

**Strategic Planning Committee Minutes**  
Friday, 22 September 2023, 9:00-10:20 a.m.

Present: Lexey Bartlett (Chair), Shannin Schroeder, Jeannine Szostak, Chris Lockwood, Matt Hlinak; Apologies: Carrie Fitzpatrick (much missed!)

**Agenda: To discuss this committee focus: “Based on current SP and with input from other Board members or committees (particularly the Professional Development Task Force, the Centennial Task Force, and those committees responsible for awards, scholarships, and grants), determine the focus, scope, and goal(s) for Sigma Tau Delta’s fundraising campaign for Spring 2024.”**

We began with two questions brought to us by Service and Partnerships, namely about the process for tracking how donations are allocated based on the donors’ requests and naming opportunities for awards as potential fundraising or partnership opportunities (including corporate partner opportunities like Norton and Penguin, especially for Classroom Library Grants).

We will be researching the tracking of donations and figuring out a process for moving them out when we reach a certain amount (if the recipient is not our funds for scholarships, etc.). Jeannine will help with that.

### **Campaign Focus**

After some discussion, we decided to focus our fundraising toward two primary goals: 1) scholarships (which Chris pointed out everyone likes to support) and 2) projects aimed at addressing the effects of book bans (classroom library grants, chapter service projects like little free libraries, books in barbershops, or other community projects or support). [Addition: In the Board meeting, there was discussion about support to help cover membership dues for those who can’t afford them, so that might be a third fundraising focus that would appeal to our audience.]

### **Scope**

Given our centennial anniversary, our campaign will run over the 2024 year (perhaps with a kickoff in late 2023, especially with the Board).

### **Goals**

We did not discuss a specific monetary goal overall, but some suggestions for goals regarding numbers of donors were 1,924 donors (including counting individual members of a chapter if a chapter makes a donation) or percentages of donors in a group, like 100% of Board members. However, a chapter might aim at donating \$19.24, or \$192.40, so those smaller targets for fundraising could roll into a larger goal. Matt pointed out that whatever goal we decide, we should wait until we are about halfway toward achieving it before announcing it (a common practice in funding campaigns).

Beyond monetary or number of donor goals, a campaign with these foci should:

- Raise the profile of our scholarships (both for awareness and so people are aware of how much money we give away)

- Promote of what scholarships do for recipients (and likely promote careers in the humanities)
- Expand support for awards supporting diversity
- Give us prospects for future or continual donations (Chris suggested asking recipients to write letters to donors (these can be reproduced to send out—not individually written) to see if they will continue to give once they have given something.)

### **Potential Audiences/Promotion Focus**

We plan to use a slide carousel on the landing page of the website connected to the donate button [Addition/Revision: Rename this button “Giving,” per Ami Comeford’s suggestion in the Board meeting.] These images will connect to the foci—scholarships, anti-book banning efforts, [and potentially a member dues fund]. These images will be shared through social media as well.

The focus of the promotional images will shift at certain periods. The first round will introduce the foci, perhaps with some inclusion from the beginning of scholarship recipient testimonials. As donations start coming in, we might advertise with testimonials from donors about what they supported and why. The third round of marketing might center on “centennial grads” [Addition: As Kelly mentioned in the Board meeting, these are also students who likely had their high school graduations disrupted by Covid]. These promotions might be linked to the changing attention of our members from Convention preparation to scholarship applications, to graduation, for spring and early summer 2024.

When we are ready to announce goals and share trackers, we might show how many individuals have given or use pie charts to show percentages of donations for specific purposes, where/which groups donations are from. We could perhaps pit groups against each other for competition.

### **Some specific groups to target:**

- People who have received a scholarship in the past: ask for a donation or a testimonial about what the scholarship did for them.
- Alumni: if an alum from a chapter donates, contact others from that chapter to match or donate more, or ask alumni to contact their former classmates to give. [Board addition: Enlist alumni through Discord.]
- People who want to honor someone with a temporary or permanent naming opportunity
- People who want to support diversity in a particular area
- People who participate or want to participate in webinars (have a donation option or give access with a donate (like selling a ticket), especially if it’s a celebrity event)—webinars might also be advertised to other colleges and universities as a way of gaining interest in starting chapters
- [Board addition: Past Presidents and Deltans]

### **Centennial Themes**

- **Donation amounts with commemorative themes:** Shannin offered a number of themed options: \$19.24, \$192.40 [split into 12 monthly payments per suggestion at Board meeting], etc.; Charter year or anniversary for a chapter; graduation year; others?

- **Donation perks:** Shannin suggested historic logo stickers or Centennial or decade stickers; mugs; discount on store merch; other swag?

[Addition from the Board meeting: Some adjustments to the giving mechanisms on the website and options for payments are needed.

- Ensure that it is easy to navigate the donation page and also to heighten the visibility of the donation page—for example, no secondary landing page, simple lists, embed info onto donation page (on hover over or opening in another tab or window); possibly use radio buttons for options instead of drop downs to improve their visibility.
- Have links for different donation foci go to a story linked to that area for donation as a transition to the form.
- Get recurring payment donations options set up.
- Change button from “donate” to “giving.”]