

ANNUAL GIVING'S Critical Role in the Journey to Major Gifts

As higher education evolves, advancement leaders must focus on building a strong donor pipeline for long-term sustainability and success. At the same time, they need to tackle current challenges and raise money for today's needs. **Annual giving is essential in attracting new prospects, offering flexible funding, and nurturing donors from first-time givers to major contributors.**

The Journey to Major Gifts

From the first donation to regular contributions and significant upgrades, **the path to major gifts involves consistent nurturing and engagement.**

First Gift

Annual giving attracts and brings new prospects into your donor pool.

*Average first gift of major donors is **\$179***

Consistent Early Giving

Annual giving keeps donors engaged and connected to your mission through regular, personalized communications.

*Donors who give every year for the first 5 years give **3x as much as other donors by their 20th reunion***

First Leadership Gift

While nurturing your donors, annual giving raises unrestricted funds for flexibility during emerging needs and opportunities.

*Donors on average take **7 years to make a \$1,000 gift***

Regular Upgrades

Tailored stewardship strategies nurture donor relationships and encourage increased and sustained support.

*Donors who upgrade consistently have a **9x better chance of one day giving a major gift***

First Major Gift

Annual giving primes donors for transition to your major gift officers who build on the existing relationship and in doing so, cultivate a major gift.

***54% of major donors give for 16+ years** before \$25k gift*

Effects of an Undeveloped Pipeline Strategy

Missed major opportunities

Overlooked significant donations that could support scholarships, research, infrastructure, and more.

Unrealized lifetime donor value

Missing out on the cumulative impact of a donor's long-term, consistent giving

Increased pressure on less donors

Excessive reliance on a few major donors creates program vulnerability.

Staff turnover and burnout

Focus on immediate fundraising needs leads to staff becoming burnt out and leaving.