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# FACTORS THAT LEAD MILLENNIAL ALUMNI TO DONATE TO THEIR ALMA MATER

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FACTORS THAT LEAD MILLENNIAL ALUMNI TO DONATE TO THEIR ALMA MATER

by

Robert Andrew Morgan

B.A., Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 1994  
M.S.Ed., Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 1999

A Dissertation  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Administration  
with a Concentration in Higher Education

Department of Educational Administration and Higher Education  
in the Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
May 2014

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DISSERTATION APPROVAL

FACTORS THAT LEAD MILLENNIAL ALUMNI TO DONATE TO THEIR ALMA MATER

By

Robert Andrew Morgan

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

in the field of Educational Administration and Higher Education

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December 9, 2013

## **AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION**

ROBERT ANDREW MORGAN, for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION, presented on DECEMBER 9, 2013, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: FACTORS THAT LEAD MILLENNIAL ALUMNI TO DONATE TO THEIR ALMA MATER

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Saran Donahoo

This study examined the characteristics and predictors of Millennial alumni who donated financially to their alma mater and those who did not by reviewing data from the Alumni Attitude Survey (AAS). The data set was composed of 2,108 Millennial respondents and 1,110 as Generation X respondents. This study can help university foundation and alumni association staff members to determine why their donors, specifically Millennial alumni, give to their institution and how to be more effective in requesting for a financial donation from them. Generating consistent support from alumni and other donors is an economic necessity for postsecondary institutions. As current students graduate, institutions need to know how they can entice these alumni to provide financial support. This dissertation fills the gap in the literature by providing new research on the effect Millennial student involvement has on the likelihood they will become donors to their alma mater.

This dissertation used Astin's (1984) involvement theory as a foundation for the research. The connection that alumni have with their alma maters and the outcome of donations after graduation may stem from the connections that these alumni established while involved in activities as undergraduates. Astin's involvement theory provides some insights into identifying the experiences that help to inspire alumni to donate financially and helps institutions identify and devise new ways of using these experiences to help increase donations. The positive

emotional experiences from undergraduate involvement may be motivation to donate to one's alma mater.

This study identified the involvement characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and predictors of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. This study focused on the potential relationship between involvement and student satisfaction and subsequently, found statistically significant variables that influenced Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater. Specifically, Millennial alumni who were involved in organizations that relate to peer involvement; such as fraternity/sorority involvement, participation in intramural athletics, community service, residence halls participation, and the alma mater providing or encouraging relationships with other students, encouraging the attendance at athletic events, providing student leadership opportunities and providing opportunities to interact with alumni relate to one donating to their alma mater. These variables were statistically significant, but they were also practically significant, meaning that the findings do make a difference in helping to identify factors that lead to Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater.

The findings in this dissertation reiterate the importance of student engagement on the campus. An institution's faculty and staff involvement with undergraduates, specifically those staff who work directly with student organizations, are vital for student engagement that lead to graduation and future donations as an alumnus.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this paper to Connie, Molly, and Ruthie for their encouragement and patience they provided me while pursuing this degree.

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Throughout my career in student affairs, I have been fortunate to have many wonderful mentors who continue to provide me guidance, honest advice, and support.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Need for the Study**

Universities are receiving less funding from their state and federal governments and with the cost for deferred maintenance, growing salaries, and marketing expenses, administrators are looking more towards alumni giving to address their campuses' financial needs (Pulley, 2003). State appropriations for higher education have declined 40% since 1978, and current state investments effort per personal income has dropped \$32.1 billion below the 1980 level (Mortenson, 2004). Beginning in 1979, alumni financial donations became the largest source of private gifts to colleges and universities (Council for Aid to Education, 2005). Since then, alumni donations continue to make up the largest group of donated dollars – more than nonbusiness organizations, religious organizations, business operations, corporate gifts, and foundations (Cook & Lasher, 1994; Snyder & Dillow, 2012). Therefore, it is imperative for colleges and universities to find productive ways to attract alumni donations.

In tough economic times, it is more difficult for alumni to donate to their alma mater. From 2007-2010, colleges and universities saw a decrease in donations (Council for Aid to Education, 2012). For recent college graduates, i.e. Millennial alumni, trying to find work in the recent recession has been difficult. Hence, a recent alumnus' ability to donate to their alma mater is even more difficult. However, some of these recent alumni do donate, but why?

This study will examine the characteristics and predictors of Millennial alumni who gave to their alma maters and those who do not by reviewing data from a national alumni satisfaction survey. Alumni satisfaction relates to an alumnus' experience as an undergraduate; this experience influences one's attitude towards his/her alma mater and any involvement with



his/her alma mater, which may include financial donations (Ikenberry, 2000; Lunardini, 1993). According to a 1994 study by Worth and Asp, there has been little objective research concerning university fundraising. Research in the area of institutional development has increased in the last decade; however, there is a need for additional research to assist institutions of higher education to effectively gain additional funds. Universities and colleges most recent undergraduate alumni and today's traditional aged undergraduate college student include many members of the Millennial generation, those born between 1982 and 2001 (Strauss, 2005). This study can help university foundation and alumni association staff members to determine why their donors, specifically Millennial alumni, give to their institution and how to be more effective in requesting for a financial donation from them. This will give institutional development staff additional data on how to market to their current and potential donors, thus optimistically generating more "bang for their buck" in obtaining fundraising dollars.

### **Problem Statement**

Generating consistent support from alumni and other donors is an economic necessity for postsecondary institutions. As current students graduate, institutions need to know how they can entice these alumni to provide financial support. Yet, the problem is that no existing research examines the factors that lead to undergraduate Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater. While specific institutions have sought to learn more about why their alumni donate to them, this literature makes no effort to examine the larger population of Millennial alumni donors.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and determinants of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. This study focused on the potential

relationship between involvement and student satisfaction and consequently, whether those two elements influenced Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater. This study's intent is to fill the gap in the literature by researching the effect Millennial student involvement has on the likelihood they will become donors to their alma mater.

### **Research Questions**

#### **Research Question One**

What are the demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and undergraduate Millennial alumni nondonors?

#### **Research Question Two**

How do undergraduate Millennial alumni donors compare to nondonors in regards to their undergraduate involvement characteristics?

#### **Research Question Three**

What is the influence of generation on donor status holding demographics, importance, and performance variables constant?

### **Significance of the Study**

American research universities, especially private universities, have grown because of financial gifts often resulting from their success in convincing affluent people to fund new institutions, buildings, and programs rather than relying solely upon tuition dollars or government support (Guzman & Bacevice, 2006). Wealthy persons gathered their fortunes through the free enterprise system of inexpensive labor, low taxes, abundant resources, and lack of government control (Guzman & Bacevice, 2006). Whether motivated by altruism, the desire to establish a legacy, or interest in additional tax relief, the wealthy shared their fortunes by building institutions (Guzman & Bacevice, 2006). Today, donors are more concerned with

outcomes and proof of the progress made with their gifts; donors are becoming equal to government in their wish to control how colleges and universities spend their money.

People give to higher education for many reasons, such as religious, spiritual, or philosophical beliefs, guilt, recognition, self-preservation and fear, tax rewards, obligation, and pride and self-respect. Additionally, alumni donations often stem from a desire to give back to the institution for the education received or based upon increased recognition of the academic benefits provided by the institution (Leslie & Ramey, 1988).

Alumni donations also stem from the skills of the campus' foundation staff. This staff asks for money because they have built and maintained a relationship with their constituents. "Constituency building makes people want to give" (Guzman & Bacevice, 2006, p. 5). The nature of the relationship between the donor and the institution determines the success of the institution in obtaining the charitable donation (Leslie & Ramey, 1988). Kozobarich (2000) reported that "University administration often say that private money makes the difference between adequacy and excellence allowing the university to go above and beyond mere day-to-day operations" (p. 26). Donations are the major source of institutional discretionary funds, which allow for the introduction of innovations, the ability to take risks, and investments into the future (Leslie & Ramey, 1988).

Universities need to find ways to attract more donors. Development and/or advancement offices need to have a plan in order to raise external funds. This includes "developing a message, setting priorities, managing prospects, organizing the fundraising program, and carrying out the plan" (Guzman & Bacevice, 2006, p. 7). The role of campus fundraising professionals is to raise money for the campus; this starts with communicating and developing relationships with alumni by connecting the alumni to their alma mater (Leslie & Ramey, 1988),

in addition to communicating and developing relationships with external agencies (Kozobarich, 2000). The ability to develop relationships is an important characteristic for development professionals. It is important for these professionals to have integrity, honesty, commitment, intelligence, and an outgoing personality (Kelly, 1998). It is also imperative for these professionals to acknowledge the importance of nurturing people with the greatest probability of donating a major gift differently from the consistent, but average donor (Melchiori, 1988). “Donors and nondonors have different relationships with their alma mater and, therefore, are expected to be treated in a more individual manner” (Taylor & Martin, 1995, p. 5). Alumni donors are likely to continue their donations through the years once they start donating (Eldridge, 1964). Being aware of the relationship between alumni and the alma mater is important in creating a successful fundraising campaign (Leslie & Ramey, 1988). This relationship is about more than just being a graduate of the institution, but rather the relationship that the alumnus had with the institution while a student. To understand the relationship between the alumnus and their college alma mater, student development theory was explored.

### **Student Development Theory**

The connection that alumni have with their alma maters and the outcome of donations after graduation may stem from the connections that these individuals established with their institutions while enrolled as students. Either all or in part, this connection may result from undergraduate involvement and activities during enrollment years (Astin, 1996; Johnson & Eckel, 1998; Lunardini, 1993; Pascarella, 1989). To that end, student development theory may provide some insights into identifying the experiences that help to inspire alumni giving and help institutions to pinpoint and devise new ways of using these experiences to help increase donations. This study focused on the involvement theory developed by Astin (1984).

In his theory of involvement, Astin (1984) states that the more students are involved academically and socially in college, the more their learning increases. Students who are involved devote significant energy to academics, spend time on campus, participate actively in student organizations and activities, and interact often with faculty. On the other hand, uninvolved students neglect their studies, spend little time on campus, abstain from extracurricular activities, and rarely initiate contact with faculty or other students (Astin, 1984). Notably, the most influential types of involvement are "academic involvement, involvement with faculty, and involvement with student peer groups" (Astin, 1996, p. 126). In addition, Pascarella (1989) found that there is a strong correlation between the level of student involvement in interpersonal activities and the positive outcome of intellectual skill development. Outside and inside the classroom experiences are both sources of these positive outcomes. "These experiences may have a significant impact on future 'motivation to give'" (Thomas & Smart, 2005, p. 5). Additionally, "graduates who had a rewarding undergraduate experience may feel more connected to their alma mater, become more involved, and contribute financially when able. Conversely, students who had an unsatisfying experience may not stay connected, act as ambassadors, or assist their institutions when possible" (Johnson & Eckel, 1998, p. 229). Lunardini (1993) concluded that there is a link between undergraduate extracurricular involvement while a student and the support they provide while an alumnus. Therefore, these positive emotional experiences as an undergraduate may be a motivation to donate to their alma mater.

Institutions need to continue to encourage involvement outside the classroom to increase student and alumni satisfaction. Alumni tend to perceive their involvement in extracurricular activities in college as related to gaining the skills necessary for success in the job market

(Bisconti & Kessler, 1980). By participating in college activities, students develop interpersonal and leadership skills, which they perceive as being beneficial in their careers and which others view as signs of managerial ability. There is also a correlation between involvement in extracurricular activities and job earnings, particularly when individuals held leadership positions in their respective undergraduate organizations (Calhoun & Reddy, 1968). Educational attainment and undergraduate extracurricular activity are also positively related. Participation in social activities increases a student's social integration and interpersonal bonds with an institution. In turn, this integration increases the likelihood of persistence (Tinto, 1975, 1987).

Specific undergraduate involvement relates to more involvement as an alumnus. Alumni support to institutions is related to fraternity involvement, housing status, use of student life resources, extracurricular activity, and religious and parental involvement (Ikenberry, 2000; Johnson & Eckel, 1998; Lunardini, 1993). Prior research has shown that this involvement and interaction as an undergraduate continues as an alumnus (Okunade, Wunnava, & Walsh, 1994; Weerts & Ronca, 2009). In order for institutions to successfully raise funds, they must continue to develop a relationship with the government, but also develop and maintain strong institutional bonds with their alumni.

### **Government Funding in Education**

Higher education funding across the United States is in a crisis with a significant increase in costs for students and their families (Benjamin & Carroll, 1997). Because of growing costs, universities risk “an erosion of public trust” if tuition and fee prices continue to increase at current rates and that federal action could change the landscape, including termination of research, programs, federal dollars, and scholarships if colleges and universities fail to be more fiscally responsible (National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education, 1998). In order for

institutions to be competitive, their costs must be low; donations from alumni can help to lower their costs.

Institutions are becoming increasingly independent from their states because of a decline in state funding, but this is also happening to departments that are seeing less funding from the university, and are thus more dependent on donations. Fundraising within higher education has significantly increased because of less state and federal funding and rising costs of student services and operations (Miller, Newman, & Seagren, 1994). Institutions have turned to their “community,” their alumni, and friends, to help with their funding issues. It is important for institutions to understand how to encourage these persons to donate, but first institutions need to understand why people donate to non-for-profits and institutions of higher education.

### **Why People Donate**

People will “support philanthropic organizations because they fill a void or promise to solve a problem for an individual” (Miller, Newman, & Seagren, 1994, pp. 7-8). Ironically, individual giving increases when there are large social needs and economic conditions are poor (Leslie & Ramey, 1988). Higher education may use this knowledge to encourage alumni and non-alumni to donate when there are shortfalls in state support (Leslie & Ramey, 1988). However, corporate giving increases when economic conditions are more favorable. “Giving is not always spurred solely by feelings of goodwill or altruism, but can be inspired by the availability of resources” (Miller, Newman, & Seagren, 1994, p. 8). What does this mean or suggest related to cultivating donations to postsecondary institutions?

In order for institutions of higher education to be more productive fundraisers, they need to build a model to “predict” fundraising effectiveness and then introduce an institution’s variable values (Leslie & Ramey, 1988). Successful fundraisers build fundraising traditions

through tried and true tactics. Leslie and Ramey (1988) noted that institutional actions influence donor behavior. People want to give to flourishing institutions that are targets of public largess, although alumni respond to a perception of institution need.

