
From the Cayman Islands to Washington: Development in Academic Libraries

Joline R. Ezzell

An enterprising librarian in the Cayman Islands decided to seek funds from departing tourists. The large ceramic whiskey bottle labeled "Funds for Library Books" placed among the jewelry, cameras, and other items on sale at the airport's duty-free shop was soon overflowing with coins left by those with no further need for Cayman money.¹ This ingenious strategy for library development is but one of many. Consider the following:

- an appeal to turn over tax rebate checks to the library
- an auction of Audubon Society prints
- an evening event at a dinner playhouse
- radio spots
- a bookstore
- newsletters
- antiquarian books auctions
- exhibits
- sales of cards, notepaper, and book totes
- library want lists

All these ideas and more have been used by libraries as development activities.

What is library development? Thomas Broce thought that it must involve photography. In his excellent book, *Fund Raising*, he relates the story of his introduction to the field of development. Figuring he could "handle everything I understood and fake the rest until I learned it,"² he applied and was hired for the position of director of public relations and development at a small university. He was certain that "development" had something to do with photography and did not ask the president what it meant until after he had received his first paycheck. The president's shock at his question and his shock at the president's answer were equal, but, he reports "in time both the president and I recovered."³

Library development is, in the narrowest sense, fundraising, and in the broadest sense, proclaiming the library's mission, goals and accomplishments in such a way that individuals and groups are eager to have a part in its success.

Planning

The first step in development should be a planning session in which the library answers the following questions. Who are we? What is our mission? How do we accomplish this mission? What are our goals for the next ten years, the next five years, the next year? What are our greatest needs and challenges? What innovative solutions to these challenges can we formulate? Who will benefit from these solutions?

The answers to these questions will form the basis for initiating both public relations and fundraising activities. Moreover, these questions should not be asked and answered only when a development program is initiated; they should be asked and answered annually, to ensure that the stated needs and goals match reality.

Public Relations

The "proclamation" of the library's plans and activities should precede, as well as accompany, all efforts to gain support. No individual or group is likely to give to an institution about which little is known. Potential donors want to know what the organization does, how it does it, and what makes it worthy of support. A continuing, positive public relations program will put, and keep, the library in the public's sight, whether that public is legislators, trustees, alumni, faculty, or students.

The positive nature of the public relations effort cannot be overstressed. People give to going concerns. They want to be associated with success. They will jump on the bandwagon when they are certain that the bandwagon is moving forward.

Public relations can take a variety of forms, adapted to suit a particular institution. Larger academic institutions will have a news bureau or public relations office that maintains contacts with local newspapers and radio and TV stations. This office will often be willing to send press releases to library-related publications as well. A good working relationship with staff in such news bureaus is invaluable to the library.

Libraries may handle their own publicity,

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either by choice or necessity. Then the working relationship needs to be built with staff from the local media. Libraries can also use brochures, annual reports, newsletters, and flyers to publicize their activities and accomplishments. Other, less overt types of public relations include tours and focus groups comprised of "consumers" of library services.

Once a vehicle for publicity is identified, the next logical question is what should be publicized. Suitable topics are new collections or services, exhibits, programs (such as lectures and discussions), and major gifts. Too often libraries tend to restrict the broadcasting of such news to the campus, if not to the library itself. But the majority of the library's financial support, beyond that appropriated by the college or university administration, will come from those outside the library and, indeed, outside the institution.

Relationships

Fundraising for the academic library traditionally has been a responsibility of the library director. The importance of outside funding has grown in direct proportion to the increased stringency of academic budgets during recent years. As a result, several academic libraries have at least one additional staff member whose duties include raising money.

Regardless of who bears this responsibility, one of the most valuable weapons in an academic library fundraiser's arsenal is a good working relationship with the individual(s) responsible for fundraising for the entire academic institution. "Development done well is development done collaboratively."⁴ For purposes of discussion I will call this individual the development office. This office should be the first target for the library's public relations campaign. Academic fundraisers must be made aware of the importance of the library to the overall goals of the institution. Library staff should regularly inform this office of additions and improvements to the library's collections and services. With this information, institutional fundraisers will be alert to individuals or foundations with a potential interest in funding library programs, will be able to express clearly and accurately the library's goals and needs, and will be able to answer questions about the library.

The development office may also maintain a clearance list of prospects, both individual and corporate/foundation. The aim of a clearance system is to prevent different units of the institution from competing with each other for donations. The development office generally grants clearance to approach a potential donor to the

unit of the institution that most closely parallels the donor's interests (i.e., the unit with the best chance of obtaining a gift). Several units may be given clearance to approach the larger foundations which may have many different funding programs. Again, it will be easier to obtain clearance if there is a good working relationship between the library and the development office.

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Individuals

What are the potential sources of external funds for the academic library? First and foremost should be those who benefit from its services, namely students, faculty, and staff of the institution. Though rarely large donors individually, they can, as a group, make up the bulk of the continuing support for the library. Students will be least likely to contribute; however, as future alumni they need to be made aware of the importance of the library in the life of the institution. Another class of individuals now more frequently being tapped for donations to the academic library is local business people, who often make use of the library's reference services. If the library provides borrowing privileges to residents of the city or county, these individuals may also be solicited.

