

The Seven Faces of Philanthropy: A New Approach to Cultivating Major Donors

By Russ Alan Prince and Karen Maru File

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Colleges and universities are re-defining their activities to be much more business-oriented. One facet of this has been the emphasis on independent cost centers, where individual divisions, colleges, or units must generate their own income and funding. Divisions of student affairs have been hit particularly hard by this trend, being called upon to raise money for student centers, scholarships, activities, and in some cases even to raise money for salaries. Regardless of the current scope of the trend, student affairs professionals will increasingly become prominent actors in institutional fund raising. Orientation professionals typically take on this task through marketing support and advertising sales, but the art of fund raising will become increasingly pervasive, and the *The Seven Faces of Philanthropy* will be a good overview for student affairs professionals looking to explore this new world of philanthropy.

Prince and File divided all donors into seven basic types, and describe the best ways of approaching these potential donors. The authors also provide the reader with basic vocabulary that will attract the attention of that specific donor type. The types of donors that they identify include:

- the Socialite, for whom doing good is fun;
- the Devout, for whom doing good is God's will;
- the Repayer, for whom doing good is a return for favors that were received;
- the Communitarian, for whom doing good makes sense for the community;
- the Investor, for whom doing good is good business;
- the Altruist, for whom doing good feels good and right; and,
- the Dynast, for whom doing good is a family tradition.

The authors stressed, though, that each type of donor is not typically exclusive, and that many donors are combinations of these typologies.

The authors stress that the Socialite type of donor would be an ideal choice for someone in charge of a special event or a special get-together for the alumni, parents, or friends of the university. For those at a college with a religious affiliation, the Devout donor would be the one who could be approached for any need that would be of a religious nature, from remodeling a chapel to providing funding for a retreat (such as a

wilderness retreat) program.

Many student affairs professionals automatically approach all alumni as if they were in the Repayer category when they begin work in fund raising. While there are many who feel a strong tie and loyalty to the college, not all alumni are willing to fund scholarships solely due to the experiences that they had while they were in college, and many still feel that students should be paying their own way to attend college, as many of these alumni did “in their days.” While there definitely is a Repayer type of donor, not all alumni fit into this category. Various examples and situations are provided to readers to help them identify which alumni truly fit the Repayer category.

The authors describe Communitarians as friends of the college who frequently reside in the local community, and look at the college as the organization that helps the community and its reputation in the state and country. They are easily approached for programs or building projects that will help the college be a better citizen in the community. Very much like the Communitarians is the Investor type of donor. This type feels that doing good is good for business, and again would be the type of donor to approach for programs or building projects that improve the college or for programs that will help the business in the future with shortages in the work force. A possible example of this might be in looking at some hospital or long term care facility CEOs as Investor donors who are facing a shortage in nurses or nursing assistants. They could be encouraged to provide scholarships for students to pursue these fields of study and alleviate the current shortage.

Finally, the last two types of donors, the Altruist and the Dynast, are usually the easiest to work with at colleges, as far as their not choosing a specific restriction for their gifts. They usually will be agreeable to any type of project that benefits the college or directly benefits students. The Altruist simply provides gifts to the college because it feels good and feels that it is the proper thing to do. The Dynast on the other hand usually follows in a family tradition in providing funding to the college.

Prince and File’s work and research into donor types will provide student affairs professionals a good foundational knowledge of the art of fund raising. The basic premise is that the people who can support an institution or program have needs and motivations, and responding to those needs and motivations is more important and more significant than the latest marketing strategy. Whether entering the fund raising process for the first time or re-focusing major gift efforts, student affairs professionals will find this an excellent resource for their professional growth.