Public higher education is becoming more similar to private institutions (Miles & Miller, 2000). This trend has bearing on alumni relations and fundraising programs. Dependence on “fund raising gives rise to the institutional span of control consideration between alumni affairs and fund raising officers” (Miles & Miller, 2000, p. 4). Development offices depend on their staff to raise these funds, while administrators in alumni affairs depend on attention to the management of volunteers to assist in raising these funds.

### **Delimitations**

This study examines the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors in the United States, and seeks to determine whether their levels of undergraduate involvement is predictive of their donor status. This study does not focus on the alumnus’ future giving plans, but rather their past behavior. The dichotomous variable is the donor status; either donor or nondonor.

### **Limitations**

This study’s data is limited to that provided by the Performance Enhancement Group’s (PEG) Alumni Attitude Survey (AAS), a survey instrument developed by the PEG. Another limitation is that only institutions that hire PEG to survey their alumni will have data accessible for this study. The AAS is a web-based survey sent to university alumni via email. Participating universities provide alumni email addresses to PEG; therefore, only a specific population of alumni who have active or correct email addresses with the university have the opportunity to contribute data. Additionally, electronic surveys often have lower response rates than paper-



based surveys. Universities that use the AAS have an average response rate of 18% with an average response rate range of 10% to 35%. Furthermore, other research indicates that in the area of alumni giving, donors respond to surveys at a higher rate than nondonors (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2008). Moreover, the data provided does not include the amount a donor gave to their alma mater. Another limitation is that PEG does not include information regarding the degrees earned or majors studied by the alumni, thus situating all Millennial alumni into one combined dataset. Lastly, in the AAS survey, respondents have the option to answer “Other” on some survey questions. This study chose not to use that response since a free form answer is very difficult to categorize in the data analysis. According to PEG, there are very few of these responses.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

#### **Alma Mater**

The college or university from which one has graduated (Binkley, 2012).

#### **Alumnus/Alumni**

An alumnus is an individual who completed a course of study that led to an earned undergraduate degree at a United States college or university. Alumnus is the singular masculine form of alumni and is used to refer to an individual (Baker, 2004). The term “alumni” is used as the plural form of alumnus (Binkley, 2012).

#### **Alumni Association**

An organization on a college or university campus that employs staff to network and communicate with their alumni in regards to programs, socials, reunions, etc. specifically for their campus’ alumni.

**Donor**

An alumnus who has given financially to their alma mater at least once (Binkley, 2012).

**Foundation**

A college or university department that works with donors and potential donors on raising funds for the campus.

**Fundraising**

The act of soliciting monies for a particular cause, activity, or organization. This is often called development (Binkley, 2012).

**Generation X**

A person who is born between 1961 and 1981 during Generation X (Strauss, 2005).

**Institutional Advancement**

A college or university's department that works with alumni, donors, and potential donors to benefit the campus. This department is usually composed of the campus' alumni association and foundation.

**Millennial**

A person who is born between 1982 and 2001 during the Millennial Generation (Strauss, 2005).

**Nondonor**

An alumnus who has never given financially to their alma mater (Binkley, 2012).

**Student Involvement**

Participation as an undergraduate student in a student organization or activity that is formally recognized by the college or university, on either a social or an academic level (Baker, 2004).

**Undergraduate**

Denotes when a degree, person, program, or school relates education received beyond high school; ones first tertiary degree or a post-secondary degree (Binkley, 2012).

**Summary**

The purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and predictors of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. This study focused on the potential relationship between involvement and student satisfaction and consequently whether those two elements influenced Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater.

Chapter 2, the Literature Review, details studies that investigated why donors give to institutions of higher education. It also provides research on the Millennial generation and their philanthropic and service characteristics. Since there are a limited number of qualitative studies, most of these studies reviewed are quantitative studies. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology employed in this research project. This section includes an overview of the Alumni Attitude Survey developed by the Performance Enhancement Group. This chapter will also outline the data set, parameters, and statistical methods that applied to the data obtained from PEG. Chapter 4 presents the findings from each of the three research questions for this dissertation. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the major research findings from this study, suggestions for future research, and conclusions from this study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Fundraising for higher education was once thought to only be for private institutions, but fundraising in public education has become accepted and the norm (Brittingham & Pezzullo, 1990). “Flat or declining government support, coupled with higher demand for financial aid, means colleges and universities must rely on philanthropy if they are to remain healthy and viable” (WealthEngine, 2012, p. V). Institutions are now dependent on these fundraised dollars and this is even more evident due to the continual increase in public scrutiny of the cost of higher education (Mann, 2007). For over two decades, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* has documented the top 400 philanthropic organizations and in 2010, they saw the worst decline (Barton & Hall, 2010). Alumni should have a close affinity to their alma mater since it was their home for several years. Therefore, understanding what motivates an alumnus to donate to their alma mater is essential in today’s economic times.

Focusing on existing literature, this chapter presents data on giving, why colleges need donations, and the age of donors. The chapter then moves into the area of the psychology of donating by focusing on happiness, guilt, and how donors are taught to donate. An overview of different strategies on how institutions use the knowledge of their alumni to ask for donations and why alumni want to donate to successful organizations is then presented. This chapter concludes with studies on Millennial students and the role of the college with these students, these students reasons for donating their time and service because of feelings of selfishness, and then ending with Millennial students ability to donate to their alma mater.

### **Data on Giving: Figures**

Charitable giving is a \$290 billion industry in the U.S. (Giving USA Foundation, 2011). The Gallup Organization's Independent Sector has found that on average, 70% of Americans donate to charity annually and on average donate about two percent of their income to these charities (Cnaan, Jones, Dickin, & Salomon, 2010). In the U.S., there are 1.6 million nonprofit organizations (Roeger, Blackwood, & Pettijohn, 2011) compared to 12,000 in 1940 (Boris, 1999); therefore, there is more competition for donations from these organizations (Venable, Rose, Bush, & Gilbert, 2005). During times of institutional need and when economic times are poor, campuses have found individuals are more likely to donate, unlike corporate giving which correlates positively with economic conditions (Brittingham & Pezzullo, 1990; Leslie & Ramey, 1988). In 2011, while our country was still in a recession, individuals accounted for 75 percent of charitable giving in the U.S., compared to foundations at 14 percent, estates at six percent, and corporations at 5 percent (Nonprofit Research Collaborative, 2011). The Giving USA Foundation (2011) estimates that total charitable donations have increased in current dollars every year since 1954, the year they began following charitable donations, except for 1987, 2008, and 2009. Nationally in 2011, alumni donations rose 9.9%; these institutional donations account for 26% of the donations received (Council for Aid to Education, 2012). Americans continue to give to charity regardless of intervals of economic stress because it is a central part of the American society (Giving USA Foundation, 2011).

### **Data on Giving: Why Colleges Need Money**

One hundred years ago, higher education was a state's valued treasure, even though only the privileged attended. Today, even with significant increases in the number of students going to college, public funding to higher education continues to decrease and there is too much

institutional dependence on tuition and fee revenue (Smith M. F., 2004). Throughout the college campus, departments are competing for the same alumni dollars, specifically with athletic departments who have become more competitive and aggressive for these dollars (Sun, Hoffman, & Grady, 2007). Colleges are growing more competitive for students and want the best facilities for the best and brightest students to ensure academic quality. This is costing more and more, but government funding continues to decline. Only with the support from financial donations, can these institutions build new facilities, attract excellent faculty and students, and implement programs.

Today, higher education is in reach to almost everyone, but “states are devaluing their systems and relying much more on independent funding” (Smith M. F., 2004, p. 35). Most state elected officials view financial support for higher education as discretionary and higher education can find other forms of income, such as monies from tuition, fees, and donations, which is not an option for other state services (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2010). Seventy-five percent of all U.S. college students attend a public institution (Douglass, 2010), but state appropriations per state college student in fiscal year 2009 (in constant dollars) were lower than 1980 levels (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2010). In recent years, there has been a recession and “state funding for higher education is heavily influenced by the states’ fiscal situation” (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2010, p. 1). In a speech Robert Reich, former U.S. Secretary of Labor, said, “Long term solution is to give more people access to education and training. Although education is the answer, government is making cuts” (Masterson, 2009b, para. 20). More people are choosing to continue their education rather than enter the workforce since there is a shortage of jobs (Douglass, 2010). However, public higher education resources are inadequate, thus universities are increasing their tuition costs, which is

increasing the proportion that students and their families have to pay for their higher education (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2010). “States have very limited ability to borrow funds for operating costs” (Douglass, 2010, p. 25). Consequently, institutions have to raise the cost of tuition and fees and/or raise donations to offset the reduction in revenue from the state.

In a global economy, a strong education system is needed. However, in the U.S., degree attainment rates have remained stagnant. Conversely, in Europe, degree attainment rates have steadily increased and the U.S. does not even rank in the top ten of degree attainment among the thirty-four member countries in research provided by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Douglass, 2010). Conversely, “most nations are not restoring to uncoordinated and reactionary cutting of funding, and reductions in access, that we see in the US. Their political leaders see higher education as a key to both short-term economic recovery and long-term competitiveness” (Douglass, 2010, p. 3). Additionally, the United States has insufficiencies in attracting non-U.S. citizens because of some of the high tuition fees and little financial aid for international talent (Douglass, 2010). By 2020, the U.S. may have a shortage of 14 million workers with college-level skills and over 70 percent of the thirty most rapid growing career fields entail some postsecondary education (Douglass, 2010). However, “two-thirds of young adults from poor families do not get a college education and about half of all students who enroll in a bachelor’s degree program do not get their degree by the age of 29” (Douglass, 2010, p. 4). Essentially, the declines in government funding for higher education not only hurt institutions in the present, but lay the foundation for lasting negative economic consequences for the nation as a whole.

As college tuition has increased, the proportion of alumni donating has gone down (Langley, 2010). Due to heavy tuition costs, donations by every age group under age 65 and

specifically with the young have decreased. The biggest challenge for any charitable organization is attracting and retaining donors while government support decreases with increase competition for these dollars from other charitable organizations (Webb, Green, & Brashear, 2000). In 2010, for every \$5.35 in donations raised by organizations, \$5.54 was lost through attrition, which equals a negative 1.9 percent growth-in-giving ratio (Fundraising Effectiveness Project, 2011). However, there was a 1.7 percent gain in the total number of new and recaptured donors. Regardless, only one out of ten alumni donates annually to their alma mater (Langley, 2010). The bad economy in 2009 led to “steady drop in alumni participation...alumni are (colleges) largest source of contributions and their donations make up a quarter of total giving” (Masterson, 2010b, p. 3). “A generation of alumni has been, and will continue to be philanthropically constrained by tuition bills already paid” (Langley, 2010, para. 4). This suggests that the cost of paying student loans long after alumni have finished their degrees may limit the ability to today’s college students to donate to their alma mater.

In order for the United States to continue to compete globally, more funding toward higher education needs to occur. With rising tuition costs, less government funding, and global competition, our citizens cannot afford to receive the education that our country needs in order to remain competitive. If the government is not willing to put more funding towards higher education and families cannot afford rising tuition costs, donations to higher education are the best alternative to make higher education more affordable. Nevertheless, who are these donors and why do they give?



### **Data on Giving: Donor's Age**

A donor's age is a major determining factor in donating to the institution. Okunade, Wunnava, and Walsh (1994) concluded that graduation year is the most significant predictor of alumni donation. Olsen, Smith, and Wunnava (1989) found that growth rate of donation coincided with the donor's age-income profile, which reinforced work by Bruggink and Siddiqui (1995) who studied alumni from a liberal arts college and found an increase of five percent in donations for every one year increase in age. Okunade and Berl (1997) also found that alumni giving increased with age, but not at a decreasing rate. Using age as a substitute for graduation year "supported generalization older alumni have higher net worth and large capacity for charitable giving. Younger alumni...with less income and possible student loan debt may be less generous to their alma mater than otherwise might be" (Sun, Hoffman, & Grady, 2007, p. 328). This student loan debt may hinder their donation even though, according to Langley (2010), young alumni feel more emotionally attached to their alma mater as compared to older alumni.

The youngest alumni who donate are contributing a larger percentage of their total charitable giving to their alma mater than older alumni are. However, even the younger alumni's loyalty will diminish over time if their institution positions a fundraiser or an annual-fund appeal (Langley, 2010).

Once the young alumni student loan debt is paid-off, and he or she has more ability to donate, the emotional attachment has decreased, which therefore reduces the alumni's desire to donate. Once alumni reach their peak earning years, there is increased competition from other fundraisers asking for donations, which decreases the chances of an alumnus donating to their alma mater (Langley, 2010; Okunade et al., 1994).

## **Psychology of Donating: Happiness**

We know little about donor attitudes (Webb, Green, & Brashear, 2000), but several studies tie giving to reported states of happiness (Harbaugh, Mayr, & Burghart, 2007). People who have feelings of indifference, shame, or hostility toward their undergraduate institutions are less likely to donate than those who do not have these feelings (Seymour, 1988). “In the campus setting, it is argued that an individual’s experience while attending college creates a special sense of obligation that results in a donation being made to their alma mater” (Mann, 2007, p. 36). If alumni were satisfied with their previous student experience, they were more likely to donate (Marr, Mullin, & Siegfried, 2005; Sun, Hoffman, & Grady, 2007). An alumnus’ “emotional attachment” to their alma mater was a significant predictor of giving (Beeler, 1982; Gardner, 1975; Shadoian, 1989). This attachment may come from inside or outside the classroom experiences, thus “satisfaction with the educational experience” was found to have significant relationship to donor status (Oglesby, 1991; Shadoian, 1989; Tsao & Coll, 2005) as well as “satisfaction with the undergraduate experience” (Van Horn, 2002). This is consistent with other findings from Shadoian (1989) and Oglesby (1991). Sun, Hoffman, and Grady (2007), (Miracle, 1977), (Grill, 1988), and Taylor and Martin (1995) all found significant differences between donors and nondonors relating to alumni experience. Sun, Hoffman, and Grady (2007) defined a happy collegiate experience as “students who were satisfied with their academic experience, and who believe their college education contributed to their career success are more involved to give as alumni than those with less favorable feelings beliefs” (p. 308). This sense of happiness or pride of association is vital to motivate others to support a group or cause (Seymour, 1988). Alumni participation serves as an important measure of support. Alumni participation measures the number of donations the institution receives, regardless of the amount. This number is an

indicator that alumni are happy with their alma mater, which suggests that the institution offers both a good education and a good student experience (Engagement Strategies Group, 2010).

