

# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## PARENT GIVING: CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP DONORS WITH A BOARD & COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



Matt Mullen | mmullen@nrcm.org



### LEARNING OUTCOME

#### After participating...

...you will be able to better cultivate higher-level parent donors with a board and committee structure.



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## AGENDA

- Parent Program Structure
- Parent Board & Committees
- Leadership Giving
- Parents of Alumni Development



## KEYS TO SUCCESS



### PARENT GIVING & PROGRAMS

- Strong programs take time to develop
- Promote benefits of involvement
- Be a critical resource to parents
- Focused message to avoid mixed messages
- Administrative and campus community support
- Brand your program to parents *and* campus community



#Altraining

## PARENT PROGRAM STRUCTURE



■ “WE DON’T DO MUCH,  
BUT WHAT WE DO,  
WE DO REALLY WELL!”



- In a perfect world, everyone’s mantra (of course, almost never true)
- Our office oversaw ALL things parents:
  - Mail & digital communications
  - Development
  - Parent relations
  - Events
  - Website
  - “Other duties as assigned”



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

■ “WE DON’T DO MUCH,  
BUT WHAT WE DO,  
WE DO REALLY WELL!”



**BUT, IT WORKS FOR US.**

- Clear messaging
- Finger on the pulse
- Great campus relationships



■ **OUR  
PROGRAM’S  
STRUCTURE**

**Development**

Annual & major gifts  
(unrestricted &  
designated  
opportunities)

**Development  
Volunteers**

PEC & SPGC  
(Top parent donors &  
development  
volunteers)


**Programming**

Broad-based, non-  
development, parent  
communications

**Programming  
Volunteers**


Welcome Committee  
(Outreach to  
incoming/transfer  
families)  
Career Services





POLL


Do you have full-time staff  
dedicated to parents?



9

■ INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT  
(AND WHY IT MATTERS)

- What are you trying to accomplish?
  - Parent awareness?
  - Parent involvement?
  - Gain parent networking?
  - Gain parent expertise?
  - Increase parent giving?
- Where are you housed?
  - Annual giving?
  - Dean of students?
  - Alumni relations?



10

# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT



- Colby College
- College established in 1813
- Parents Executive Committee (PEC) established in 1983
- Roughly 1850 current students = 2,000 parent/family households
- 3 parent giving & programs staff
  - Director
  - Assistant director
  - .75 administrative assistant
  - Housed in annual giving (11 total staff)



## HOW CAN WE HELP?

### Outreach Committees

- Worthy
- Broad
- Enjoyable

### Development Committees

- Giving support
- Seeking support

### Advisory Boards

- Worth the (staff) effort?

### Host (Events) Committees

- Great cultivation
- (for hosts)
- Broadens reach



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEERS



- Our focus of today's conversation (& ultimately what most affects bottom line)
- Top parent donors & development volunteers)
- Setting clear expectations for committee members



## THE DIFFERENCE WITH PARENTS VS. ALUMNI



- Looking to stay connected after "13 years of drop-off lane & carpool"
- Most often interested in a direct impact on their student's experience
- A short window of opportunity for engagement (but very excited & looking for it)



#Altraining

## PARENT BOARD AND COMMITTEES



### DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

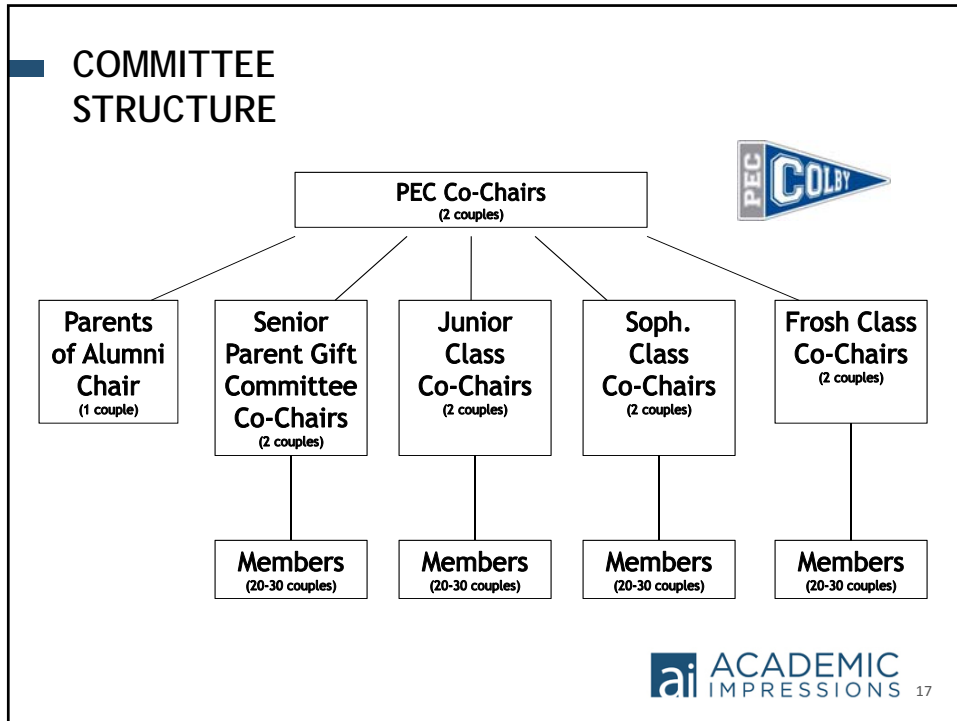
#### PARENTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (PEC)

