

THOMAS P. BONNER

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SUMMARY: Forty years of higher education advancement with a proven track record of significantly enhancing programs at three top-tier national liberal arts colleges. Expertise encompasses implementing strategic and innovative communication strategies, recruiting and engaging trustees, effectively coaching and mentoring staff, and cultivating and soliciting principal gift prospects. Successfully led comprehensive capital campaigns, solicited major and planned gifts, fostered alumni relations, and supported college annual funds. Most notably, led teams in six campaigns cumulatively raising over \$1 billion, which included securing \$260 million to fund 20 building projects.

EXPERIENCE:

1998 – 2023 Chief Advancement Officer

Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, 2014-23

carleton.edu

Macalester College, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 2005-14

macalester.edu

Sewanee: The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, 1998-2005

sewanee.edu

Leadership: Consistently recruited, trained, and coached professionals to deliver best-in-practice advancement programs at each college. Scope of responsibilities included communications and marketing, alumni and parent engagement, all aspects of fundraising, board recruitment and engagement, strategic plan implementation, long-range budgeting, and crisis communication management

Fundraising: Achieved significant annual growth in philanthropic revenue receipts during tenure. For Carleton increased gift receipt revenue from \$25 million annually to an average of \$45 million. Provided staff leadership for the *Every Carl for Carleton* campaign, which surpassed the \$400 million goal by raising \$492 million over the six-year campaign period ending in June 2020. The Macalester *Step Forward* campaign raised \$156 million toward a goal of \$150 million. The previous Macalester campaign concluded in 2001 and raised \$55 million. Planned and led the implementation of *The Sewanee Call* campaign, with a public goal of \$180 million—\$111 million raised before the public launch in April 2005.

Directed the successful solicitation of ten eight-figure and over one hundred seven-figure commitments for campaign priorities at the three institutions. Capital projects funded included constructing a music and performing arts building, an integrated science center, five academic buildings, two athletic centers, music and arts commons, studio arts facility, two alumni house renovations, residence hall, a new chapel and a renovation, and an equestrian center.

Engagement: Developed programs to engage alumni, parents and other constituents in fundraising and career advising for students as volunteers. Provided guidance for Board cultivation and solicitation of major gift prospects. Identified and engaged potential new board members through a pipeline program which involved key stakeholders. Supported Board governance committees engaged in communications and development oversight, trustee affairs. Crafted messaging platforms for key volunteer constituencies. Reunion and Homecoming programs that generated record numbers of alumni in attendance for lifelong learning programs and reconnections. Oversaw alumni travel program that consistently provided exceptional educationally oriented adventures. Collaborated with the Schuler Education Foundation to create a young alumni engagement initiative, aiming to boost engagement using market research and seed money for trying new activities within a five-college consortium.

1983-1998 Alumni and Development Positions

Sewanee: The University of the South; Executive Director of Development, Director of Major and Planned Gifts, Director of Planned Giving, and Associate Director of Planned Giving

The University of Southern Mississippi; Associate Director of Development, Planned Giving, Assistant Director of Development, Annual Fund, and Field Representative, Alumni Association

EDUCATION: BSBA, University of Southern Mississippi