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Understanding Generosity at Military Colleges and Universities: Characteristics and Motivations of Major Donors at the Federal Service Academies and Senior Military Colleges

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UNDERSTANDING GENEROSITY AT MILITARY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES: CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVATIONS OF MAJOR DONORS AT THE FEDERAL SERVICE ACADEMIES AND SENIOR MILITARY COLLEGES

by

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Educational Administration

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Kim: you were my sidekick in the pursuit of this degree and you are so incredibly bright. It is you who should be wearing a doctoral hood. You have supported me throughout this process and done so with never wavering encouragement. You maintained the balance in our family, took care of the kids, and our family never missed a beat. Without you, this degree would have never even been a dream, much less a reality. I love you dearly.

To Gibson and Brauer: while it is hard for you to imagine, Dad started this degree to honor you and make your life even better. You are my inspiration and I thought of you the entire way during this journey. I missed so many of your activities and chances for us to be together, but you always forgave me and told me how you understood when I was locked away writing. I am blessed beyond measure to be your father. I love you to the moon and back!

To my mother, Barry Gibson Webster: thank you for always making sure that my priorities were in order, my compass was pointing north, and that I knew, no matter what, that education was paramount to achieving success in life. To my stepfather Dr. Ronald Webster – you encouraged me and offered assistance around every corner.

To my father JP Dowd, Jr. and sister, Elizabeth Dowd Dorrell: thank you for always being interested in and supporting my work.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the characteristics and motivations of major donors at three federal service academies and the six senior military colleges. Although much literature has been published on donor motivation, as well as studies determining what donor characteristics are linked to the decision of alumni to financially contribute back to their alma maters, research specific to the federal service academies and the senior military colleges could not be found. Therefore, this study addressed the void in the literature.

The methods used to gather this data were survey instrument and personal interviews. The researcher sent letters to colleagues at the study institutions and then conducted eight personal interviews in a semi-structured environment. The interviews were selected by participants indicating on the survey their willingness to contribute, as well as via the researcher's personal contacts.

The findings were limited to a small sample, due to having 5 out of 9 institutions participate in distributing the survey; 158 surveys were ultimately returned. This small sample size is typical of mail surveys in qualitative studies. Nevertheless, the results highlighted a number of interesting indications about giving; it is anticipated that these will serve as valuable reference points in future research on this subject of military giving (especially in regard to alumni giving). These results included, perhaps predictably, some similarities between the motivations of these donors and donors at institutions with

similar unique or "niche" missions. However, there were some interesting differences as well. Gender played a prominent role, as did age and the perceived value of leaving a legacy at the institution. Student experiences did not have as much of a role in motivating donor behavior; however, donors who were on an athletic team showed an increased propensity to give. The research also supported findings in previous studies, showing that involvement at the school leads to higher contributions and that donors need to have faith in administrative leadership in order to permit their gifts to be used in the best interest of the school. Finally, the research supported the supposition that leaving a legacy and enhancing the institution's brand was of high importance to major donors.

The results can assist professional advancement staff at the subject institutions to develop strategic and specific fundraising approaches with major donors on their respective campuses. The data points indicated by the study can be beneficial when working with current or future major donors at the federal service academies and senior military colleges and universities. The alumni and other major donors who participated in the survey and interviews have immense loyalty to their alma maters. The study also provides foundational research in giving at military colleges and universities, which clearly have strong similarities and differences from other niche mission schools such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and women's colleges (as well as links to mainstream private and public universities).

Dissertation Director: Dr. Katherine Chaddock

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Philanthropy and Military Colleges

The raising of extraordinarily large sums of money, given voluntarily and freely by

millions of our fellow Americans, is a unique American tradition ... Philanthropy, charity,

giving voluntarily and freely ... Call it what you like, but it is truly a jewel of an

American tradition.

-John F. Kennedy [National Philanthropic Trust, n.d.]

American philanthropy in the cause of higher education has changed how

institutions approach their financial modeling and projections. Universities are

increasingly turning to private philanthropy to not only meet budget demands, but also

create and grow additional academic and student support programs on campus (Drezner

2011). The inability to depend on public funds, federal grants, or monies historically

provided by denominations for church-affiliated schools has forced American colleges

and universities to rely more than ever before on the proficiency of their professional

fundraisers and departments. This is, however, only the latest phase of a long tradition of

giving, for as Peter Dobkin Hall explains, "no single force is more responsible for the

emergence of the modern university in America than

giving by individuals and foundations" (Drezner, 2011, p.1). Today, in the area of philanthropy, development or advancement divisions must depend on the data generated by outcomes from their internal prospect research, data mining, and data analytics in order to meet the fiscal demands of the institution.

However, staff in these departments are under increasing pressure to secure private resources in particular, which drives them to identify what motivates members of their constituency base to make "major" or "transformational" gifts to their school. Elliott (2006) states, "While no one can truly know the motivations behind a gift – sometimes even the donor is not clear or suffers from self-deception – the primary role of the fundraiser is to understand the donor's motivations, acquire funds, and work with the donor to see that the funds are put to the best use for all concerned" (p. 53). He suggests that staff should be empathetic to the donor's desires and match those desires to institutional priorities. The practice of having dedicated divisions and staff to create a culture of philanthropy on college and university campuses is becoming increasingly important. This increased need on campuses is directly correlated to the need to find private resources to replace the dollars once appropriated by federal and state legislative bodies.

Therefore, the need for an infusion of private dollars into American higher education is quite possibly at an all-time high, due both to decreases in public funds and to the lack of sufficient educational and general funds within school's budgets. This is evidenced by the quantitative goals and ambitious undertakings occurring at colleges and universities across the country. Requested gift amounts and fundraising goals are at all-time highs, even adjusted for inflation (Drezner, 2011). Grenzebach, Glier & Associates

(2010) and Drezner (2011) highlight in their research that in June of 2010, 75 campaigns had stated goals of more than $1 billion. This figure accounts for comprehensive fundraising campaigns either publically announced or recently completed. Forty-nine of the 75 considered themselves successful or even exceeded their announced goals. The remaining 26 are currently in what is referred to as the public phase of the campaign and expect successful completion of their billion-dollar efforts.

In the wake of severely declining state revenues, pressures to make up budget shortcomings through alternative means of income have increased over the past decade. Public institutions have also seen a decline in taxpayer revenues over the past decade, and since 2008, some public four-year universities have lost nearly 48% of their state appropriations (SCCHE 2014). For example, in April 2015, Louisiana reported a potential funding shortfall of 82% at flagship school Louisiana State University (LSU). The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, home to both VMI and Virginia Tech, stated in their 2009 report *The Erosion of State Funding for Virginia's Public Higher Education Institutions* that state appropriations to the public colleges and universities have been reduced significantly, falling from 14% to 11% between 1992 and 2010. Nor are the federal service academies exempt from this dilemma. According to recent statements in West Point campaign literature, federal appropriations only cover 90% of the cost to educate the next generation of Second Lieutenants in the United States Army. This creates a serious need for today's campuses to not only develop relationships with the constituents who are affiliated with the institutions, but also be able to turn them into major benefactors for their respective schools (Drezner, 2011; Elliott, 2006; Latta, 2010).

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Due to declining state and federal appropriations, it is imperative that the federal service academies and senior military colleges ("subjects") understand why their donors are contributing at meaningful levels. Military schools have the ability to build upon unique campus traditions in order to create emotional connections that lead alumni, friends and supporters to demonstrate their support by making charitable gifts. The keys are identifying what those traditions and emotional symbols are for the donors. Additional research on donors is needed, and specifically, a scholarly exploration of empirical evidence on motivating factors for major donors at military schools in particular; student and alumni experiences that may influence donor motivation are of primary interest.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide a greater understanding of the motivating experiences and individual characteristics of major donors at United States military academies and senior military colleges and to identify how they differ, if at all, from the findings of studies on donor motivation at non-military colleges and universities. Are there similarities in what motivates benefactors to contribute to the different types of institutions? If so, how can the answers be used to assist administrative leaders to become even more successful in securing large contributions and meeting or exceeding expectations for capital campaign goals?

Specifically, this study sought to discover those motivational and demographic characteristics of alumni and non-alumni major gift donors at the federal service academies and the six senior military colleges: The United States Military Academy (West Point), The United States Naval Academy (Annapolis), The United States Air Force Academy (Colorado Springs), Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, The University of North Georgia, Texas A&M University, Virginia Tech University, and The Citadel. Data from the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE) survey (2015), included in Table 1.1, provides further background information on these schools.

Table 1.1

Summary of Federal Service Academies and Military Colleges

Institution	Founding Date	Enrollment	Endowment ($millions)
US Military Academy	*1802*	*4,511*	*208,736*
US Naval Academy	*1845*	*4,398*	*213,906*
US Air Force Academy	*1954*	*3,935*	*87,900*
Norwich University	*1819*	*2,211*	*206,074*
Virginia Military Institute	*1839*	*1,700*	*364,810*
University of North Georgia	*1873*	*15,455*	*46,273*
Texas A&M	*1876*	*58,679*	*10,540,226*
The Citadel	*1842*	*3,528*	*256,284*
Virginia Tech University	*1872*	*31,205*	*796,437*

The relevant factors studied among donors were those related to student and alumni experiences.   Due to the effort of maintaining and, perhaps more importantly, sustaining a high level of major gift and campaign activity, the factors that encourage individuals to support the mission of each institution needed to be identified. Therefore, this study aimed to provide data regarding these motivational characteristics that could be used by the professional staff within development and alumni offices to identify future major gift prospects and to steward current donors.

Although this research was limited to institutions that have a military scope and mission, results may be applicable to other campuses with similarly specialized missions. These could include schools such as: women's colleges, Jesuit colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, schools that focus on Hispanic students, and even Christian liberal arts institutions (e.g., Hillsdale, Bob Jones and Oral Roberts).

Research Questions

Question 1

What student experiences/involvement, if any, at service academies and military colleges

influence motivation for later major donor giving to those institutions?

Question 2

What alumni experiences/involvement, if any, at service academies and military colleges

influence motivation for major donor giving to those institutions?

Question 3

What other factors do major donors report as influencing their giving to service

academies and military colleges?

Question 4

Does age or gender correlate with differences in factors that influence giving among

major donors to service academies and military colleges?

Question 5

How do the motivational influences found among major donors at service academies and

military colleges compare to those already uncovered in research concerning college and

university giving in general?

Background of Subject Schools

Early in its history, the United States identified a need for higher education institutions, founded and funded by the federal and state governments, to train and educate principled military leaders and commission military officers. In colonial times, there was a popular demand for a strong and well-trained military, made particularly urgent when General George Washington's Continental Army faced the overwhelming odds of fighting a far superior, better trained, and much wealthier British army in its efforts to secure America's independence (McCullough, 2005). The creation and founding of West Point as a fort on a high bluff on the west side of the Hudson River is associated with Washington and his need to control water travel and access in and out of New York City from the north. The United States Congress founded the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1802 (USMA, 2014).

When the United States Congress established the United States Naval Academy in 1845, it chose the strategic position of Annapolis more for an escape than for naval strategy. According to the US Naval Academy website, "a more suitable location" was the goal of Secretary of the Navy, George Bancroft, who decided to move the naval school away from Philadelphia to the more "healthy and secluded location of Annapolis in order to rescue midshipmen from the temptations and distractions that necessarily connect with a large and populous city" (2014). The US Naval Academy was essential for developing a strong naval force for the defense of the United States by land and sea, and has served ever since as a pipeline of trained servicemen and women to defend the nation. Finally, the United States Air Force was established as a branch of the service

immediately following World War II, in 1947. At the declaration of the United States Congress, the Air Force Academy was subsequently founded in 1954.

Military colleges and universities by design are unique in their mission and scope of delivering educational experiences in regimented and structured environments. Not all students who want to attend a federal service academy are granted an appointment, and admission is a rigorous process. Military colleges offer students who are not accepted into a service academy or are not prepared to commit to a military career the opportunity to enroll as a member of a cadet corps and obtain a military educational experience. A majority of the young men and women attending military colleges and universities are also residential students, which adds another level of emotional commitment to their experience. Virginia Military Institute and The Citadel, for example, require all cadets to reside in the barracks on campus. According to the Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the United States (AMCSUS), military schools employ and emphasize core values like honor, integrity, duty, service, and self-discipline. The specific statement of core values varies from school to school.

The six senior military colleges and universities are summarized below and can trace their roots to the 19th century with dates ranging from Norwich University in 1819 through Virginia Tech in 1872. Notably, only 50% of the senior military colleges still operate for the purpose of training their students in military command, and the cadets in those colleges represent the overwhelming majority of undergraduate students at those institutions. In contrast, the University of North Georgia, Texas A&M, and Virginia Tech all have corps of cadets which comprise only a small percentage of the total student

population. As of the fall of 2014, the approximate size of the North Georgia corps of cadets was 700; Virginia Tech had 1,000 cadets, and Texas A&M had 2,550 cadets.

Each school was founded in response to some specific need for national training and military mobilization during the 19th and 20th centuries. The rationale for each school's location and founding are summarized below (Citadel, 2014; Norwich, 2014; Virginia Tech, 2014; University of North Georgia, 2014; Texas A&M, 2014; & VMI, 2014):

The Citadel (1842)

> With arsenals located across South Carolina, Governor John P. Richardson was the first to conceive the idea of converting the Arsenal in Columbia and the Citadel in Charleston into military academies. With help of the State Legislature, the plan went into effect on December 20, 1842. The Arsenal Academy was made auxiliary to the Citadel Academy and only accepted first year cadets, who would then transfer to The Citadel to complete their education. On March 20, 1843, the first cadets reported to The Citadel, a date which is now known as Corps Day.

Norwich University (1819)

> After Captain Alden Partridge's idea of the "American System of Education" was dismissed by the United States Military Academy, Partridge established his own institution in 1819. This institution was first named the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy at Norwich, Vermont, but was later shortened to Norwich University.

Virginia Tech (1872)

> Virginia Tech opened as the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College on October 1, 1872. With an enrollment of 132, all students were cadets and organized into a battalion of two companies which were led by the Commandment of Cadets, General James H. Lane; he also wrote the first cadet regulations.

University of North Georgia (1873)

Originally named the North Georgia Agricultural College, this institution focused particularly on mining and engineering and was established in 1873. That same year, their first class of students asked that military training be part of the curriculum. In 1986 the Corps of Cadets officially adopted the name of the unit as "Boar's Head Brigade," an allusion to part of the family crest of Georgian James Oglethorpe. The Boar's Head remains a symbol of fighting spirit and hospitality.

Texas A&M (1876)

Founded in 1876, Texas A&M University currently has the largest uniformed body outside the national service academies. Until 1965, when membership in the Corps of Cadets became voluntary, every individual who attended Texas A&M was required to be a cadet. The Corps are referred to as "Keepers of the Spirit" and "Guardians of Tradition." It has historically produced more officers than any other institution in the nation, other than the academies.

Virginia Military Institute (1839)

Before becoming an institution of higher education in 1839, VMI's site was one of three locations in Virginia that were occupied by an arsenal. The arsenal guards lacked self-discipline and their leisure-time activities upset the decorum of Lexington. In 1834, attorney John Thomas Lewis Preston proposed that the arsenal be transformed into a military college, allowing the cadets to pursue educational courses while protecting the stand of arms.

Due to the perpetual need to bolster the nation's defenses and have well-trained military officers, the federal government (and subsequently state governments) funded the academies and military colleges at high levels. Superintendents and presidents of the institutions were not concerned about sufficient public resources and taxpayer appropriations until more recently. The federal service academies did not begin to move in the direction of more defined advancement (development and alumni affairs) operations until the early 1990s. For these reasons, there is a need to understand

philanthropy and donor motivation in a way that takes into account the unique features of military schools.

