

CLIENT: BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY

PROJECT: SPRING APPEAL MAILING



CASE STUDY

CHALLENGE

Like many colleges, Bridgewater State University (BSU) relies on philanthropic support to ensure financial stability and long-term growth. With a decline in alumni participation and donor retention, along with flat-lined individual giving, BSU was looking for a way to increase their average gift per donor, boost their participation rates, grow their donor base, and recapture lapsed donors.

SOLUTION

Bridgewater State University engaged CFS to execute an A/B test for their Spring Alumni Scholarship Appeal. They sent their existing mailers to half of their Alumni, and allowed CFS to apply our Direct to One expertise and test a second version to the other half of their Alumni base.

The CFS Direct to One team applied highly personalized messaging based on the recipients' history with the University. Specific variables included salutations and core messaging based on past interactions with BSU (alumni, past donor, etc.), and references to previous donation amounts. Additionally, the mailing envelope featured compelling imagery and call-out messaging to entice recipients to engage with the direct mail piece.

RESULTS

The CFS mailer yielded an average gift of \$132.40, while the BSU control group yielded an average gift of \$45.30 per donor. The gross revenue raised by the CFS version was **4x** the control group, and average gift per donor was **3x** that of the control group. Long-lapsed donors (>2 years since their last gift), yielded an average gift of \$117.71 which was **double** the control groups' long-lapsed average gift of \$64.17.

By applying data driven, highly personalized messaging, CFS was able to engage BSU alumni and exceed the client's fundraising expectations, making this BSUs most successful appeal to date.

"CFS is a key strategic partner that has helped BSU exceed our fundraising goals. Knowing that I can rely on CFS to mine our data, and manage our entire direct mail program from strategy to execution, has allowed me to focus on other critical tasks." -Director of Development



April 2019

*****AUTO**ALL FOR AADC 028 9 1 2168

Jane Sample
CFS, Inc.
312 E Main St
Norton, MA 02766-0913

Dear Mrs. Sample,

As a Bridgewater State University graduate and donor, you understand that the opportunity to envision a tomorrow even more thrilling and dynamic than today is vital...especially in the midst of our rapidly changing social landscape. Nearly 180 years of success has proven that our alumni are critical thinkers, compassionate leaders, and visionaries in their chosen careers. Each day our graduates selflessly share their talents with a world that is eager to build a better future for all.

Today's BSU graduates must be men and women who are societal "bridge-builders"; aware of the vast differences that come from diverse backgrounds and individual perspectives. They possess a sense of purpose that motivates them to lead with others rather than to be led.

Your last gift of \$50 helped to provide students like Troy Bryce, a Junior majoring in communications who aspires to a career in ministry, with the direct financial support he needed to have the chance to make a difference in our community and our future. As Troy shared with me,

"I was honored when I learned that there was a donor who felt the desire to help me, as my financial situation at this point is definitely in need of some help. I work between 14-20 hours at my part time job at Shaw's but even that isn't enough to pay for school. As an honors student, I really have enjoyed my experience at Bridgewater, but it's becoming difficult for me to pay for school, and so help from donors is vital for me.

"The scholarship I received may have saved my academic career at Bridgewater."
-Troy Bryce, Junior

One thing I have learned through this experience is that donors are more valuable than they know. I feel very blessed for the support I received, and I am committed to becoming the best that I can be, today and in the years to come. Thank you for your help!

