



2021-22 LTCC University Center Program Review

Section I:

1. Describe how your department supports the vision, mission, and beliefs of Lake Tahoe Community College.

The Foundation supports the vision, mission, and beliefs of the college by connecting with donors to encourage investment in student and program support. The Foundation provides direct support to students through scholarships, the Lake Tahoe College Promise, and an emergency textbook fund. The Foundation supports new and innovative programs that enhance the learning experience through success grants and provides funding for campus improvements to ensure an effective learning environment.

2. What are the major strengths of your department?

The major strengths of the Foundation are increasing donation revenue over previous years, bringing innovative support to students, and putting policies and procedures in place so Foundation operations are following industry best practices. Over the past five years, the foundation has increased fundraising, bringing total sponsorship revenue for Taste of Gold in 2022 to just over \$100,000, the highest yet! The event is also an effective friend-raiser, bringing local residents and businesses to campus and developing partnerships to support programs. On an annual basis we've seen ticket purchasers upgrade to sponsorship and additional donations throughout the year. For the 2022/23 academic year, total scholarship awards to continuing and transferring students increased to \$216,000 from \$189,000 in 2021/22. In the past five years, scholarship support to students has risen on an annual basis.

Staff continued *Student Success Grants* for the sixth year and the program is providing numerous benefits. In fall 2022, \$19,000 was awarded to college departments to purchase equipment, field trips, hands-on activities, etc. to enhance the learning experience. This brings the total *Student Success Grants* awarded to date to over \$113,000! A second benefit of these grants are newsworthy student stories and photos to share with donors to show the impact of their gift. Also, the Foundation hosts an annual lunch event and invites grant recipients, campus leadership and donors. At the event, recipients report on the impact of the grants from the previous year, and the current grants are announced. This event provides an excellent stewardship opportunity for staff, faculty, and students to interact with donors.

In the past two years, staff has also established and updated policies and procedures to improve efficiency and operations. In March of 2021, the executive director earned the Certified Fundraising Executive designation to increase knowledge of best practices, trends, and fundraising strategies, and to demonstrate a commitment to the highest standards of ethics and professional practice. In the past two years, the board approved an *Endowed Scholarship Spending Policy*, and the board also approved including the *Donor Bill of Rights* as a policy to demonstrate the Foundation's commitment to the highest ethical standards.



Another Foundation strength is building donor engagement through face-to-face, email and phone communications. The Foundation has continued to grow the President's Circle which recognizes donors who give \$1,000 or more annually and attend invitation-only events. Recognition and engagement through the President's Circle have built stronger ties with donors. The Foundation hosted a President's Circle event in August that resulted in a \$20,000 donation from a donor in the program! Thus, proving these events help bring large donors while also providing a way for them to engage with the foundation and President. From 2020/21 to 2021/22 President's Circle revenue increased from \$41,000 to \$50,000.

3. In what ways could your department improve to better meet the needs of the College and support student success?

Improvements that Foundation staff could make to better meet the needs of the College and support student success, is to develop both a comprehensive major donor program and a planned gift program.

These efforts will grow our loyal donor pool, bring in more gifts, and have the potential to secure large, transformational gifts that would make meaningful and impactful change similar to the \$5.8 million donation from Lisa Maloff for the university center. The resulting increase in funds raised will support individual students and programs. This includes supporting Goal 3 of the Superintendent/President goals, more donated dollars would increase available scholarship funds and funds to support wraparound services.

A major gifts program and a planned giving program, which allows donors to make gifts through IRA charitable rollovers, charitable gift annuities, and bequests, are the natural next steps to grow the Foundation's fundraising funnel. Since establishing this funnel model eight years ago, we have experienced exponential growth in donations, including a one-million-dollar gift for an endowed scholarship fund, a \$200,000 gift for the Lake Tahoe Promise endowment and numerous gifts in the \$10,000 to \$50,000 range. The Foundation has one known planned gift from a former Trustee that is over \$200,000. Until now, our core strategies have involved increasing annual fund donations, cultivating sponsorships from donors who purchase tickets to our annual fundraising event, and increasing the number of major gifts. By incorporating both a sophisticated major donor and planned giving strategy into this funnel, we will be able to secure gifts from assets, legacy gifts, and blended gifts.

4. What are the biggest challenges your department may face in making these improvements?

The two biggest challenges the Foundation faces in making these improvements are the time and funds needed to implement these programs. The executive director and program specialist spend a significant amount of time on administrative tasks including processing donations and administering program funds, contracts, and scholarship administration, plus the time spent on University Center tasks. With more time to focus on fundraising, staff can increase donation revenue to support students and programs. With more support staff time or



budgeted funds allocated to contract services, current staff can contract out tasks and increase time spent on donor outreach and stewardship.

5. Identify any other questions, comments, suggestions, or concerns you may have.

The Foundation is concerned with the stagnant number of students who apply for scholarships on an annual basis. The amount of scholarship dollars has increased, but the number of unique recipients hasn't grown accordingly. There needs to be a coordinated and focused outreach campaign to students to promote the application process and benefits of applying. The Foundation is a donor facing department and does not have the knowledge and connection with students, but is interested to partner with student services, financial aid, and the Equity and Promise programs to launch a campaign with the goal of increasing the number of students who apply for scholarships. The campaign could possibly include the following elements: Promote scholarship opportunities through social media, email campaigns, and other digital marketing channels. Educate students and faculty about the importance of applying for scholarships. Host scholarship workshops and seminars to guide students through the application process. Offer incentives and rewards to students who apply for scholarships.