Good alumni participation rates attract better students, staff, and faculty and university fundraisers are asked to solicit new donors and are factored into the widely followed *U.S. News & World Report College Rankings* (Education Insider, 2010).

Even years after graduation, alumni happiness, and pride remain vital to their potential donation. Bresciani, Bump, and Heffernan (2010) suggest that college campuses should focus on soliciting individual donations around events that remind alumni of their positive experience as an undergraduate student. These shared-interest reunions provide for possible volunteer opportunities for alumni that can lead to donations to the institution (Masterson, 2009a). These social activities may strengthen this group and large donors can solicit donations from within this group (Harbaugh, The prestige motive for making charitable transfers, 1998). This emotional attachment is essential in creating a donor.

Current undergraduate student organization members can potentially bring donors to the table for student affairs. These potential donors' maybe former members of the organization. They may become donors largely because out of classroom experiences form the fabric for many of the fondest collegiate memories. Current students vividly remind potential donors of those memories and inspire them to make gifts (Bresciani, Bump, & Heffernan, 2010).

After graduation, institutions must also treat their target donors well by making their alumni happy. Alumni who believe that their alma mater treated them well are more likely to donate than alumni without similar beliefs. This feeling of happiness can open up communications lines between the alumnus and their alma mater; this can help university alumni

associations identify services that can improve alumni relationships with the alma mater (Sun, Hoffman, & Grady, 2007).

Being associated with something that is doing well can also bring one happiness (Bartling, 1999), such as pride in their alma mater. If their alma mater is doing well, then people may associate them as doing well too. Mael and Ashforth (1992) demonstrate the impact of alumni perceptions of organizational prestige, distinctiveness, and competitive excellence on alumni giving. Those individuals who identified strongly with their alma mater and viewed it as being prestigious, distinctive, and competitive as compared to other higher education institutions were more likely to make gifts to their alma mater. The prestige effect has a substantial influence on donations. A donor's gift relates to the perceived value and service quality of the organization (Brittingham & Pezzullo, 1990; Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996). Some alumni may donate to show others they are successful (Harbaugh, 1998). Therefore, institutions should publish who donates to the institution and their level of giving. Cooter and Broughman (2005) concluded that more alumni would donate if others observed their level of giving. "Behavioral studies find that contribution levels are twice as high when donations can be observed as compared to complete anonymity" (Cooter & Broughman, 2005, p. 6). When one's donation is anonymous and unobservable by others, one makes a smaller donation than when others observe the behavior (Cooter & Broughman, 2005). There is a benefit for a donor when other people know the donor has given to a charity; therefore, it is important that charities promote these donors; it is in their control (Harbaugh, The prestige motive for making charitable transfers, 1998). This is why large anonymous donations are rare and why university buildings are named after donors (Harbaugh, The prestige motive for making charitable transfers, 1998). Donors who give large amounts would be more likely to list themselves than those who donate a

little. The public will assume those who are not on the donation list do not donate large amounts. This peer pressure will help to increase donations in both size and frequency (Cooter & Broughman, 2005).

It is important that donors be recognized in front of their peers for their donation. This can be done through institution's alumni relations programs. The donors' strong dedication to the institution allows the donor "to feel they are doing something worthwhile and that the recipient recognizes their efforts" (Momin, 2003, p. 10). This creates peer pressure for others to donate when their respected friends and colleagues have made a donation (Bresciani, Bump, & Heffernan, 2010). Because of this peer pressure there is a greater chance that others will donate when their respected friends and colleagues make a donation. The logic here is that if alumni find a champion to tell how much they donated then others will strive to do the same because they are expected to do so (Bartling, 1999).

Other characteristics also help to promote alumni giving. Harrison, Mitchell, and Peterson (1995) conducted a study using data spanning three years and 18 universities – both private and public, research and teaching, and large and small – to model alumni giving. They found that annual bequests are strongly positively related to donations and schools with higher participation in fraternities and sororities, but schools with a large part-time population have lower donations. Lindemann (1983) reported emotional attachment and loyalty emerge as two main characteristics that motivate donors to make gifts to their respective alma maters. This identification with an alumnus's alma mater might explain the connection between institutional loyalty, emotional attachment, and alumni giving. In research completed by Bhattacharya, Hayagreeva, and Glynn (1995), they determined that alumni who were actively involved as undergraduates, such as being a member of a fraternity or sorority or athletic team, may develop

a strong bond to their alma mater and have an increased tendency to donate financially.

Bruggink and Siddiqui (1995) also support the claim that giving is positively associated with undergraduate involvement in a fraternity/sorority and regardless if the fraternity/sorority is still on campus. In Ikenberry's 2000 study on Penn State alumni, the researcher found alumni who were more involved as students were more involved as alumni through alumni activities, joining alumni organizations, responding to alumni questionnaires, and making annual donations compared to alumni who were not as involved in campus organizations. Baker (2004) examined potential relationship between student involvement and satisfaction with alumni involvement at Central Florida University by reviewing data from the Alumni Attitude Survey for the institution. Baker found statistically significant relationship between student involvement and satisfaction with college experience and involvement as an alumnus. Additionally, financial support was another form of alumni involvement and almost half of the respondents indicated they were current donors and would continue to support the university in the future.

Existing research suggests that institutions may receive larger donations by publishing the list of those who provide financial support, involving alumni to help with fundraising efforts by serving as spokespersons for campaigns, and working to ensure that alumni have good experiences at and positive feelings toward the institution so that they will want to donate. Institutions need to build on the happy experiences of their students, specifically with those who were involved, while they are alumni to increase the likelihood that they will donate to their alma mater.

### **Psychology of Donating: Guilt**

In addition to happiness, another emotion associated with alumni giving is guilt. Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000) noted three attitudes toward helping others: altruistic motivation,

empathy, and negative state relief. People do not donate because they are less altruistic than donors are (Kottasz, 2004). Some donors give because of a sense of guilt, “doing for others what those who preceded you have done for you” (Bartling, 1999, p. 56). People donate because it is making a donation that helps an individual’s self-esteem by giving the individual public recognition, and through the gratification of conveying gratitude for an individual’s own well-being and relief to feelings of guilt and obligation (Hibbert & Horne, 1996). This sense of guilt can result from not donating to the fundraiser, especially when they are face-to-face with the fundraiser (Bell, 2009). People will donate in order to please oneself or to avoid pain, therefore, “Egoistic motivation has the ultimate goal of increasing a person’s own welfare by gaining rewards for helping or avoiding punishment for not helping” (Kottasz, 2004, p. 12). However, some people do donate because it is motivation for altruism, or helping others (Hibbert & Horne, 1996). “Altruistic motivation...has the ultimate goal of enhancing the welfare of the needy even at the expense of a person’s own interest” (Kottasz, 2004, p. 13). Altruistic motivation results from empathy (Hoffman, 1981; Simmons, 1991).

Similarly, Kottasz (2003) concluded that people with empathetic predispositions are more likely to donate to charity. Empathy is “an other-oriented emotional response congruent with the perceived welfare of another person [which] can evoke motivation to help that person” (Batson, et al., 1988, p. 52). The negative state relief researched by Cialdini, Baumann, and Kenrick (1981) concludes that an egoistic motive of a person’s need or desire to relieve personal distress elicited by observing another’s suffering motivates helping behavior. This helping behavior can be in the form of a financial donation.

An intrinsic benefit is the donors own knowledge that he/she has given; this is an internal feeling that the charity cannot control (Harbaugh, The prestige motive for making charitable

transfers, 1998). People donate because the motivation to donate stems from anticipation of intrinsic beliefs since one feels better after giving (Hibbert & Horne, 1996). This feeling relates to empathy and the positive feeling it gives oneself after helping another person. This sense of giving to others is taught.

### **Psychology of Donating: Taught**

Charitable giving can be taught from one generation to another and each generation develops their giving based on the cultural events they experience (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2005). People donate because it is a behavior learned from socialization (Hibbert & Horne, 1996). Donors may donate because it is what their families taught them. One donates because it is passed-down from generation to generation; it is taught and molded from one's family (Bartling, 1999) and becomes a personal value. This personal value partially explains donor behavior (Kottasz, 2004).

Alumni who received need-based student loans while in college were less likely to donate to their alma mater compared to those who received merit-based scholarships (Marr, Mullin, & Siegfried, 2005). A Millennial's parental income had a significant favorable effect on alumni donations (Marr, Mullin, & Siegfried, 2005). Millennial alumni's charitable donations can be cultivated by their alma mater, but giving among students is "positively correlated with the giving behavior of parents" (Catapano, 2005, p. 33); this reinforces the theory that donating is taught.

### **Strategy: Knowledge**

Getting to know potential donors is critical for colleges and universities to be successful in their fundraising efforts (Bresciani, Bump, & Heffernan, 2010). Sun et al. (2007) suggested that fundraisers might advance their capability to differentiate alumni donors from nondonors



and focus on likely donors in their fundraising endeavors and “fundraising is generally regarded as relationship marketing” (p. 310). Knowing whom to ask, knowing the potential donor, and how to make the request is crucial. The number one reason why people donate time and money to charity is that someone asked them to give (Independent Sector, 1999). Universities need to ask for the gift; they cannot assume people will donate (Bartling, 1999). However, “strong working relationships with potential donors is critical and sponsors, infectious enthusiasm for your programs and a compelling case for funding, you may never actually have to ask for sponsorship funds” (Bresciani, Bump, & Heffernan, 2010, p. 25). Strong relationships are based on good communication; therefore, when asking for the donation, researchers argue that it is important to do more listening than talking (Bartling, 1999). According to Tsao and Coll’s (2005), the more alumni are in communication with the academic program and its faculty, and “the more often they are asked to get involved with the program, the higher their intent to make donations” (p. 388). Asking for a donation is a process, not just a one-time or incidental contact.

Knowing the potential donor is critical, so know how much of a donation to ask for and do not ask for too little since the potential donor can always go with a lower donation amount. Charities need to influence non-traditional donors to give, especially those with highest ability for large donations (Kottasz, 2004). Obviously, “higher income earners donate more generously” (Kottasz, 2004, p. 11). There is a high correlation rate between alumni wealth and their donations to their alma mater (Sun, Hoffman, & Grady, 2007). Wealth is associated with jobs that require education and are professional and managerial in nature (Kottasz, 2004). People give more when it is cheap to give and when their income is large (Vesterlund, 2006). Traditionally, individuals earn higher incomes after decades of experience. Bristol (1990) found that the number of years between graduation and onset of giving had a substantial effect on the

magnitude of alumni giving. Bristol (1990) concluded that participant rate in alumni increases with age. However, it is also important to legitimize small donations, make it acceptable so potential donor will not be embarrassed with donating small amount when that may be the only amount they can afford (Bell, 2009).

### **Strategy: Organization Success**

If the institution has success or failure, the alumnus who is connected with the alma mater will feel it as well (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Individuals donate to successful institutional programs (Bresciani, Bump, & Heffernan, 2010). People want to be associated with something doing well - a winner, not something that is dying or losing (Bartling, 1999). Herzlinger (1996) identified ineffective organization and inefficient organizations as problems with charities gaining donations. The institution has the most control over this one variable. "Donors favor organizations with strong staff management, under the theory that a strong staff will attract a strong board, which will attract big bucks" (Bartling, 1999, p. 58). Additionally, the institution's image maybe the "single most critical element of its promotional program, because it may determine whether the first step of the helping decision process-perception of need is initiated" (Bendapudi, Singh, & Bendapudi, 1996, p. 37). Institutions that are well known and well established are the more likely to receive donations (Kottasz, 2004). Organization is the focus in services and nonprofit marketing. Indeed, a vital part in creating brand equity is the development of a strong organization identity (Venable, Rose, Bush, & Gilbert, 2005). This strong identity helps to create and maintain the positive image that institutions need to help drive alumni donations.

The success of the institution's fundraising has a direct relationship to the institution's fundraising staff and how effective they are in attracting donors. An effective staff will communicate to potential donors how their donation is going toward solutions; this is more important than donating toward needs (Bartling, 1999). It is important that the fundraising staff explain the cause for donation because potential donors will only donate to the institution because they believe in the cause (Hibbert & Horne, 1996). The institution needs to provide cause value, meaning the main work of the philanthropic organization, and service value, meaning what the organization does for the donor (Kottasz, 2004). Donors give because of the economy and execution of the fundraising plan (Masterson, 2010a). Therefore, an effective plan has the institution's fundraisers finding cost effective approaches to increase fundraising results (Sun, Hoffman, & Grady, 2007). Fundraisers need to understand the price of giving, or what it costs a donor to give the organization an additional dollar (Vesterlund, 2006). Additionally, the institution can help create a strong fundraising plan by allocating a healthy budget. This culture, staff, and leadership of the college drive the budget (Bresciani, Bump, & Heffernan, 2010).

In order for colleges to be competitive for the best and brightest faculty, staff, and students, more money is needed. Colleges need to know who their alumni are and which of them are most likely to donate to the alma mater. Alumni who were involved in college are happier alumni; consequently, they are more likely to donate. Having a fundraising plan of communicating the success of the campus community to alumni and potential donors is vital. Donors want to affiliate with something successful, but also an organization that is a source of a solution. This communication to alumni must occur over time and not just when an alumnus is in his/her peak earning years. The small donations from a young alumnus will eventually grow

with this long-term communication from the alma mater. Knowing how to reach out to today's young alumni is important in building this relationship, but who are these young alumni?

### **Millennial Students: Who Are They?**

Strauss and Howe (1991) define generations as “a cohort-group whose length approximates the span of a phase of life and whose boundaries are fixed by peer personality” (p. 60). This phase of life is composed of central social roles that span a twenty-two-year period of person's life. They conclude that, simple lifecycle framework of four life phases that equal twenty-two-year lengths. Accordingly, life phases are defined as youth as lasting from ages 0 to 21; ‘rising adulthood’ from ages 22 to 43; ‘midlife’ from ages 44 to 65; and ‘elderhood’ from ages 66 to 87. (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 56). Each generation has its own peer personality or “generational persona recognized and determined by (1) common age location; (2) common beliefs and behavior; and (3) perceived membership in a common generation” (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 64). Each generation has its “social moments” which Strauss and Howe (1991) define as “an era, typically lasting about a decade, when people perceive that historic events are radically altering their social environment” (p. 71). Some of these historic events could be September 11, 2001 or the assassination of President Kennedy.

