

2019 AVAP Conference

Track Session Three – Feeding the Monster

Wednesday, July 31, 2019

Moderator: Gretchen Morgan, Director of Alumni & Donor Relations, LSU

1. Opening Remarks

Gretchen shared her approaches to feeding the major gift pipeline, which include alumni events, shifting department focus to “friend” raising and customer, i.e. alumni, focus, and solicitations through class agent letters.

She monitors alumni giving by pulling giving lists and visiting with alumni, which helps her to identify who to cultivate and put in major gift pipeline and who to solicit for Dean’s Circle. Our annual giving efforts focus on the SVM Dean’s Circle, which is our leadership level of annual giving.

She also reviews giving reports for donors she knows and looks for relationships within the Baton Rouge community.

LSU SVM Grateful Clients are identified through our Grateful Client database. Our department reaches out to them through a variety of communications, such as snail mail and emails, but this has not been as successful as we anticipated.

2. Group Discussion

- *Annual giving is different across the various veterinary schools. Group agreed that research is a common denominator to identify major gift donors, such as:*

Searching giving reports for donors who fell through the cracks and donors who increased gifts from previous years.

- *How do schools handle Grateful Clients annual giving?*

Faculty, staff, and house officer training for Grate Clients programs – how to identify a grateful client

Research Grateful Clients lists weekly and mail thank yous and tour invitations.

Invite Grateful Clients to faculty and donor focused dinners.

Monthly mailings and or holiday mailings to Grateful Clients or mailings 6-10 weeks after their visits to keep them connected.

Trained students call to thank clients and solicit gifts.

- *How do we communicate with Foundation LAG officers and train them?*

Group agreed that key communication to teach LAG officers is that Grateful Clients have a passion for animals, not the university.

- *Alumni giving trends*

Even though young alumni have debt and cannot give now, keep them engaged for future giving. Some schools do solicit young alumni right away, so they begin to give early and sustain a habit of giving.

Young alumni can connect the school to larger gifts from outside clients.

Some schools have success engaging with young alumni as DVMs rather than as alumni donors.