- 100 families (roughly 25 per class)
- Invited to join before move-in
- Top potential parent donors
- Minimum yearly giving expectation





# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure



## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

**JOINING THE PEC (PROCESS BEGINS IN DECEMBER THE YEAR BEFORE)**

*Working with Admissions*

- Who are the current-legacy families?
- Working with Athletics & their recruits
- ED1, ED2, and Spring
  - Welcome & Congrats Letter
- Retention Events

## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

### JOINING THE PEC (PROCESS BEGINS IN DECEMBER THE YEAR BEFORE)

#### *Doing Your Research*

- Screening the summer before move-in
  - Matriculation Form
  - Welcome Receptions
- 60-80 families invited results in 20-25 by Homecoming
  - Who does the invite?
  - How to and how much follow-up?



## RESOURCE

### PEC Information



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

### WHAT AM I SIGNING UP FOR?

- Connection Independent of Their Student
  - From once a year to once a week
- “We are a...”
- “Two invites a year to campus from someone other than my daughter.”
- Three Ts



## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

### GIVING EXPECTATIONS

- Give versus get?
- What do you want to achieve and what matters most? (donors vs. dollars)
- Median vs. minimum
  - Want to ensure a floor under us and not a ceiling on expectations
  - Raising those levels as time passes



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents Executive Committee  
207-859-4321 | PARENTS@COLBY.EDU | WWW.COLBY.EDU/PARENTS

PEC Outreach Selection (2014-2015)

This year we are asking members to reach out to 3 - 4 parents to ask them to join you in making a gift to the Parents Fund.  
Please answer the brief questions below so that we can match you with people you feel comfortable interacting with this year.  
Thank you,  
Matt & Jynn

1. How would you like to participate with PEC outreach this year?

Call  
 Write  
 Both Call & Write

2. Who from your family will complete outreach?

3. Please fill out student information that you would like us to use to match you with families:

Local Area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Athletic Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Class Year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Major	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Study Abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

- Targeted outreach
- “Not just a solicitation, but a conversation”
- Working with what works best for volunteers



## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS CAMPUS

### VARIETY OF PARTNERS ACROSS CAMPUS

- Housing, career center, athletics, faculty, etc.
- How do you want to use them?
- Partnering with and for them can bring great benefits (and sometimes wrist slaps)
- The parent committee, not the helicopter society, nor black helicopter society



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## WEB COMMUNITY

**PEC Member Portal**

Members of the Parents Executive Committee (PEC) play a leadership role in the life of the Colby community through participation, service, and financial support. For more information, please contact Matt Mullen, director of parent giving and programs (mmullen@colby.edu).

**PEC Co-chairs**

- P13, '15
- P11, '13, '15, '18

**PEC Parent of Alumni & Class Co-chairs**

- P13
- P15
- P16, '18
- P10, '12, '16
- P17
- P14, '18
- P15, '18

**Monthly Updates**

- August 2014
- September 2014
- October 2014

**Key Dates**

- PEC Fall Weekend: 10/17 - 19
- Grad Program Call: 11/9 at 1:30 p.m.
- Boston Parent Event: 11/13 at 6:30 p.m.
- Job Shadow & Internship Call: 11/11 at 1:30 p.m.
- PEC Spring Weekend: 4/24 - 25
- Commencement: 5/22 - 24

