

VOLUME 12

SOLUTION of the MONTH



Pledgmine is pleased to announce the January 2017 Solution of the Month! Thanks to a rapidly growing and highly innovative community of clients, the Solutions Library has become an indispensable resource for fundraising ideas at more than 300 institutions across the country. In combination with the existing portfolio of exceptional samples, this newest addition to the Solutions Library is designed to inspire your future projects.

The Solution of the Month program continues to highlight innovative solutions. A challenge for many Annual Giving programs is donor retention. How do you maintain a strong base year after year? Donors appreciate and remember creative pieces that speak to them on a personal level and let them know how their donation is being used.

The January 2017 Solution of the Month features Tommy Gallagher and his team at St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas. The St. Edward's Fall Letter Appeal addresses the challenge of retaining donors by targeting specific groups of donors, using an infographic to highlight both the diversity of the incoming freshmen class and the need for scholarship assistance. Congratulations to Tommy and his team on a successful campaign!

From the team here at Pledgmine, our best wishes for a happy and healthy new year!

VOLUME 12 SELECTION ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY



Letter in 6x9 Envelope

FLAT: 8.5" x 11"

Stock: 70# Text Super Smooth

FALL LETTER APPEAL

ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY



AN INTERVIEW WITH ST. EDWARD'S

TOMMY GALLAGHER

Associate Director of Development | St. Edward's University

My name is Tommy Gallagher. I am an Associate Director of Development, Athletics and Annual Programs. I work with annual giving in support of The St. Edward's Fund. I work with two other awesome colleagues to help bolster unrestricted giving. One of my largest responsibilities is to plan and create our direct mail appeals. I have been with St. Edward's University for 2 years and have worked with Pledgmine for the two years that I have been with the University. Together we have created some great direct mail and pledge fulfillment pieces.

Q Is this a new design/concept/format or have you used it before?

A This was the first time we used this design format with Pledgmine. We have used a similar format in the past, but that was just a letter with a sidebar – all text.

Q Can you share the specific objectives that you had for this campaign?

A We used this design for our Fall Appeal. Our objective was a high rate of renewal from LYBUNTS and SYBUNTS to aid us in our donor retention efforts and boost the alumni participation rate early in the year.

Q What factors influenced your decision to use this format? Any constraints or challenges?

A We decided to use a letter signed by the annual giving director because it had been years since we had done that for a large segment. We had used her as the signatory for leadership annual gifts to good effect the last two years and thought it was worth a try. The opportunity to provide an infographic along with a fairly large amount of text was a real selling point. One of our challenges was that we did not have an infographic – we just had text and numbers – so we called upon the designers at Pledgmine to handle that part.

Q What was the size of your intended audience? What % is this of your entire database?

A The appeal was mailed to approximately 3,169 individuals, which represents approximately 10% of our solicitable constituents.

Q Was segmentation an important part of your strategy?

A Our segmentation for this year's Fall Appeal was dramatically different from past years. Where we would ordinarily solicit everyone at this time of year, we chose instead to concentrate on renewing our more dependable donors early. This allowed us to tailor the message so that it led with an acknowledgement of their past support before asking them to re-commit. The idea was that if we started by thanking them and offering them a glimpse of the newest students to enter SEU before soliciting them, they would feel like they were on a bit of an inside track.

Q Did you achieve your objectives for this mailing? Can you share results to date?

A We received 99 gifts (a 3% response rate) totaling almost \$19,000 in contributions, which is 6% of operating funds raised to date (via all means). On that basis alone we consider this to have been a success. Unfortunately, due to a database conversion, we are not able to compare these results to last year's. We do, however, now have a baseline from which to measure future Fall Appeal performances. We also know from past performance that our alumni will continue responding to this appeal throughout the fiscal year, and possibly even into the next one, so these are not necessarily final numbers.

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Q Do you have any other noteworthy insights or conclusions that relate to this campaign?

A We have come to value and rely upon the creativity of the Pledgmine design team in helping us solve our presentation challenges. If we did not have their assistance in designing the infographic, this layout would not have been as visually appealing, and probably not as effective.