Unique institutional culture influences the perspectives alumni of the federal service academies and six senior military colleges have about what undergraduate education should entail. The mission of each of their respective schools – maintaining a rigorous regimen for cadets and midshipmen alike – is very important to them. Consequently, the symbolism and traditions, which are important to these alumni, are very different from those meaningful to students who choose more traditional colleges and universities. During an interview with a Citadel graduate, he remarked that he was emotionally bound to his classmates not only by a ring but by the importance of life in the barracks, which could only be understood by those persons who experienced it. Another alumnus of The Citadel explained in an interview that the discipline and rigorous demands of the military environment probably "saved his life" because had he not attended The Citadel, not only would he have never finished college, but also never attained his present success in life overall. The fact that many young men and women choose the college or university experience "less traveled" may warrant future investigation into their values and motivations, as well as their experience at the academies. Therefore, the history and founding mission of each of these military schools substantiates the claim that each one is different by design and should be considered a subset for review.

This study provided data that may enable the professional staff at the academies and military colleges to better understand the reasons their largest benefactors are contributing at their current levels. Findings may also assist those institutions in

developing strategies to retain their current contributors, to improve data mining and analytics, and to construct programs that will encourage others to give at the major gift level. In each of these areas, the data would thus allow development and alumni offices to adopt or improve empirical strategies for fundraising, increase solicitation efficiency, and save institutional resources. The study therefore had a paramount purpose of presenting these data in a clear and practical format, readily available for future use.

While there is an abundance of research on donor motivation in general, the same cannot be said for research on donor motivation specific to military schools. Although research exists that correlates a donor's actions to some form of psychological or sociological phenomenon in regard to giving, fundraising in military schools tends to be driven by alternate values, which mirror the school's core values: honor, duty, respect, and country. This has been observed in the personal experiences of advancement professionals and can also be seen in the institution's historical fundraising experiences as well. There is a common conception in the advancement profession that if a donor is wealthy and has some level of emotional attachment to the school, that may be all that is necessary for him/her to exhibit charitable behavior. Personal experience indicates that there is also an overarching assumption that certain commonalities among contributors exist. This study sought to supplement these personal experiences and anecdotal knowledge with empirical data.

To achieve this end, it is useful to examine the current literature on the psychology of charitable giving. The practice of soliciting major gifts has been a part of the higher education landscape in the United States for years (Nicolson, 2006 & Latta, 2010), and schools have historically used some form of prospect identification.

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However, Latta (2010) asserts, "As the development profession has matured, several different models have been developed to explain the process of giving. One of the most well-known models is described as 'the five I's' from Greenfield (1999); the model includes the steps of *identification*, *interest*, *information*, *involvement*, and *investment*" (p. 30). This model is often modified to meet an institution's development matrix. Identification of the potential donor can be brought to the advancement professional's attention in several ways: through staff research, wealth screening instruments, or a peer review assessment where a fellow alumnus or professional colleague shares names of prospective donors with staff. Once a prospective donor is *identified* the next step is to ascertain his/her interest in a possible relationship with the institution. The *information* stage consists of conveying data and providing support materials for the particular areas of interest the donor may have. *Involvement* could be as simple as meeting with students or sharing life experiences, or as involved as teaching a class, facilitating a professional roundtable for faculty, working on job placement, or serving on an advisory board or board of trustees. According to the model, all of these steps lead to the end goal of soliciting private resources and securing an investment in the institution. While this model is sound in theory and practice, in the author's experience practitioners add a final point to this model: after closing the gift, there needs to be a high level of engagement in *stewarding* the donor and convincing the donor his or her contribution is being used in accordance with his or her wishes.

Importance

The extent to which public institutions are able to rely on state and federal funding is dwindling with each budget year. According to an article published in *The Atlantic* in March 2013, United States public policies passed by legislative bodies now generally dictate that fewer appropriations be designated for public institutions. Based on data from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 48 states decided to cut the appropriation line for higher education between academic fiscal years 2008-2013, with an average cut of 28% over that time frame. Only North Dakota and Wyoming experienced increases during the same period (Weissmann 2013). As a result, there is an even greater dependency on private donations to adequately maintain scholarships, academic programs, and capital expenditures.

A bond bill has not been passed by the South Carolina General Assembly since 2000, and the likelihood of passing a bond bill specific to higher education in the near future is not strong (Harrell, 2014). This means that state public education will not have capital money available for new buildings or substantial renovations of existing facilities. Economic and political circumstances dictate the necessity of creating alternative ways to secure funds for any new construction. This dilemma is just one example of the challenges faced by the campuses highlighted in this study. Terry and Macy (2007) point out that state governments have changed their focus from supporting higher education to public K-12 education, and have limited their support of universities through funding student loan programs via sources such as state lotteries.

There are limited studies available that delve into specific segments of professional philanthropy at institutions with what might be considered niche missions, (e.g. military colleges, women's colleges, or religiously fundamental colleges). The majority of existing studies focus on broader approaches to fundraising and on characteristics of donors in the areas of race, gender, age, occupation and religion (Pollard 1958, Worth 2002). Research based on institution type and demographics (public vs. private, bachelor's degree vs. master's degree, etc.) in regard to initiating major gift solicitation and fundraising campaigns on the nation's campuses is also available. Examples of these studies are found within McDearmon & Shirley (2009) and Monk (2003). There are also numerous studies (Wastyn 2009, Wannuva & Lauze 2001) which focus on motivation and giving characteristics, embedded in the disciplines of psychology and sociology, but none thus far have been identified to specifically correlate to the graduates of military institutions. Therefore, the exploratory nature of this study provided foundational data that may be used on individual campuses by not only staff, but by boards of trustees, education foundations, and alumni associations of institutions with niche missions.

Definitions

Definitions of terminology used in this study include:

Alumnus: someone who has a degree conferred upon him/her by his/her respective institution; plural form is alumni

Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the United States (AMCSUS):
professional association comprised of member schools to include colleges,
universities, and prep schools which provide a quality education in a military
environment

Capital and comprehensive fundraising campaigns: focused efforts within a set
time frame designed to obtain large contributions to address specific institutional
priorities

Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE): professional
association comprised of individuals serving in the advancement profession
(development, alumni, public relations)

Data mining: process of using key identifiers found in existing donor records for
the purpose of prospect research and identifying potential contributors

Federal service academies: higher education institutions founded and funded by
the United States government to train and educate principled military leaders, and
to commission officers equal to the rank of second lieutenants [The United States
Military Academy/West Point (Army), The United States Naval
Academy/Annapolis (Navy and Marines), The United States Air Force
Academy/Colorado Springs (Air Force)]

Major donor/benefactor: an individual who makes a conscientious decision to
make a major contribution at a college or university

Major gift: A contribution of at least $25,000, cash or planned/estate gift

Senior military colleges: colleges and universities which add a military
component corps of cadets to the regular academic curriculum, and which provide

training and education for principled military leaders [The Citadel, Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, Texas A&M University, University of North Georgia, Virginia Tech University]. (Not all graduates of these institutions are service contracts with obligations to serve in a branch of the United States armed forces.)

Limitations

This study was limited to major donors, who were individual donors of a minimum of $25,000. Using a specific dollar threshold to evaluate financial impact on the institution necessarily excluded other donors as participants, which meant that the survey sample did not include smaller gifts from donors who might be equally as loyal to their alma mater but who did not have the wherewithal to make large gifts. While important to the donor cycle, smaller donations have minimal impact when creating specific academic programs or capital projects; thus, only major donors were studied. The gifts contributed by the donors of this study had a more immediate and noteworthy impact on the institutions. Secondly, the survey and interview process did not include those persons who chose not to support the institutions at all, through any causes or projects. Non-donors, as this population is often referred to in development models, far outnumber the donor population on the majority of campuses. Again, although studying non-donors provides important information, this study did not encompass such a large demographic subset and only sought to provide foundational data for this subject area. It would have been very difficult to gather data on non–participants.

An additional limitation was the historical demographics of research focused on donor motivation and core elements of donor motivation, especially for giving large amounts of one's wealth. According to Drezner (2011), much of the research theories that are driving the study of philanthropy to date were created from studying white men. Historically, this single demographic subset has contributed much of the nation's philanthropy.

Access to the donors was granted by the institutions, which was necessary for the study to proceed. The success of this research depended on the endorsement of each institution and its role in corresponding with its constituents not only by distributing the questionnaire, but also by making certain the survey reached the donors in a timely manner. However, the pool of study participants was not large enough to allow for statistical analysis beyond qualitative description.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical and Descriptive Literature: Philanthropy and Higher Education

Numerous authors have devoted considerable time and effort to research the
historical origins of philanthropy and the behavioral causes of acting generously. Thelin
and Trollinger (2014), Curti and Nash (1965), and Bremner (1994) have written
extensively about philanthropy in America and specifically how philanthropy is
applicable to American higher education. Their work chronicles the historical
development of the advancement model as well as the societal needs that led schools to
search for more effective ways to secure resources and offset costs not covered by church
offerings, state funds, federal support, or tuition and fees.

Charity versus Philanthropy: General Definitions and History

Charity, in some form or fashion, has been around for as long as historical records
can be accessed. The Greeks are credited for coming up with the more modern term
"philanthropy" (Bremner 1994). Charity is closely tied to religious beliefs and practice,
and is motivated by one's desire to care for individuals and tend to those persons who

cannot adequately do so for themselves. In other words, love thy neighbor. St. Augustine emphasized in his writings the importance of charity and made the point of how personal the act of giving actually is to individuals. He encouraged people, when making the challenging decision of how one shares and distributes precious and hard-earned resources, to choose wisely by selecting a mission that is closely tied to both personal beliefs and those most in need (Bremner, 1994).

Philanthropy, on the other hand, is "secular in origin and emphasizing love of man rather than God, [and] has not been as closely involved with the poor as charity" (Bremner, p. xii). Robert Gross explains: "Coined as a term in late seventeenth-century England, it became associated with the Enlightenment, for it sought to apply reason to the solution of social ills and needs. Either way it aspires not so much to aid individuals as to reform society" (Friedman (ed.), 2003, p. 31). Bremner also argues that philanthropy in the 18th and 19th centuries was more about individual actions through reforms associated with humanitarian efforts (i.e., treatment of persons incarcerated, those considered mentally challenged, and supporting the rights of laborers and women).

Philanthropy in American Higher Education

Curti and Nash (1965) note that in 1683, gifts and requests for support began the funding mechanism to establish Harvard and other colonial colleges and schools. When founding these institutions, much emphasis was placed on the need for bringing

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civilization, religious instruction, and the training of leaders to this new, unsettled world. Higher education in America during the years 1780-1860 witnessed many donations in the form of land, gifts in exchange for work, and items of subsistence (such as produce) to help the colleges survive. Curti and Nash explain: "The meaningful colleges found a single worthy patron, obtained money abroad, collected a large subscription, or were taken under the patronage of a state or city. The windfall pulled the struggling institution out of purgatory into prominence" (p. 45).

The 20th century could be considered a boom period for philanthropy. Bernstein (2014) writes that the organization of philanthropic institutions is primarily a 20th century phenomenon, and has been a "decidedly US-based innovation" (p.xv). The creation of charitable foundations had meaningful influence on higher education in part because of the rise in the foundations' assets, which created more wealth to be expended. The impact of this wealth began to be felt around 1900 with the establishment of notable foundations such as Carnegie, Rockefeller, Rosenwald, and Russell Sage (Thelin & Trollinger, 2014). "Foundations represent the institutionalization of philanthropy," Thelin & Trollinger explained (p.66). However, Robert Gross disagrees, arguing that philanthropic organizations really have their own origins in the legal model developed in the previous two centuries (Friedman, 2003). Gross's and Thelin & Trollinger's arguments may be compatible if one considers that the 20th century's rise in foundations occurred at a time when existing factors and new factors together burgeoned into an explosion of growth. The era beginning in the 1930s and lasting through the 1970s witnessed foundations like Ford, Sloan, and Pew embark on funding initiatives that often had special emphases or directives toward education. "These also reflected a parade of

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new, changing sources of economic development in the United States, as the foundation's endowments were based on fortunes made in [various fields]" Thelin & Trollinger explained (p. 68).

Alumni Donations

According to Curti and Nash (1965), the effort to organize and motivate alumni to contribute back to their respective alma maters did not take shape until the early 20th century. Cohen (2007) indicates a slightly earlier date: in 1897, The University of Michigan hired an alumni secretary for the first time, highlighting the need to facilitate stronger alumni contacts. Curti and Nash (1965) point out that even with structured alumni support, endowments were not providing sufficient funds to keep colleges above water financially. Thus a stronger argument was made for making more direct charitable appeals to alumni. "Alumni traditionally supported their alma maters, usually for designated purposes," Curti and Nash explain (p. 186). "After 1918 organized alumni support gained momentum. The efforts of particular graduating classes and of the overall alumni organization provided the means by which private institutions could count on a dependable annual income" (p.186). Pollard (1958) agrees: prior to 1929, he argues, endowments and income derived from student fees were the most recurring and dependable forms of revenue for the majority of private colleges and universities – an even more dependable source of income than foundations. After the beginning of the financial depression in 1929, schools began to recognize the importance of recurring

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gifts. He also says, citing an example from Vassar College's fundraising efforts in 1922, that the alumnae appeared to be in a mode of just waiting to be solicited and asked for support (Pollard, 1958).

The evolution of class reunion campaigns also emerged in the early 20th century, after Harvard engaged in this practice in 1906 (Curti and Nash, 1965). Class reunion campaign efforts were based on the understanding that these types of alumni solicitations and gifts came about when focused fundraising efforts centered around class reunions and homecoming events; "such anniversary gifts came to be habitual," they note (p. 201). Thus, donors' attitudes toward making gifts in support of their respective alma maters have changed over time. It is important to understand this change and the evolving factors that directed that behavior.

History of Higher Education Fundraising Campaigns

Gearhart (2006) credits Michael Worth for describing some of the earliest fundraising efforts in America. Worth describes how in 1641 William Hibbens, Hugh Peter, and Thomas Weld set sail from Boston to London on a mission to solicit gifts for the young Harvard College. Their stated purpose was to raise money enabling the college to educate the local Native Americans, a cause apparently viewed as worthy by wealthy British citizens of the time. Hibbens, Peter, and Weld's efforts were met with "moderate success" (Curti and Nash 1965, p. 7). During the group's subsequent trip in 1663, the trio

of pioneering development officers urged the prospective supporters of Harvard that higher education was important in the attempts to ward off the dangers of 'degeneracy, Barbarism, Ignorance, and irreligion doe [sic] by degrees break in upon us'" (p.8). The adventures of Hibbens, Peter and Weld are considered the first organized fundraising activity undertaken for an American college (Worth, 1993). The greater outcome of the trip by Hibbens, Peter and Weld was that it set in motion the tradition of supporting American colleges and universities with charitable gifts (Curti and Nash, 1965). Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, however, fundraising methods were primitive by today's standards. These methods mostly consisted of passing the church plate, staging church suppers or bazaars, and writing letters with a tone more of begging than of philanthropy (Gearhart, 2006). Pre-Civil War gifts were usually in the form of work, food, or land (Curti and Nash, 1965). The principle technique was the "begging mission," usually carried out by a trustee, the president of the institution, or a paid agent, who was often given a percentage of the funds raised. Early colleges were often connected with a sponsoring church and their fundraising reflected a religious zeal, with gifts being solicited for the purpose of advancing Christianity in a young and uncivilized nation (Worth, 1993).