The Millennial generation composes persons born between 1982 and 2001. They were born after Generation X (born between 1961 and 1981) and before the Baby Boomer Generation (born between 1943 and 1960) (Strauss, 2005). According to Howe and Strauss (2000), Millennials are different than Generation X and are running exactly counter to trends launched by the Baby Boomer generation. “As a group, the Millennials are unlike any other youth generation in living memory” (Howe & Strauss, 2000, p. 4). Strauss (2005) described that Millennials as “the center of attention in ways Generation Xers were not, at the center of a

culture war over family values spawned by opposing coalitions among the boomers, who set much of the tone for the Millennials' upbringing and schooling" (para. 27). As such, the tone for Millennials is not always as clear it was for their older relatives from previous generations. This generation is closer to their parents compared to Generation X. The relationship between this generation is nonhierarchical in nature because this generation has "experienced a democratization of family authority" (Kinports, 2009, p. 11) and this relationship is more of a friendship. Because of the close relationship between parent and child, Millennials are the most sheltered generation of any generation (Smith K. L., 2010). This close relationship and high parental involvement has also transferred to having great respect for their elders and authority compared to Xers and Boomers (Pew Research Center, 2010). Their parents are still very involved after Millennials graduate from college. Millennial parents have fewer children and are often dual income, which funds many of their child's numerous activities. Their parents are more involved in their children's lives than past generations and are often referred to as helicopter parents because of their micromanaging parenting style, which has greatly influenced this generation. Terrorism, war, Hurricane Katrina, global connections through technology – such as social networking sites and through study-abroad programs have greatly influenced the Millennial generation (Hart, 2011). This has influenced Millennials' philanthropic nature.

Millennials are more open minded and socially conscious than past generations, however, they are not overly religious when compared to these generations (Pew Research Center, 2010). According to Strauss and Howe's (1991) theory on generational types, Millennials are the "civic" generation because they recognized the coming-of-age as "good" and "empowering", contrasting to the Generation X who view it as "reactive," "bad," and "alienating."

### **Millennial Students: Service**

The Millennial generation is achievement oriented and tends to get involved in activities with opportunities for personal growth (Kinports, 2009). This involvement translates into being more civic minded and into doing community service. Today, unparalleled numbers of Millennials are serving their communities (Kinports, 2009). Millennials have “participated in community service and service-learning activities at levels unseen in the past” (Broido, 2004, p. 81). At an early age, Millennials are taught to give back to their communities. Over 80 percent of Millennials are required to do community service while in high school compared to Generation X who rarely did such service (Stone, 2009). Many volunteer as part of their effort to gain admission into college and for employment after college (Kinports, 2009). The rate of volunteerism among Millennials has increased 22 percent since 2002 (Roberts, 2006). Stone (2009) found that volunteerism for those between the ages of 16 to 24 nearly doubled between the years 2003 and 2009. The hope is that these students will get into the habit of service while at a young age and that it will continue throughout their life. Many studies have found this habit of service begins before one starts college. Astin and Sax (1998) and Astin, Sax and Avalos (1999) concluded that participation in community service in high school leads students to continue their involvement in college.

Once in college, Millennials continue to volunteer. This participation in service while an undergraduate college student “enhances students’ leadership ability and social self-confidence and is positively associated with...the student’s satisfaction with the opportunities provided by the college for developing leadership skills and with the relevance of undergraduate course work to everyday life” (Astin & Sax, 1998, p. 259). College students who spend more than six or more hours per week volunteering during their last year of college, as compared to those who do

not volunteer, nearly double their chances of spending one to six hours per week volunteering after college (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999). “Participating in volunteer service during college is associated with attending graduate school, earning higher degrees, donating money to one’s alma mater” (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999, p. 197). Research found that between the 1970s-1990s, 22-24% of high school seniors did community service (Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1999). When a student begins college, service may decrease or become a lower priority because one is in a new environment and removed from many of the external motivators (Jones & Hill, 2003). Transition from high school to college can be dramatic and many may choose to put service on hold. In many cases, college students discontinued service while in college because the external motivation from high school was no longer present. While in college, there was little investment on themselves, fewer claims on their sense of self and little commitment (Jones & Hill, 2003). Conversely, while in high school, there was external motivation from family, friends and high school requirements as well as the desire to impress college admissions officials. While in high school students thought little of why they were doing service other than those involved in church/religious service (Jones & Hill, 2003). Those who continue with service after high school were involved in volunteering and had teachers who helped explain why community service was important (Jones & Hill, 2003). Therefore, a student’s involvement in certain college organizations may explain why a student does service. Drezner (2009) concluded that “school spirit, combined with social identity and the use of extrinsic and intrinsic motivations influences student participation in both fundraising and giving” (p. 159). This involvement may allow reflection on why one does service (Jones & Hill, 2003). In the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the “Survey of Young Americans’ Attitudes Toward Politics and Public Service” (2010), Harvard University found that 54 percent of college students (N=3,117 between the ages of 18 and 29) did

community service in the past year and 38 percent volunteered a few times a month.

Additionally, in Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates' 2010 study of 2,200 Millennials, only 29.1 percent reported over 30 hours of service in the past year followed by the second highest response was 36 percent doing less than five hours of service in the past year. "More than anything else, the giving and volunteering polarization in this age group...would seem to be simply a product of the respondents' personal and professional progress" (Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates, 2010, p. 8). Additionally, in the 2011 study, those who did not volunteer (85 percent of the respondents) say they did not volunteer because of a lack of time, but 45 percent of them said they were not asked to volunteer (Johnson Grossnickle Associates; Achieve, 2011).

Today's college students are reporting more and more service and donation of charitable dollars and to encourage Millennials to volunteer – in the hope to increase or receive a donation – organizations should promote volunteering with the Millennials friends and family (Johnson Grossnickle Associates; Achieve, 2011). Encouraging volunteering throughout college can enhance the social development of the student because volunteering among undergraduates "encourages students to become more socially responsible, more committed to serving their communities, more empowered, and more committed to education" (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999, p. 200). Additionally, Astin and Sax (1998) found that involvement in service positively affects students' commitment to their communities, to helping others in difficulty, to promoting racial understanding, and to influencing social values.

Millennials are more likely to volunteer their time than their money and have great potential for donating their money in the future (Stone, 2009). Loyalty to one's alma mater is viewed as a very important characteristic in predicting alumni donations (Lindenmann, 1983).



This loyalty occurs because of an emotional attachment to the institution, participation in alumni events, and participation in and contributions to other voluntary and religious groups.

Additionally:

Quality of an alums undergraduate experience ... is an important variable predicting his or her volunteer support. Specifically, alumni donors who reported high levels of academic engagement (ACENG) while an undergraduate student were 1.88 times more likely to volunteer at the university. (Weerts & Ronca, 2008, p. 287)

Weerts and Ronca's (2008) findings also support a study by Johns Hopkins University, which found that persons who volunteer are twice as likely to donate to a nonprofit organization as opposed to those who do not volunteer (Real Estate Weekly News, 2009). However, 71.9 percent do not need to volunteer for an organization before they make a donation. In their 2011 study, 79 percent donated their time, but "the more money people gave, the more time they gave" (Johnson Grossnickle Associates; Achieve, 2011, p. 15). Kinport (2009) concluded, "Millennials are more likely to donate small amounts, their time, or influence change through conscious consumerism. When Millennials do give, it will be in a way that does not affect their quality of life" (p. 21). Research by Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates (2010) found that 28 percent of their Millennial respondents prefer to do service for a non-profit before they donate to them. However, 83 percent "donate to organizations from which they received services or with which they have participated in programs" (Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates, 2010, p. 12). Based on those who do donate, what are their characteristics?

### **Millennial Students: College Role**

Institutions play a role in developing their students to give back financially and through their time. Most college students are unaware of service opportunities in college (Jones & Hill,

2003), therefore informing students of service opportunities is important in order to create a culture of giving. Campuses should utilize the students' peers in developing others to serve; according to Jones and Hill (2003), college peers are an important factor in determining whether someone gets involved in service. Institutional influence is important. "The visibility and accessibility of community service programs influence participation" (Jones & Hill, 2003, p. 528). Campuses may want to encourage service by promoting organizations that do service. Some college students become involved in service because it was a membership requirement, such as in a fraternity or sorority (Jones & Hill, 2003).

The Millennial generation began completing college in 2003. Research on traditional aged college students have shown that students who were involved in extra-curricular activities reported more positive educational and social experiences, increased intellectual and leadership development, success in academic and career goals, and were more likely to graduate (Astin, 1975, 1977, 1993; Kuh, Schuh, & Whitt, 1991). Students are more likely to take part in annual giving campaigns if they are involved in organizations that encourage philanthropy and are educated about the needs of those that benefit from the donations (Drezner, 2009). Marr, Mullin, and Siegfried (2005) found several factors that stimulate alumni financial donations, including membership in non-academic organizations, such as fraternities, sororities, and athletics; academic success; and majors such as economics, mathematics, engineering, and science. Colleges need to start the relationship with their alumni in the very beginning by engaging them early (Noel-Bentley & Sollis, 2007). Through this relationship, the college will instill pride and commitment and create a lifelong commitment from the alumnus.

Friedmann (2003) and Drezner (2009) both concluded that the reason that one donates to their alma mater is reciprocity or a sense of giving back to their institution that helped them.

Hart (2011) discussed how alumni built a connection with their alma mater while a student, such as their admission, positive college experience, living on campus, spending time in classes and in organizations, and social activities. Through all of this, students' progress through the course work and socially, which creates trust in the institution and group cohesiveness among future graduates. Regarding young alumni:

A shared emotional connection derives from receiving a diploma and forever being connected to future students through a shared history. Universities need to build on this sense of community by offering opportunities for alumni to maintain their shared connection and preserve their sense of community with the institution. (Marr, Mullin, & Siegfried, 2005, pp. 7-8)

Institutions can enhance this trust through communication. Hart's (2011) research on Kansas State University alumni found that "Millennials' donation decisions may be influenced by communication channels, friends, their perceptions of the cause and their connection to the university" (p. 46). Connection to the alma mater is vital for Millennials, therefore fundraisers must create relevant messages that "target and resonate with millennials, particularly in relation to communicating the importance of the organization's cause and how donating to the cause will enhance pride in the institution" (Hart, 2011, pp. 46-47).

### **Millennial Student: Characteristics and Giving**

People donate to charities for a variety of reasons, but the Millennial generation is different from past generations. In 2008, The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University surveyed a random sample of 10,000 Americans about donating to charity and their motivations to giving. This study found that Millennials are most likely to be motivated to make a donation by a desire to make the world a better place (44.5 percent) compared to the Generation X, who is

born between 1961 and 1981, (37.3 percent); Baby Boomer Generation, who is born between 1943 and 1960 (33.8 percent); Silent Generation, who is born between 1925 and 1942 (31.9 percent); and Greatest Generation, born before 1924 (26.5 percent). Since Millennials want to have an impact on a global scale, nonprofit organizations should educate Millennials on their mission and objectives and demonstrate how their purpose will have an impact on the global scale (Baranyi, 2011). However, “Younger donors' philanthropy is primarily mission driven, with the mission being the donor's mission, not necessarily the nonprofit organization's” (Wachovia Trust Nonprofit and Philanthropic Services, 2008, p. 1); therefore, Millennials will attempt to see how their personal mission aligns with the organization. Hence, the “millennial generation... are likely to give to organizations they have the most direct involvement with” (Catapano, 2005, p. 18) however, the Millennial students are far less likely to donate to highly emotional causes (Catapano, 2005). In their youth, Millennials were involved in many different activities and as adults, their donations are as well. In their 2011 study, Johnson Grossnickle Associates and Achieve found that Millennial donors are more likely to donate to multiple organizations than to one.

Organizations need to share their information in many different mediums, since Millennials find their information from more than one source (Baranyi, 2011). According to research by Bhagat, Loeb, and Rover (2010), Millennials learn about the charity they donate the most to through mainstream media and their engagement with the charity is through direct donations. In Horseman's 2011 research, she found that young alumni are using Facebook as a source to connect, but it is not translating into alumni engagement or donations, instead a personal relationship is essential when asking Millennials for a donation. In their collaborative research, Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates (2010) surveyed over 2,200 people

between the ages of 20 and 40. They found that “91% of Millennial donors are at least somewhat likely to respond to a face-to-face request for money from a nonprofit organization” (p. 6). Seventy-four percent of Millennials are likely or highly likely to donate when asked by a family member or 62.8 percent when asked by a friend (Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates, 2010). Because of these personal relationships with their family and friends, 71.7 percent of Millennial donors responded they are willing to communicate with their family and friends about how they can become involved in the organizations they support (Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates, 2010).

Johnson Grossnickle Associates and Achieve found in their 2011 survey of 2,953 respondents between the ages of 20 and 35, 93 percent donated to nonprofit organizations. In 2010, over 41 percent of their respondents reported donating over \$300 in the past year; alternatively, the second highest response was 23.3 percent who donated less than \$50 in the past year. People who make less than \$50,000 per year have a higher tendency to donate to charities that help the poor help themselves compared to those whose income is over \$125,000 have a higher tendency to donate to charities because they want to help those with less (The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2008). Therefore, non-profit organizations may be more effective in limiting their fundraising efforts to those who earn less than \$50,000 a year and to donors who have a desire to make the world and their community a better place to live. Additionally, “the perceived future income of the student body does not influence their participation rates nor do outside, egoistic, fundraising initiatives” (Catapano, 2005, p. 33), thus suggesting that income is not the only factor that determines donation habits. Generationally, “Millennials and Gen X donors, when compared with Boomers, are less likely to want to fund

services that government cannot or will not provide” (The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2008, p. 33), but the researchers did not speculate if this relates to higher education.

Most donations given by affluent young U.S. entrepreneurs went to the educational sector (Grace & Wendroff, 2001). They found young entrepreneurs view their donation as an investment rather than a donation in solving problems by seeing immediate results. Out of 2,953 Millennial respondents, two-thirds said they donated to an educational organization in 2010 (Johnson Grossnickle Associates; Achieve, 2011), which is promising for higher education. Donors with school-aged or college-aged children are more likely to donate to education. Amongst Generation X, 21.8 percent donated to education, followed by Baby Boomers at 20.4, Millennials at 17.1 percent, Silent at 18.8, and Great generation at 15.7 percent (The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2008). In their 2011 study, Johnson Grossnickle Associates and Achieve, found that those falling in the 30-35 age group “gave significantly more in 2010 than donors aged 20-24 or 25-29” (p. 8), thus “providing further support to this budding trend is the fact that increases in giving correlate to age, as the survey results show higher levels of giving and numbers of organizations supported as donors age” (p. 8).