**Parent Resources**

- Make a Payment
- myColby
- ColbyCard
- Financial Services
- Student Affairs

**Events and Important Dates**

- Stay Informed +
- Local Information +

**Contact**

4322 Mayflower Hill  
Waterville, ME 04901  
P. 207-859-4321  
parents@colby.edu

**Quick Links**

- PEC Member Guide 2014 - 2015
- Parents Guide to Colby 2014 - 2015

**ai ACADEMIC IMPRESSIONS 25**

FY15 Projected Gift Amount needed to reach PEC Contribution Goal of \$900,000	# of Gifts
\$100,000	1
\$50,000 - \$99,000	2
\$25,000 - \$49,999	8
\$15,000 - \$24,999	5
\$10,000 - \$14,999	10
\$5,000 - \$9,999	65

**ai ACADEMIC IMPRESSIONS 26**

# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

### SENIOR PARENT GIFT COMMITTEE (SPGC)

- 20-40 families
- Recruited senior year from consistent annual fund donors
- Peer-to-peer outreach to increase participation (and dollars)



## SPGC



### SENIOR YEAR GIVING

- Challenge Idea X for Y (ex. 50 Days-50%-\$50K)
- Data mining
- STUFF (Who doesn't love it?)
- Case for both ends of donor base

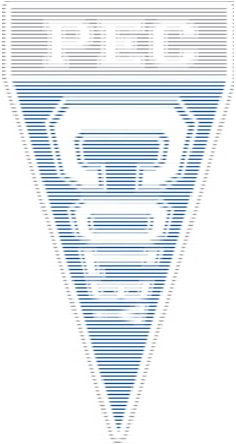


# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure


Gift Amount needed to reach Class of 2015 Scholarship Goal	# of Gifts
\$2,015	10
\$1,500	10
\$520.15	30
\$150	50
\$20.15	10
	65



## ■ GETTING INVOLVED



- Multiple opportunities for involvement beyond just writing the annual fund (& tuition) check
- Goal of cultivation rather than only outward fundraising
- Results



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEERS

### WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

- Parents Executive Committee
  - A development committee, but mainly a cultivation committee
  - Top donors who we want to also feel invested with their time (as time allows)
- Senior Parent Gift Campaign (SPGC)
  - Targeted outreach to build participation (50%+ last 4 years)



## BUILDING YOUR COMMITTEE



- It's Okay To Start Small
- It Takes a "Full Generation"
  - Signing up early
  - Doesn't happen all at once
  - Strong leadership
  - Word of mouth
- Building a Brand
  - Authentic
  - Clear expectations
  - What we are & what we aren't





# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## TYPES OF COMMUNICATIONS

- Web presence
- Timing & purpose
  - Welcome invitation to incoming families and for parent committee
  - Solicitations and appeals
  - Too much, too little
  - “Hi this is...”