Thelin & Trollinger (2014) state that the craft of organized efforts and approaches to fund-raising for higher education did not exist until the early 1900s, and the professionalization of philanthropy did not occur until after World War II. Prior to World War II, efforts to engage alumni for the purpose of raising funds were met with mixed reactions. Over the past 100 years, fund raising for higher education has shifted its emphasis from a more charity driven mission to that of philanthropy. The appeal and

case statement for support is more donor-centric and specialized. As one source puts it, "Today, a philanthropic rather than a charitable pitch characterizes the approach to donors and, in a more comprehensive sense, the model of the relationship between donor and beneficiary" (Hunter, Jones, and Boger, 1990, p. 529).

Historically, colleges and universities have used campaigns to generate dollars to support existing programs and new initiatives. The higher education fundraising model in use today was developed during a three-day meeting held at the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulpher Springs, West Virginia, in 1958 (Nicholson, 2006). The purpose of the event was to provide a platform for universities to discuss the most advantageous ways to organize fundraising efforts on the respective campuses. A survey conducted at the time of the conference indicated that 20% of the institutions represented at the Greenbrier reported only one staff member who was responsible for administering the three critical areas in institutional advancement: development, alumni, and public relations (Latta, 2010). In 1985, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) organized a conference to reflect on the issues presented in 1958 at the Greenbrier and evaluate the profession as it stood to date. The most significant outcome, according to Latta (2010), was recognizing the need for more scientific research in the advancement profession, particularly in the areas of theory building, introspective studies, and administrative studies.

These needs are centered around the importance of understanding what motivates and inspires individuals and organizations to contribute major donations to institutions. Frey (1981) states that "universities probably know little about their alumni. They presume opinions, beliefs, and preferences, yet they almost never conduct scientific

research into the matter" (quoted by McDearmon, 2013, p. 285). Thelin & Trollinger (2014) delved deeper into the need to form theories and conduct studies of experiences for the advancement professional when building a pipeline of future donors. "Since a student's satisfaction with her or his college experience is a strong predictor of future giving to Alma Mater, development officers are wise to consider the growing body of research literature on the priorities, values, and decisions of young alumni," they write (p. 176). Thelin & Trollinger mention Travis McDearmon as an example of a scholar who provides empirical data to determine overall trends in alumni giving – the key is to find a better understanding as to why mega gifts are being realized at schools every day.

In 2013, several mega gifts were contributed to American higher education. Three schools recorded gifts in the nine figure range: Columbia University received over $277.5 million from Dawn M. Greene and Jerome M. Greene; Stanford University cultivated a relationship with alumnus John Arrillaga resulting in his giving $151 million; and the University of Southern California booked a gift of $117 million from an anonymous donor (Giving USA, 2014). These types of gifts came to fruition because of proper planning and strategy. Equally essential was understanding what motivated each of these donors, and looking ahead, it is important to understand how data on motivation could be used to entice others to do the same. Optimism remains high for campus fundraisers going forward: part of the Giving USA report includes the Council and Advancement for Support of Education (CASE)'s fundraising index, which reports that their constituents stated a 5.1% increase in 2013 and cautious optimism for another increase in 2014. In February 2014, the Council for Aid to Education released survey data which confirmed the optimism of CASE: a record giving year was experienced across

America's higher education institutions. The survey indicates that $33.8 billion was contributed during the 2013 fiscal year, a 10% increase from fiscal year 2012, and an increase from the record of $31.6 billion set in 2008 (Thelin, 2014).

Understanding the historical framework of philanthropy in higher education is imperative to grasping the methods of best practices in use today. As noted in this section, philanthropic behavior throughout time has often been motivated by a desire to help alleviate the most pressing needs within the school or community. While sometimes not purely altruistic, however, more often than not, individual benevolence has been linked to a desire to support the mission of a charity or ameliorate the most pressing societal needs of an individual or group. The broader question of why people give is a complex and fascinating subject that has received much recent attention. Examining these larger motivations of giving is important for this study, both from a theoretical standpoint and also because institutions and staff need to better understand an individual's behavior and propensity to give.

Motivations for Giving

Pollard (1958), Cutlip (1965), and Taylor and Martin (1995) report that alumni giving may very well be the single most influential indicator of how alumni feel about the institution and "esteem" that accompanies their degree. For example, Taylor and Martin (1995) point out that for many schools that have been studied, alumni traditions are important when establishing an emotional commitment to give back when called upon to

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do so. An example to support Taylor and Martin's theory on traditions can be found at the subject schools. At the military colleges and the federal service academies, the author has personally observed how the ring presented to each graduate upon degree completion represents a lifelong connection between school and individual, bound into the emotional attachment found through such a symbolic icon. In the minds of many alumni, the ring issues a statement to others they have mastered the challenge of being part of a disciplined and regimented military school environment. The "band of gold" brands them one of a select few.

The study of philanthropy as a general field has recently seen an explosion of scholarly interest. Most of the research has been conducted within the past 30 years. Holmes (2009) points out that there is substantive research on charitable giving overall, but fewer sources that focus specifically on higher education. Some scholars would argue that when focusing on the study of philanthropy as it relates to higher education that period is even shorter (Drezner, 2011). With the decline in state and federal revenues over the past five to seven years (as detailed in Chapter 1), it is even more imperative that research be conducted on the reasons people give and what motivates them. Andreoni (2006) says that philanthropy first surfaced as an academic field of study in the 1960s, but more interest and dialogue exploded in the 1980s. Friedman and McGarvie (2003) also argue this when stating that a political committee recommended in the 1980s that philanthropy be considered an interdisciplinary field in higher education, which resulted in philanthropy becoming a more accepted area of historical study.

There are several important considerations for donor motivation and behavior. Gearhart (2006) developed and proposed eight motivations for giving: altruism,

immortality, peer pressure, control, a desire for inclusion, transformational change, the passing of wealth from one generation to the next, and tax considerations (p. 201). First, many donors are genuinely altruistic, sincerely care about the welfare of the institution, and also have the desire to help their community and humankind. Secondly, donors who want to be etched in perpetuity make gifts that allow them to name buildings or endow faculty chairs or academic programs. Gearhart explains that such benefactors want to be linked forever with the institution or a particular subculture within the institution. Third, there is a higher propensity for a donor to respond favorably to a request for support when it is made by a close confidant or colleague (Gearhart, 2006). A close relationship, when joined with a meaningful project or cause, can often result in a successful gift request. Fourth, a donor who desires to influence or guide decision making at an institution may use a gift for leverage when attempting to impose their will on the outcome of the decision. This particular characteristic is more often seen in attempts to gain access to certain athletic events or admission to the institution. Fifth, some donors use their gifts to "join the club" and be associated with individuals or organizations with whom they may not otherwise have a connection. Sixth, those donors who have a will to shape and mold societal issues are motivated to give as a means for transformational change. Gearhart (2006) credits the baby boomer generation for this philanthropic paradigm. Seventh, benefactors are interested in leaving a legacy for their children but do not want wealth to have adverse effects on their children's lives. Examples of adverse effects could include the void of motivation in securing a professional position, not establishing a strong work ethic, or poor financial decisions. The donors thus choose to leave enough to their family to ensure the maintenance of their accustomed quality of life

and then distribute their remaining assets among the charities or institutions of their choice. Finally, subsequent research has demonstrated that the charitable tax deduction is not the primary motivation that many would expect for a majority of donors.

Andreoni (2006) further argued through his "warm-glow" theory of motivation that some causes are so multifaceted and far-reaching that an individual cannot be motivated solely by self-interest or the expectation of enjoying direct benefits from their contribution. The donor instead gets an emotional "warm-glow" from self-gratification. Thelin & Trollinger (2014) support Andreoni by arguing that social exchange theory is a key concept when determining causes for giving. "Interdependent relationships such as those that exist between alumni donors and Alma Mater are readily understood in terms of social exchange theory," they state (p. 62). In essence, the individual's desires must mirror, or at least closely correlate with, the scope of work that the institution proposed to the donor in order to secure a supporting contribution. In addition to social exchange theory, Thelin & Trollinger also summarize two other mainstream theoretical explanations for donor motivation: a *psychological* explanation (donor self-expression and recognition, combined with the desire to contribute) and a *teleological* one (donor is motivated because of the end state of where the money is going; the organization's mission factors strongly within this theory). The teleological theory is particularly relevant to this study because the concise and clear missions of the federal service academies and military colleges factor strongly into donors' motivations.

Complementing the work of Nicholson (2006), Latta (2010), Matheny (1999) and Gearhart (2006), there is additional literature related to donor behaviors and the charitable giving process. The Center for Philanthropy at Indiana University and an

initiative at Notre Dame University called the Science of Generosity are two notable research sources for advancement professionals who desire information regarding donor motivations and best practices in the field. Tanise, Hite and Hite (2007) conducted a study in which they interacted with the "top ten" donors at 132 institutions of higher learning within the United States. All of the subject institutions were public university campuses. The study was undertaken to give readers the opportunity to evaluate strategies for fulfilling desires of current donors and marketing new fundraising initiatives. The authors reference the Donor/Organization Integration Model (DOIM) as a way to work with current and future donors. The chart below (Table 2.1) depicts this model, showing the quadrants and areas of activity that were shown to result in higher yields of gifts. Each quadrant of the model correlates to, at a minimum, some level of foundational or interpersonal attachment between the institution and donor.

Table 2.1

Donor/Organization Integration Model

		Functional Organizational Integration N=9	Full Organizational Integration N=12
Formal Structural Interaction	Integration "Formal" High (Internal) ↑		
	Interaction "Informal" ↓ Low (External) **Transactional Activity**	Isolated Organizational Integration N=10	Latent/Potential Organizational Integration N=8
		Low	High
		Relational Embeddedness Interaction	

There are other sources on the topic of donor behavior that deal more directly with wealth transfer and characteristics of the next generation of philanthropists. Routley, Sargeant, and Scaife (2007) address the large amount of expected wealth transfer over the next 50 years, the reasons individuals make large bequests, and what prompts their motivation to give (such as affinity with the mission or the personal estate planning benefits enjoyed when including a charitable organization as a beneficiary).

Especially pertinent to this study is research that has concluded that satisfaction as students and later as alumni makes a positive difference in giving. Clotfelter (2001) agrees that satisfaction is important and Tom and Elmer (1994) agree satisfaction is

important when the definition of satisfaction includes the student approving of the academic experience that prepared him or her for life post-graduation. Gaier (2005) specifically correlates student satisfaction regarding their undergraduate experience with whether or not a pattern of charitable giving begins post-graduation. Survey results indicate that the relationship between alumni involvement and satisfaction with the academic curriculum and overall classroom experience as a student is in fact relevant. However, Weerts and Ronca (2009) find that satisfaction is not significant in their study unless it correlates with the motivation of major benefactors. In that case, they find satisfaction to be an important factor. In addition, Gaier (2005) presents his research results as a reference source for development offices and practitioners to implement. Increases could be found in both alumni contributions and a propensity to participate when satisfaction with the experience is very high.

Leslie and Ramey (1988) also report that alumni donors tend to have an emotional attachment that motivates them to repay the school or institution out of gratitude for some benefit they enjoyed while enrolled. Gaier's (2005) data also suggest a positive correlation between age and giving. The most logical single factor in making major gifts is the donor's discretionary income, and this typically increases as alumni mature with age and professional achievement. Gaier (2005) adds a level of empirical analysis to this theory in his study, and concludes that as alumni increase in age so does their resource availability to give. Leslie and Ramey (1988) also support this conclusion with their research findings.

One question this study asked each participant was the city and state in which they reside. One hypothesis was that proximity to campus has an impact on donor

motivation at the academies and military colleges. Based on the author's personal

experience, the level of alumni involvement with the school is higher when the individual

lives closer to campus, but this does not necessarily equate to major donations. Leslie

and Ramey (1988) find supporting evidence for this in their study; the distance which

alumni lived from the main campus had an impact on their giving and participation in

volunteer activities on campus. Results from Leslie and Ramey's study indicate that

alumni who live in the same state as the university were more likely to give and to

participate with the university than alumni who live further away. Similar circumstances

may or may not be found for the institutions in this dissertation. Thelin & Trollinger

(2014) refer to a study conducted by Indiana University and Johnson, Gossnickle and

Associates regarding the issue of donor motivation, with the institution's location taken

into account. The report states that if "students and alumni reported a great campus

experience that fostered loyalty and affiliation; a long-serving president; institutional

maturity; a strong national ranking; a high percentage of tenured professors; a relatively

large endowment; regional location, with metropolitan and Northeastern sites being most

favorable; and, a pattern of thoughtful growth" (p.171) then more multi-million dollar

gifts were commonplace and realized by institutions with these organizational

characteristics.

Giving USA (2014) reports that gifts to the education sector accounted for

approximately 16% of total giving to charity during 2013. In addition to the weighted

sector percentage, contributions to education rose almost 9% from 2012 to 2013. This is

a positive trend and in order to capitalize on its success, studies like the Giving USA

report need to investigate more thoroughly not only why the money is coming in but also

who exactly is contributing. This would enable major benefactors on America's campuses to be understood better from a philanthropic perspective.   While fundraising programs across campuses in the United States are, for the most part, working well, advancement professionals and campus leadership cannot become complacent. Drezner (2011) succinctly states that "motivation is the foundation of giving" (p.61).   Therefore, we must understand more about what motivates major gift donors and whether or not there are comparisons to be made between donors at military schools and donors at other colleges and universities. If the single motivating factor were need, then only those schools arguing their case for the direst set of circumstances would receive help; as Thelin & Trollinger (2014) state, "Simply presenting needs is rarely sufficient to stimulate giving. Otherwise, the neediest causes, including the neediest colleges and universities, would receive the most money in the form of charitable gifts" (p. 62).

Alumni Giving Studies

Several studies regarding donor motivation and alumni giving were reviewed as part of this research. The studies reviewed took into consideration specific focal points on alumni engagement and donor motivation ranging from student academic experience to gender and age to current place of residency. Studies on alumni giving – which has developed into a rich scholarly field in recent decades – should be used to contextualize the results of this study of donors at the military schools, as many of the respondents were alumni. Several landmark studies in alumni giving are discussed here because of their relevant content and findings.

Gaier (2005) surveyed 1,608 alumni to determine the link between satisfaction in the college experience and alumni giving. He reports that the academic experience carries meaning in terms of fostering an alumnus's future involvement with his or her respective institution. "Findings demonstrated a significant positive relationship between alumni satisfaction and current alumni involvement with their alma mater. Simply stated, the higher the level of satisfaction with the academic experience, the more likely alumni are to give and/or participate with the university," he notes (p. 279). In other words, the alumni's satisfaction with the academic enterprise is directly correlated to their willingness to contribute back to the school. In addition to satisfaction with the academic experience, Gaier (2005) looked at other factors, including demographics, extracurricular involvement, and current alumni involvement.

While Gaier finds a correlation between gender and giving, Connolly and Blanchette's (2006) findings among Wesleyan University alumni donors (examining how wealth/ability to give and loyalty are linked to giving) disagree, with gender not being found as a notable characteristic of alumni donors. McDearmon and Shirley (2009) also find no definite gender distinction in regard to giving in their study of 2,273 young alumni donors and non-donors from a public Midwestern university.

Regarding the correlation between alumni giving and proximity of residence to the university, both Gaier (2005) and Connolly and Blanchette (2006) agree that where the alumni reside does have an impact on contributions. Those alumni who live in the same state as the institution are more likely to contribute in Gaier's study (2005), while Connolly & Blanchette (2006) find that those alumni who live on the east coast

contribute more frequently than those who reside on the west coast, and the alumni in New England give the smallest median gifts.