Millennials have grown up participating in groups and playing on teams more than other generations (Howe & Strauss, 2000). This has led this generation to expand their scope for friendships with peers, which has attracted them to small groups and cliques. Millennials volunteer, visit charitable websites, and attend charitable events more than other generations (Bhagat, Loeb, & Rovner, 2010). Millennials are more likely to forward an email regarding a charity to their friends and share articles and photographs on their social networking site compared to other generations. Therefore, Baranyi (2011) suggests they be tapped for fundraisers because they can involve large number of supporters. For that reason, events can

draw Millennials and their peer network into giving. Johnson Grossnickle Associates and Achieve (2011) found that events such as dinner parties with entertainment, social cocktail parties, small private gatherings, sports/game tournaments and walk/run events are attractive to Millennials compared to speakers, scavenger hunts, raffles, silent and online auctions. The researchers point out that the organization should be careful about asking for a donation at these events and that it is more important for the donors or potential donors to connect and “attempt to get more money from the donors after they’ve walked through the door” (p. 12).

Technology is playing a larger role in fundraising; it is a way to communicate. The 2011 study by Nonprofit Research Collaborative showed that eight percent of the 813 charities in their survey were adding social networking (i.e., Facebook and Twitter) and a fundraising tool, however, only about 45 percent of the responding charities are using social media. One way to reach younger alumni and to identify potential donors, social media should be used (Burke, 2011). In a survey completed by WealthEngine (2012), 88% of donors under the age of 35 had a Facebook account. Universities can use the information from their alumni Facebook accounts to engage alumni and to develop stronger potential donors. However, universities must also have the resources to fund staff that have the time to research and find this information. Fundraisers need to take advantage of this wealth of information to assist in identifying potential donors.

Once they give, Millennial donors want to hear from the nonprofit organization’s programs and services (86.3 percent) and be provided updates on their financial condition (54.6 percent). However, they only wish to hear from the organization on a quarterly basis and they prefer this communication be via email at 95 percent versus Facebook at 23.8 percent and print at 26.9 percent (Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates, 2010). In the Achieve and Johnson Grossnickle Associates (2010) study, the majority of the 2,200 respondents expressed an

interest in having access to the non-profit organization's executive leadership they support and over three-quarters of the respondents expressed an opportunity in working closely with this leadership on important matters. This access would help develop trust in the organization. Their 2011 study found that 84 percent of the respondents say they "would be somewhat or very likely to donate to an organization that they can fully trust, and 90% said they would stop giving to an organization that they could not trust" (Johnson Grossnickle Associates; Achieve, 2011, p. 10). It is essential that organizations explain how the donations are going to be used and where the money is going (Johnson Grossnickle Associates; Achieve, 2011). Again, recommendations from family and friends on where to make donations can help to develop this level of trust in the organization.

### **Millennial Students: Ability**

According to WealthEngine (2012), compared to the past, potential donors are becoming younger, female, and technologically connected. Institutions need to find new ways to reach these persons in order to create a donor. "The future of philanthropic giving to higher education lies with an institution's young alumni and current students" (Drezner, 2009, p. 148). Younger people have not been asked to donate because they are young (Pidgeon & Saxton, 1992). Bhagat, Loeb, and Rover's (2010) research findings show that Millennials also do not donate as much as often as other generations, mainly because of income differences, but Millennials are planning to increase their donations in the future. Bell (2009) encourages fundraisers to legitimize small donations, make it acceptable so potential donor is not embarrassed with donating small amount when that maybe the only amount they can afford. In a 2009 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, the Vice President of University Relations at University of Maryland College Park, Brodie Remington, said "Young alumni are often skeptical that their



small contribution can make a difference” (Supiano, 2009, para 9). However, Syracuse completed an on-line fundraising campaign over winter break in 2008. About 20% of the donors were alumni who graduated within the last 10 years versus 38% who donated to annual fund (Supiano, 2009). These immediate campaigns are appealing because alumni are less likely to make long-term commitments in an environment where financial climate is uncertain (Supiano, 2009).

Young alumni will donate less compared to their elders because of smaller salaries and student loans, but one day their alma mater will depend on them for larger gifts. Past donating behavior is correlated with future and current donations (Okunade & Justice, 1991). Therefore, colleges should get younger alumni to develop a pattern of giving so they are more prone to financially support their alma mater throughout their lives. In order for the alma mater to have this pattern of giving maximized, the alumni investment process needs to begin while the student is still in school (Momin, 2003). Communicating with current students on ways to give, why to give and continue this communication with these students after graduation is vital. Young alumni give their alma mater high marks in regards to world-class education and excellent faculty, but they also believe that their alma mater falls short in maintain a relationship with them (Engagement Strategies Group, 2010). However, young alumni may not donate to their alma mater because these young alumni may believe that the institution does not need the money and because of rising tuition costs (Engagement Strategies Group, 2010). In the “Mood of Alumni 2010” study by Engagement Strategies Group (2010), 80% of the 700 respondents who were under the age of 35 feel they have paid enough already in tuition to their alma mater and rather not donate any more. Half of the 35 year olds and younger respondents also feel that their alma mater does not need the money. Therefore, it is necessary for colleges to educate their

alumni that tuition students paid was much less than the actual cost of an education because of the donations of alumni to offset the tuition costs (Masterson, 2010a). “Graduates in their 20s and early 30s have witnessed both the large endowments and rising college costs of many higher educational institutions today, which can present a disincentive to giving back,” said Cindy Cox Roman, co-founder of Engagement Strategies Group (Engagement Strategies Group, 2010, para. 2). “With overall alumni participation rates declining, schools need to consider what they are offering young donors to reward their financial allegiance” (Engagement Strategies Group, 2010). Therefore, developing a relationship and finding new ways to communicate with one’s alumni is essential in fundraising.

Research has shown that institutions that develop relationships with their younger alumni can develop a potential donor, but this time is a disadvantage and an advantage. Through cultivating this relationship, there is great potential for them to donate financially.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and determinants of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. This study focused on the potential relationship between involvement and student satisfaction and consequently, whether those two elements influenced Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater. This study's intent is to fill the gap in the literature by researching the effect Millennial student involvement has on the likelihood they will become donors to their alma mater.

This research is identifying the characteristics of Millennial undergraduate alumni donors and the determinants of the Millennial undergraduate alumni donor behavior. This study's data were limited to that provided by the Performance Enhancement Group's (PEG) Alumni Attitude Survey (AAS), a survey instrument developed by the PEG.

#### **Conceptual Model**

The connections that alumni have with their alma mater and the number of donations after graduation may stem from the connections that these individuals established with their institutions while enrolled as students. Either all or in part, this connection may result from undergraduate involvement and activities during enrollment years (Astin, 1996; Johnson & Eckel, 1998; Lunardini, 1993; Pascarella, 1989). To that end, student development theory may provide some insights into identifying the experiences that help to inspire alumni giving and help institutions to pinpoint and devise new ways of using these experiences to help increase donations. This study focused on the involvement theory developed by Astin (1984).

In his theory of involvement, Astin (1984) states that the more students are involved academically and socially in college, the more their learning increases. Students who are involved devote significant energy to academics, spend time on campus, participate actively in student organizations and activities, and interact often with faculty. Notably, the most influential types of involvement are "academic involvement, involvement with faculty, and involvement with student peer groups" (Astin, 1996, p. 126). Therefore, these positive emotional experiences as an undergraduate may be a motivation to donate to their alma mater.

Institutions need to continue to encourage involvement outside the classroom to increase student and alumni satisfaction. Alumni tend to perceive their involvement in extracurricular activities in college as related to gaining the skills necessary for success in the job market (Bisconti & Kessler, 1980). By participating in college activities, students develop interpersonal and leadership skills, which they perceive as being beneficial in their careers and which others view as signs of managerial ability. There is also a correlation between involvement in extracurricular activities and job earnings, particularly when individuals held leadership positions in their respective undergraduate organizations (Calhoon & Reddy, 1968). Educational attainment and undergraduate extracurricular activity are also positively related. Participation in social activities increases a student's social integration and interpersonal bonds with an institution. In turn, this integration increases the likelihood of persistence (Tinto, 1975, 1987).

Specific undergraduate involvement relates to more involvement as an alumnus. Alumni support to institutions is related to fraternity involvement, housing status, use of student life resources, extracurricular activity, and religious and parental involvement (Ikenberry, 2000; Johnson & Eckel, 1998; Lunardini, 1993). Prior research has shown that this involvement and interaction as an undergraduate continues as an alumnus (Okunade, Wunnava, & Walsh, Jr.,

1994; Weerts & Ronca, 2009). In order for institutions to successfully raise funds, they must continue to develop a relationship with the government, but also develop and maintain strong institutional bonds with their alumni.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and predictors of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. This dissertation is guided by the involvement theory developed by Astin (1984). In Astin's theory of involvement (1984) he states that the more students are involved academically and socially in college, the more their learning increases.

**Research Question One: What are the demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and undergraduate Millennial alumni nondonors?** To date none of the prior research has focused on Millennial undergraduate donors. The objective of this research question is to generate an image of the Millennial undergraduate donor in the United States, detect differences between Millennial undergraduate donors and nondonors, and establish if the demographic characteristics are appropriate control variables for statistical analysis. The research hypothesis for research question one is that there are no significant demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors.

**Research Question Two: How do undergraduate Millennial alumni donors compare to nondonors in regards to their undergraduate involvement characteristics?** The objective of research question two is to identify differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors associated to their involvement characteristics. These

characteristics may be academic, faculty, and peer involvement while an undergraduate, but also if they worked on campus or were involved in campus student organizations.

Three types of involvement variables were used for this study, they were participation, importance of an activity, and the alma mater's performance providing that activity were all variables. Participation variables revealed if a respondent was involved in a specific activity. Importance variables revealed how important an activity was to the respondent's undergraduate experience. Performance variables revealed how respondents appraised their satisfaction with their alma mater on the same indicators as the importance variables. The research hypothesis for research question two is that there are no significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors related to their undergraduate involvement characteristics.

**Research Question Three: What is the influence of generation on donor status holding demographics, importance, and performance variables constant?** The objective of research question three is to identify the influence of generation is on predicting donor behavior and to determine if it is still significant while introducing demographic and involvement variables. As stated in Chapter 2, Millennial undergraduates as compared to previous generations are very involved and are very service oriented. Through this research question we may predict if generation is a greater predictor of donor status, but also which activities coupled with generation, predict donor status. The research hypothesis for research question three is that are no significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni giving and student involvement with those of Undergraduate Generation X alumni. Table 1 displays the research questions and their associated null hypothesis, research hypothesis, and statistical applications.

## **Research Design**

This dissertation is nonexperimental since the researcher is not capable of manipulating the independent variables (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). This dissertation is a quantitative analysis of a cross-sectional data set collected by a third party, the Performance Enhancement Group, using an existing data instrument termed the Alumni Attitude Survey. Wiersma and Jurs (2009) refer to this type of study as a cross sectional design because the data was previously collected at one point in time. In this study, there were two defined groups, they were undergraduate Millennial alumni and Generation X alumni, who were a part of the Alumni Attitude Survey's survey sample.

## **Population and Sample**

The research sample for this study draws on respondents to the Alumni Attitude Survey who identified themselves as graduating with their undergraduate degrees between 2007 and 2012. This five-year span was chosen since Millennial generation was born between 1982 and 2001 (Strauss, 2005). The traditional aged college student is under 25 (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, 2012), hence if one was born after 1982, college graduation years of 2007-2012 would capture Millennial generation college graduates. The Alumni Attitude Survey was developed in 2001 by a group of advancement professionals from 11 major universities and alumni associations (Performance Enhancement Group, 2013). As of 2013, over 160 colleges and universities throughout the country have implemented the Alumni Attitude Survey (Shoss, 2012). Between the years 2004 and 2012, 160 colleges and universities contracted with the Performance Enhancement Group and over 500,000 alumni responded to the Alumni Attitude Survey (Shoss, 2012). The original sample size for each participating institution was unknown, therefore, the response rate could not be determined since each

participating university determines who the survey is sent to. PEG (2013) insists that the distribution of the samples reflect the overall population demographically. Additionally, PEG tests for non-response bias by using telephone interviews to attain a statistically significant sample of those who do not respond to the survey via the internet. “In none of those cases so far

Table 1

*Research Questions, Corresponding Hypothesis, and Methodological Applications*

Research Question (RQ)	Null Hypothesis (H <sub>0</sub> )	Research Hypothesis (H <sub>A</sub> )	Statistical Application (M <sub>A</sub> )
RQ1: What are the demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and undergraduate Millennial alumni nondonors?	H <sub>0</sub> 1: There are no significant demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors.	H <sub>A</sub> 1: There are significant demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors.	M <sub>A</sub> 1: Descriptive Statistics and Chi-square
RQ2: How do undergraduate Millennial alumni donors compare to nondonors in regards to their undergraduate involvement characteristics?	H <sub>0</sub> 2: There are no significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors related to their involvement characteristics.	H <sub>A</sub> 2: There are significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors related to their involvement characteristics.	M <sub>A</sub> 2: Descriptive Statistics, Chi-square, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient
RQ3: What is the influence of generation on donor status holding demographics, involvement, importance, and performance variables constant?	H <sub>0</sub> 3: There are no significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni giving and student involvement with those of undergraduate Generation X alumni.	H <sub>A</sub> 3: There are significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni giving and student involvement with those of undergraduate Generation X alumni	M <sub>A</sub> 3: Hierarchal Logistic Regression



have the results from telephone been significantly different from internet results” (Performance Enhancement Group, 2009, para. 6). Fortunately, younger generations, such as Millennials are used to being assessed (Coomes & DeBard, 2004).

According to the Performance Enhancement Group (2013), the historical response rate for their Alumni Attitude Survey has ranged from 10% to 35%, with an average response rate of 18%. Based on the data provided by Performance Enhancement Group, the final research sample size was composed of 20,000 undergraduate alumni respondents who were randomly selected by the PEG. From this sample Millennial and Generation X graduates were identified.

