

VOLUME 16

# SOLUTION of the MONTH



The newest edition to Pledgimine's Solution Library is an annual fund appeal from Stephen Sullivan and his team at Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas. For over 127 years, HPU has remained committed to its mission of a Christ-centered academic community dedicated to excellence. It emphasizes developing and equipping the whole person for intellectual inquiry, personal and professional integrity, and service to God and humanity. Communicating the needs of the community through various giving options and use of segmentation resulted in a unique, personal, and memorable piece.

Alumni and donors like to know how their donation is helping. HPU leveraged advanced segmentation to create an appealing photo collection and a variety of giving options tailored to each recipient's demographics. Stephen collaborated with Pledgimine's design team

to come up with a truly special End of Calendar Year Appeal template that not only connected with donors visually, but also achieved the important secondary goal of updating HPU's donor database. By creating a truly unique piece, HPU increased their connection with donors on both an emotional and technical level. Congratulations to Stephen and his team at HPU for this innovative new appeal!

The Solution of the Month program continues to highlight creative solutions. Thanks to a rapidly growing and highly innovative community of clients, the Solutions Library has become an indispensable resource for fundraising ideas at more than 350 institutions across the country. In combination with the existing portfolio of exceptional samples, this newest addition to the Solutions Library is designed to inspire your future projects.

## VOLUME 16 SELECTION

HOWARD PAYNE UNIVERSITY



**LEGAL LETTER IN 6X9**

**FLAT: 8.5" x 14"**

**Stock:** White 70# Text Smooth in 6x9 Envelope

# END OF CALENDAR YEAR APPEAL

HOWARD PAYNE UNIVERSITY



## AN INTERVIEW WITH HOWARD PAYNE

STEPHEN SULLIVAN

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS AT HPU

I am the director of development and alumni relations at HPU. I graduated from HPU in 2011 with a BBA and 2014 with my MBA. I began working for HPU as an admissions counselor in 2012. In 2014, I was offered a position in the development office and have been here for three years now. My primary role is annual giving and fundraising for non-campaign related initiatives, including the Annual Fund. When I began, there was not much strategy behind our annual fundraising initiatives other than, "Let's send this appeal – ready? Go!" Pledgimine has exponentially aided me in creating a successful fundraising strategy for our Annual Fund appeals.

**Q** Is this a new design/concept/format or have you used it before?

**A** This design was really kind of a blend between a couple Pledgimine templates and something I scratched down on a legal size sheet of paper. The design team at Pledgimine did an unbelievable job at making this scratchy vision of mine full of different segmentation turn into something absolutely beautiful.

**“ ...it's a relief to be able to send a crazy idea off and have a great looking piece come back**

**Q** Can you share the specific objectives that you had for this campaign?

**A** Overall, my objective was to reach both donors and non-donors in an intriguing way. In the past, our appeals have typically been standard letters asking to support scholarships. The letters were approximately a full page in length and, frankly, quite boring to read. With this particular appeal, I wanted to keep the reading to a minimum and draw the audience's attention to the pictures and the heart of why we are sending this piece to them. The feedback I received from the response cards was incredible; we actually had donors mention how much they enjoyed this piece when they sent in their check.

**Q** What factors influenced your decision to use this format? Any constraints or challenges?

**A** I had a general idea for this appeal in my head, but none of Pledgimine's solutions quite fit my idea. I used two or three of Pledgimine's solutions, then sketched out my idea. Fortunately for me, the design team liked it and agreed to create this specific version. The appeal was able to not only focus on giving, but also included some important announcements we needed to get out to our constituents as well. This ultimately allowed us to combine three mailings into one.

**Q** What was the size of your intended audience? What percent is this of your entire database?

**A** This appeal was sent to a total of 15,000 constituents, which is about 80% of our database.

**Q** Was segmentation an important part of your strategy? How?

**A** Segmentation was a huge part of the strategy. From the second the reader received the piece in the mail, I wanted them to know it was for them, not just a general appeal. The envelope was segmented specifically and the pictures for the piece were segmented to the school from which they graduated.

**Q** Did you achieve your objectives for this mailing? Can you share results to date?

**A** Our objectives for this appeal were two-fold. First, obviously, we wanted the reader to have an emotional connection to HPU and in return, make a gift. Second, we wanted to update our database. The ability to have Pledgimine include the update portion of the response form was just as valuable to us as the money raised through the appeal. To date, we have raised about \$45,000 from this appeal.

**Q** Do you have any other noteworthy insights or conclusions that relate to this campaign?

**A** I have really appreciated the quick turnaround time Pledgimine offers for all aspects of their solutions. As busy as our marketing office is with numerous projects, it's a relief to be able to send a crazy idea off and have a great looking piece come back in a matter of days.