

Cause-Based Philanthropy

Social Media and Special Initiatives



Thank you to our Conference Host and Sponsors



Agricultural Alumni Association



Who We Are



Adam Fischer

Chief Development
Officer, CFANS



Echo Payne

Director of Annual Giving
and Operations, CFANS

CFANS by the Numbers

12 Departments

14 Majors

28 Minors

226 Faculty

937 staff

1,681 undergraduate students

536 graduate students

31,000+ living alumni

10 Years Ago

3,205 donors

2,064 alumni donors

827 non-alumni donors

FY26 Fundraising at a Glance

185% increase in donors FY17-FY26

Total Donor Count: 9,146

Source	Dollars	Donors
University Alumni	\$15,922,251	2,761
Other Individuals	\$4,728,898	6,094
Corporations	\$2,665,373	194
Foundations	\$359,850	13
Other	\$1,182,719	84

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Your institutions can do this too

The Family Farmers Making More From Clicks Than Crops

Social-media stardom is helping more producers weather a challenging farm economy



Aa



94



Gift unlocked article



Listen (6 min)





How do you capitalize on public interest?



Case Study 1: Bee Lab

2007: Colony collapse
was hot in the news

No donors, but a lot of
public support.



What We Did - Annual Giving

- Started an annual giving campaign
 - ▣ Lists from Extension events, short course attendees
- The Bee Lab started a newsletter to keep individuals informed.
- State of the Bees fundraising event.

What We Did - Cultivation

- Cultivated short course attendees with high capacity, and encouraged Dr. Spivak to introduce us to her connections
- Had a donor interested in funding a new building

Bee Lab Today

Annual Giving (\$25k or less)

Average 250 donors per year, \$250,000 in gifts

2014: Bee Lab Building \$2.2M

Plus legislative funding

2024: \$5M Endowed Chair

Through 9 major gift donors

Bee Lab Today

Total Raised: \$12.1M

What We Learned

Managing expectations is a big key.

This is going to take time.

What We Learned



Capital campaigns:

What is the
University doing,
what is the
legislature doing?

What We Learned

This is sustainable

U of M Department of Entomology achieves \$5 million goal
for Honey Bee Faculty Chair

July 19, 2024

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

INSECTS & WILDLIFE

CAMPUS AFFAIRS



The [Department of Entomology](#) at the University of Minnesota's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) is pleased to announce the successful achievement of its \$5 million fundraising goal to establish a Honey Bee Faculty Chair. This pivotal milestone ensures the continuation of the

Case Study 2: Voyageurs Wolf Project



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

CFANS

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL
AND NATURAL RESOURCE SCIENCES

VWP's Numbers

Voyageurs Wolf Project

- **402k** Facebook followers
- **108k** Instagram followers
- **70k** Youtube subscribers
- **51k** X followers

University of MN

- **221k** Facebook followers
- **118k** Instagram followers
- **16k** Youtube subscribers
- **110k** X followers

UT Knoxville

- **333k** Facebook followers
- **220k** Instagram followers
- **15k** Youtube subscribers
- **162k** X followers

What We Did

Account started in 2018, first ask was May 2022.

- 2,400 donors in a week, raised \$100,000
- General project funding, small gifts
- No UMN connection, from around the world

Every year VWP does a May crowdfunding campaign.
Added in a November one as well for Give to the Max
Day, Minnesota's day of giving

VWP Today

Annual Giving (\$25k or less)

Average 4000 donors per year, \$360k in gifts and rising

Last week

Raised \$150k from crowdfunding campaign, 3000 donors

Major Gifts

First estate gift booked, first major outright gift in the works

VWP Today

Total Raised: \$1.8M

What We Learned - Social Media

Their success isn't just because of cute wolf pups!

CAUTION: Image of a wolf carcass coming

What We Learned - Social Media



What We Learned - Social Media

Put the fun back into fundraising

 **Voyageurs Wolf Project** ✓
May 23, 2023 · 🌐

If 1% of the folks who follow our project make a beer-sized donation (\$7) today, we reach our annual fundraising goal today...we only have 25% to go!! That means we only need 4,549 beer-sized donations...a small amount considering we have >377,000 followers! So help us cross the finish line here!

Donate at the link in the comments! [See less](#)



View more comments

 **Lynn Osse**
I donated a case

3y Like Reply 5  

 **Author**
Voyageurs Wolf Project ✓
Lynn Osse Excellent! Cheer Lynn! We really appreciate the support!

3y Like Reply 2 

 **Voyageurs Wolf Project** ✓
May 25, 2023 · 🌐

Unfortunately, we made a fatal mistake in our fundraiser. As you probably know, we have been asking for beer-sized donations (\$7) to reach our fundraising goal. We based this on the fact that a typical pint of craft/micro-brew beer is \$7 and thus we only need 3,383 beers right now to reach our goal!

That was really dumb of us though because when people think of "up north" (i.e., Northern Minnesota), they don't think of drinking craft beer on their boat drinking the finest beer of Golden Light, LaBatts, etc.

that resembles beer-flavored LaCroix, lime-esque properties (not our opinions... have heard).

of fancy beer by the pint...you buy it by the

;/case but more typically is probably

/ need is 1,184 cases of the finest beer of

What We Learned

Social media is powerful, but fickle.

Work on a multi-channel program early on!



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AND NATURAL RESOURCE SCIENCES

What We Learned

Prioritizing one-on-one outreach with donors and major gift officers

Launching Your Campaign

Who has faculty projects with a large social media following, or whose work is big in the news right now?

Managing Expectations

- This is a long game. 5, 10, 15+ years in the making.
- It takes a lot of work from everyone involved
- Great way to leave a legacy

Careful Stewardship

- May not have a connection between the project and the university
- Work stories into broader communications
- They'll need their own stewardship plan for some time, outside of project specific stewardship

What's Next



researcher
or VWP
ing



Questions?

Echo Payne, epayne@umn.edu

Adam Fischer, afischer@umn.edu



Please take one minute
to complete our session
evaluation and
committee interest form





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Agricultural Alumni Association

