

VOLUME 21

SOLUTION *of the* MONTH



Innovation is the lifeblood of any business, and the business of fundraising is no exception. As the 2016-17 academic year drew to a close in May, Alberto Perez, the Annual Giving Officer for the University of North Georgia knew it was time to innovate! Pledgeline is pleased to recognize Alberto and UNG's innovative **One Gift. Your Gift.** campaign with the October 2017 Solution of the Month award.

Alberto's vision was to combine UNG's first-ever crowdfunding initiative with a more traditional solicitation letter to activate past donors and "kick-start the campaign". Pledgeline was pleased to support Alberto's vision and UNG's campaign

execution on all fronts. The results of this multi-channel approach are impressive, and we salute UNG's innovative leadership ... after all, this is "The Military College of Georgia"!

The Pledgeline Solution of the Month program continues to highlight innovative concepts and solutions. 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 350 institutions across the country. In combination with the existing portfolio of exceptional samples, this latest addition to the Solutions Library is being shared to inspire future projects and continued innovation.

VOLUME 21 SELECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA



FORMAT DETAILS



STANDARD LETTER

FLAT: 8.5" x 11"

Stock: White 70# Text Smooth
Optional Color: natural



CLOSED-FACE 6x9

9" x 6.125"

Stock: 24# White Wove



8 5/8 (CHECK) REPLY ENVELOPE

3.625" x 8.625"

Stock: 24# White Wove

AN INTERVIEW WITH UNG

ALBERTO PEREZ ANNUAL GIVING OFFICER

I have been the Annual Giving Officer at the University of North Georgia for the past year. Although this is my first year in fundraising for higher education, I have over ten years of fundraising experience within the performing arts sector. I have a Masters in Arts Administration from Boston University and my work experience includes corporate and foundation relations, grant writing and individual giving for Florida Grand Opera and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC.

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

A Everything was new with this project. It was the first time I collaborated with Pledgmine, the first time UNG embarked on a large-scale crowdfunding campaign and the first time we included strong visuals and graphics in an appeal.

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

A The **One Gift. Your Gift.** crowdfunding initiative was launched on commencement weekend (May 5-6, 2017) and lasted until the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2017). The goal was to engage and capture those past donors who haven't yet given in FY17 and compel new donors to give for the first time. Considering that a crowdfunding campaign had never been attempted and that June, historically, is one of the lowest giving months, it was important to capture our past donors with a mailed letter to kick-start the campaign.

Q What influenced your decision to use this format? Did you have any constraints or challenges?

A Before this appeal, UNG had been very traditional in their solicitations, favoring the letter format with minimal use of images. I decided to play it safe knowing that a letter format would be familiar to our donors. The main constraint prior to using Pledgmine – and something that is common in smaller institutions – was that there is only one graphic designer for the whole university, and design approval is required for all communications.

Pledgmine's team solved this problem by producing quality designs that conform precisely to UNG's branding guidelines with a 24-48 hour turnaround. The final proof for the **One Gift. Your Gift.** solicitation received only minor edits from UNG's designer and was approved in a matter of days.

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

A We have 75,000 records in our database and this solicitation was sent to 3,920 past donors.

Q Was segmentation an important part of your strategy? How?

A Segmentation was not crucial in this campaign except to identify those donors who would be most likely to give, knowing that they would prefer a traditional solicitation. UNG is The Military College of Georgia, so including the military component on the envelope was significant.

“Pledgmine's team solved this problem by producing quality designs that conform precisely to UNG's branding guidelines...”

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

A **One Gift. Your Gift.** raised over \$15,000 from 158 gifts. The mailing brought 12.3% of the amount raised and counted for 15.8% of the gifts. Most of these were received the first week of the campaign which helped us achieve the momentum we needed for success. In addition, the mailing instructed donors to give online, but it's difficult to track how many online gifts can be attributed to the mailing.

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

A **One Gift. Your Gift.** was the first time I collaborated with Pledgmine. My experience was so satisfying that I upgraded our original FY18 agreement from a 5,000 unit agreement to 24,000 units. Our in-house design team now trusts Pledgmine's judgement and taste, allowing us to explore new ideas and ventures.