The student experience is also shown to frequently determine the behavior of future donors once they become alumni. Monk (2003) surveyed and interviewed young alumni of prestigious private universities to determine which demographics most closely correlated with giving. His findings agree with McDearmon and Shirley (2009) that the overall university experience is one of the best predictors for future donors. Monk (2003) also concludes that there are certain demographics (including income, gender, being white and single American citizens, and having been involved in extracurricular activities) that can be identified within alumni databases that will lead to donations. Universities can and should save time and resources by focusing on alumni whose specific demographics match those identified in donor studies, using the alumni and development offices' information about the alumni.

The researcher also felt it important to review at least one study that dealt with possibilities of reasons alumni choose to not contribute back to their schools. Wastyn (2009) tackled this unusual perspective by interviewing 12 local alumni from a religious-affiliated Midwestern university. Based on his findings, he contends that many non-donors share the primary feelings and characteristics that donors have. Wastyn finds, for instance, that the non-donors have a good student experiences, maintain positive feelings toward their alma mater, and some even remain engaged with the school. The real difference appears to be one of attitude, specifically regarding how the non-donor perceives the institutions and the role of college overall. The relationship in many instances is merely transactional: Wastyn finds that responses from the non-donor

interviews generally indicate that those alumni considered college to be more of a commodity which students contractually pay for, and thus they did not view the school as a charity. Furthermore, his interview results indicate that non-donors believe the university does not necessarily need their money to survive, and that since only large gifts were requested in the past, the smaller gift amounts do not matter. Non-donors also tend to question the way in which decisions are made at the school. Wastyn (2009) considers that there are many factors involved in formulating the non-donor's behavior and attitude, but ultimately the difference for the non-donors appears to be how they view their four years as only one part of their lives (and the college experience as a paid service), rather than viewing it as the 'beginning of a life-long association with the college" (p. 103).

Clotfelter (2003) finds in his extensive study of 34 private colleges and universities that a consistently significant factor to determine alumni giving for graduates of elite private colleges and universities is whether the college attended is the student's first choice. This concurs with Monk (2003), who finds that satisfaction with the current direction of the school has a positive externality, while dissatisfaction with its direction and recent decisions can alter giving behavior.

Finally, Connolly and Blanchette (2006) state that alumni fall into two distinct categories – those who give vs. those who do not and those who give large gifts vs. those who make smaller gifts – and each of the groups has different characteristics defining it. They explain, "In the latter case, alumni involvement and motivation appear to be the most important, while in the former alumni attitudes more closely related to capacity take precedence (that is, willingness to increase their annual gift and support fundraising

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goals). There was even an indication that alumni interest in at least one aspect of the institution may be negatively associated with large gifts. In contrast, the positive association with plans to attend their class reunion suggests that older alumni who make large contributions may be more interested in their fellow alumni than they are in becoming involved directly with the institution" (p. 86). Large gifts are also linked to alumni donors being business directors or CEOs.

All of these alumni giving studies provide invaluable context and background, as this study's survey and interview questions address alumni attendance at campus events, direct involvement with the institution, age, attitude towards current leadership, and having the capacity to contribute major gifts. Each of these issues is informed by the findings of these major studies, linking the significance of the research results on mainstream public and private universities and on military colleges and universities. Specific links between the published literature and this study's results will be discussed in chapter 5.

Fundraising at the Federal Service Academies and Military Colleges

In conducting this research, it was difficult to locate any empirical analysis directly related to philanthropy and donor activity at West Point, Navy, or the Air Force Academy. Part of the reason for the void in this research to date can be explained by the point Zinsmeister (2012) made: that it was not until the late 1990s that the academies,

goaded by federal budget cuts, began to purposefully and strategically raise money from alumni and other private sources. Zinsmeister (2012) also opines that donors support the federal service academies for similar reasons as donors who support other colleges and universities. Gifts are often made out of individual allegiance to the institution but those gifts can also contribute to and result in a positive externality for education – especially the military colleges and academies – in the United States.

There are numerous major public research universities – including top tier research institutions – which receive less than 15% of their revenue support from appropriated public dollars (Gearhart, 2006). While the appropriations may vary from school to school, the overarching trend is that the academies and military colleges are not immune from what the research institutions are experiencing. According to West Point's case statement of support as part of their current "West Point For Us All" capital campaign, "each year approximately 10 percent of the resources available to the Academy come from private funding. Federal dollars fund 90 percent of West Point's budget" (West Point for Us All, 2013). The federal service academies enjoy a much higher percentage of public funding in comparison to the six senior military colleges, but the academies are still faced with offsetting the difference in revenues by generating private support. Five of the six senior military colleges do receive public taxpayer dollars through state appropriated general funds. Norwich is private and therefore its financial model would not be affected by the need for public appropriations and dollars. These examples illustrate that while the research institutions and military colleges differ in mission, a scarcity of public dollars to operate is a common problem.

According to the results published in the 2014 Voluntary Support of Education (VSE) survey by the Council for Aid to Education (2015), several of the schools under study shared their fundraising totals for the year. It is important to note that the VSE survey is "the authoritative source of information on private giving to higher education and private K-12 institutions in the United States" (VSE, p. 1) and CAE has managed the survey since 1957. While institutions are not required to participate, each school that chooses to submit data must abide by set criteria for the report, regardless of the institution's size or mission, in order to properly benchmark private giving. This provides a definitive source of information for philanthropy. VSE reports a 9% increase in gifts designated to higher education during 2013 (VSE Report 2014), and an increase of 10.8% in 2014. Giving to colleges and universities in the United States was also at its highest recorded level of giving in 2014 with an astonishing $37.45 billion (VSE report 2015).

The following table provides an overview of the institutions that were listed for the 2014 gift year in the VSE report (2015):

Table 2.2

Private Gifts Received

School	Outright/Deferred Gifts Combined
Norwich University	*$12,604,000*
Texas A&M	*$317,549,000*
The Citadel	*$17,936,000*
United States Air Force Academy	*$20,038,000*
United States Military Academy	*$52,622,000*
United States Naval Academy	*$42,536,000*
University of North Georgia	*$1,705,000*
Virginia Military Institute	*$34,965,000*
Virginia Tech	*$78,141,000*

Data from the voluntary support report is categorized by institution classification (i.e., doctoral, masters, or baccalaureate granting schools) show that the majority of the schools that participated in the 2014 VSE survey are receiving gifts above their peers (VSE Report 2015). This comparative data illustrates that the academies and military colleges, at least at the top tiers of the military institutional system, are in fact doing well from a fundraising perspective. This is a significant reason why this dissertation is so important – it is vital to get a better understanding of why these particular schools are

doing well and of the donor characteristics that can be identified at other institutions of

higher learning as well as within the military colleges and service academies.

Summary

The literature reviewed and included in this research is specifically relevant to the

institutions under study. However, the timeliness of the topic parallels the ever-pressing

financial needs and desire for campuses to undertake larger-scale fundraising campaigns.

Charitable activity is approaching 2008 pre-recession levels at America's colleges and

universities (Giving USA 2014), and the quest to secure more private dollars has never

been more intense. This research is germane in the context of the existing literature about

philanthropy and donor motivation in higher education.

In studies of donor motivation, the research generally does not address specific

campuses in higher education with niche missions. This study attempted to address one

aspect of this lack in research by considering institutions with "niche" missions in higher

education and comparing data to existing research in hopes of determining a more exact

understanding of donor behavior. However, there are studies that have focused on

schools classified as historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) that have

bearing on this study. At Livingstone College, an HBCU in North Carolina, Hunter,

Jones, and Boger (1999) identify several common denominators when determining donor

affinity. The authors find that donors to Livingstone tend to share a number of

characteristics and demographics: the donors believe in the mission of HBCUs; attend

church at least once a week; are similar in age and family income, belong to a Greek

letter organization, and volunteer in their respective communities. However, Cohen

(2006) gives reasons why HBCUs might struggle to raise funds from alumni, including

his finding that an assumption exists amongst alumni that their alma mater does not need

alumni support or private dollars contributed. Cohen's point reinforces the need for

research on donor motivation to better understand how to articulate a message of need,

and identify characteristics of donors at schools with special missions such as those

HBCUs that Cohen (2006) and Hunter, Jones and Boger (1999) identify.

Studies of the history of educational philanthropy and fund-raising, such as Curti

and Nash (1965) and Pollard (1958), identify that alumni student experiences, as well as

the highest level of education attained, have positive relationships with the amount of

money alumni donate (Drezner, 2011). Research in this area is prevalent around

strategies for fundraising in general, but generally speaking, those studies are not specific

to certain colleges and universities considered to have specialized or niche missions.

Even the data generated by the aforementioned research cannot be simply applied to

other institutions because each school and campus is unique in its own right. This is

especially true for the federal service academies and military colleges. Any time

personalized fundraising data can be obtained from research within a particular

subculture of higher education (i.e., federal service academies and military colleges) the

results can be implemented into day-to-day fundraising plans by development

professionals on those campuses. Drezner reminds us that donor data are essential in

eliminating the impossible task of directly contacting each donor on a personal basis for

solicitation (2011). When more is known about what motivates and, equally critical,

what does not motivate donors, campuses will be able to better identify potential donors

and maximize gifts to the institution. While the literature to date reveals key indicators

for success in higher education fundraising, none of the studies on niche or special

mission schools focus on military schools.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study sought to identify factors that influence major donors' giving at military colleges and academies. Methods of research included a survey questionnaire and follow-up interviews with selected major benefactors. Military schools stand to benefit by understanding what motivates their major donors in ways that may lead to new initiatives and more effective stewardship programs. This type of research is particularly important during a time of added pressure to secure additional private resources as state and federal appropriations continue to decline.

Haddad (1986) cites Nachmias and Nachmias (1981) to support the position that mail questionnaires are the "most appropriate and feasible" means of gathering data when investigating donors and non-donors among alumni (Haddad, 1986, p. 32). Connolly & Blanchette (1986) agree. Roberts and Bradley (1999) also cite Nachmias and Nachmias (p. 107-109, 1981), positing that mail questionnaires are especially useful for research aimed at theory development rather than testing. This study used electronic mail surveys and personal interviews as the most efficient and appropriate methods of data collection from a large number of individuals and for obtaining more in-depth information from selected interviewees.

A limited number of follow-up interviews were conducted to add depth to the survey data. The participants who were interviewed were selected based on their indicated willingness to be interviewed and their proximity to the author's residence and scheduled travel. Eight interviews ultimately took place.

The number of study participants at each institution varied due to the different donor demographics for each school. The potential respondents in this study were extremely busy with professional and personal demands. The survey was designed to take approximately 20 minutes to complete, although additional notations and comments were encouraged. It was hoped that the format of multiple-choice response would assist in a high rate of response and return. The follow-up interview was designed to provide a deeper explanation of why and how the factors influencing donor motivations occur. The personal interaction during the interview was designed to provide the individual an opportunity to elaborate on a personal experience, positive or negative occurrence, and how it shaped their charitable behavior.

Conceptual Framework

This study was framed by the idea of student and alumni experiences and characteristics as key factors in predicting their motivation to give. While many studies (e.g., Taylor, 1995, and Gearhart, 2006) note psychological elements of donor motivation, such as the desire for a legacy or sense of responsibility, others (e.g., Panas,

2005, and Leslie & Ramey, 1988) also include the concept of activity with and for the institution as students and alumni. At military institutions it is particularly important to understand motivations created by the cadet experience, since that is an area that may be open to adjustment by institutional leaders. In emphasizing donor experiences as factors concerning motivation, this study reflects a descriptive economic theory known as prospect theory (Kahneman, 2011). Prospect theory adds individual dimensions and personal determinants to the earlier "expected utility theory" (Kahneman, 2011) of decision-making. Individuals act not simply out of rational decisions, but also from intuition, experience, and personal preference. While expected utility theory is considered to be the "foundation of the rational-agent model and is to this day the most important theory in social sciences" (Kahneman, 2011, p. 270), the deviation toward "prospect theory" helps to better describe why individuals behave and make certain choices, as well as to identify the logic behind those decisions. These conceptual underpinnings were reflected in the research questions and within the survey instrument prepared for this study (Appendix B).

Participating Institutions

The federal service academies and other senior military colleges invited to participate in this study were: The United States Military Academy (West Point), The United States Naval Academy (Annapolis), The United States Air Force Academy (Colorado Springs), Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, The University of

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North Georgia, and Texas A&M University, Virginia Tech University, and The Citadel. The United States Coast Guard Academy and the United States Merchant Marine Academy were not selected for this research primarily because their command reporting structure is through and with the Departments of Homeland Security (USCGA) and Transportation (USMMA) rather than command reports for the USMA, USNA, and the USAFA. Additionally, their classifications and missions are different than the service academies and their alumni presence, both in numbers and influence over charitable giving, would not impact the findings. Four of the institutions declined to participate at the time of this study's completion: The U.S. Military Academy, The U.S. Air Force Academy, University of North Georgia, and Texas A&M University.

Each academy or senior military college differs in its mission and size. For Virginia Tech University, the corps of cadets represents a fraction of their entire student body. At Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, and The Citadel, on the other hand, the corps of cadets is central to the primary mission of undergraduate education. Unlike the members of the corps of cadets and midshipmen at the federal service academies, the graduates of the six senior military colleges are not required to graduate with a military contract and accept an active duty commission. For example, The Citadel commissioned approximately 34% of its graduating class in May 2014, which has been fairly consistent over the past 5 years. In 2008, VMI commissioned 52.8% of their graduates into the United States Armed Services (VMI website, 2015).

Participants

The study required access to the schools' top-level donors. Major gifts are defined as contributions of $25,000 and greater, an amount widely considered standard for that designation at many institutions. The sample from each participating school consisted, at a minimum, of those individual donors who made contributions of no less than $25,000 during the previous fiscal year. This may or may not include capital campaign contributions, depending on the status and position of each institution. However, it was highly likely that the majority of the campuses in this study would be either in a public or "quiet" phase of a comprehensive campaign, just exiting a comprehensive campaign, or planning to enter a comprehensive campaign.

Institutional contacts were encouraged to select the subjects by determining their activity in the most recent comprehensive/capital campaign completed by the school. By focusing on recent events, some consistency was added to the practice of combining typical and homogeneous sampling. Additionally, major donors are generally benefactors who have contributed much larger sums of money than those donors considered annual fund donors. Annual funds, by design, are typically smaller amounts spread over wide ranges of value. Major benefactors bestow upon organizations large sums of money that are much more transformational in nature to the institution than collective annual donations in terms of direct and immediate impact on the school.

Access

The most challenging aspect of this study was first to convince the

administrations at the various institutions to allow major benefactors as defined by the

study to be contacted with the survey. It was anticipated that fear or hesitancy by

administrators might cause them to deny another development office access to their

donors. The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) code of

professional standards was carefully followed; and the author's familiarity, professional

network, and current position helped to relieve any doubts about a lack of

professionalism and the true intent of the research. Administrative staff understood that

the study could assist institutions involved by strengthening their major gift

development efforts through better understanding their donors.

A definite challenge in terms of access was being perceived as an "outsider" who

desires inappropriate access to obtain confidential and proprietary information, and the

support of each advancement operation (development and alumni offices) was essential.

The primary contact at each institution was a colleague or professional staff member

similar in title and job scope to the researcher, the CEO of The Citadel Foundation/Vice

President for Advancement (The Citadel). The president of The Citadel agreed to assist

in making contact with each academy superintendent as a matter of courtesy, if needed.

A colleague and friend who formerly served the United States Naval Academy Alumni

Association was also contacted for assistance.