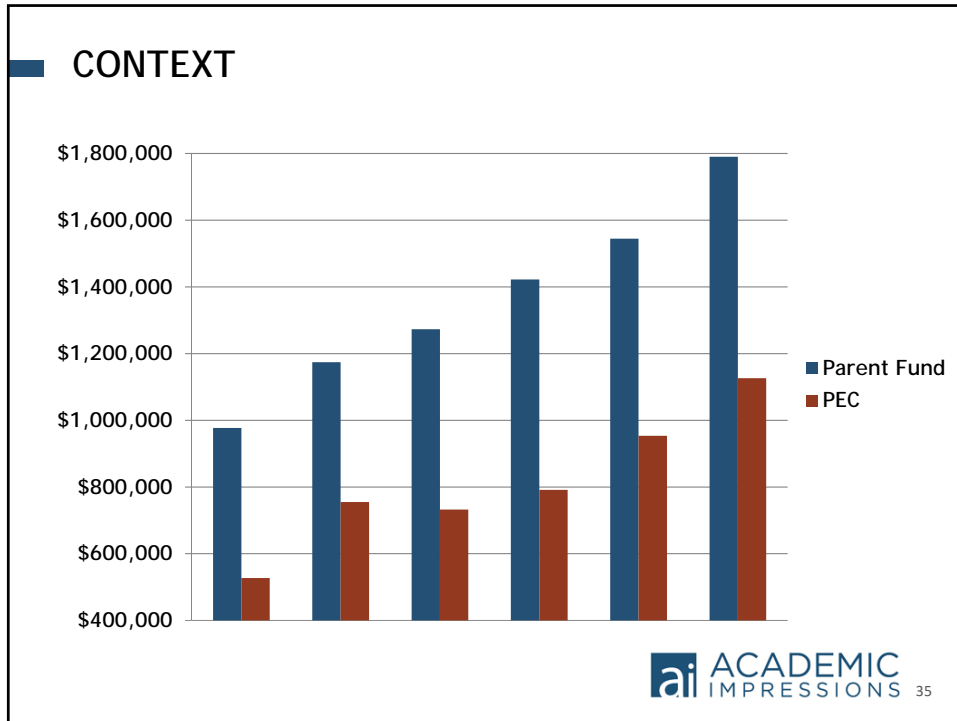


*#Altraining*

## LEADERSHIP GIVING



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure



## LEADERSHIP GIVING

**DOESN'T JUST COME FROM THE PECs**

- Not everyone will want to join
- Working with development and campus partners
  - Athletics
  - Department & campus life leadership
  - MGOs and joint visits
    - Become the "program person" hook for the development officer
    - Recruit junior and fall senior families to the SPGC

ai ACADEMIC IMPRESSIONS 36

# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## DEVELOPMENT

### ANNUAL

- Unrestricted
  - Majority of our dollars raised (thankfully)
  - Show of support by families in college priorities
- Designated
  - Majority of our increased support last four years
  - “Robbing Peter to pay Paul”
  - Parents want to see a direct impact
  - Athletics easiest opportunity but any department can do



## CREATING MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES

### DEMONSTRATING DIRECT IMPACT

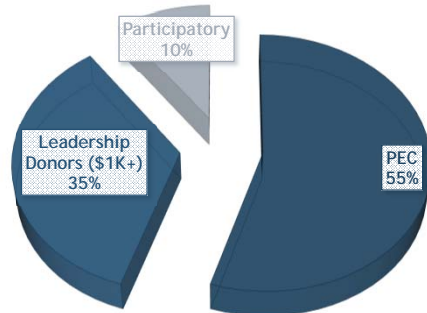
- Often designated, but let it be budget relief, not enhancement
- Sharing stories
  - Often found in campus partners' back pocket
  - Canvass every inch of your website
  - Working with your communications department
- “Buying a microscope”



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## CREATING MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES

GIVING BREAKDOWN



## RECOGNITION LEVELS

### YOU CAN NEVER SAY THANK YOU ENOUGH

- Parent volunteers want to feel special, but not exclusionary (or seen as receiving outwardly special treatment)
- Recognize leadership donors just as you would alumni donors
  - Maintain same giving circle levels
  - Both annual and cumulative
  - Annual Reports and donor profiles
- Participation Matters (to them, but not to us or US News rankings)

Ultimately, donors are donors

#Altraining

## PARENTS OF ALUMNI DEVELOPMENT



### ■ THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING (SOMETIMES)



#### PARENTS OF ALUMNI

- The only growing number in your base

#### *Opportunities & Obstacles:*

- Yay, no more tuition!
- Keeping connection to campus
- "It's up to them now"
- Being prepared to say, "Good bye" to top donors.



# Parent Giving: Cultivating Leadership Donors with a Board & Committee Structure

## PARENTS OF ALUMNI



*“Turning it from their child’s school to a philanthropic interest.”*

- Making the case more than ever.
- Involving that alum
- Meaningful engagement creates meaningful results
- Support goes in 1 of 2 directions
- Focused giving towards primary passion. (i.e. Athletics or Financial Aid)



## PARENTS OF ALUMNI

### RESULTS

- In last FY, accounted for ~ 20% of all “pure parent” support
- Cash-in more 2x from 5 years prior
  - Continued support from former PEC members
  - Decreased, but still impactful, levels of leadership support
  - Starting the conversation senior year while still captive audience
  - Maintaining meaningful relationships with top Committee members & volunteers





## TAKEAWAYS

- Define what you're trying to accomplish (w/ internal & external audiences)
- Better to do less, but well, than more, but ineffectually
- Be the first contact/outreach for and by parents
- Clear boundaries
  - Neither the helicopter society, nor black helicopters...



## TAKEAWAYS

- Build campus partnerships
  - Admissions
  - Campus Life
  - Athletics
- "We are a development committee."
- Parents of Alumni are your only growing constituency...

Strong programs take time to  
develop



## QUESTIONS



## RESOURCE

### Stay in touch!

Matt Mullen, [mmullen@nrcm.org](mailto:mmullen@nrcm.org), 207-430-0125  
Networking - Parents Fundraising Conference  
(check us out on LinkedIn & Facebook)







## EVALUATION

# Thank you!

Please remember to complete the event evaluation.  
Your comments will help us continually improve the  
quality of our programs.

© Copyright 2016 Academic Impressions

Follow us:



49