

Leveraging core funding into other sources of funding/developing relationships with university development departments

Wednesday, March 21st. Concurrent Sessions 1.

Matthew Wappett:

- Perception around development work comes with “sleaze factor” for most, but the UCEDD’s have many programs that are easy to sell
 - This can be tricky because universities tend to be protective of their resources
 - Cannot just talk to big donors, must branch out and cultivate relationships
- Utah State University UCEDD used to employ a development officer prior to Matthew’s tenure as director
 - Nisonger Center (Marc Tasse) and Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (Derek Nord) have contracted employment for a half-time development officer to assist
 - With the departure of the development officer, Matthew has found himself taking more of the responsibilities himself, having to balance grants vs. development work.
 - Cultivating relationships is critical, as the work is easier when you become more known
 - Matthew still works closely with the university’s development officer/office and always runs donations through the office
 - The development office is very supportive of their programs in general
 - Must coordinate any efforts with the government affairs department of the university. There are no issues as long as the priority areas align, although there are instances when an ask is denied
- While their deans may be under pressure, Utah State University UCEDD is in a unique situation because they are the largest research center in their university
- Sachin Pavithran’s Assistive Technology (AT) program helps college through donations, not going through the state’s AT act.
 - When making the pitch for donations, the language that helps is framing it as a return on investment (ROI)
 - Ex: “triple the value of your donation.” Make the economic case as that is more convincing
 - Ex: “For every \$XX.XX donated, you are saving close to \$XXXX.XX.” The breakdown helps in making a case for oneself
 - This language works for both foundations and legislators
 - This language helped in the line item appropriation in the state budget for his program
- In-kind gifts now being reported through Advancement. This is a nice way of building relationships.
- Major problem faced: lack of alumni donor base

- Alumni continue to be involved through staff positions and trainee opportunities, but this continues to be a challenge faced
- While corporate donations (corporations or foundations) are not a problem in Utah, these are not an option for other UCEDD's located in other states
- Regarding affluent family benefactors: Marketing is incredibly important in how you sell ideas
 - This is a struggle for the UCEDD too, but this development work was vital to the foundation of the center itself. Helps when the affluent benefactors have a personal connection to the center. Must follow up with families regarding the updates and programs originating from the center
 - They have no annual event to do fundraising. They can work with corporations and develop a mutual relationship (ex: providing work to post-secondary students)
 - When soliciting help, must provide very specific use/priority areas
 - Ex: Scholarship for TIPSID; clinic for Medicaid services charity case fund; finishing payment of new building, renaming their center in honor of their past director, etc.

Christopher Murray:

- There is usually a barrier formed with the university development office as it tends to be hierarchical
 - This office was too centralized, and the leads are distributed through the developments office
 - By the time it gets to the college level, all the good leads are gone
- Must deal with perceptions that "disabilities are poor." The perception being that this population does not donate/spend money (on Medicaid, etc.)
 - Must highlight success stories
- Have some affluent families in their system that donate often
 - While they donate to the university, the DD cause never get an opportunity to even make a pitch. There could be interest in donating to them if they can make a case

Derek Nord:

- Must know who to reach out to for efforts
 - Example: will reach out to families during Autism Month in April for donations to support the programs
- Regarding how to handle the lack of alumni base issue: University foundations seeking individual donations already to the initial outreach. Must build a portfolio that one can share with the overall alumni base of the university, since everyone is affected by disabilities
- Their UCEDD is located on the university's donation page. This provides people an option to donate among the options available
 - Good to explore the differences between corporate funding and individual philanthropy
- Crowd funding can be an area to explore, given the narrower focus
 - Foundations have the mechanisms, must invest in technology to put a face to the ask

Marc Tasse:

- University magazine highlighted research, serving to increase the money brought in
 - However, a common obstacle found among different UCEDD's is that even though research/center staff may be highlighted, this is often not followed with an "ask" requesting donations

- Since they are a medical center, they tend to be lower on the university's "food chain" as compared to other university areas
 - There are a couple of affluent families giving to causes though (down syndrome). This typically occurs when the family has a personal connection to the cause
- Payroll deductions are also an option, as employees can select which causes to donate to from thousands of options available (although this isn't an option for some UCEDDs/states).