The initial contact at each school was an email to a professional-staff contact

requesting an appointment to discuss the study, the sequence of next steps, and the

importance of institutional involvement. This was also an opportunity to explain the intended outcomes and how the data collected would be shared and distributed to the peer institutions. The feedback from these institutions overall was very positive, with a genuine willingness to assist the effort. However, some that were initially positive ultimately did not distribute the survey.

Survey Distribution and Instrument

This study used a survey instrument developed by the researcher with guidance from a survey used in a previous dissertation by Latta (2010), in which each question tied back to the research questions in some manner. The purpose of the survey (Appendix B) and the interview protocol (Appendix D) was to investigate the motivations and giving characteristics of major donors at the service academies and senior military colleges and address the research questions.

Questions about motivation for giving asked about involvement/engagement during the student experience and the post-graduate experience, as noted in research questions 1 and 2. Other motivational factors (research question 3) were prompted by additional survey questions. The instrument also gathered demographic data in order to support Question 4.

The survey instrument, as well as the interview protocol, accompanying documents, and plan of data collection, were all approved by the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board (Appendix A).

An initial request to distribute the survey was sent to the identified professional

staff. It asked them to determine which donors contributed an amount greater than

$25,000 during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015. This query, aimed at developing

an initial pool of participants at each institution, included directions to identify and batch

those donors who participated in the corps of cadets at schools with mixed enrollments.

The next step was to ask the professional staff to forward an introductory letter to major

donors from the author introducing the research, including a link to the online survey

and stating that the survey results would be treated with strictest confidentiality with

documents destroyed upon the author's degree completion (See Appendix C). The

participants were also assured that their participation would be treated anonymously and

they could opt out of any questions they did not wish to answer. The answers were to be

coded based on institution, with no names associated with the returns. Finally, the letter

contained the researcher's personal contact information. These communications were

designed to emphasize to the participants the anonymity of the study and to underscore a

willingness to share the results with each institution so that they might develop even

better practices for private resource generation.

Utilizing the Survey Monkey program, responses were made online and

forwarded to an account set up to receive the completed survey. A total of 158 surveys

were returned. A follow up request to redistribute the survey to non-responders was not

made to the institutions, largely to be sensitive to the time commitment of professional

staff members and to their desires to avoid inconveniencing major donors. Based on his

own experience, the researcher decided this decision would be most respectful to staff

members and donors.

Interviews

An interview component was added to the research methods to expand survey responses with more in-depth understanding. The author developed an interview protocol (Appendix D) and used this instrument to interview eight major donors, all residing in the southeast. Their demographics differed in regards to age, but not to gender, ethnicity, or the institution which they support. The purpose of the interviews was to discover any consistent themes and patterns that could assist in answering the research questions and add the depth of thoughtful reflection. The interviews were conducted in person at locations based on convenience. The majority of the semi-structured interviews were conducted in the researcher's office, but also in the workplace of the donor, on a private plane with a donor, and over teleconference.

The interviews were coordinated with the donors through an initial email request and a follow-up communication either by phone or in person to set up the appointment. The majority of the interviews were conducted in the office of the researcher; several interviews had different locations, one being conducted in the donor's office, another on a private aircraft, and a third via phone. All the interviews were conducted over a span of several weeks beginning at the end of September 2015, and concluding the week of October 22, 2015. The interview subjects represented graduating classes of 1948, 1964, 1973, 1976, 1978 (2), 1983, and 1987. In order to assure anonymity and because this study addressed donors as a group rather than by institutional or regional differences, demographic information was not matched to the interview responses.

The interview audio data were transcribed by the researcher, and transcripts were coded by certain themes and words that repeatedly surfaced during the interviews. An immediately evident recurring theme was the importance of current college and university leadership in maintaining donor confidence in not only making a large contribution, but permitting the institution to guide that gift to its best use and having the gift recorded as undesignated.

Data Analysis

It was anticipated that the number of returned surveys would be small and therefore difficult to test for statistical significance. This ultimately was the case. However, the descriptive data allowed for determining percentages of the responses for reporting purposes. A set of tables and graphs were compiled to view respondents' experiences and other motivations. These enabled the researcher to identify and to look for patterns (rather than significance) of similarity and difference, noting trends about donor experiences and demographics that could possibly be correlated with giving. This analysis also extended to reviewing existing research findings (e.g., Leslie & Ramey, 1988; Gaier, 2005; Latta, 2010; and Thelin & Trollinger, 2014) for comparison to similar emerging findings and in order to begin to identify how military institutions compare to higher educational institutions in general. Data generated through the interview process could have strengthened or diminished the importance of the survey results.

Participants' survey responses were intended to assist in identifying what, if any, characteristics are common amongst them. This enabled development of a matrix of characteristics (age, socio-economic status, whether the subject graduated from the institution, and level of involvement as a student or post-graduation) and consideration of those characteristics in light of questions about motivation.

The respondents were coded so that names were disguised through alternate methods of identification. This was to ensure the privacy and anonymity of donors, allowing them to speak freely. Interview audio data were transcribed by the researcher and then reviewed to determine emerging themes, repeated words and ideas, and key areas of consistency. These generated codes that enabled the researcher to highlight their usage in transcripts and find notable patterns.

Researcher Positionality

The researcher had a strong familiarity and interest in this research due to a professional career that has involved working to benefit the constituencies of The Citadel: The Military College of South Carolina. He also had a rapport with other development professionals and familiarity with the institutions and their missions. The researcher's employment by one of the subject institutions could have posed a limitation. Therefore, the issue of bias and lack of objectivity could be of concern. It should be noted, however, that at least three individuals not affiliated with the institutions studied the results and reviewed early drafts to check for signs of biased analysis or reporting.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS OF SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS

Overview of Purpose and Methods

The purpose of this study was to understand what motivates major donors at federal service academies and senior military colleges. The term "major donors" refers to donors who contributed more than $25,000 during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, or ending December 31, 2014, if the budget is based on a calendar year. The results from the five institutions and 158 responses, as well as the eight personal interviews, offer a glimpse into the patterns of donor motivation amongst the military colleges and academies.

Survey Findings: Introduction

The total number of surveys that were distributed between August and October 2015 by the subject schools is unknown, since the institutions maintained control of their database and distributed the survey on the researcher's behalf. It required that window of time to make contact with the schools and the staff, as well as for the staff to run the query and distribute the survey. The total number of respondents was 158, and not all individuals responded to the entire survey. The individuals were not asked to identify

themselves except for affiliation with a specific institution. However, 74 individual

respondents did self-identify and expressed a willingness for the author to contact them.

Survey Findings: Institution and Gift Type Profile

The individual donors who responded to the survey instrument included 24 from

Norwich University, 71 from The Citadel, 30 from the United States Naval Academy, 25

from Virginia Tech, and 2 from VMI. 152 respondents answered this question out of the

total 158.

Table 4.1

Donor Response by Institution

Institution	Number	%
The Citadel	*71*	*46.71*
US Naval Academy	*30*	*19.74*
Virginia Tech University	*25*	*16.45*
Norwich University	*24*	*15.79*
Virginia Military Institute	*2*	*1.32*

The response breakdown on giver identity indicated a large majority of alumni at

92.2%. The study considered non-alumni who did not graduate from the institution but

contributed the minimum amount of $25,000 under the category of "friends" in the

survey, of which they comprised 5.2%. Parents comprised 2% of the responses and

there was one response from an alumnus who did not graduate (which equaled less than

1%).

Table 4.2

Donor Identity

Identity	Number	%
Alumnus/graduate	*141*	*92.16*
Friend (never attended)	*8*	*5.23*
Parent	*3*	*1.96*
Alumnus/non-graduate	*1*	*0.65*

In terms of gift designation, the donors who responded and gave to these

categories did so at the rates shown below. There could be duplication in the number of

responses as the participants were encouraged to note more than one area they support if

applicable.   The respondents included 70.5% designated toward annual appeals, 59.5%

toward some form of scholarships, 53% in response to a comprehensive ask, 48%

toward capital projects, 34% toward strategic initiatives, 28.1% in support of

endowments, 20.9% toward cadet/midshipman experiences, and 9.8% toward faculty

support.

Question 5 of the survey asked participants what form or transaction they have

used to make their gifts. The responses could contain multiple answers, as the

participants were encouraged to check all that applied. For outright cash gifts, 94.2%

responded, for estate planning through a will or bequest, 24.4%, for gifts of stock, 23.1%,

for annuities/charitable trusts, 11.5%, for life insurance, 8.3%, for gift in kind, 6.4%, and

for any contribution made through a family trust or community foundation, 5.1%.

Table 4.3

Types of Gifts

Gift Designation	Number	%
Cash	*147*	*94.23*
Life Insurance	*13*	*8.33*
Annuity, Charitable trusts	*18*	*11.54*
Stocks	*36*	*23.08*
Gifts in kind	*10*	*6.41*
Plans through will or bequest	*38*	*24.36*
Trust/community foundation gift	*8*	*5.13*

The survey also asked how long each donor had been giving to the institution.

The purpose of this question was to determine whether major donors tended to be long-

term supporters or if they had only begun giving recently. There were no responses for

those respondents who have given for less than one year. Those who have given

between 1 to 3 years, 1.9%; given for 4 to 6 years, 4.5%; given for 7 to 9 years, 4.5%;

given for 10 to 12 years, 7.1%; and those who have given for more than 12 years,

81.9%. This finding was important as it revealed a clear disparity between those donors

who have given for only 10-12 years and those who gave for more than 12. The years of

giving were an important factor in developing the long-term relationships with major

donors and cultivating prospective major donors. This data point was noteworthy and an easy one for professional staffs to query and identify.

Survey Findings: Donor Motivation

The next section of the survey asked questions with a desired outcome to ascertain donor motivation, which was the primary purpose of this study. One question asked donors to select roles of leadership and student activities that they had participated in during their student experience. Since the institutions are military colleges and academies, involvement as a cadet or midshipman is most usually centered around leadership in the corps of cadets. The responses to the question asked about involvement included: 1.5% for regimental commander, 32.6% for senior private, 22.7% for a considerable amount of cadet activities, 20.5% as a member of the corps squad/student athlete, 12.9% for company commander, 12.9% for regimental staff and 8.3% for religious organizations. Although these percentages were likely higher than the percentages of all student participation in such activities, the precise data was not available to the researcher. Finally, 9.9% of the respondents indicated that they did not participate in any of the stated activities. It was worth noting that the majority of major donors were senior privates, meaning that they carried no leadership rank amongst the corps of cadets.

Table 4.4

Participation in Student Activities

Student Activities	Number	%
Senior private (no leadership)	*43*	*32.58*
Many activities	*30*	*22.73*
Corp squad/student athlete	*27*	*20.45*
Company commander	*17*	*12.88*
Regimental Staff	*17*	*12.88*
None	*13*	*9.85*
Religious organizations	*11*	*8.33*
Regimental commander	*2*	*1.52*

Understanding how post-graduation involvement factored into the major giving of the respondents was a key element of this study. The desired outcome was to understand the level of engagement the donor had with the school. Nearly half of the respondents declined to answer this question (70 out of 158), but development leaders tended to give the most while leaders on the alumni board gave the least. Overall, donors who served in a leadership role as a development/campaign volunteer made up 48.9% of the survey; those in leadership roles on the foundation board, 28.4%; those who were cadet/midshipman mentors, 28.4%; those in a leadership role on the governing board, 20.1%; and those with a leadership role on a school or department advisory board, 19.3%. Finally, those with a leadership role on the alumni association board made up 19.3% of the responses. There was a request to "check all that apply" so there could be duplication in the numbers. It is worth noting from these responses that current

involvement had positive correlation with the donor's charitable decision. The interviews supported this correlation: a common remark amongst the interviewees was that once they became even more involved, "their money followed their time."

Table 4.5

Level of Engagement Post-Graduation

Post-Grad Role	Number	%
Development/Campaign volunteer	*43*	*48.86*
Leadership role on foundation board	*25*	*28.41*
Leadership on governing board	*18*	*20.45*
Cadet/midshipman mentor	*25*	*28.41*
Leadership on advisory board	*17*	*19.32*
Leadership on alumni board	*17*	*19.32*

The question regarding what motivated major donors to give back to the institution also included a request to choose all that applied. Of the respondents, 80.8% responded with the desire to leave a lasting legacy on campus; 70.5% said the responsibility to give back to their alma mater; 61.5% said to train, educate and support members of the corps; 42.3% identified with a special project or appeal; 36.5% mentioned patriotism; and 32.3% said their being asked to give. Fewer respondents indicated the remaining five options: 15.3% said to help replace the loss of public appropriations; 20.5% said strategic tax/estate planning; 16% said recognition by the institution; 8.9% said peer or reunion class pressure; 8.9% said alumni giving quotas and maintaining a high position in university rankings; and finally, less than 1% indicated

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that they gave to elevate their overall social status. This was representative of a broad

list of possible characteristics of motivation.

Table 4.6

Motivations for Donors

Reason for Giving	Number	%
Give back/leave legacy at alma mater	*126*	*80.77*
Responsibility to give back	*110*	*70.51*
Train/educate/support corps members	*96*	*61.54*
Identified with specific project/appeal	*66*	*42.31*
Patriotism	*57*	*36.54*
Being asked	*51*	*32.69*
Replace public appropriations	*24*	*15.38*
Strategic tax/estate planning	*32*	*20.51*
Recognition by institution	*25*	*16.03*
Peer or reunion class pressure	*14*	*8.97*
Rankings for alumni giving %	*14*	*8.9*
Elevate social status	*1*	*0.64*

Based on professional experience of the author, personal contact by a staff

member at the institution carries influence. When asked which professional staff

member(s) at the institution played roles in securing the gifts and their importance to the

donor, the responses reflected the following percentages. The president or

superintendent played a key role for 42.8%; development/gift officer made contact with

49.2%; the athletic director or coach made contact with 17.6%; a vice president or

provost made contact with 9.9%; the vice president for development made contact with 16%; a dean/department chair/faculty member made contact with 15.3%; a board member/key volunteer or peer made contact with 16.8%; and the CEO of the foundation contacted only 7.6%.

Table 4.7

Influential Staff Contact

Contact Person	Number	%
President/Superintendent	*56*	*42.75*
Development/Gift Officer	*65*	*49.62*
Athletic Director/Coach	*23*	*17.56*
VP for Development	*21*	*16.03*
Dean/Department Chair/Faculty	*20*	*15.27*
Board Member/Key Volunteer/Peer	*22*	*16.79*
Vice President/Provost	*13*	*9.92*
CEO/Education Foundation	*10*	*7.63*

The next question attempted to discover what motivated donors to make additional or subsequent gifts to the institutions. This statistical information is important when planning future solicitation strategy and prospect ratings. The results were as follows: knowing the gift would enhance the school's quality of education ranked the highest at 75%, while knowing that the institution would honor their request for specific fund allocation followed at 56%. A surprisingly high number (46%) indicated that understanding that the gift was an important part of meeting the school's operating cost motivated them to give additional funds; 39% said that an increase of their personal

wealth motivated them; while a knowledge of how the gift was used motivated 37%;

26% reported being motivated by the desire to help raise the institution's peer ranking;

another 24% cited a relationship with the institution's staff; and 22% mentioned the

similar scenario of being approached by a relevant contact at the school.   Finally, access

to a corporate matching gift program motivated 10.5%, and a persuasive fundraising

pitch helped motivate another 6%.

