Fundraising in Difficult Times

AACC Annual Convention
April 2009

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Philanthropy: *Can do* vs. *should do*

- What difference does it make?
- Show me the money.
- Keep your established donors and grow your base.
- Have and be able to tell a good story.
Notes from the Field

- “Difficult? Weird and unprecedented times!”
  - Financial Advisor

- “Kathleen – I’m glad you got our donation last year.”
  - NMC Donor

- “Things are going to get a lot worse before they get worse.”
  - Lily Tomlin
The Current Condition

- 2008 – charitable contributions to colleges and universities grew by 6.2%

- Total – $31.6 billion highest ever (VSE)
  - 20 institutions raised $8.4 billion
  - Without these institutions – net effect is a 4.2% decline
  - One half of remaining institutions posted declines

- CC’s still receive less than 2% of the total
40 Years Up, One Down (1987)

- **Historical Data (Giving USA)**
  - Analysis of 13 major events
  - Giving tends to increase following crises – war, terrorism and economic turmoil

- **1987. Not a close historical parallel.**
  - Financial panic (Black Monday) – the Dow lost 22.6% of its value
  - This time the Dow has been down as much as 50%
  - Giving likely down for 2009 and 2010
What’s Up?

- About every 20 years the wheels come off the economy
- We’re still in the middle – we don’t know how it is going to turn out
- Endowments are down – number/value of gifts are down
- Historic pattern – giving is influenced by stock market, GDP and tax law
- Many non-profits are paralyzed – uncertain what to do next – some are already gone
- Community colleges – we’re here to stay – waiting for the markets and economy to “settle” is not an option
What to Do?

- Don’t sit on the sidelines and wait for the economy to turn around.

- Think forward!
  - Clarify your vision
  - Describe benefits for students/community
  - Lead with a plan
  - Engage in “Leadership Awareness”
  - Deliver outstanding “Customer Service” to established donors and prospects
If you already have a fundraising program:

- **Keep Cultivating**
  - Serious, determined donor relationship-building

- **Keep Asking**
  - Annual campaigns
  - Special gifts
  - Planned gifts

- **Keep Thanking**

DONORS ARE MAKING CHOICES.
DON’T LET ANY OF YOURS GET AWAY!
If you don’t have a robust fundraising program:

- **Make It a Priority**
  - It starts at the top

- **Lay the Groundwork**
  - Invest in development
  - Identify and cultivate donor prospects
  - Strengthen your foundation board
  - Develop and practice your best story

- **Donors Rarely Look for You - Be Proactive**

Donors are making choices. Give them reasons to choose you.
Think Like a Donor
What do Donors Want?

- **A Relationship**
  - …not a shotgun wedding

- **To Feel Confident**
  - …that the college is efficient and effective
  - …that the case makes sense

- **To Make a Difference**
  - …and feel great about it
Harness the Power of Great Storytelling

Review/Strengthen Your Case for Support

- How are our programs and services even more important in difficult times?
- How will students and the community be affected by delay or inaction?
- How is our college poised to make a significant contribution to the regional economy?
- In what “new” ways is the college being challenged to lead? How are we responding?
Top of Mind – Believe and Personalize

- This is serious. Donor investment ensures the success of the community college mission.
- Educate/convince/empower faculty, staff and trustees.
- This is urgent.
- Emphasize case, relationships, accountability.
- Be generous – personally and as an institution.
Why Us? Why Now?

- We’re higher education’s first responders.
  The nation is counting on us.

- We’re here to stay. Anchor properties in the local “mall” of economic development.

- We’re a great investment offering tremendous ROI.