Benchmarking California's Community College Foundations:

Success Factors and Suggestions for Growth

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Network of California Community College Foundations

Findings from the 2012 NCCCF Survey

Comparison: Number of Staff and Fundraising History

The average amount of funds that community college foundations raised over the last five years increased in correlation with an increase of foundation staff members. Foundations with a staff of six or more members raised an average of $12,996,416.38, while foundations with one or less staff members raised an average of $2,568,916.46 over the last five years.

Average amount raised over last 5 years (by number of staff)	
Staff of 1 or less	$2,568,916.46
Staff of 1 – 3	$3,454,650.00
Staff of 3 – 5	$5,402,473.46
Staff of 6 or more	$12,996,416.38

Findings from the 2023 NCCCF Survey

Comparison: Number of Staff and Fundraising History

The average amount of funds that community college foundations raised over the last 3 years increased in correlation with an increase of foundation staff members. Foundations with a staff of six or more members raised an average of $17,610,672, while foundations with one or less staff members raised an average of $1,326,670 over the last 3 years.

Average amount raised over last 3 years (by number of staff)	
Staff of 1 or less	$1,326,670
Staff of 1 – 3	$2,525,334
Staff of 3 - 5	$8,890,451
Staff of 6 or more	$17,610,672

*Data from 33 responding colleges with 3 most recent years of data

NCCCF Preliminary Findings (46 respondents)

- **73%** are auxiliary 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporations
- **27%** are independent non-profit corporations
- Director/Executive Director is lead staff title in **90%** of Foundations
- Longevity of lead staff ranges from 4 months to **37** years
- **76%** report to the college president or district chancellor
- **24%** report to the foundation board

NCCCF Preliminary Findings (continued)

- Average gross assets of all 46 respondents - **$16.23M**
- Purpose of endowed accounts – scholarships, programs
- Average distribution of endowed accounts – **3-5% annually**
- Approximately **$96M** raised by 42 foundations in 2021-2022
- Average of **$2.28M** raised in the last fiscal year by those foundations
- Foundation portfolio assets **lost** during 2021-2022 – -$21.5M
- Foundation portfolio assets **gained** in 2020-2021 – $72.4M
- Foundation portfolio assets **gained** in 2019-2020 – $15.4M

NCCCF Preliminary Findings (continued)

- Scholarship funds distributed in 2021-2022 - **$23.5M**
- Average per campus in scholarship distribution - **$511,000**
- Total operating expenses for all foundations - **$27.8M**
- Average per campus in operating expenses - **$605,000**

LACCD Preliminary Findings (11 respondents)

- 10 auxiliary foundations and 1 independent foundation at LACCD
- Average professional staffing at 10 auxiliary organizations – **1.3 FTE**
- Staffing level at LA's only independent foundation – 8
- **$70M** in gross assets at all 11 LACCD Foundations
- Average gross assets – **$6.35M** per college for all 11 foundations
- **$28.5M** in gross assets at 10 LACCD auxiliary organizations
- Average gross assets – **$2.85M** at 10 auxiliary organizations

LACCD Preliminary Findings (continued)

- 8 of 11 LACCD foundations utilize consultants (mainly accounting/audit)
- 6 ED's report to president, 3 to the board, 1 to the district
- Most Foundations distribute **4-5%** annually from endowment
- Scholarship funds distributed in 2021-2022 - **$3.26M**
- Average per Foundation in scholarship distribution – **$297,000**
- **5,376** scholarships distributed across the district in 2021-2022
- Average per campus in operating expenses - **$520,000**
- Average per campus minus outliers - **$187,000**

Challenges Faced by our CCC Foundations

- Staffing limitations are impeding growth and sustainability
- College/District bureaucracy and leadership instability
- Campus understanding of foundation and fundraising mission
- Insufficient resources for alumni identification and engagement
- Board recruitment/development/participation needs improvement
- Accounting/audit assistance is limited
- Limited institutional support – financial & operational
- Weak culture of philanthropy on campus

Success Factors for CCC Foundations

- Adequate and effective **staffing**
- Strong institutional **support**
- Investment in **alumni** identification and programming
- **Storytelling** – the secret sauce of fundraising
- A culture of philanthropy top down and bottom up
- Strong **board** members who understand their roles/assets
- **Accounting** support from the institution
- Sound investment & spending policies including management fee

Common Strategic Directions @ CCC Foundations

- ***Enhancing Our Image and Telling our Story*** (gathering and telling the story via multiple media channels)
- ***Identifying and Engaging our Alumni*** (identification, cultivation, solicitation, stewardship)
- ***Building our Revenue Streams*** (major gifts, planned giving, campaigns, grants, enterprise activities, etc.)
- ***Growing our Infrastructure*** (refers to matters of staffing, board, technology, fiscal/accounting matters, policy development, college support, etc.)
- ***Collaborating with Internal/External Partners*** (formal and informal arrangements with college, city, community, etc.)
- ***Building a Culture of Philanthropy*** (employee giving & board giving; leading by example so that donors see the support at the college and emulate it)

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