### Variables and Constructs

**Dependent Variable.** Question 20 of the Alumni Attitude Survey relates to donor status. This is the dichotomous dependent variable. A donor is an alumnus who has given financially to their alma mater at least once. A nondonor is an alumnus who has never given financially to their alma mater. The AAS does ask the alumnus’ about their past financial support and their future intentions to financially support their alma mater. This study is interested in the past behavior of alumni donors, not their future donations, even though past donating behavior is correlated with future and current donations (Okunade & Justice, 1991). The dichotomous dependent variable was created from donor status question to identify past alumni donation

**20. Which of the following best describes your financial support of the XYZ University?**

- ☐ Have not financially supported the XYZ University and do not plan to in future
- ☐ Have financially supported the XYZ University but do not plan to continue
- ☐ Have not financially supported the XYZ University but plan to in the future
- ☐ Currently financially support the XYZ University and plan to continue
- ☐ Currently financially support the XYZ University and plan to increase in future
- ☒ No Opinion

Figure 1. Alumni Attitude Survey question 20: Donor Status.

behavior. In Figure 1 respondents who selected choices two, four, or five were coded as donors and respondents who selected choices one or three were coded as nondonors.

**Independent Variables and Constructs.** The independent variables for this study were the demographic, participation, importance, and performance questions. The importance variables were from question 10 (see Figure 2). These involvement variables consisted of participation (question nine) and performance (question 10) in the activities they were involved

**10. How important was each of the following to your experience as a student, and how well did the XYZ University do at providing them?**

	Importance				University's performance			
	1 = Not important 2 = Somewhat important 3 = Very important 4 = Critically important				1 = Poor 2 = Fair 3 = Good 4 = Excellent			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
a. Admissions process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Relationship with other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Academics/classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Relationship with the faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Attending athletic events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Attending cultural events including films, lectures, and other arts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Opportunity to participate in fraternity/sorority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Orientation for new students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Relationship with administration and staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Student leadership opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. Student employment opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. Skills/training for career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m. Lessons about life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
n. Exposure to new things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
o. Traditions or values learned on campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
p. Opportunity to interact with alumni	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 2. Alumni Attitude Survey question 10: Importance and Performance Variables.

in as an undergraduate. Generation corresponded to the undergraduate graduation year.

Millennial graduation years were identified as years 2007-2012 and Generation X graduation years were identified as years 1986-1991. The demographic and generation variables from the AAS are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

*Demographic Variables from Alumni Attitude Survey*

Variable	Alumni Attitude Survey Answers	Research Data
Gender (GENDER)	1=Male 2=Female	0=Female 1=Male
Ethnicity / Race (ETHNICITY)	1=White (Non-Hispanic) 2=Black 3=Hispanic 4=Asian or Pacific Islander 5=American Indian or Alaskan 6=Other	1=White (Non-Hispanic) 2=Black 3=Hispanic 4=Asian or Pacific Islander 5=American Indian or Alaskan 6=Other
Undergraduate Graduation Year (GENERATION)	Graduation years were included for every respondent.	0=Generation X Graduation Year 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991  1=Millennial Graduation Year 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

As stated in the Review of Literature, many studies have explained that alumni satisfaction and donations relate to the alumnus' involvement and experiences as an undergraduate (Baker, 2004; Ikenberry, 2000; Lunardini, 1993). In the Alumni Attitude Survey,

questions nine and 10 are associated with the respondent's student involvement. Question nine (Figure 3) asks respondents to choose between twelve or more organizations and activities they

**9. In which of the following organizations/activities did you participate as a student? (Choose all that apply.)**

No	Yes		No	Yes	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	a. Honor Society	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	b. Fraternity/Sorority
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	c. Intramural athletics	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	d. Intercollegiate athletics
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	e. Music/theater/art	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	f. Community service
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	g. Religious organizations	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	h. Residence halls
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	i. Professional or career related organizations	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	j. Academic clubs
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	k. Ethnic and/or cultural centers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	l. Newspaper, radio, or yearbook
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	m. Other <input style="width: 150px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>			

*Figure 3. Alumni Attitude Survey question nine: Participated Variables.*

participated in while a student. This data were individually analyzed. Each response was coded as 0=No and 1=Yes. Table 3 displays AAS question nine's possible involvement responses.

Survey respondents were asked in question 10 (see Figure 2) to rate on a four-point scale the importance of activities they participated in while an undergraduate, but also rate the university's performance of that activity. A respondent may view an activity as critically important, but rate the university's performance in that activity as poor. However, it is problematic to conclude if preexisting perceptions of particular activities lead to undergraduate involvement, or whether the involvement changes these perceptions about the level of importance of an activity (Astin, 1997). The study determined if there is a correlation between the independent variables of performance and importance with donor status for each generation. The survey respondents were asked in question 10 (see Figure 2) to rate on a four-point scale the importance of activities they participated in while an undergraduate, but also rate the alma mater's performance of making

that activity available to them. If a student thought an activity was important, then there was a greater likelihood they would participate in that activity. If their university offered assistance to that activity could be an indicator of the student's satisfaction with their experience as an undergraduate student.

Table 3

*Alumni Attitude Survey: Question Nine Involvement*

Variables (Alumni Attitude Question)
Question #9 - Involvement
9a: Honor Society
9b: Fraternity/Sorority
9c: Intramural Athletics
9d: Intercollegiate Athletics
9e: Music/Theater/ Arts
9f: Community Service
9g: Religious Organization
9h: Residence Halls
9i: Professional/Career Related Orgs.
9j: Academic Clubs
9k: Ethnic/Cultural Centers
9l: Newspaper, Radio, or Yearbook

### Statistical Methods

The data set was provided by Performance Enhancement Group and was from their Alumni Attitude Survey. From this data set, the research hypotheses were tested using statistical methods applicable for the research questions that are listed in Table 1. Descriptive statistics and chi-square was used to determine if undergraduate Millennial student demographic and involvement characteristics differ between Generation X alumni donors and nondonors. Point Biserial Correlation Coefficient would be calculated, but SPSS is not able to calculate it, however, since it is a close estimate to Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Glass

& Hopkins, 1996) and the Pearson's  $r$  can be calculated in SPSS. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient or Pearson's  $r$  was applied to determine the relationship between donor status and the importance and performance variables in question 10. Logistic Regression was employed to establish if generation, while holding demographic, involvement (question nine), importance (question 10), and university performance (question 10) variables as predictors constant in determining donor status. The data set was analyzed using SPSS by IBM Incorporated, Version 21.0.

**Statistical Methods for Research Question One (What are the demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and undergraduate Millennial alumni nondonors?) and Research Question Two (How do undergraduate Millennial alumni donors compare to nondonors in regards to their undergraduate involvement characteristics?).** Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to depict the undergraduate Millennial alumni donor and nondonor. Demographic characteristics, as listed in Table 2, and involvement characteristics, as listed in Table 3, for Millennial undergraduate donors and nondonors were analyzed. Pearson's chi-square test was administered to measure if there is significant difference between the effect of two categorical independent variables (demographic and participation questions) on a categorical dependent variable (donor). The chi-square is used to determine if the observed proportions in two or more categories differ significantly from the expected proportions (Glass & Hopkins, 1996).

Hochberg's Sequential Model was utilized for question nine's (Figure 3) chi-square results on involvement. Question 9 is composed of twelve activities or categories. Significance ( $\alpha$ ) is based 0.05, thus there is a greater chance of a type-I error occurring. For example, if there were 20 categories and with significance of 0.05 (20 multiplied by 0.05 equals 1), one category

would be found significant which may be false, which would be a type-I error. If a type-I error occurred, the null hypothesis is rejected (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). Hochberg's Sequential Method was used to reduce the chances of a type-I error from occurring (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995). SPSS calculated the chi-square and significance for each involvement category. The chi-squares were ranked from smallest to largest in an Excel spreadsheet in order to perform the Hochberg's Sequential Method. Based on the 12 categories, the  $\alpha$ -value of 0.05 was multiplied by the categorical number or test number. This sum becomes the adjusted  $\alpha$ -value. The  $\alpha$ -values decrease as the number of tests increase, thereby making it more difficult to commit a type-I error. This is a much more conservative method in determining significance between many categories (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995).

To measure alumni response to question 10's (Figure 2) importance of certain activities and the university's performance, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) tests were completed to determine the correlation between donor status with an activity from question 10. Pearson's  $r$  is used to measure of the dependence between two variables (Glass & Hopkins, 1996), such as donor status and an activity. The Pearson  $r$ -value was between +1 and -1. A value of 1 is total positive correlation, 0 is no correlation, and -1 is negative correlation. Respondents chose between four Likert type responses. For importance, respondents choose between not important, somewhat important, very important, and critically important. For university's performance, respondents choose between poor, fair, good, or excellent.

**Statistical Methods for Research Question Three (What is the influence of generation on donor status holding demographics, importance, and performance variables constant?).** The purpose of research question three is to determine the influence of generation on donor status holding demographics, involvement, importance, and performance variables

constant. Logistic regression was used to establish if the independent variables (demographics and activities) have an effect on donating to one's alma mater and influence generation has on these activities. Logistic regression includes both categorical and continuous variables as independent variables and dichotomous variables (Keith, 2006). The dichotomous dependent variable in this study is the donor status, i.e. donor or nondonor. Logistic regression makes fewer restrictive assumptions compared to multiple regression, but it too "combines information from a set of independent variables to predict with maximal accuracy the probability of falling into category 1 or 0 of the dichotomous dependent variable" (Glass & Hopkins, 1996, p. 183). The independent variables for this study were the demographic, participation, importance, and performance questions, such as gender, race, generation, and involvement in intramurals, community service, or fraternity/sorority. Logistic regression predicted the probability that one of these independent variables identifies with the dichotomous dependent variable of nondonor, which equals 0, or donor, which equals 1.

Logistic Regression was completed in steps to compare generation with the significant variables research questions one and two by either the Millennial or Generation X generations. Limiting logistic regression to these significant variables helps to reduce suppressor variables that were not significant, reduces degrees of freedom, and doing so helps to reduce the spurious variation. Logistic regression can be used to test whether there is a significant difference between two modalities (Cleophas & Zwinderman, 2010). A block of predictor variables from each research question were introduced and tested with the generation variable to see which predictor variables were a significant predictor of donor status. There was a total of six block or six steps, which were labeled as models. These steps were displayed in their corresponding model; the generation predictor variable is Model One, demographics predictor variables are in



Model Two, participation predictor variables are in Model Three, importance predictor variables are in Model Four, and performance predictor variables are in Model Five. The “Trimmed Model” only looked at the variables that are significant in Model Five. In each Model, the Model Chi-square, Prediction Accuracy, and Cox and Snell R-square were presented. Additionally the  $p$ -values were listed if any chi-square values or predictors were found to be significant. Significance ( $\alpha$ ) was based on 0.05. The null hypothesis for this research question is that there is no difference between the coefficients for the Millennial undergraduate involvement constructs and Generation X undergraduate involvement constructs.

**Potential Limitations.** This study investigated if undergraduate student involvement influences alumni to donate to their alma mater. The activity as an undergraduate precedes the dependent variable on donating to the alma mater. The independent variable must be related to the dependent variable. As stated in Astin’s previous research (1984, 1993, 1997, & 1999), and research by others (Baker, 2004; Ikenberry, 2000; Lunardini, 1993), undergraduate student involvement and alumni donating to their alma mater are related. It is difficult to account for all outside independent variables, just as other research studies have stated.

This study used data that was collected from many institutions. According to Binkley (2012, as cited in Wiersma & Jurs, 2005) “using an established data set instead of collecting original data increased the validity of this dissertation because it allows the researcher to access data from multiple institutions that are derived from a well-tested survey instrument” (p. 83). As stated earlier, PEG (2013) insists that the distribution of the samples reflect the overall population demographically. PEG also tests for non-response bias by using telephone interviews to attain a statistically significant sample of those who do not respond to the survey via the

internet. Additionally, the results from the Alumni Attitude Survey do support research by Ikenberry (2000), Lunardini (1993), and Sun, Hoffman, and Grady (2007).

The Alumni Attitude Survey does not include all possible student involvement opportunities, such as student government. Additionally, questions 9 and 10 do not measure the frequency of participation nor the amount of time spent in these organizations/activities. Therefore, a respondent may only devoted minimal time towards an activity, such as attending an intramural athletic event one time, and respond that they participated in intramural athletics. Another respondent may devote years to intramural athletics and also respond they participated in intramural athletics. Hence, the results from the data maybe skewed. This could cause biased and inaccurate results in the coefficients of the Logistic Regression.

An additional limitation is donor status is self-reported by the respondent. Therefore there is no way to determine how much one donates. A respondent may not report a small donation of a few dollars, but that is still a donation to the alma mater. Also, some respondents may inaccurately report that they make a donation, but the university does not report any donations from that alumnus.

Based on the AAS respondents choose a range for their age. This too is a limitation. This age range does correspond with the Millennial generation, but it does not correspond with other generations, such as Generation X. Therefore, I used the graduation year to determine if respondents were part of either Generation X or Millennial generation.

Since the data is a random sample of respondents from over 160 different institutions and the fact that many institutions request anonymity, there is no way to determine what type of institutions were in the sample. All of the institutions who participate in the AAS were four-year

institutions of higher education. Knowing if an institution is a public or private, size of institution, and if they are research oriented, would enrich the data.

### **Consideration of Human Subjects**

This dissertation carried out an analysis of secondary, anonymous data collected by a third party, the Performance Enhancement Group, through an existing survey, the Alumni Attitude Survey. Therefore, the researcher has no contact or interactions with human subjects.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I have described the methodology that was used for this dissertation. This dissertation is nonexperimental and is a quantitative analysis of a cross-sectional data set collected by a third party, the Performance Enhancement Group, through an existing survey, the Alumni Attitude Survey. The population consisted of undergraduate Millennial alumni who graduated between 2007 and 2012. This dissertation is guided by the involvement theory developed by Astin (1984). In his theory of involvement, Astin (1984) states that the more students are involved academically and socially in college, the more their learning increases. I used the five student involvement constructs developed by Astin (1997) to uncover the effect they have on the likelihood undergraduate Millennial alumni will become donors.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE DATA**

The purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and factors associated with undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. This study focused on the potential relationship between involvement and student satisfaction and whether those two variables influenced Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater. In Astin's 1984 theory of involvement, he theorized that the more students are involved academically and socially in college, the more their learning increases. These positive emotional experiences as an undergraduate may be a motivation to donate to their alma mater (Marr, Mullin, & Siegfried, 2005; Sun, Hoffman, & Grady, 2007). An alumnus' "emotional attachment" to one's alma mater was a significant predictor of giving in previous studies (Beeler, 1982; Gardner, 1975; Shadoian, 1989). This "emotional attachment" may come from inside or outside the classroom experiences, thus "satisfaction with the educational experience" was found to have significant relationship to donor status (Oglesby, 1991; Shadoian, 1989; Tsao & Coll, 2005) as well as satisfaction with the undergraduate experience (Van Horn, 2002).