A Friends of the Library group is an excellent source of support. Its members can provide extra funds for the library through membership renewals and special contributions. A Friends group may also raise money for the library through book sales or through other fundraising efforts. Moreover, members of the Friends can serve as another vehicle for publicity by telling their friends and colleagues about successful Friends programs or library services.

At least one academic library has established another type of outside support group. The library of Texas A&M University formed a development council to assist with its fundraising. This group consists of twenty-two members, geographically distributed in areas pinpointed for fundraising activities, who serve three-year terms. This body gathers frequently to work on projects and meet with potential donors. Those chosen for the development council are often individuals just completing a term on the university's Board of

Regents. The library has judged the development council to be a success.

In addition to the fundraising strategies mentioned at the beginning of this article, many other ideas for raising money from individuals abound in the literature. Just one of those ideas will be mentioned here. The adopt-a-book/adopt-a-journal program solicits money from donors for use in purchasing books or journal subscriptions. Libraries employing these programs often allow donors to specify the subject area of the book or journal to be purchased and may also encourage them to make the contribution in honor or memory of a loved one. Many of the fundraising successes described in library literature come from public libraries. One should not make the mistake of dismissing them out-of-hand as inappropriate to a college library. With slight adaptations, they can often be used profitably in an academic setting.

The annual solicitation of alumni by the university can prove an excellent source of income from individuals. Pledge cards or donation slips frequently list various components of the institution to which donations may be assigned. If the library is one of those components, a relatively steady flow of operating income can result. Furthermore, if the library staff thanks these individuals and maintains contact with them via newsletters, mailings, etc., it is likely that they will continue to contribute annually.

The library can also benefit from individuals' donations through deferred-giving programs. These include charitable remainder unitrusts, pooled-income funds, and charitable-gift annuities. A charitable remainder unitrust is a life-income plan created by the donor that irrevocably transfers assets to a trust. The trust pays the donor an annual income for life, based on a fixed percentage (not less than five percent) of the fair market value of the trust assets, as valued each year. When the transfer is made, the trust becomes the property of the recipient institution. A pooled income fund also involves an irrevocable transfer of funds or securities to an institution. A representative of the institution signs a contract agreeing to pay the donor income for life. The gift becomes the absolute property of the institution, which adds it to a pool of other income gifts and invests the lump sum. Through a charitable-gift annuity, the donor transfers funds or securities to an institution in exchange for an annual fixed payment to the donor or survivor for life. The transfer is part gift and part annuity. The rate of return is based on the age of the donor and any other conditions that may be specified.⁵ Fund-

raisers should work with their institution's development office to become familiar with such arrangements, as well as with gifts through wills and insurance contracts.

The library may also seek funds from individuals for special purposes. Such appeals may be designed to meet the matching requirements of a grant or challenge program, for a capital campaign, or for a special project such as renovation. For such a solicitation the fundraiser will want to tap all those in the potential donor pool: students, alumni, faculty, staff, other borrowers, Friends of the Library, annual fund donors, trustees, and local business leaders. The support of the academic administration is crucial to the success of a special appeal, and careful preparation is essential. Goals, objectives, and strategies must be identified well in advance of the public phase of the campaign. The specific steps to be followed in carrying out the program are described in the many books on fundraising, including Broce's publication, previously cited.

Foundations and Corporations

A major source of funding for academic libraries is foundations and corporations. According to a preliminary report from the Conference Board, in 1987 charitable donations from companies to education probably reached \$2.2 billion, a record amount and 44 percent of all corporate donations. Colleges and universities typically receive from seventy to seventy-five percent of these funds. The Foundation Center reports that \$68,196,000 was distributed in the form of grants to libraries in 1986. Of that amount, \$3,046,000 came from community foundations, \$2,601,000 from company-sponsored foundations, and \$62,103,000 from independent foundations. There is money available from foundations and corporations for academic libraries.

At the same time, most foundations and corporations receive requests for many more dollars than they have to give away. They must make a choice, often among very good and worthwhile projects. How do they decide which proposal to fund?

The majority of foundations and corporations conduct their charitable activities under specific guidelines. These parameters may have been established by the organization's founder or by the current governing body. The guidelines will include geographic limitations, subject area, and restrictions as to the type of items for which funds can be expended. In addition, the foundation or corporation's charitable activities will be

limited by its financial resources. All of these factors must be considered when determining which foundation or corporation to solicit for a specific project.

