



Thank you to our Conference Host and Sponsors





Building Power Partnerships for Philanthropic Success

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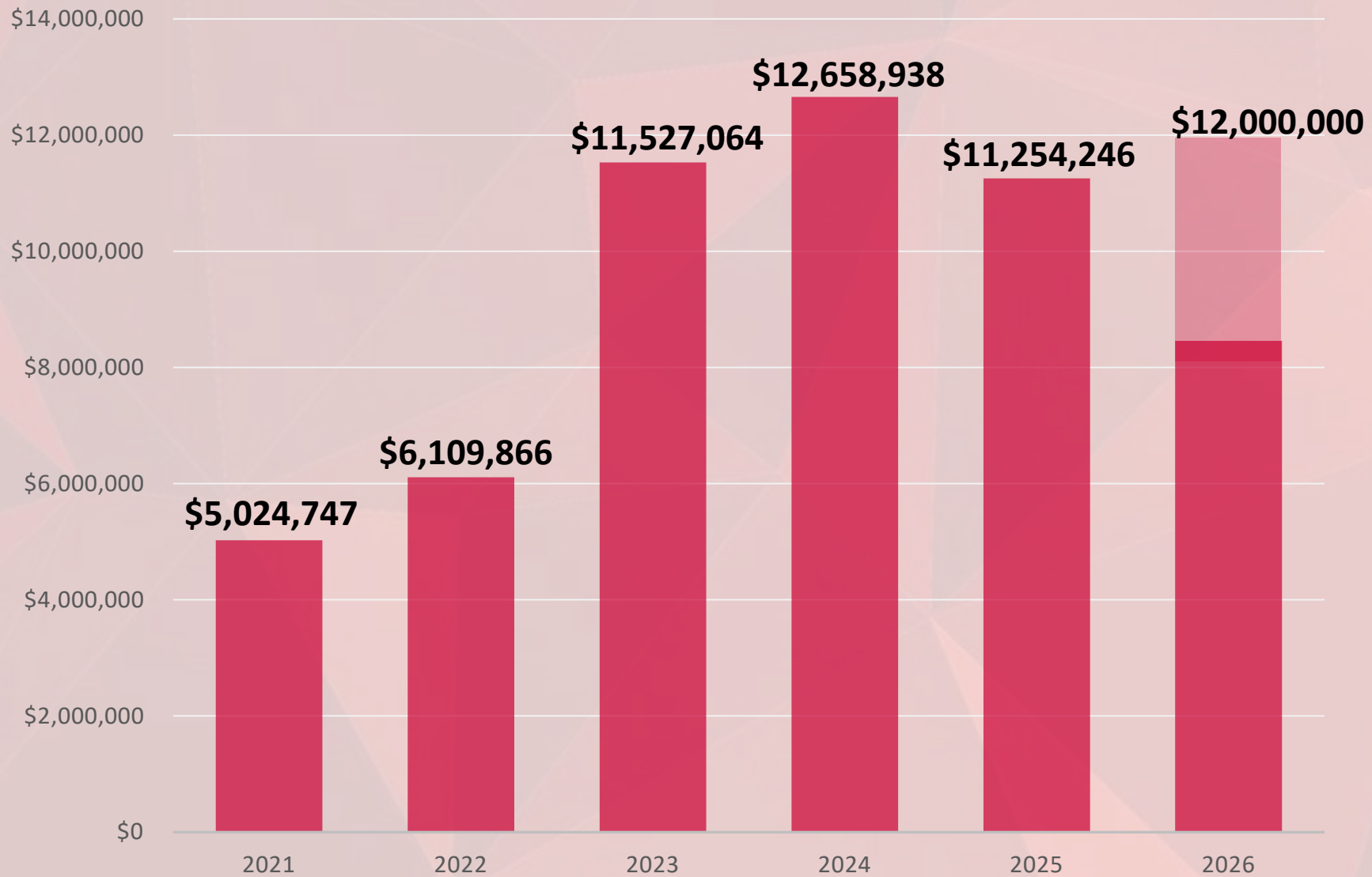


How many development officers are in the room?

How long have you been working with your Dean(s)?

Do you feel you're on the same page?

