

Title: Kent State University Centennial Campaign Case Statements

Category: 17. Best Program in Case Statements/Cultivation Publications

Institution: Kent State University

Submitting Name: Brian Thornton
bthornt1@kent.edu
330.672.0419
1061 Fraternity Circle, Kent, OH 44242

Individuals Responsible for Entry: Primary: Brian Thornton (communications manager), Gary Harwood (photographer), Ologie (consultant)

General Description:

The Kent State Centennial Campaign case statement package is a modular collection of publications that can be customized for individual donors. Twelve books were developed — one overarching university case statement, one scholarship case statement, and 10 case statements for individual colleges or programs within the university. In addition, a custom campaign folder was created to enclose the package.

For each donor, the folder and main case statement are combined with two additional books and an individualized letter or proposal to create a package that is unique to his or her interests. For instance, a psychology alumnus/prospect could receive the university case statement, a College of Arts and Sciences case statement, and a scholarship case statement, all contained within the campaign folder.

Goals and Objectives:

1. Create package of materials that can be utilized during prospect visits to assist in discovery, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship.

2. Develop campaign message that educates prospects about rationale and priorities, as well as compels them to act by showing impact of giving through donor/student stories.
3. Implement unified brand language and visuals across materials.
4. Highlight individual donors to continue stewardship, as well as cultivate new donors.

Description of how project fits into advancement goals:

The Kent State Centennial Campaign, which will have its public launch in October 2009, has a goal of raising \$250 million toward the university's endowment, capital projects and current operating funds. The campaign case statement package is designed to assist during prospect visits to help raise gifts of \$25,000 or more. The package helps educate potential donors about the institution and its vision, campaign priorities, impact of gifts and ways to give.

It also serves as a leave-behind education and reminder piece to help spark further conversation.

Audience:

Primary: 12,000 top prospects (alumni, friends, parents, faculty and staff) who have been identified as having the greatest potential to give to the campaign.

Secondary: All 184,000 alumni of Kent State, plus community members and friends. (Case statements can be downloaded from the campaign Web site.)

Number of professional and support staff who worked on the program: 2 primary at Kent State. Four secondary at Kent State, who served as reviewers. About seven at Ologie, the consultant hired to develop and implement message and visuals.

Program budget: \$420,000 for research, surveys, workshops, writing, design and production of the package. Between 2,000 and 5,000 copies of each piece were printed, depending on the size of the prospect pool for each area.

Special circumstances and challenges:

Kent State has a visual and language style (that includes typefaces and color palette) that must be adhered to in all publications. In order to create a fresh campaign look, this style needed to be maintained while finding new ways to use those elements in a fashion that would be remembered as the “brand.”

In addition, each of the 13 pieces needed to have its own distinct look while fitting in with the overall campaign look. A lengthy design and evaluation process ensured that language and visuals were uniform across the case statements, while still providing room for individuality of the programs.

Documents results, measurements of effectiveness:

The books were first used during the past fiscal year. While a direct correlation is impossible to measure, Kent State had a record-breaking fundraising year (ending June 30, 2009) with \$38 million in commitments.

The campaign has \$161 million in commitments as of the end of the fiscal year, meaning the university is well on track to achieve its \$250 million goal after the campaign goes public this fall.