How does one learn about foundations or corporations that will support proposals from libraries and that will make grants for the specific purpose in mind? A good starting point is *The Foundation Directory* and *Corporate 500: The Directory of Corporate Philanthropy*. *The Foundation Directory* includes "information on the finances, governance, and giving interests" of foundations "with assets of \$1 million or more or which have annual giving of at least \$100,000." *Corporate 500* is a directory of the top 560 U.S. corporate foundations. Both of these publications describe the types of support and the limitations of each organization included. Another excellent printed source is *Foundation Center Source Book Profiles*, which is issued in looseleaf form and revised biennially. Its information on foundations awarding \$200,000 or more each year includes descriptions of recent grants awarded. This reference work may be available in the university's development office, if not in the library.

Two good sources of more current information are the Grants and the Foundation Grants Index databases available through online search services. The latter file, which is updated monthly, contains information on grants awarded by more than 400 major foundations, including descriptions of past grants awarded by each organization. Such descriptions are helpful in determining an agency's possible interest in a library project. Boolean search strategies, as well as date restrictions, may be used in searching these files to gather a list of the organizations to solicit for a specific funding idea. "Business and Philanthropy," a section within each issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, frequently contains articles about foundations and their current interests, and regularly contains a listing of private gifts and grants made to educational institutions.

Once a possible source of support has been identified, a proposal must be prepared. Libby Chenault's article, "Applying for Foundation Grants" in the Winter 1986 issue of *North Carolina Libraries* describes in detail the preparation of a grant proposal. Let it suffice to stress here the importance of explaining clearly in the proposal why the foundation/corporation should award a grant to ABC college, why the project is best suited to ABC college, and what long-lasting, and (it is hoped) wide-ranging benefits will come from completion of the project. Foundations and corporations want to know that their gifts will make

a difference. Corporations, being businesses, want to know what's in it for them and how their company will benefit (e.g., public relations, increased sales).

Governmental Sources

Another good source of funding for academic libraries is the United States government. Several programs are available specifically for libraries. The Department of Education has three programs created especially to benefit academic libraries: 1. Strengthening research library resources program (Higher Education Act, Title II, Part C), 2. Library research and demonstration program (Higher Education Act, Title II, Part B), and 3. College library technology and cooperation grants program (Higher Education Act, Title II, Part D). Information about these and other federal programs is available in the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* (Washington, Office of Management and Budget). In addition, academic libraries may benefit from the Department's Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title III program. This program provides funds to state library administrative agencies for establishing and operating local, state, and regional systems or networks of libraries. In past years, funds have been awarded to support interlibrary and reference networks, the production of computerized lists and catalogs, multistate cooperative efforts, and continuing education and staff development related to networks.

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In addition, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Archives and Records Administration, and the Department of Health and Human Services sponsor several programs appropriate for academic libraries. The National Endowment for the Humanities offers challenge grants for humanities research, for preservation projects (including the U.S. Newspaper Project), to support humanities projects in libraries, to fund projects to improve access to research resources, and to fund the creation of reference works for humanistic research. The National Endowment for the Arts also provides challenge grants. The National Archives and Records Administration sponsors National Historical Publications and Records Grants, which may be used for

In contrast to many foundations and corporations, government agencies generally provide specific information about their grants programs. By the same token, the requirements for submitting proposals are frequently more stringent than those of foundations and corporations. For each program, information is readily available about the format for proposals submitted, the deadline (usually one deadline per year), the average size of grants awarded, and the criteria used for judging proposals.

Those who know their gifts are appreciated are most likely to give again.

By now, the fundraiser's quiver is full. It contains an innovative idea translated into a well-stated proposal, a granting agency or individual that is capable of providing the amount of funding needed and whose giving history indicates potential interest in the library and in the idea, and support from the institution in the form of clearance to approach the potential donor and of commitment to the proposed project. The question, then, is will the arrows hit the target? Will you bag some bucks? Possibly. A huge number of worthy causes seek funds from foundations, corporations, and government agencies. Because these agencies have limited funds for grants, they

Two more arrows are needed. The fundraiser must have perseverance and a thick skin. He or she must be able to recover quickly from the disappointment of being turned down by a prospective donor or from having a grant proposal rejected, fresh and ready to seek other donors and write new proposals.

The fundraiser must also have, and use, the arrow of gratitude. Donors want to know how their funds are being spent, what the recipient has accomplished, and how the gift has made a difference. Individuals who have established endowments enjoy learning how the income is being spent. Regular reports detailing the items purchased with endowment income strengthen the relationship with the donor, apprise the donor of the good stewardship of the funds, and serve as an expression of gratitude. The fundraiser or other appropriate personnel, then, should sincerely thank each and every donor. Those who know their gifts are appreciated are most likely to give again.

1. *Library Journal* 98 (September 15, 1973): 2498.
2. Thomas Broce, *Fund Raising: The Guide to Raising Money from Private Sources*, 2nd rev. ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), ix.
3. *Ibid.*, x.
4. Susan Getman Abernathy, "Gifts, Grants, and Grantors: Garnering the Library's Fair Share," in *Library Fund Raising: Vital Margin for Excellence*, ed. Sul H. Lee. (Ann Arbor: Pierian Press, 1984), 16.
5. Broce, pp. 163-164.
6. *Foundation Directory*, 11th ed., (New York: Foundation Center, 1987).