Survey Findings: Stewardship of Gifts

Findings showed that donors did monitor the use of their gifts to ensure that the

schools were using those gifts as the donors intended. When asked how satisfied they

were with the information that they had received from the institution regarding the use

of their donation, the results were very similar with 69% being very satisfied; 16%

somewhat satisfied; 10% satisfied; 3% somewhat satisfied; and only 2% actually

dissatisfied. Eighty-five percent were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied. There

were no 'undecided' responses. Overall, respondents were very satisfied not only with

the information they received about the use of their gifts, but also were satisfied with the

more general ability to direct gifts (see Table 4.8).

These results also matched the smaller pool of responses from donors who

agreed to be interviewed when they were asked what they felt about the way in which

their gifts were being used (and for what purpose). The interviews highlighted a

recurring theme of the donors trusting the school's leadership, stating that the leadership

had a far greater knowledge of how to best use the money contributed than the donor did

personally. Due to this trust and belief in the school's better judgment, donors indicated

that they usually permitted their gifts to be treated as undesignated.

Table 4.8

Satisfaction with Institution's Ability to Direct Gifts

Satisfaction Level	Number	%
Very Satisfied	*123*	*79.35*
Satisfied	*16*	*10.32*
Somewhat satisfied	*14*	*9.03*
Somewhat dissatisfied	*1*	*0.65*
Undecided	*1*	*0.65*
Dissatisfied	*0*	*0*

The final question in this area asked donors to rate their trust in the leadership's

ability to maintain and steward the institution's brand. Respondents overall responded

that this was very important to their willingness to give, a finding which is consistent

with follow-up responses in the interviews. Overall, 70% were very satisfied; 13.6%

were somewhat satisfied; 12.3% were satisfied; 2% were somewhat dissatisfied; and less

than 1% were dissatisfied (with 0% being undecided).

Survey Findings: Demographics and Characteristics of the Sample

The participants in this study were major benefactors during the five schools'

most recent fiscal year (Norwich University, The Citadel, USNA, VMI, and Virginia

Tech). The minimum gift amount used to define a major donor was $25,000. The

majority of the respondents were male (96%) as compared to female (4%). The

responses regarding gender supported Gaier (2005) in stating that gender does make a

difference in giving. As seen by the results of this survey, it overwhelmingly made a

difference with these institutions. However, the fact that the population pool was so

heavily male to begin with made this result unlikely to impact the study's findings in

terms of true characteristics of generosity.

The ages depicted in the survey show that almost 78% of the survey respondents

were over the age of 60, and the largest group indicated that they were between 70 to 79

years old (38%). Age was a key determiner of discretionary income and thus impacted

the ability to donate; however, other factors such as family situations and professional

attainment also influenced discretionary income.

Table 4.9

Age of Donors

Age	Number	%
90 or over	*4*	*2.6*
80-89	*13*	*8.44*
70-79	*59*	*38.31*
60-69	*44*	*28.57*
50-59	*23*	*14.94*
40-49	*10*	*6.49*
30-39	*0*	*0*
20-29	*1*	*0.65*

The next question was about income and Table 4.10 shows the range of household income for those who responded. The data indicated that over 84% of the donors made less than $1 million in annual income. An argument can thus be made that a donor's desire to leave a legacy at the school is stronger than mere financial considerations.

Table 4.10

Income for Donors

Annual Income	Number	%
$1 million or more	*20*	*29.55*
$500,000 - $999,999	*17*	*12.88*
$250,000 - $499,999	*39*	*29.55*
$100,000 - $249,999	*42*	*31.82*
$50,000 - $99,999	*12*	*9.09*
$25,000 - $49,000	*2*	*1.52*

There were two open-ended survey questions, one in the donor motivation section and another at the end of the questionnaire; each question requested written responses. For the first question, 46 individuals responded and 112 chose not to respond. A sample of the responses selected by the author included the following excerpts:

"My son is receiving a top education. I have the means to have paid for him to attend a private college. But the cost of education at the USNA is not means based, so I pay nothing. Additionally, I have given to the annual funds of each school my three children have attended. Support of educational institutions is my main philanthropic priority. For all these reasons, plus others that are included in your survey questions, I am making major gifts to the USNA during the time my son is a Midshipman. I will likely continue after he graduates, although at a reduced amount."

"Give back for excellent education and training."

"A special mission among colleges."

"Give back. I appreciate what The Citadel "process" did to enhance my life and professional success, to the extent it is successful. Plus, makes me feel good."

"Love of Country."

"Grateful to have survived combat and as a result feel I have been given an opportunity to help others."

"The development of principled leaders and future military officers."

The final question in the survey was open-ended and asked if the donors would prefer to make any additional comments. Of the sample donors, 29 elected to leave additional comments while 129 skipped the question. Generally, those who commented were satisfied with their charitable experience. One of the respondents commented that the institution prepared the donor for the rest of his life by challenging him and giving him the skills needed for a productive future. Another donor commented that giving was more than just giving back, it was about modeling proper behavior and supporting the next generation. Those who responded were clear that giving was not just about sharing wealth, but about making a difference at the schools they supported.

Interview Findings

The interviews reinforced the survey findings and clarified certain points regarding donors' confidence in the institution's leadership, donors' desire for gifts to be used to enhance the college's brand and reputation, the correlation between alumni/donor

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involvement and propensity to give, and the absence of a connection between individual student experiences and donor motivation. These findings are highlighted in the following sections.

Confidence in Current Leadership

The interviews reinforced that the institutions represented in this study have unique missions and that a positive brand and reputation was critical to their support. When this is the case, which it was under the timeframe of this study, the trust of the school's leadership to make the right determination of the institution's course of direction and the education of the corps of cadets are focal points. If donors did not trust the leadership, gifts did not materialize. There was also the expectation amongst donors that "leadership will continue and do what is the right thing for the school." However, the interview respondents also commented that the institution's constituents had a responsibility to help establish an environment on campus attractive enough to recruit and retain an excellent leadership team.

The alumni interviewed felt that it was not in their purview to make determinations on how to best allocate their gifts. That rested in the expertise of the institution's leadership. "I don't monitor, nor desire to – I agree with where it goes if that is what the president tells me, and I trust his leadership," explained one donor enthusiastically. He went on to say that if he did not trust the school's leadership, then designating or monitoring his gifts would not matter because he would not contribute.

Furthermore, there was a theme that donors relied on the professionals to make the proper decisions about where gifts were most needed.

Positive Brand and Reputation

As referenced in the preceding section on trust in leadership, the donors interviewed had strong feelings that their gifts be used by the administration to strengthen and enhance the brand and reputation, and to that end, the mission of the institution. The alumni interviewed felt the school must have a solid reputation in the space of higher education not only in the state where it resides, but regionally and within its peer and aspirational groups. One donor even commented that a reason he believed it was important to sustain the mission and reputation of the school through giving was "the uniqueness of the school, the history of the school, and what it does for the community, the southeast, and I want to make sure it proliferates."

The donors, while not elaborating specifically on what they felt it meant for a school to carry a 'strong brand,' did voice their confidence that their alma mater met that definition of a solid reputation. Alumni and institutional leadership must trust one another; the alumni must have confidence that the core leaders are adequately representing the institution. As one alumnus said, "There is the trust factor that a person will lead the school in the right direction and not the wrong direction." Image of the school was vitally important to those interviewed.

Current Alumni and Donor Involvement

Involvement was also a recurring theme in the interviews. Of the eight persons interviewed, four (or 50%) of them served on the foundation board of their respective institution. One donor was very clear when he described to the researcher the importance of involvement, "As a professional investor by trade, I want to know there is an ROI [Return on Investment] in a concrete way. By serving on the board and as involved as I am today on that campus helps me understand how my gifts are at work." This way of thinking tied directly into survey results that showed that the majority of donors understood how their gifts were making a difference and felt that the schools were adequately informing them of the uses of their contributions. A clearer explanation of involvement was offered by a donor who explained in his interview that, "how much time you spend on campus has some manifestation to how much money you will give."

There was clear indication in all eight interviews that timing in the donor's personal and professional life dictated the frequency of visits to the campus and his ability to become involved at a level more meaningful to him. One of the subjects interviewed was quick to point out that being a fourth-generation graduate, his frequent trips to campus have shaped his behavior in terms of being involved and charitable. He also made an observation that tied back into the importance of administrative leadership and frequency to visit campus: "if the college leadership is good, alumni are even more likely to get back to campus."

There must be reasons for the alumni to become involved and engaged at a high level. If the school fails to attract alumni involvement, then there is a high probability that that particular institution will struggle to find major donor fundraising in a pool of potential donors. One of the interviewees stated that having multiple ways to engage people without much difficulty was crucial and "underscores the importance of having programs or ways for our alumni to be involved and get people involved."

Student Experiences

It was expected that during the interviews the researcher would identify certain student experiences that influenced donor motivation and subsequently created an understanding of the importance of giving. That was not the case at the conclusion of the interviews, as they revealed little connection between individual student experiences and donor motivation. Specific student experiences did not appear to motivate donors to give, but rather the overall experience of having attended and graduated from an institution that the donors readily define as "unique" was a motivating factor. This, along with an academic experience deemed worthwhile, motivated donors to contribute. The school was "teaching things outside of the classroom and I was always home when I was here," replied one donor. The shared experience of having graduated from a military college was a lifelong umbilical cord for those alumni donors interviewed for this study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the characteristics and motivations of

major donors at the federal service academies and senior military colleges. The subjects

were individual donors who made contributions of a minimum of $25,000 during the

most recent fiscal year. Data were collected from 158 respondents from five military

colleges and academies. The survey requested feedback with questions ranging from

motivation for giving to stewardship and demographics, and included two separate open-

ended questions.

The first research question asked whether student experiences or involvement, if

any, influenced donor motivation for making major donations to their alma maters. The

results from the survey showed that many of the respondents identified themselves as

senior privates, which supported the theory that the activities/experience factor did not

have much of an impact. The results from the interviews also supported this conclusion.

However, having played a sport or been a member of the corps squad did influence

giving.

The second research question asked respondents to identify alumni experiences

or current involvement that had influenced donor motivation. Both the survey and

interview results strengthened the conclusion that being involved at the schools

increased the likelihood of alumni making major donations.

Research question three investigated what other factors major donors reported or

identified as reasons they gave. The research results showed that trust in the

administrative leadership, communication of the use of the gift, and the satisfaction of

how their gifts were impacting the school were strong indications of not only why the donors gave, but also can be used to predict future donations. Another noteworthy indication, especially for professional development staff, was how important the respondents felt it was to give back and leave a legacy when marketing the case for support. In addition, the donors communicated that there was a strong need to train and educate future leaders of principle in our society, and that recognition of the donors was not that important to those who responded via survey and in the interviews.

Research question four asked about what roles age, income, or gender played in their decisions to give. The results indicated that there was a correlation to age and gender, the majority of the survey respondents indicated they were older than 60 and male. For the majority of respondents, their annual income was greater than $100,000, but less than $1 million. The interview participants were all Caucasian men, with a variety of ages.

As will be examined at greater length in Chapter 5, the existing research on donor motivation and involvement was largely supported in this study. Areas of agreement with existing research include: loyalty to alma mater, quality of the institution and the national brand of the school, confidence in leadership, and alumni involvement. However, there was only questionable support in this study for research demonstrating the importance of student experiences. While the study sample was small and therefore limited in the relevance of its findings, the results merit more research regarding the importance of the institutional experience and how the donors of the military colleges and federal service academies were molded by the culture of the school.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This study was initiated to determine relevant factors, characteristics, and indicators related to major donor motivation at the three federal service academies and six senior military colleges. The individuals who were surveyed and interviewed were all major donors at the aforementioned study schools and had made a contribution of at least $25,000 in the prior fiscal year to the institution. An intended outcome of the study was to gather enough useful information to share the findings with the professional staff at the participating schools. It is the author's anticipation that these findings regarding student experience, alumni loyalty, and age/income factors, among other factors, will enable them to more easily and accurately determine which donors are most likely to give. More generalized findings that could be useful to alumni giving programs across the board were also considered. This chapter will include a summary review of the study's purpose, as well as a discussion of the findings and conclusions, recommendations for further research, and the study's limitations.

Review of the Study's Purpose

The purpose of the study was to develop a greater understanding of the motivating experiences and individual characteristics of major donors at United States military academies and senior military colleges and to further identify how they differed, if they differed at all, from the findings from existing research on donor motivation at other types of colleges and universities. Were there similarities between those results and what motivated benefactors to contribute to military colleges and academies? How can those comparisons be used to assist administrative leaders to become even more successful in securing large contributions and exceeding expectations for capital campaign goals?

Specifically, this study sought to discover various factors about major gift donors at military colleges and academies that impacted their motivation. The institutions that participated included: The United States Naval Academy (Annapolis), Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, Virginia Tech University, and The Citadel.

Discussion and Analysis of Key Findings

Motivational Factors: Absence of Student Experiences

A particularly interesting finding surfaced about the importance of cadet experiences in shaping the way that major donors viewed their philanthropic support for their alma mater. There is an abundance of literature (e.g., Gaier (2005), Holmes (2009),

Clotfelter (2001), Weerts and Ronca (2009)) that reflects upon the individual student experience as a major contributor to shaping the alumnus's manner and motivation to donate back to the school he/she attended. However, this is in contrast with the findings of this study.

Earlier research findings suggested that students who attended their first choice of colleges or universities were more likely as alumni to give back to the school through gifts of time and money (Clotfelter, 2003). While respondents were not asked specifically whether their alma mater was the service academy or military college/university of their first choice, the author has found from professional experience at The Citadel that many of the alumni and current students were only interested in and thus only applied to The Citadel. This personal observation supported Clotfelter's (2003) findings that alumni of private colleges who attended their first choice of college were more likely to become alumni donors.

The academic and extracurricular environments of the military colleges and the academies are unique in their student opportunities, which alter the student experience found more traditionally on campuses across the country. The cadets have mandatory physical training, classroom attendance, and are encouraged to perform community service. The opportunities and expectations that accompany a military lifestyle for students supersede what student organizations at non-military schools might offer, such as student government associations or other more ordinary day-to-day activities common at private and public institutions. One might question why a military school would need a formalized student program board when there are regimental officers who direct this on behalf of the entire corps of cadets. The cadets are tied together by class and bonds that

have an indefinite shelf life – such as the band of gold each graduate wears on their finger highlighting their class year. A similar phenomenon was observed by Cohen (2006) regarding HBCUs: the graduates of HBCUs who contributed financially to their alma mater actually did not appear to be motivated by their student experiences either. Military schools and HBCUs have unique missions that perhaps transcend the need for individual experiences to create a sense of belonging at the institution, which may explain this unusual trend.

It should be noted that the majority of respondents overwhelmingly self-identified as not carrying rank or serving in a leadership position within the corps. Only 27% of the major donors who answered this question identified themselves as participating in one of the three leadership categories (Regimental Commander, Regimental Staff, and Company Commander). This group is the rough equivalent to student government in private and public universities. Future research could benefit from an understanding of how this compares to the entire population within the corps of cadets. Thus, it appears that while the majority of major donors never experienced the standard set of extracurricular activities that most research links to alumni donors, it may be the case that strong emotional ties to the alma mater did not depend on such "extras" at military colleges and academies. Additionally, it should be recognized that the military colleges strive for a leadership culture even outside of formal leadership roles. The entire military school experience – from mandatory living in the barracks to physical standards and regular parades to uniform expectations and classes – creates a uniquely close bond among graduates that is not far removed from a fraternity or sorority. This offered a potential explanation for why senior privates actually outnumbered student athletes and those who

considered themselves active in cadet activities when the three categories were compared individually.

