identifying the many options for the fundraiser's toolbox. While the usual focus areas for colleges and departments in higher education fundraising are scholarships, bricks and mortar, faculty chairs/professorships or directorships, programs and research, they are only the beginning for the academic library. This book is a representation of the most valuable pieces of scholarship on this topic for the development professional working in the library and for leadership in the advancement division of the university. These publications are suggested at the outset because they introduce the fundraiser to the culture of the library, the many and diverse units within the academic library, and the opportunities available for funding. But because these scholarly publications