Fundraising Success to Date



Path to Fundraising Readiness

LEARNING, LEADING, AND CULTIVATING SUPPORT

- Our partnership began during the Dean's third year of her initial five-year term
- First 1-2 years require a different approach as the Dean acclimates to the role and institution
- If possible, by the end of year two, conversations about fundraising priorities should begin to take shape
- Strong alignment between the Dean and Director of Development is essential
- Ongoing dialogue builds understanding of fundraising strategy, processes, and priorities
- Mutual trust and support can drive transformational outcomes





Requirements for Success

WHAT IT TAKES TO LEAD, ENGAGE, AND DELIVER RESULTS

- Schedule regular Dean–DOD meetings to keep development top of mind.
- Identify early wins that demonstrate progress and build confidence.
- Align on priorities, messaging, and donor strategy.
- Leverage the dean's calendar to maximize donor engagement opportunities.
- Celebrate successes and learn from setbacks together.
- Focus on relationship-building before solicitation.
- Protect time for fundraising activities on the dean's calendar.
- Approach donor engagement as a long-term relationship strategy, not a series of asks.
- Debrief after donor meetings to capture insights and maintain momentum.

Investing in Development & Alumni Engagement

BREAKING APART THE ADVANCEMENT MODEL

I

Dismantle the Advancement Model

The original advancement model was comprised of Communications, Philanthropy, and Alumni Engagement. Communications no longer reports to the EDOD.

II

Development and Alumni Engagement Together

Previously Alumni Engagement and Development were separate offices at SEBS/NJAES. By unifying the offices, AE will grow and drive the donor pipeline. AE is not solely focused on events.

III

Realign Staffing Based on Talent and Interest

The team previously had job descriptions that didn't serve their talents. After a year of observations, the office was realigned based on skills and abilities to drive productivity.

IV

Build Staffing Slowly and Demonstrate Need

The office began as a team of three (DOD, Development Specialist, Manager of AE). We quickly added a Team Administrator, followed by an Assistant Director of Development several months later. One year later we added an Associate Director of Development.



Our Partnership Model

VISION + STRATEGY + TRUST + EXECUTION

- Prioritizing fundraising opportunities can be challenging and intimidating
- Academic goals do not always translate easily into philanthropic priorities
- Fundraisers can guide discovery through the 7 Whys framework
- Repeatedly asking “why” reveals purpose, impact, and donor relevance
- The result is greater clarity, focus, and fundraising direction
- The Dean and DOD should operate as a unified team
- Always show up for each other and look for opportunities for engagement and growth
 - Our first day working together was in a cranberry bog!





Trust and Transformation

STRATEGIC EVENTS AND INVESTMENTS

- Revival of Scholarship Reception (now Celebration of Student Success)
- UHNW and HNW prospect event at the American Museum of Natural History
- Investment in Football Suite Tickets AND Alumni events at football games
- Rutgers Feeds the Future
- Retired Faculty and Staff Luncheons
- Farm to Table Dinners at Rutgers Gardens
- Legacy of Giving Dinners
- “Homecoming” celebration at Rutgers Day (coming April 2027)



“Taste of Rutgers” Farm to Table Dinner



Celebration of Student Success



Rutgers Football



Retired Faculty and Staff Luncheons



Rutgers Feeds the Future



Where the Best Ideas Happen

12 STATES AND COUNTING

- Travel is key – meet donors where they are and demonstrates interest and authenticity
- Identify interest areas in Development and how the Dean would like to be engaged
- Discuss projects and ideas outside of the office
- **Think BIG!** Take time to dream and plan for what “could be” and then turn that into a plan of action
- Partner with other units at the University to highlight synergies and broader themes
- Consider a visit to an aspirational institution for planning and priority setting



Travel...





Putting This Approach into Practice

- Show up as a team!
- Build the Dean-DOD partnership early and intentionally
- Recognize that fundraising readiness develops over time
- Identify and pursue early wins to build momentum and confidence
- Use the “7 Whys” to transform ideas into compelling fundraising priorities
- Align around a shared vision, strategy, and donor engagement plan
- Invest in continuous learning about fundraising, donors, and institutional priorities
- Travel strategically to strengthen relationships and deepen donor connections
- Think big, plan boldly, and execute together



Questions?



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