The military schools and the academies thus have great potential for enticing charitable giving because of the cadet/midshipman experience: the system in place for the most part stayed in place for generations and each graduate can share some experience with another graduate, regardless of the class year or distance in age. The overall experience, compared to varying, individualized student engagement at other schools, set the subject schools apart from the status quo. These subsets of major donors also gave the professional staff at the subject schools a prospect pool for discovery. Development and fundraising staff should, based on these findings, expand their solicitations beyond those alumni who served in student leadership roles. In addition, they mostly likely should still pay additional attention to those who were athletes and/or participated in cadet activities, as the study results indicated some degree of connection between them and large-scale donations.

Motivational Factors: Confidence in Current Leadership

A recurring theme in the responses, particularly from the subjects who were interviewed, was that they had confidence in the administrative leadership to work diligently to enhance the reputation and profile of the institution, and this confidence was paramount in terms of willingness to contribute. Brand meant a great deal to those

alumni interviewed. With all military institutions carrying a very unique, niche mission, those schools have competitive advantage in the higher education space of being an identifiable brand.

This idea of trust in the leadership was a bold contrast from what Cohen (2006) found in a study on HBCUs, another type of niche institution. While the interviews in this study clearly showed that major benefactors held the institution accountable and in high regard before making charitable commitments, this was not the case with HBCUs. There, Cohen's research indicated that the alumni had no tendency to correlate their confidence, or lack of thereof, in financial or general support to the current leadership of their alma mater.

Cohen (2006) presented quite a contradiction from what the interviewees expressed in their answers. A possible explanation of why donors trusted in the administrative leadership at such a high level was a straightforward one: the military schools and academies taught and embedded in their students the importance of leadership and being a leader of principle. If the school's administration did not show competence in effective leadership, the alumni did not support the institution.

The donors trusted the leadership to use their gifts wisely and strategically, and that was of primary importance. The element of trust by the donors in the leadership of the school was a major reason the majority of the donations made by persons interviewed were undesignated. These donors had a high level of trust and respect for how decisions were made at their alma maters and were very comfortable with how their gifts were being used. The survey and interview feedback received strongly indicate that there was

a high level of confidence in the administrative leadership, brand, and direction of the military colleges and academies, as well as a general trust that the gifts entrusted to the institutions were being stewarded properly and used according to the donor's wishes.

Based on these findings, the administrators at military colleges and academies should focus on recruiting students with potential leadership qualities, work closely with the student leadership to make sure that cadet leaders are chosen wisely, and pay careful attention to hiring decisions on the board and for staff positions. As the author often has urged his staff at the military college, hiring is all about the talent business, and it is imperative to get the best. This truism appears to be highly relevant from a fundraising perspective as well.

Motivational Factors: Alumni Involvement and Engagement

The interviews provided insight into the need for staff and volunteers at the academies and military colleges to determine and then invest time and resources into meaningful involvement and engagement of graduates early on and often right after commencement. One such way was through class agents and class reunions. The respondents, both in the survey and interviews, connected the importance of class affiliation and peer contact (113 out of the 158 were currently involved at their alma mater either as a volunteer or on a board). While this is not a new phenomenon on the campuses of the subject schools, as Grant and Lindaur (1986) found and Olsen, Smith and Wunavva (1989) confirmed, alumni reunion years are vitally important for higher

giving, this research supports the additional investment of precious college budget allocations toward personnel costs in the programs that organize reunions.

The academies and military colleges rely heavily on class reunion giving and class affiliation when working to establish relationships with major benefactors. A strong emotional bond forms between alumni and their classmates, beginning on the very first day the prospective cadets matriculate into the corps. It is the personal experience of the author that when one Citadel alumnus meets another, the first question asked is in reference to what their class-year was, and the second is which company they were in. Giving campaigns organized around reunions often reunite classmates who have drifted apart over the years. The emotion created though gathering with alumni who shared an unusually close college experience infuses these gatherings at military colleges and the academies with a feeling of solidarity that sets them apart from other campuses and reunion/homecoming programs. In the author's personal experience at both private/public and military schools, military colleges and academies have exceptionally well-attended reunions and large amounts of money are routinely raised. A spirit of competition is especially evident among the different graduating classes as each strives to raise more money than the others and thus establish themselves as the "best class."

In a similar vein, when asked the question about what motivated them to give back to the institution, donors overwhelmingly stated it was their legacy to the school (77.5%) and their responsibility (68.2%). These are areas to take into consideration when talking to alumni about the importance of giving back and when formulating a philanthropic strategy and donor stewardship plan. Over 76% of respondents in this study indicated they were made aware of how their gift was used to enhance the

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institution's quality of education. This response indicated a higher likelihood to contribute again when they know how their gifts are being put to use to enhance the mission of the school. This tied into a recurring theme of the interviews, which was that the brand of the institution and overall reputation of the school was critical to major donors' giving.

Demographic Characteristics: Age and Giving

The findings of this study also supported the Life–Cycle Hypothesis of alumni giving, which is popular in the scholarship of alumni donation literature (Olsen, Smith and Wunaava (1989); Grant and Lindaur (1986); Okunade, Wunnava and Walsh (1994)). The hypothesis was that people tended to contribute more as they aged and as their income increased, though different studies found different times of decline in giving patterns, all of which could be dictated by a myriad of factors. For instance, Bristol (1990) found that donations increased for the first 10-20 years after graduation, but then began to decline after the 40th year. This study supported the hypothesis that age and ability to give were not separately distinguishable. The majority of the major donors in this survey ranged in age from 60-79. Therefore, from a strategic planning point for advancement staff, age did factor into strategic marketing and donor profiles. Grant and Lindaur (1986) remarked: "Since the recent literature has found that giving is positively related to income and marginal tax rates, and since these determinants of the level of charitable contributions generally rise over an individuals' working life, it is not

surprising that alumnae donations increase as an individual ages. However, since individual income elasticities for charity may change as the individual ages, the life-cycle patterns of alumnae giving may not parallel the individual's age-income profile" (p.131).

The data in this survey provided a snapshot, albeit a small sample, of age ranges that were most common among donors, and the class years linked to those ages should be data-mined. Although a combined 77.92% of major donors in this survey were over the age of 60, the author believes the maturation of age/income – fitting with the Life-Cycle Hypothesis – will bring younger alumni forward to replace older major donors in the coming years. Strategic planning will be important: development offices must identify potential donors now, which is an effort this study sought to inform. A possible flaw is that younger alumni donors (who overall did not participate in this study) may not have the same values for leadership and shared student experience as older alumni, and thus will not be as attracted by, or understand fully, what the military colleges and academies are currently striving to provide. Since the academy and military college experience has not changed dramatically over the past several decades, however, there is no present evidence for such a shift in attitudes and behaviors.

Demographic Characteristics: Proximity to Campus

Donors' ability to attend campus events and to return at least somewhat frequently to campus influenced donor motivation. Based on the interviews, proximity to campus

did impact donor engagement and involvement. Those interviewed said that even though they were engaged with the school despite not residing in the same city, the more they, the donors, frequented the campus, the more their emotional ties to the alma mater increased. This tended to escalate their propensity to give and become involved. However, the way the survey question was presented made it difficult to verify these remarks with the survey responses.   The question included in the survey regarding residency was open-ended and not specific to one particular institution in the survey. The perceived distance between the donor's residence and institution varied, and in one instance, a donor even stated he resided 400 miles away from campus. In that donor's opinion, it was even more important to commit to the travel to and from campus, "I attend as many of the Alumni Boards listed above as I can. Round-trip commute is about 800 miles. In this way I stay well informed."

There is room for additional research around the subject of donor residency, their proximity to their alma mater, and at what level of engagement proximity actually does affect involvement, if it impacts it at all. The survey respondents self-identified that they resided in 22 states, ranging from the east coast to the west coast. The majority of responses identified the top five states as: South Carolina, Virginia, Florida, Texas, and California. The researcher found these results interesting as they lent support to the earlier statement about the need to research involvement and proximity to campus. Such further research would be particularly helpful since this study only included schools that were located in four states (Maryland, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia).

Demographic Characteristics: Donor Age

The research findings from this study regarding donor age were valuable and may be of interest to others pursuing the study of donor motivation within a specific subset of a campus with a unique and focused mission statement. However, the research findings did identify some contradictions when compared to other studies on donor motivation and alumni giving.

Several studies referenced in this research focused on gender and student activities or "experiences." Wannuva and Okunde (2013), Haddad (1986), Clotfelter (2001), and Dvorak and Toubman (2013) all agreed gender was noteworthy. Gaier (2005), Holmes (2009), Clotfelter (2001), and Weerts and Ronca (2009) all concluded that student activities were compelling. This study found meaningful gender disparity amongst the donors at the academies and military colleges: the majority gender was male, although that was expected considering the demographics of the student body (which were all male until the relatively recent admission of women). A similar statement on gender can be made when one studies the patterns and motivations of giving at an all-women's college, for example. The primary gender pool for that donor base would be female. For military colleges, a more revealing question in future research might be to specifically target women graduates and determine whether they give more than male graduates.

Conclusions of Key Findings

While the aforementioned points on campus engagement, age, and career progression appeared to agree with the common sense of the average development practitioner, these research findings firmly established the importance of those attributes and characteristics as they related to inspiring donor motivation. The results of this study showed primarily that confidence in current leadership and the overall college experience (as opposed to individual activities) played substantial roles in the motivation of major donors at military colleges and academies. These findings reinforced the notion that one's choice of attending the school matters, and also the fact that all students went through the same experience and behavior, training, and overall expectations.

Confidence in administrative leadership led, more often than not, to the pattern of giving. The military culture places an even greater level of importance on competent and principled leadership. Effective leadership is more valued by alumni of military colleges and universities than elsewhere. Training at military academies and colleges creates followers who understand the chain of command for authority. Once someone is designated as a leader in a military culture, formally or informally, he or she is trusted by virtue of the position held and by the actions he or she displays. Whereas, other colleges and universities place more value on collaboration and community, military colleges create a leader-follower culture, and a culture where the corps of cadets leads the corps of cadets without much administrative staff intrusion. Before they are taught to lead, students are taught to follow as freshmen. This cultural aspect is unique to military

colleges. Since a culture that emphasizes leadership is more prominent at military colleges than at traditional colleges and universities, trust in the institution's leadership carries greater significance. This conclusion is based on what the author observed in the interviews.

Another observation was how age influenced gift designation and charitable decisions. This was most likely the case because as alumni matured, they learned about integrity and strategic planning and vision in the business world, and applied those experiences to the institutional level in their designated gift-giving. The finding that leadership or extra activities as a cadet were not necessary for a large number of donors provided support for the hypothesis that the senior private was a more well-rounded student than the average college student. He or she went through the academy or military college experience, graduated, and underwent the same set of leadership training and academic and physical training that cadets who chose to become officers did. Reasons are unclear, but it was evident that experiences in school without having rank or leadership positions did not have an adverse effect on the decision to give. Based on these responses, anything that military colleges and academies can do to support the cadet experience is money well worth spending. This includes anything from renovating physical fitness facilities to building barracks to improving the parade grounds, each of which contribute to the students' shared experience and support the institution's stated mission of leadership.

Recommendations for Further Research

There is a need to expand upon the findings of this study. The ability to understand donor motivation on any campus is very important to vitality and in some cases survival of an institution. For schools that have unique missions, such as those represented in this study, an argument could be made that the best way to obtain more complete information is to conduct a study on each individual campus. As has been discovered with this research, donors are willing to respond and openly share with the researcher their candid thoughts and reasons for giving. Alumni are passionate about their alma maters, and the author hoped that any type of feedback or response that they shared would help make a difference at their respective schools.

This was a small study. A more robust survey pool should be the goal for future research. This can be obtained by tweaking the criteria, perhaps by lowering the minimum gift level or including donors who have made financial contributions of any size. The pool for the survey should be doubled for better accuracy. Another factor to aid in a more desirable response pool would be to have all institutions willing to participate in the research. Further research on why non-donors do not give and what motivates them not to give is also needed. Professional staff need to understand why donors who have the discretionary income choose not to donate.

Limitations

The limitations for this study were centered on the number of institutions requested to participate. The number of respondents was too small to actually test statistically. As previously noted, not every academy or military college was willing to participate. However, that factor was somewhat mitigated by their homogeneity and the consequent expectation that any one academy or military college/university was not considerably different from the others.

From the initial and conceptual stage of this survey, the researcher knew it would be critically important to the study that the institutions send out the surveys in order to maintain the integrity and confidentiality of the donor's charitable and personal information. The very nature of this information was such that it was not and should not have been entrusted to the researcher; as those data sets remain proprietary to the institutions. Therefore, the sensitivity to the donor profile made it necessary that partners and colleagues on other campuses sent out the surveys, which meant limited control as to when they went out and how respondents were approached.

The data sets included in the study were specific to military colleges and the academies. The data may or may not be conducive to institutions without a military culture found within a corps of cadets environment, but it is possible that some factors such as student experience, age, donor involvement, and faith in leadership may transcend across all institutions. These factors can be identified or shaped in order to create desired outcomes at other campuses. However, those colleges and universities

with very specific "niche" missions can use the study as an example/model for creating their own studies and for purposes of staff development and strategic approaches to fundraising.

An additional limitation was discovered to be the length of time that elapsed between when the graduates earned their degrees and the current level of involvement at their alma maters. Many respondents and interviewees had been out of college for many years, one interviewee as long as 67 years. Therefore, the respondents may not always have had accurate recall about the nature of their college experiences and how that may have influenced subsequent donor decisions.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study noted that the overall student experience was important to the survey respondents and interviewees. Student affairs professionals in other niche-mission institutions need to continue to find ways to provide homogeneous experiences for students across their campuses. In the military institutions studied, the donors' experiences were not limited to one department or company, but the overall day-to-day lifestyle for each cadet or midshipman. Alumni involvement was found throughout the study to have a direct correlation to giving back to the institution, both in time and charity. It would be worthwhile for alumni affairs professionals to develop programs targeting alumni in order to strengthen their connectivity to the school and keep alumni

engaged as soon as possible post-graduation. More effective efforts to maintain continual

contacts between alumni and the school would bode well for cultivating future major gift

donors.

Alumni and development offices should constantly look for opportunities to

adequately market the administrative leadership of the institution and to build a clear,

favorable, and identifiable institutional brand. The interview findings stressed the

importance of the donors having trust and confidence in the school's leadership as a

factor in their willingness to contribute. Staff should showcase the college's leadership

team and its many accomplishments.   Furthermore, based on the interviews, the

professional staff must remain aware that the administrative leadership and the school's

brand are not necessarily separated, but congruent and critical to moving the institution

forward. The prominence of the institution amongst its peer groups was very important

to donors.

Conclusion

This study addressed a key area in the ever-changing landscape of higher

education philanthropy. As noted in Chapter 1, there is increasing pressure on

institutions to find alternative means for revenue generation on campuses across the

country. The institutions under study are not immune from these pressures, and staff

members are sometimes required to do more with less budgetary resources. There is only

a finite amount of time in a day, and resources available to staff to understand how they will identify and cultivate major gift prospects on their campuses. Professional advancement staff who work to create more robust fields for philanthropic harvest need research findings and prospect tools to help them understand what motivates their most generous contributors. Due to reduced public funding and the inability to increase tuition beyond a certain point, philanthropy plays a pivotal role in the balancing of institutional budgets, adding academic programs, student scholarships, and capital projects. Revenue generation through private support is one of only a few ways for institutions to add resources to the budget's bottom line.

The findings from this study determined several important indicators in relation to major donors. First, trust in the administrative leadership was paramount when understanding why donors were making large gifts, especially for undesignated gifts. The majority of donors in this study (over 80%) have contributed back to the schools for 12 years or more. Donor consistency and retention were indicators of major donor behavior. Cadet leadership experiences did not appear to have a strong effect on donor motivation. In fact, the opposite was true, as almost 33% of the respondents identified themselves as senior privates, and when those who responded *none* were added the response rate went up another 11.5%.

