

College Fundraising User Guide

Introduction

Postsecondary institutions often face financial constraints that can limit the capability for schools to provide extra support services for their students. In order to meet the demand for low-cost educational opportunities, it is becoming increasingly imperative for schools to invest more of their time in pursuing additional fundraising opportunities. All 13 Tennessee Community Colleges have foundations and collectively raise about \$8-\$10 million annually. Most Tennessee Technical Colleges don't have their own separate foundation but raise funds for scholarships, equipment and building projects through a statewide foundation. Students can have a part in fundraising, so don't be afraid to ask! Two-year institutions should also not assume that former students will only identify with universities to which they transfer, as studies have proven that notion to be false¹.



Student Success

- Investing in schools provide foundational support for students, which allows them to prosper.



Strengthen Communities

- Reaching out to community leaders, employers and alums about college fundraising can help strengthen a community, bridge gaps, and form connections.

Implementation

Before getting started, work with your campus foundation staff or college leadership to evaluate what specific need for the institution warrants raising additional funds and develop a fundraising plan to accomplish the initiative. Implementing initiatives as effectively as possible requires students, college leadership, foundation staff, foundation board, and community being on the same page and clearly understanding the fundraising goal and plan and the impact investment will make. Also, marketing college fund raising as more of an “investment” instead of a “donation” and offering incentives can motivate individuals to participate.

¹ <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/confessions-community-college-dean/fundraising>

“Find the stories you want to tell, and find the people you need to tell them to. Once you explain what’s happening and what the need is, people are pretty philanthropic by nature.”

-Robert Schwartz, Executive Director of the Los Angeles City College Foundation

Best Practices

- Support your college’s foundation or the system foundation by helping build its database of alumni, local employers and community leaders as potential donors
- Extend donation outreach to current students and employees, as well as former students and retired staff
- Research local, national foundations with a history of education funding (see below)
- Help your college host events to honor students, alumni, corporate and community partners and faculty and staff
- Attract alumni, corporate or community partners, or foundations as donors by identifying specific programs for which the donor has an interest, not just pitching your college in general

Resources

- [Center for Community College Advancement](#)
- [Amazon’s “Smile” Program](#)
- [Los Angeles City College’s Foundation](#)
- [Top 40 Giving Foundations in Tennessee](#)