Donor Community Meetings: Stakeholder Insights

Penn State University Libraries Assessment Department
Partners in advancing the University Libraries

Development and Alumni Relations personnel: Sarah Carey, Wendi Keeler, Gretchen Little, Pamela Long, Karen McCulley, Trinity Wilkinson-Osbourne


Emeritus: Ronald L. Filippelli, Michael S. Kirschner, Sandra W. Spanier
Donor Community Meetings

• Library Development initiative to bring like-minded donors together to form connections
• Developed around the four programmatic areas of the Libraries:
  - Advancing University Research
  - Teaching and Learning
  - Discovery, Access, and Preservation
  - Dean’s Vision
Goals

FOCUS ON WHAT WORKS WELL

IDENTIFY WHAT NEEDS TO IMPROVE

PROVIDE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE WITH ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS
Methodology: 6 Focus Groups (30 participants)
Analysis: Appreciative Inquiry

Define
Discover
Design
Dream

Rothwell, 2012
Findings

Discover – What works well?

• An opportunity to gain knowledge and get involved
• Liked hearing from experts
• Loved hearing about students & from students

Dream – What could be?

• Desired more opportunities for interaction in order to develop a “common bond”
Recommendations

COMMUNICATIONS AND PLANNING

MEETING STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

COMMUNITY BUILDING

SUSTAINABILITY
Taskforce recommendations and actions

- Taskforce developed to review report and implement recommendations
  - Recommended hiring personnel to assist with this initiative
- Communications
  - Rebranding: Libraries Discovery Hour
  - Be consistent – repeat, repeat, repeat messaging and branding
  - Expand communication channels: Website, LinkedIn, social media, etc.
  - Collaborations & Partnerships: Penn State Alumni Association, cross promote events with College units/departments
  - Schedule at least 6 months in advance
  - Develop post-event engagement strategy
- Meetings
  - Polish presentations: Well-trained presenters are just as important as well-trained facilitators
    - Include students as presenters and don’t be afraid of what they might say!
  - Match programming with supplemental opportunities
  - Explore “portable” programming opportunities or “Development Roadshow” for delivery at other campuses or donor homes
- Topics
  - Finding passion: Sent survey to 5,000 participants in mail campaign, ranking topics of interest
  - Appointed advisory group comprised of PSUL personnel, Development staff and donor board members to assist with selection of topics
  - Tie program themes to university events or exhibits
- Fall 2023: Re-evaluate outcomes and successes
Potential Calendar

Jan. | Feb. | March | April

Zoom | “On the Road” | State College | Zoom

May | June | July | Aug.

“On the Road” | State College | Zoom | “On the Road”


Zoom | State College | Zoom | Holiday Break
"We're all here for a reason. We all believe in the Libraries. But we also bring various levels of expertise, and I take it as an opportunity to learn from each person who's also here."

- Donor board member and study participant

Thank You!!