The age and income demographics were also worth noting. The majority of donors indicated their age range either as 60-69 (32.2%), or 70-79 (32.2%). The ranges of income with greatest frequency were $100,000 - $249,999 (31%), $250,000 - $499,999 (31%), followed by $1 million and above (17.7%).

An intended outcome of the study was to share the findings with the professional staff at the schools that participated in this study. Advancement professionals can use this research to shape the school's major gift solicitation strategy and plans in hope of securing future major contributions. With proper planning and a defined strategic approach to major gift solicitations, advancement divisions can save valuable staff time and budgetary resources when there is useful data to ascertain which donors are most likely to give.

The federal service academy in this study (the United States Naval Academy) and its colleagues at the senior military colleges and universities (Norwich University, Virginia Tech University, The Citadel, and Virginia Military Institute) have loyal and unique sets of alumni and donors. There are a multitude of reasons those donors give, and the motivation and characteristics of what formulates those decisions was the impetus behind this study. It is the author's hope that some of the research findings may help the professional staff at these historic institutions serve their campuses and constituents well. In the years ahead the importance of philanthropy will continue to increase on campuses across the United States, and the subject schools must be able to continue to train, develop, and graduate the country's next generation of principled leaders. During his interview with the author, a donor from the class of 1948 shared his feelings about supporting his alma mater in a profound statement. It is fitting to conclude this study with his words: "It is our job to plant the trees, and not worry about who enjoys the shade. It is just that simple."

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APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN RESEARCH
APPROVAL LETTER for EXEMPT REVIEW

This is to certify that the research proposal: **Pro00047888**

Entitled: *Characteristics and Motivation of Major Donors at the Federal Service Academies and Senior Military Colleges*

Submitted by:

Principal Investigator:	John Dowd
College/Department:	Education
	Education Leadership & Policies
	Columbia, SC 29208

was reviewed in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(**2**), the referenced study received an exemption from Human Research Subject Regulations on **8/24/2015**. No further action or Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight is required, as long as the project remains the same. However, the Principal Investigator must inform the Office of Research Compliance of any changes in procedures involving human subjects. Changes to the current research protocol could result in a reclassification of the study and further review by the IRB.

Because this project was determined to be exempt from further IRB oversight, consent document(s), if applicable, are not stamped with an expiration date.

Research related records should be retained for a minimum of three (3) years after termination of the study.

The Office of Research Compliance is an administrative office that supports the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board (USC IRB). If you have questions, contact Arlene McWhorter at arlenem@sc.edu or (803) 777-7095.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Johnson
IRB Manager

University of South Carolina ● 1600 Hampton Street, Suite 414 ● Columbia, South Carolina 29208 ● 803-777-7095
An Equal Opportunity Institution

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Informed Consent Letter

Dear Survey Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study as a part of the requirements for me to obtain my Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policies, College of Education, at the University of South Carolina. I am researching motivations of major benefactors who give to the federal service academies and six senior military colleges/universities. The survey included here should take no more than 20 minutes to complete, with written comments if you choose to provide them.

Risks and Benefits of Participation

Please note you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. Although you may not benefit directly from participating in this study, it is my hope that others in the academic community in general, including the schools under study, will benefit by further understanding what motivates major benefactors to contribute.

Confidentiality

Participation is confidential, and survey results will not include any identifying information about participants. Study information will be kept in a secure and monitored location under my direct supervision. The results of the research study will be published or presented at professional meetings and even shared with the participant schools, but your identity will not be revealed.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You are free not to participate or respond, or to withdraw at any time, for whatever reason, without any consequences. In the event that you do withdraw from this study, the information you have already provided will be treated and kept in a confidential manner. If you wish to speak with me in person, please call or email me as noted below.
This letter is for your own records and no signatures are required. Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research study. I look forward to reviewing the responses. Please begin the study by clicking on the following link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MKD2T65

Sincerely,

John P. Dowd III (Jay)
Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education Administration
Department of Educational Leadership & Policies
College of Education
University of South Carolina
jaydowdsc@gmail.com; 843-206-1874 (cell)
jay.dowd@citadel.edu ; 843.953.7550 (Direct dial, office)

Survey Instrument Used for Academies and Military Colleges
(Adapted from the survey used by Latta, 2010)

Motivation for Giving to Federal Service Academies and Senior Military Colleges

1.   Please identify yourself with one of the following institutions:

___Unites States Military Academy (West Point)   ___Norwich University
___United States Naval Academy   ___The Citadel
___United States Air Force Academy   ___Virginia Military Institute
___Texas A&M University Corp of Cadets
___Virginia Tech University Corp of Cadets
___University of North Georgia Corp of Cadets

2.   Please indicate your affinity and relationship to (institution):

___Alumnus/graduate
___Alumnus/non-graduate
___Friend (defined as never attended)
___Parent
___Other (Please elaborate _____)

3.   If alumni, please enter graduation year _____.

4.   If non grad, please enter years attended _____ to _____.

5.   Identify areas of support and/or initiatives you have given.

___Annual fund appeals   ___Strategic initiatives
___Cadet/midshipman experience appeals   ___Capital projects
___Scholarships (annual or endowed)   ___Faculty support
___Response to a comprehensive campaign ask   ___Endowments

6.   In what form or transaction did you make your gift? Please check all that apply.

___Cash   ___Life Insurance   ___Annuity, Charitable Trusts
___Stocks   ___Gift In- Kind   ___Plans through a will or bequest
___Gifted through a family trust or community foundation

7.   How long have you been a donor to (institution)?

___Less than one year
___1 to 3 years
___4 to 6 years
___7 to 9 years
___10 to 12 years
___More than 12 years

Motivation

8.   As a cadet/midshipman, what was your involvement in terms of cadet leadership?
        Please check all that apply?

___Regimental commander   ___Regimental staff
___Company commander   ___Corp squad/student athlete
___Cadet activities (please specify)
___Senior private
___Religious organizations
___None

9.   Post-graduation or leaving (institution), what has been your engagement at the
        school.   Please check all that apply.

___Leadership role on governing board
___Leadership role on foundation board
___Leadership role on alumni association board
___Leadership role on a school or department advisory board
___Cadet/midshipman mentor
___Development/campaign volunteer
___Other roles (please specify)

10.   If you have made a gift to (institution), what motivated you to act upon the desire to give? Please check all that apply.

___Give back/leave legacy at alma mater
___Desire to train, educate and support members of the corps
___Fill void, loss of public appropriations
___Responsibility to give back
___Recognition by institution
___Peer or reunion class pressure
___Being asked
___Elevate social status
___Strategic tax/estate planning
___Patriotism
___Alumni giving % and maintain position in college/university rankings
___Identified with specific project/appeal

11.   Which professional staff at (institution) most influenced your decision to give and toward the designated gift priority? Please check all that apply.

___President/Superintendent
___Vice President/Provost
___Dean/Department Chair/Faculty
___Board Member/Key Volunteer/Peer
___VP for Development
___CEO/Education Foundation
___Development/Gift Officer
___Athletic Director/Coach
___Other (please specify) _____

12.   What would motivate you to make subsequent gifts to (institution)? Please check all that apply.

___Understanding my gift is an important source of annual operating support
___Knowing how my gift will enhance the quality of education at (institution)
___Recognizing my gift will elevate the status of the institution in peer rankings
___Knowing my request to designate is honored and funds allocated accordingly
___Relationship with the professional staff
___Request being made by the appropriate person, relational and position to school
___Access to a matching gift company
___Persuasive marketing/fundraising materials with an articulated case statement
___Subsequent stewardship and knowledge of how my gift was used
___An increase in personal wealth and discretionary income
___Other (please specify) _____

13.   What are the other reasons or causes not referenced above, that motivate you to contribute? Please make notations.

Stewardship

14.   In what area are you most inclined to respond when asked by (institution) to give?

___Operating support
___Athletics
___Specified academic programs, departments or individual schools
___Endowments
___Capital needs, new construction, expansions and renovations
___Student Scholarships
___None of above
___Other (please specify) _____

15.   How satisfied are you with your ability to designate how your donation to (institution) is being used?

___Very Satisfied
___Somewhat satisfied
___Satisfied
___Somewhat dissatisfied
___Dissatisfied
___Undecided

16.   How satisfied are you with the information received from (institution) regarding the use of your donation?

___Very Satisfied
___Somewhat satisfied
___Satisfied
___Somewhat dissatisfied
___Dissatisfied
___Undecided

17.   How satisfied are you with the decisions (institution) makes for use of its funds?

___Very Satisfied
___Somewhat satisfied
___Satisfied
___Somewhat dissatisfied
___Dissatisfied
___Undecided

18.   How satisfied are you with the recognition and stewardship you receive from (institution) for being a donor?

___Very Satisfied
___Somewhat satisfied
___Satisfied
___Somewhat dissatisfied
___Dissatisfied
___Undecided

19.   Overall, how would you describe your feelings as a donor and your relationship between you and (institution) as a donor?

___Very Satisfied
___Somewhat satisfied
___Satisfied
___Somewhat dissatisfied
___Dissatisfied
___Undecided

Demographics

20.   What is your gender?

___Male
___Female

21.   What is your age?

___20-29   ___40-49   ___60-69   ___80-89
___30-39   ___50-59   ___70-79   ___90 or over

22.   Where do you reside?

City: _____
State: _____
Country: _____

23.   What is the range of your annual household income? Please only select one.

___$25,000 - $49,999   ___$250,000 - $499,999
___$50,000 - $99,999   ___$500,000 - $999,999
___$100,000 - $249,999   ___$ 1 million or more

24.   If contacted, would you be willing to expand on your survey answers with a phone or in person interview?

___ Yes
___ No

25.   Other comments about your donor rationale and experience

Thank you taking the time to complete this important survey. As indicated in my letter, the purpose of the study and this survey is to assist the participant schools in better understanding the motivations and needs of their donors, and ways in which they can help foster the relationship between school and individual. It is my desire that the schools will use these anonymous results to bolster their efforts to become increasingly donor centric so you, our most precious resource of private support, will maintain loyalties and allegiances when asked to answer the call for private support.

APPENDIX C: COLLEAGUE LETTER

Dear _____,

I trust this message finds you well and all well in "subject town" as we enter a new academic year. A new class of 678 cadets matriculated on 15 August, and I anticipate "X" has also just welcomed a new class of eager cadets.

The purpose of my contact is to seek your assistance in completing my Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration and Public Administration from the University of South Carolina – Columbia. I am at a stage in my research that requires me to collect data that I and my doctoral committee consider to be of significance to the field. The scope of my research is narrowly focused, but the implications can be of significant value to our institutions.

We share a unique constituency of alumni. My intent is to determine what motivates the major benefactors at our respective institutions who have been significantly involved at three federal service academies (Air Force, Navy, and West Point) and the corps of cadets at the six senior military colleges and universities (Norwich, the University of North Georgia, Texas A&M, Virginia Tech, Virginia Military Institute, and The Citadel.

In order to complete this research, I respectfully ask you to assist me in distributing the message and survey link below to your benefactors who, in the most recently completed fiscal year, contributed a gift in excess of $25,000. Multi-year pledges and planned gifts may be counted in the query.

Because of the small sample of qualifying military institutions, your participation is extremely important to the statistical validity of the findings. As your colleague, I recognize the vital importance of maintaining the confidentiality of your donors and control of your database.   I assure you that only aggregate data will be reported, and respondents are free to participate anonymously. I ask you to distribute the survey on my behalf so that I have no access to your donors' contact information.

If you have questions or wish to discuss your participation further, please contact me directly at 843-953-7550 or jay.dowd@citadel.edu. If your data administrator has any questions about the nature of the query, please feel free to have him or her contact Kim Rich, Database Administrator for The Citadel Foundation, at 843-953-6829 or krich@citadel.edu, or Jarret Sonta, Director of Communication at The Citadel Foundation, 843-953-6919 or sontaj1@citadel.edu. They will be happy to assist.

My intent is to make it as simple and efficient as possible for your team to assist me in this important research while maintaining your level of confidence in its confidentiality.

Please feel free to edit the message included below as appropriate, include an introductory note, or simply forward in its current form. Again, I want to make it as easy on you as possible.

My commitment to you is to keep you briefed on the responses received and also, once my research is complete, share the results with you and your team.   If you wish to discuss anything regarding my research in greater detail, I am happy to oblige.

Continued best wishes in all of your endeavors. Thank you in advance for your assistance, and I look forward to an opportunity to return the favor one day in the near future. Hope to see you again soon.

Kind regards,

John P. (Jay) Dowd III

▪▪

Dear ___ Alumni and Benefactors,

My counterpart at your alma matter has graciously forwarded this message requesting your assistance with a research project surveying the behavior of key donors to military institutions. The findings may prove to be of significant value to our country's federal service academies and six senior military colleges.

As the Chief Executive Officer of The Citadel Foundation, I work daily with donors like you who passionately support their alma mater, The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina. However, I write to you today as a doctoral candidate completing my Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration and Public Administration from the University of South Carolina – Columbia.

I am at a stage in my research that requires me to collect data that I and my doctoral committee consider to be of significance to the field. The scope of my research is narrowly focused, but the implications can be of significant value to our institutions.

Toward this end, I respectfully request that you take a few moments to complete the survey available here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MKD2T65.

Alumni of our institutions share a unique bond. My intent is to determine what motivates the major benefactors at our respective institutions, those who have been significantly involved at three federal service academies (Air Force, Navy, and West Point) and the corps of cadets at the six senior military colleges and universities (Norwich, the University of North Georgia, Texas A&M, Virginia Military Institute, Virginia Tech, and The Citadel).

Because of the small sample of qualifying military institutions, your participation is extremely important to the statistical validity of the findings. I assure you that only aggregate data will be reported, and you are free to participate anonymously.

Once my research is complete, I will share the results with the participating institutions in the hopes of improving the way we communicate with and steward our most loyal alumni donors.

 Thank you in advance for supporting our unique institutions by participating in this survey.

Kind regards,

John P. (Jay) Dowd III

Interview Protocol for John P. (Jay) Dowd III

Doctoral Candidate, University of South Carolina

Introduction

My name is Jay Dowd, a PhD candidate at the University of South Carolina in Columbia working on completing my dissertation. The research I am working on focuses on what characteristics and motivating factors exist among major donors who are graduates of the federal service academies and the six senior military colleges. This interview should take no longer than an hour to complete. With your permission, I will take notes and also record our conversation in order to capture your responses in full. Please know that each respondent's identity will be kept confidential and not shared unless you wish for me to do so.

Are there any questions you wish to ask of me before we begin? Thank you, and let's get started.

Ice Breakers

Please tell me about you're your family and your educational history.

How did you decide to attend your alma mater?

When did you decide it was important to become involved and invested in your alma mater?

Philanthropic Philosophy toward Alma Mater

1. How would you describe what motivates you when making charitable contributions to your alma mater?
2. What areas are important to you in terms of supporting the institution?
3. How would you describe your involvement and relationship with your alma mater since graduation?
4. How often do you return to campus and why?
5. What experiences; as a cadet, midshipman, or alumnus; led you to believe it was important to give back to your alma mater?
6. How closely do you stay engaged to monitor how your gifts are used and the financial stewardship of your gifts?
7. What are your aspirations for the overall impact of your gift?
8. How important is it for you to leave a legacy at your alma mater?

Conclusion

9. Would you like to make any further comments regarding why you feel it is important to support your alma mater?
10. Are there any items you wish to ask of me regarding this research?

Thank you for your time and interest in this research study.