This study's population was comprised of Millennial undergraduate alumni who completed the Performance Enhancement Group's (PEG) Alumni Attitude Survey (AAS) and graduated between 2007 and 2012. A sample size of 20,000 was randomly selected by PEG through their database of AAS respondents. From this data set, respondents with missing data were removed, leaving 11,864 complete respondents and from this 2,108 were identified as Millennial undergraduate alumni based on their graduation year between 2007 and 2012. Generation X undergraduate alumni were identified as part of this data set and were compared

with Millennial undergraduate alumni. From the 11,864 respondents, I identified 1,110 as Generation X undergraduate alumni based on their graduation year between 1986 and 1991. In research question one, generational demographics were measured. In research question two, generational involvement, importance of undergraduate activities as a student, and the alma mater's performance were measured. The significant findings from research questions one and two were used in research questions three's findings. In research questions three, the influence of generations was measured. The data were analyzed using the SPSS by IBM Incorporated, Version 21.0.

This chapter will discuss the results of the analysis pertaining to the research questions directing this study. The statistical methods and hypotheses for each research question are in Table 1. The research questions and corresponding hypotheses, variables and statistical methods are discussed, as well as the statistical results pertaining to the research questions are explained.

### Research Question One: Demographics

The demographics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors were the focus of this research question. In this study, the donor status is the dependent variable, which identifies respondents as either donors or nondonors to their undergraduate alma mater. Donors were AAS question 20 respondents (see Figure 1) who indicated that in the past or currently

20. Which of the following best describes your financial support of the XYZ University?

- ☐ Have not financially supported the XYZ University and do not plan to in future
- ☐ Have financially supported the XYZ University but do not plan to continue
- ☐ Have not financially supported the XYZ University but plan to in the future
- ☐ Currently financially support the XYZ University and plan to continue
- ☐ Currently financially support the XYZ University and plan to increase in future
- ☒ No Opinion

Figure 4. Alumni Attitude Survey question 20: Donor Status.



187.85,  $p \leq .001$ . This data is consistent with findings from Bhagat, Loeb, and Rover's (2010) and Bell (2009) that Millennial or young alumni donate at a much smaller percentage than older alumni.

**Gender.** Millennial male donors composed 41.4% of the subgroup and Millennial female donors composed 33.3% (see Table 5). This data was significant,  $Chi-square(1) = 9.28$ ,  $p \leq .01$ . This is inconsistent with WealthEngine's (2012) finding that female Millennial alumni are more likely to donate than male Millennial alumni. In Generation X subgroup (see Table 6), females (70.2%) donated at a slightly higher rate than males (68.7%) , but this difference was not significant,  $Chi-square(1) = 0.19$ ,  $p = 0.660$ . In sum, the null hypothesis that there are no significant gender differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors is rejected.

Table 5

*Demographic Characteristics of Millennial Respondents*

Variable	Subgroup n	% Sample	Donor n	% Donor	$X^2$	Observed $p$ Value
Gender					9.28	0.002**
Female	855	61.3%	285	33.3%		
Male	531	38.7%	220	41.4%		
Ethnicity					3.30	0.510
White	1081	75.3%	387	35.8%		
Black	95	7.3%	30	31.6%		
Hispanic	79	6.0%	28	35.4%		
Asian/Pacific Islander	102	8.3%	37	36.3%		
Other	42	3.1%	20	47.6%		

Degrees of Freedom = 1

$^{\wedge}p \leq 0.1$      $*p \leq 0.05$      $**p \leq 0.01$      $***p \leq 0.001$

**Ethnicity.** Among Millennial ethnicities (see Table 5), 35.8% of Whites were donors, 31.6% of Blacks were donors, 35.4% of Hispanics were donors, 36.3% of Asian/Pacific Islanders

Table 6

*Demographic Characteristics of Generation X Respondents*

Variable	Subgroup n	% Sample	Donor n	% Donor	$X^2$	Observed $p$ Value
Gender					0.19	0.660
Female	342	50.2%	240	70.2%		
Male	383	49.8%	263	68.7%		
Ethnicity					13.14	0.011*
White	654	87.7%	464	70.9%		
Black	33	5.1%	16	48.5%		
Hispanic	18	2.8%	13	72.2%		
Asian or Pacific Islander	22	3.0%	15	68.2%		
Other	9	1.4%	3	33.3%		

Degrees of Freedom = 1

$\wedge p \leq 0.1$      $*p \leq 0.05$      $**p \leq 0.01$      $***p \leq 0.001$

were donors, and 47.6% of those who identified as “Other” ethnicity were donors. Donor rates across Millennial ethnic groups were not significantly different from each other with a *Chi-square*(1) = 3.30,  $p = 0.510$ .

Regarding Generation X ethnicities (see Table 6), 70.9% of Whites were donors, 48.5% of Blacks were donors, 72.2% of Hispanics were donors, 68.2% of Asian/Pacific Islanders were donors, and 33.3% of those who identified as “Other” ethnicity were donors. Donor rates across the Generation X ethnic groups were significantly different from each other with a *Chi-square*(1) = 13.14,  $p \leq 0.05$ .

Table 7 summarizes the significant findings for research questions one. Specifically, these findings include the Gender by Millennial donor difference (i.e., males gave at a higher rate than females), and the Generation X by ethnicity donor difference (i.e., White, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander alumni gave back at higher rates than either Black, African American or



Other alumni). Given these findings for Millennial respondents, it can partially support the null hypothesis for research question one (i.e., that there are no significant demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors), therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 7

*Significant Findings by Donors among Generation in Research Question One*

Variables Measured	Millennials	Generation X
Demographic Characteristics		
Gender	Significant	
Ethnicity		Significant

### **Research Question Two: Involvement**

The objective of the second research question is to identify differences of involvement between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors. In Astin's (1984) theory of involvement, Astin states that the more students are involved academically and socially in college, the more their learning increases. The most influential types of involvement are "academic involvement, involvement with faculty, and involvement with student peer groups" (Astin, 1996, p. 126). Lunardini (1993) concluded that there is a link between undergraduate extracurricular involvement while a student and the support they provide while an alumnus. Thomas and Smart (2005) found that these undergraduate experience have a significant impact on future motivation to donate to their alma mater. The null hypothesis for this question is there are no significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors related to their involvement characteristics. This section describes the variables and statistical methods used followed by the findings.

## Variables and Statistical Methods Used

In the Alumni Attitude Survey, question nine (Figure 3) and question 10 (Figure 2) ask respondents about their involvement characteristics. Question nine asked respondents to identify which of 12 organizations/activities they participated in as a student. Question 10 asked respondents to rank how important a variety of activities were to them as a student, but also rank how well their alma mater performed those activities. There were sixteen activities in question 10; however, I chose to eliminate three (10m, 10n and 10o) because they did not relate directly to a specific activity. A four-point Likert scale served as the mechanism used to measure the importance and performance questions in question 10.

Chi-square tests were used to determine differences between donors and nondonors according to involvement categories in question nine. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients ( $r$ ) tests helped me to determine the relationship between donor status and the activities in question 10 (i.e., importance of an activity and their alma mater's performance of that activity). Significance was based on the traditional  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and since there were so many categories – a total of 12 involvement categories and 13 importance and university performance categories – additional steps were needed to control the likelihood of a type-I error. If a type-I error occurs, the null hypothesis will incorrectly be rejected (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). Hochberg's Sequential Method was used to reduce the chances of a type-I error from occurring (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995). After the chi-square and associated  $p$ -values were calculated for each involvement category in question nine, the chi-squares were ranked from smallest to largest in a spreadsheet in order to perform the Hochberg's Sequential Method. The same procedure was used for the Pearson  $r$  and associated  $p$ -values calculated for question 10's importance and university performance categories (i.e., the Pearson  $r$  results were ranked from smallest to largest

in a spreadsheet in order to perform the Hochberg's Sequential Method). The  $\alpha = 0.05$  is then divided by the number of tests that have been performed prior to the particular chi-square or correlation being evaluated. For example, the smallest chi-square or Pearson  $r$  value is evaluated at the traditional  $\alpha = 0.05$  (i.e.,  $p \leq 0.05 / 1 \text{ test} = 0.05$ ). The  $\alpha$ -value associated with the next smallest statistical value is then divided by two ( $p \leq 0.05 / 2 \text{ tests} = 0.025$ ), and so on. These new  $\alpha$ -values become the adjusted significance  $p$ -values. Because the new  $\alpha$ -values decrease as the number of tests increase, it becomes more difficult to commit a type-I error. The data set was composed of 2,108 Millennial respondents and 1,110 as Generation X respondents.

### **Results from Hypothesis Testing**

**Participation.** Millennial respondent data from the participation activities (question nine) showed that in seven of the twelve activities there were significant differences between donors and nondonors (see Table 8). Those activities were Honor Society (9a), Fraternity/Sorority (9b), Intramural Athletics (9c), Community Service (9f), Residence Halls (9h), Professional/Career Related Organizations (9i), and Ethnic/Cultural Centers (9k). These results are consistent with other research that a higher percentage of donors tend to be involved in activities while in school (Bhattacharya, Hayagreeva, & Glynn, 1995; Harrison, Mitchell, & Peterson, 1995; Oglesby, 1991; Shadoian, 1989; and Tsao & Coll, 2005). However, Generation X had different results than Millennials. In Generation X respondent data none of the activities were significant at the adjusted  $\alpha$  level. However, six of the twelve activities approached significance and showed differences between donors and nondonors (see Table 9). Those activities were Fraternity/Sorority (9b), Intramural Athletics (9c), Intercollegiate Athletics (9d), Community Service (9f), Academic Clubs (9j), and Ethnic/Cultural Centers (9k). It is interesting

Table 8

*Question Nine – Involvement - Millennials (using Hochberg's Sequential Method)*

Question #9 - Involvement	Involved		Not Involved		$X^2$	Observed $p$ Value	# of Tests	Adjusted $\alpha$ Level
	n- size	Percent Donors	n- size	Percent Donors				
9l: Newspaper, Radio, or Yearbook	113	34.5%	1241	35.8%	0.07	0.788	1	0.050
9e: Music/Theater/Arts	280	37.9%	1178	36.6%	0.16	0.692	2	0.025
9j: Academic Clubs	356	37.1%	1070	35.6%	0.25	0.616	3	0.017
9g: Religious Organizations	227	40.5%	1196	35.2%	2.35	0.125	4	0.013
9d: Intercollegiate Athletics	125	43.2%	1301	35.3%	3.11	0.078	5	0.010
9h: Residence Halls	511	43.2%	992	36.1%	7.30*	0.007	6	0.008
9k: Ethnic/Cultural Centers	211	47.9%	1236	34.8%	13.27*	0.000	7	0.007
9f: Community Service	664	44.4%	839	33.5%	18.75*	0.000	8	0.006
9a: Honor Society	469	46.9%	1018	34.9%	19.16*	0.000	9	0.006
9b: Fraternity/Sorority	300	48.3%	1156	34.3%	19.95*	0.000	10	0.005
9i: Professional/Career Related Organizations	687	44.1%	800	32.8%	20.23*	0.000	11	0.005
9c: Intramural Athletics	505	47.1%	972	32.9%	28.54*	0.000	12	0.004

Degrees of Freedom = 1

^ Approached Significance

\* Significance based off of Adjusted  $\alpha$  Level

Table 9

*Question Nine – Involvement - Generation X (using Hochberg's Sequential Method)*

Question #9 - Involvement	Involved		Not Involved		$X^2$	Observed $p$ Value	# of Tests	Adjusted $\alpha$ Level
	n- size	Percent Donors	n- size	Percent Donors				
9l: Newspaper, Radio, or Yearbook	70	74.3%	675	68.7%	0.92	0.339	1	0.050
9g: Religious Organizations	110	74.5%	656	68.6%	1.57	0.210	2	0.025
9e: Music/Theater/Arts	143	64.3%	640	70.8%	2.30	0.130	3	0.017
9i: Professional/Career Related Organizations	337	72.7%	454	67.4%	2.57	0.109	4	0.013
9a: Honor Society	151	75.5%	633	67.8%	3.42	0.065	5	0.010
9h: Residence Halls	305	73.4%	496	66.9%	3.77	0.052	6	0.008
9j: Academic Clubs	125	77.6%	646	68.0%	4.60^	0.032	7	0.007
9k: Ethnic/Cultural Centers	77	58.4%	698	70.6%	4.85^	0.028	8	0.006
9b: Fraternity/Sorority	198	76.3%	582	67.4%	5.54^	0.019	9	0.006
9d: Intercollegiate Athletics	84	81.0%	468	68.1%	5.82^	0.016	10	0.005
9c: Intramural Athletics	314	75.2%	475	66.1%	7.34^	0.007	11	0.005
9f: Community Service	236	76.3%	552	66.5%	7.46^	0.006	12	0.004

Degrees of Freedom = 1

^ Approached Significance

\* Significance based off of Adjusted  $\alpha$  Level

to note that in Generation X, a higher percentage of nondonors (70.6%) were involved in Ethnic/Cultural Centers compared to donors (58.4%). Only four activities were significant in both generations, they were Fraternity/Sorority (9b), Intramural Athletics (9c), Community Service (9f), and Ethnic/Cultural Centers (9k).

