

The Development Learning Collaborative Assists Texas Tech University in Determining Appropriate Campaign Staffing and Funding Levels

Challenge:

In preparation for a major campaign, Texas Tech University was trying to determine appropriate staffing and funding levels as well as effective models for allocating staff.

Solution:

The Development Learning Collaborative (DEV-LC) research team conducted a benchmarking survey of the other schools in the Collaborative. Among the questions addressed in the survey were:

- When a university increases its staff for a campaign, what percentage of development officers are typically placed at the central, unit/school, and regional levels?
- What level of staffing is required for a \$1 billion campaign?

Results:

Based on the results of the survey, Texas Tech realized their funding levels were lower than their peers and they were able to use this data to successfully make the case for increased funding for their upcoming campaign.

About Texas Tech University:

Location: Lubbock, TX

Carnegie Classification: Doctoral

Ownership: Public Institution

Size: 23,662 Undergraduate Students (2008)

About the Development Learning Collaborative:

(DEV-LC) assists colleges and universities in improving the effectiveness of their institutional advancement efforts by helping them generate new ideas, prioritize investment decisions, benchmark staffing and productivity levels for discussions with internal stakeholders, and improve the professional development of their staff.

Data Driven Decision-Making

In 2006, Texas Tech University was trying to determine appropriate staffing levels in preparation for a major campaign. As a hybrid organization, they were also seeking effective models for allocating development officers across central, regional and unit activities.

Looking to base their decision on hard data in addition to the anecdotal evidence they had collected, Texas Tech asked the research team at the Development Learning Collaborative to benchmark staffing levels and staffing metrics across the membership as well as provide insight on the advantages of various campaign structures.

Leveraging the Collective Wisdom of the Membership

Working with the staff at Texas Tech, the research team at the Development Learning Collaborative developed a benchmarking survey to capture the collective wisdom and experience of the Learning Collaborative membership on these issues. The survey was sent to senior development managers at every member institution and included quantitative measures of staffing and budgeting as well as qualitative questions about management mechanisms and the advantages and disadvantages of different staff deployment models.

Making the Case for Increased Funding

Comparing the data of the respondents with their own experience from their last major campaign, Texas Tech was surprised by some of the results. In comparison to their closest peers in the sample, they realized that while their staffing levels were comparable, their development budget in comparison to campaign goal was markedly lower. In addition, they were the only institution to make a significant budget decrease in the year after the campaign ended.

During the discussion on campaign staffing, this knowledge added substantive documentation for increased funding for the upcoming campaign. After reviewing the data, the Chancellor agreed and subsequently their budget was significantly increased. In addition they were able to educate the university leadership on typical funding patterns for the public post-campaign period in support of a request to keep the same level of funding for the development budget at the conclusion of the campaign.