

ACA Advancement Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 21, 2020 – Zoom Call

Opening

- I. Attendance
 - a. Present: Mike Halloran, Sharon Ryan, Suzie Colianni, Fr. Kevin Finnegan, Patty Stromen, Stephen Imholte
 - b. Absent: Ann Dayton, Quentin Moore
 - c. Staff: Laura Wagner, Alishia Wright
- II. Prayer: Fr. Kevin Finnegan
- III. Welcome: Mike Halloran

Academy Update

Advancement Department

- I. Patty spoke about the mission being more important than ever and how the staff have had a laser-focus on it. She spoke about the Virtual Coffee with the President engagements with donors and the communications that have gone out.
 - a. She also mentioned about Shane Carlson being absent for 4 weeks due to being called up to National Guard training.
- II. Patty spoke about the plan to reconnect with Casey Breen of Escale Advisors to work on moving forward. She brought up questions of what we've learned with COVID-19, how we take Advancement 2.0 into the future, how to take care of staff now so they don't burn out, and how to move from crisis into planning.
- III. Laura added an update about staffing within the Advancement department. She said that the team is strong, with Patty agreeing that the team is stronger now than it was in March 1st. Laura informed the committee that Debra Burgess retired and Kathryn Luedke has taken her place and has a strong background in database work.
- IV. Laura also spoke about how the systems that were being put in place prior to COVID helped adapt the team's strategies and has set them up in a great place to from now.

Drexel Schools

- I. Patty gave an update on the Archdiocese developing the St. Katherine Drexel Schools – Drexel Schools for short – as the designation for mission schools. There are 9 Drexel Schools, with the schools of the Academy holding 3 of those slots.
- II. Aim Higher Foundation is setting up a Drexel School fund, which we expect will have an effect on Academy funding next year.
- III. Patty also informed the committee that St. Peter Claver School is fully accredited with no probation period by Minnesota Independent School Association

- IV. Patty also mentioned that the Academy is potentially bringing in another Drexel School for SLAM this summer.

Advancement

Campaign Progress

- I. Patty said that on top of what is shown in the report, we have received approximately \$35,000 for pandemic relief between the parish and Academy

Board Connections Spreadsheet

- I. Fr. Kevin expressed a desire to meet with Laura, Patty, and Mike to speak about Our Lady of Grace and St. John Paul II for fundraising.
- II. Sharon recommended taking the George's off the Academy prospects list as her efforts have not been working with them. She also said that she would speak with the rest of her prospects about making gifts to St. Peter Claver School. Laura affirmed that they have been removed noting the status of removed.
- III. Suzie informed the staff that Our Lady of Lourdes likely won't be giving at their usual level as they have been struggling financially this year.
- IV. Fr. Kevin also said that he would be willing to sign letters that the Academy writes for him. He also likes the idea of Patty giving a 20-30 minute Academy update via a Zoom call, which she offered to do.

Current Strategies

- I. There are 4 main strategies the Academy is engaging in to raise money for the end of the year:
 - a. Virtual Coffee with the President
 - i. Laura informed the group that 14 people and organizations attended the 5 coffees with 4 more that were unable to attend last minute.
 - ii. Laura expressed interest in using the presentation, which was very well received, as a way to strengthen & broaden the circle of support around the Academy
 - b. Read to Lead
 - i. So far, \$70,000 has been committed to the event with another \$100,000 potential
 - ii. The event runs until June 5th.
 - iii. There are incentives for giving. This week, there will be a virtual meat raffle as a throwback to last year's gala. At the end of the event, there will be a bison raffled off or live auction.
 - c. Mailings
 - i. There will be spring updates for each school this year. Due to the decrease in giving for those below \$500, the Academy may cut out mailing to those lower level donors. Laura expressed that they will be articulating the need more clearly and putting in a parent's perspective.
 - d. Grants
 - i. There are 4 main grants that are being worked on currently:

1. Ciresi Washburn Foundation for Children
 - a. They currently have an RFP for learning loss. We are working with Achievement Network, Great MN Schools, and Bell Weather Consulting on instructional recovery, which will be talked about in this grant.
2. Koch Family Foundation
 - a. We were invited to submit a full proposal after submitting a Letter of Intent.
3. Raskob Foundation received for SLAM; submitting gen ops for Jan decision
4. Grotto Foundation awaiting decision on full grant

Discussion

- I. Stephen asked about the JPII funding, whether it's a COVID event-cancellation problem or something else.
 - a. Patty answered that with JPII, the funding problem is a systemic problem. Laura agreed and noted that we need to look at how to continue bringing supporters to JPII and SPC, to build a sort of Friends of Ascension for JPII and SPC to be able to sustain the schools.
 - b. Suzie thought that the Academy needs to work on converting those gala donors to annual giving donors.
 - c. Sharon had the idea of potentially using what Fr. Kevin has been able to do for JPII as a jumping off point for annual funding, like what happened with Michael O'Connell and Ascension. Fr. Kevin agreed and also noted how Maureen Trenary wants to be more involved with JPII with her retirement from OLG.
- II. Stephen noted that he heard from Otto Bremer Trust that they are looking for how organizations are taking care of their clients.
- III. Laura brought up how to make the Virtual Coffee presentations shorter, updated, and more accessible.
 - a. There was a lot of discussion around people experiencing Zoom fatigue, participants submitting questions ahead of the meeting/event, making a more direct ask, hosting multiple at different times of day, and recording it to be able to post on the Academy website.
 - b. The committee recommended developing a way to have a large gathering via Zoom to share the update with more supporters.

To Do

- I. The Academy staff
 - a. Laura will set times with committee members to go over their individual lists (Sharon is exception)
 - b. Alishia will work on shortening the presentation and look for dates to schedule virtual events

Closing

- I. Prayer: Patty Stromen