

Strategic Plan

University Advancement Committee

The University Advancement Strategic Planning Committee included: Monica Delisa, Vice President University Advancement (*Chair*); Ken Proctor, Dean College of Arts and Sciences; Mindy Miller, Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving; Elizabeth Hines, Director of Legacy Giving; Kim Taylor, Director of Advancement Services; Matthew Davis, Director Old Governor's Mansion; Patricia Hightower, IT Support Services; Makayla Hays, Student Representative.

Nationally, giving increased 7.1 percent increase over 2013, according to the Giving USA Foundation. Giving to education increased 4.9 percent to \$54.62 billion. Experts partially attribute this growth to wise practices by charities who have honed their cases for support, increased their communication with donors and provided proof of the impact of giving. Gifts from alumni and non-alumni individuals increased by double-digit percentages during 2014 according to the Council for Aid to Education's Voluntary Support of Education Survey (10.2 percent and 23.1 percent, respectively) in 2015. Charitable support from organizations was less robust. Gifts from foundations, including family foundations, increased 3.6 percent, while corporate giving was flat. Gifts from other types of organizations fell 1.2 percent.

At Georgia College, we have seen dramatic growth in fundraising over the past four years from \$2,112,235 in fiscal 2013 to \$5,092,510 in fiscal 2015 and year-to-date in 2016 our giving exceeds \$4,200,000. At the same time, our percentage of alumni givers has decreased from 3.7% in 2013 to 3.2% in 2015. This is consistent with a nationwide trend of a small percentage of individual donors providing more than 80% of all giving.

Fundraising is key to the continued growth and success of Georgia College. Fundraising provides a measure of excellence allowing upgrades to current programs and existing facilities not possible with state funding. Fundraising also creates a pool of funds for student scholarships and awards, providing opportunities for underserved and first generation college students to earn a college degree that might not be possible otherwise or without incurring student debt. Finally, fundraising will make it possible for Georgia College to undertake new programs and pathways of excellence that would not be possible without the support of donors and friends.

When making long-term planning decisions, administration may take into account philanthropic and donor considerations, but they should not drive the academic process. University Advancement should serve to support and further the goal and aspirations of the university – not change or lead them.

Goal 1: Deepen and mature the culture of philanthropy at Georgia College.

Building a culture of philanthropy is key to the success of Georgia College. Strengthening ties with the campus community (faculty, staff and students) meets several philanthropic objectives. First, it multiplies the number of *fundraisers* who advocate for the philanthropic goals of the university. Faculty, staff and students who understand the philanthropic goals of the institution are far better ambassadors to potential donors than the professional fundraising staff because they are the consumers of the products being funded. Creating a team approach empowers the professional fundraisers to be facilitators of philanthropic passion. Second, it increases the number of potential alumni donors. By instilling a culture of giving in students while they are on campus, they are more likely to give post-graduation. Third, it helps to engage faculty and staff who are potential givers to the university.

Objectives:

- Engage students upon their arrival on campus. Build campus programs including class giving campaigns and student alumni clubs to increase student giving.
- Engage alumni early and often. Create a young alumni board to build strength in alumni volunteers.
- Further develop a partnership with faculty and staff. Provide additional training on campus and keep faculty and staff apprised on goals and success.
- Create and encourage development opportunities beyond academic units.
- Increase giving from faculty, staff and students.

Goal 2: Create a permanent pool of financial resources.

Endowments create financial stability by providing a pool of funds that is consistently available to the institution regardless of fluctuations in state funding or annual donor funding. Endowments are also important because they reflect trust in the institution by alumni and supporters, increasing the prestige of the institution and encouraging more giving. Endowments create legacy for donors and long term sound fiscal support for the institution.

Objectives:

- Increase the endowment
- Increase alumni support
- Increase annual average fundraising
- Create parent giving programs
- Complete comprehensive campaign

Goal 3: Increase alumni engagement

Alumni support for the institution, both financially and in intellectual advocacy and volunteerism, is vital to institutional success. Alumni financial support is the key advancement related metric used by external scoring agencies, like the US News & World Report, to rate universities. According to a 1989 study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, alumni who are engaged with their alma mater through advocacy or volunteerism are three times more likely to give than those who are not engaged.

Objectives:

- Institute unique alumni engagement opportunities for each of the three phases of alumni (Jessies, Colonials and Bobcats)
- Work with campus partners to create unique volunteer opportunities for alumni and other partners that take into consideration the needs of volunteers from the three alumni phases.

Key Performance Indicators

While the field of advancement definitely has been described as both a science, that has measurable objectives and outcomes, and an art, that requires emphasis on individuality in approach – there are several key performance indicators that will measure success in the strategic plan.

By July 1, 2021

- Increase the endowment from \$33 million to \$45 million
- Increase alumni support from 3.2% to 5%
- Increase annual average fundraising from \$3.3 million to \$6 million
- Complete \$25 million comprehensive campaign
- Increase giving from faculty and staff from 28.77% to 50%
- Increase giving from parents from 4.4% to 8%
- Increase giving from students from 1.1% to 5%