**Importance.** For question 10, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ ), were calculated to assess the relationship between the importance of certain activities and Millennial donor status. Like in question nine, the Hochberg's Sequential Method was utilized. Only one Millennial activity was significant with the adjusted  $\alpha$  level (see Table 10) and it was Faculty

Table 10

*Question 10 - Importance – Millennials (Hochberg's Sequential Method)*

Question #10 - Importance	$r$	Observed $p$ - Value	Degrees of Freedom	No. of Tests	Adjusted $\alpha$ Level
10f: Cultural Events	0.01	0.837	1126	1	0.050
10i: Administrator Relationships	0.01	0.703	944	2	0.025
10k: Student Employment Opportunities	-0.02	0.543	942	3	0.017
10c: Academics	0.03	0.241	1546	4	0.013
10l: Skills/Training for Career	-0.03	0.206	1542	5	0.010
10a: Admissions Process	0.04	0.198	994	6	0.008
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities	0.05	0.134	1125	7	0.007
10p: Alumni Interaction	0.05	0.091	1371	8	0.006
10b: Student Relationships	0.05	0.125	998	9	0.006
10h: Orientation	0.05	0.121	944	10	0.005
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities	0.07	0.029	1118	11	0.005 <sup>^</sup>
10e: Athletic Events	0.07	0.011	1288	12	0.004 <sup>^</sup>
10d: Faculty Relationships	-0.08	0.004	1498	13	0.004*

<sup>^</sup> Approached Significance

\* Significance based off of Adjusted  $\alpha$  Level

Relationships (10d). However, this activity had a negative correlation,  $r(1498) = -0.08$ ,  $p = 0.004$ , with donor status, which means that alumni who reported that faculty relationships were

important tended to donate at a lower rate than those who did not report these relationships to be important. There were two activities, Athletic Events (10e),  $r(1288) = 0.07$ ,  $p = 0.004$ , and Fraternity/Sorority (10g),  $r(1188) = 0.07$ ,  $p = 0.005$ , that approached significance; their observed  $p$ -values were significant at the traditional  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  level, but were not significant at the adjusted  $\alpha$  level. Unlike Faculty Relationships, these two activities demonstrated positive relationships between Millennial donor status and the activities indicating that alumni who reported that athletic events and fraternity and sorority opportunities were important tended to donate at a higher rate than those who did not report these activities to be important.

Table 11

*Question 10 - Importance – Generation X (Hochberg's Sequential Method)*

Question #10 - Importance	$r$	Observed $p$ - Value	Degrees of Freedom	No. of Tests	Adjusted $\alpha$ Level
10k: Student Employment Opportunities	0.01	0.879	498	1	0.050
10d: Faculty Relationships	-0.01	0.747	736	2	0.025
10a: Admissions Process	-0.02	0.721	545	3	0.017
10c: Academics	0.03	0.433	779	4	0.013
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities	0.03	0.493	567	5	0.010
10l: Skills/Training for Career	0.04	0.302	775	6	0.008
10p: Alumni Interaction	0.04	0.286	765	7	0.007
10e: Athletic Events	0.04	0.305	669	8	0.006
10f: Cultural Events	0.05	0.205	583	9	0.006
10b: Student Relationships	0.05	0.210	550	10	0.005
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities	0.06	0.122	578	11	0.005
10i: Administrator Relationships	0.07	0.114	504	12	0.004
10h: Orientation	0.09	0.053	503	13	0.004

^ Approached Significance

\* Significance based off of Adjusted  $\alpha$  Level

For question 10, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ ), were calculated to assess the relationship between the importance of certain activities and Generation X donor

status. Like in question nine, the Hochberg's Sequential Method was utilized. None of the Generation X activities were significant with the adjusted  $\alpha$  level (see Table 11) and none approached significance.

**Performance.** For part two of question 10, alumni ranked their alma mater's performance on thirteen activities. Pearson's  $r$  was used to assess the relationship between their university's performance on certain activities and donor status among Millennials. Here again, the Hochberg's Sequential Method was used to reduce the likelihood of a type-I error. Five activities were found to be significant with the adjusted  $\alpha$  level, all of which demonstrated a positive relationship between Millennial donor status and the alma mater's performance of that activity (see Table 12). These activities were Student Leadership Opportunities (10j),  $r(1086)=$  Table 12

*Question 10 - University Performance – Millennials (Hochberg's Sequential Method)*

Question #10 - University Performance	$r$	Observed $p$ - Value	Degrees of Freedom	No. of Tests	Adjusted $\alpha$ Level
10k: Student Employment Opportunities	0.02	.601	911	1	0.050
10a: Admissions Process	0.03	.441	977	2	0.025
10f: Cultural Events	0.03	.390	1087	3	0.017
10i: Administrator Relationships	0.03	.372	927	4	0.013
10d: Faculty Relationships	0.04	.159	1475	5	0.010
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities	0.06	.058	1060	6	0.008
10e: Athletic Events	0.06	.033	1251	7	0.007 <sup>^</sup>
10b: Student Relationships	0.07	.022	985	8	0.006 <sup>^</sup>
10p: Alumni Interaction	0.09	.001	1334	9	0.006*
10l: Skills/Training for Career	0.09	.000	1516	10	0.005*
10h: Orientation	0.09	.004	918	11	0.005*
10c: Academics	0.10	.000	1528	12	0.004*
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities	0.12	.000	1086	13	0.004*

<sup>^</sup> Approached Significance

\* Significance based off of Adjusted  $\alpha$  Level



0.12,  $p = 0.004$ ; Academics (10c)  $r(1528) = 0.10$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ; Orientation (10h)  $r(918) = 0.09$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ; Skills/Training for Career (10l)  $r(1516) = 0.09$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ; and Alumni Interaction (10p)  $r(1334) = 0.09$ ,  $p = 0.006$ . There were two activities, Student Relationships (10b)  $r(985) = 0.07$ ,  $p = 0.006$  and Athletic Events (10e)  $r(1251) = 0.06$ ,  $p = 0.007$ , that approached significance; their observed  $p$ -values were significant at the traditional  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  level, but were not significant at the adjusted  $\alpha$  level. In total, these seven activities demonstrated positive relationships between Millennial donor status and these activities. This indicates that Millennial alumni who reported that their alma mater performed well on athletic events, student relationships, alumni interaction, skills/training for career, orientation, academics, and student leadership opportunities tended to donate at a higher rate than those who did not report good alma mater performance on those activities.

For question 10, Generation X also ranked their alma mater's performance on thirteen activities. This was also computed using Pearson  $r$  to assess the relationship between their university's performance on certain activities and Generation X donor status. Just as in question nine and the importance variables in question 10, the Hochberg's Sequential Method was used to reduce a type-I error from occurring. Only one activity was found not to have significant relationship with Generation X donor status; it was Admission Process (10a). Twelve activities demonstrated positive relationships between Generation X donor status and these activities (see Table 13). This indicates that Generation X alumni who reported that their alma mater performed well on the activities tended to donate at a higher rate than those who did not report good alma mater performance on those activities.

Table 14 displays the significant variables for Millennials and Generation X across questions nine and 10. Based on these results, the null hypothesis for research question two (that

Table 13

*Question 10 - University Performance – Generation X (Hochberg's Sequential Method)*

Question #10 - University Performance	<i>r</i>	Observed <i>p</i> - Value	Degrees of Freedom	No. of Tests	Adjusted $\alpha$ Level
10a: Admissions Process	0.01	.852	532	1	0.050
10e: Athletic Events	0.12	.003	639	2	0.025*
10l: Skills/Training for Career	0.12	.001	753	3	0.017*
10h: Orientation	0.13	.006	483	4	0.013*
10k: Student Employment Opportunities	0.13	.004	476	5	0.010*
10c: Academics	0.14	.000	765	6	0.008*
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities	0.14	.001	528	7	0.007*
10b: Student Relationships	0.15	.001	533	8	0.006*
10p: Alumni Interaction	0.15	.000	735	9	0.006*
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities	0.15	.000	546	10	0.005*
10i: Administrator Relationships	0.16	.000	495	11	0.005*
10d: Faculty Relationships	0.16	.000	725	12	0.004*
10f: Cultural Events	0.18	.000	559	13	0.004*

^ Approached Significance

\* Significance based off of Adjusted  $\alpha$  Level

there are no significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors related to their involvement characteristics) is rejected. The next section describes the results from research questions three using Logistic regression.

Table 14

*Significant Bivariate Associations with Donor Status among Generations for Research**Question Two*

Variables Measured	Millennials	Generation X
Question #9 - Involvement		
9a: Honor Society	Significant	
9b: Fraternity/Sorority	Significant	Approached Significance
9c: Intramural Athletics	Significant	Approached Significance
9d: Intercollegiate Athletics		Approached Significance
9e: Music/Theater/ Arts		
9f: Community Service	Significant	Approached Significance
9g: Religious Organization		
9h: Residence Halls	Significant	
9i: Professional/Career Related Orgs.	Significant	
9j: Academic Clubs		Approached Significance
9k: Ethnic/Cultural Centers	Significant	Approached Significance
9l: Newspaper, Radio, or Yearbook		

Table 14 continued

*Significant Bivariate Associations with Donor Status among Generations for Research**Question Two*

Variables Measured	Millennials	Generation X
Question #10 - Importance		
10a: Admissions Process		
10b: Student Relationships		
10c: Academics		
10d: Faculty Relationships	Significant	
10e: Athletic Events	Approached	
10f: Cultural Events	Significance	
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities	Approached	
10h: Orientation	Significance	
10i: Administrator Relationships		
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities		
10k: Student Employment Opportunities		
10l: Skills/Training for Career		
10p: Alumni Interaction		
Question #10 - University Performance		
10a: Admissions Process		
10b: Student Relationships	Approached	Significant
10c: Academics	Significance	Significant
10d: Faculty Relationships	Significant	Significant
10e: Athletic Events	Approached	Significant
10f: Cultural Events	Significance	Significant
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities		Significant
10h: Orientation	Significant	Significant
10i: Administrator Relationships		Significant
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities	Significant	Significant
10k: Student Employment Opportunities		Significant
10l: Skills/Training for Career	Significant	Significant
10p: Alumni Interaction	Significant	Significant

### **Research Question Three: Generational Influence**

The purpose of research questions three was to determine the influence of generation on donor status holding demographics, involvement in activities, importance of activities, and performance of activities constant. Millennial alumni are younger than Generation X alumni, and based on research from Sun, Hoffman, & Grady (2007), Okunade, Wunnava, and Walsh (1994) and Langley (2010), age is a major predictor of alumni donating. The null hypothesis for this question is that there are no significant differences in giving between undergraduate Millennial alumni and Generation X alumni after taking into account demographic, involvement, importance and performance variables. This section describes the variables and statistical methods used to test this null hypothesis followed by a presentation of the findings.

#### **Variables and Statistical Methods Used**

Hierarchical Logistic Regression was used to test the effects of certain variables, while controlling for the influence of other variables. Logistic regression is appropriate for a dichotomous outcome and multiple independent variables (Cleophas & Zwinderman, 2010). A hierarchical regression model was selected for two reasons: (a) to test the predictive utility that a group of predictors adds to an existing model; and, (b) to determine how the relationship between the primary independent (generation) and dependent (donor status) variable changes with the addition of different groups of control variables.

Only the 30 variables that were found to be significant (or that approached significance) for at least one generation in the bivariate analyses associated with research questions one and two were included as control variables in the hierarchical logistic regression model for research questions three. In order to isolate the influence of the controls on the generation by donor relationship, the generation variable was the first predictor entered into the model (Model One).

This is followed by Model Two, which added gender and ethnicity as covariate predictors. Model Three then added the nine significant involvement predictors from AAS question Nine; Model Four added the three significant importance predictors from AAS question 10; and, finally, Model Five added the 12 significant university performance predictors from AAS question 10. After incorporating each of the 30 covariate predictors in Model Five, a “trimmed model” was developed by retaining only the significant predictors from this latter model. For all of these models, the Model Chi-square, Prediction Accuracy, and Cox and Snell R-square are presented. Additionally the  $p$ -values are listed for the model, as well as for the predictors that were found to be significant. Significance was based on the traditional value of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ . Each step in the hierarchical model appears in Table 15. The data set for this research question was composed of 3,218 respondents, which includes both Millennial ( $n = 2,108$ ) and Generation X ( $n = 1,110$ ) respondents.

### **Results from Hypothesis Testing**

**Model One.** The model containing only the constant term and generation was found to have predictive utility, with a *Model Chi-square*(1) = 105.69,  $p \leq 0.001$ , a *Prediction Accuracy* of 65.0% and a *R-square* of 8.6% (see Table 15). In this model, the constant equals the log-odds of donating when the predictor variable equals zero (because Generation X is coded as 0, the constant equals the log-odds of donating for Generation X alumni). A *Prediction Accuracy* of 65% means that it is correctly classifying 65% of the donor cases. The generation variable was able to account for 8.6% (*R-square* value) of the variance in the donor outcome variable,

Table 15

*Logistic Regression Model*

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Trimmed Model	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	0.77	0.11***	0.65	0.13***	0.36	0.16*	0.32	0.38	-0.56	0.46	-0.13	0.22
Generation (Gen X = 0, Millennial = 1)	-1.32	0.13***	-1.29	0.14***	-1.31	0.14***	-1.31	0.14***	-1.39	0.15***	-1.42	0.13***
Demographics												
Ethnicity Dummy1 (White = 0, Black = 1)			-0.35	0.29	-0.28	0.31	-0.30	0.31	-0.29	0.31		
Ethnicity Dummy2 (White = 0, Hispanic = 1)			-0.04	0.33	-0.02	0.34	-0.02	0.34	-0.02	0.35		
Ethnicity Dummy3 (White = 0, Asian = 1)			0.30	0.31	0.37	0.32	0.37	0.32	0.50	0.32		
Ethnicity Dummy4 (White = 0, Other = 1)			0.01	0.41	0.04	0.41	0.03	0.42	0.08	0.43		
Gender (Women = 0, Men = 1)			0.24	0.13^	0.24	0.13^	0.24	.13^	0.26	0.14*	0.15	0.12
Involvement (Question 9)												
9a: Honor Society					0.05	0.16	0.05	0.16	-0.01	0.16		
9b: Fraternity/Sorority					0.35	0.16*	0.30	0.19	0.31	0.20		
9c: Intramural Athletics					0.38	0.15**	0.37	.15*	0.37	0.15*	0.37	0.12**
9d: Intercollegiate Athletics					0.18	0.22	0.18	0.22	0.25	0.22		
9f: Community Service					0.18	0.15	0.17	0.15	0.16	0.15		
9h: Residence Halls					-0.12	0.14	-0.12	0.14	-0.17	0.15		
9i: Professional/Career Related Orgs.					0.04	0.13	0.04	0.13	-0.01	0.14		
9j: Academic Clubs					0.01	0.17	0.02	0.17	0.01	0.17		
9k: Ethnic/Cultural Centers					0.16	0.22	0.17	0.22	0.16	0.23		
Importance (Question 10)												
10d: Faculty Relationships							-0.01	0.10	-0.13	0.10		
10e: Athletic Events							0.01	0.07	-0.03	0.07		
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opps.							0.03	0.08	0.00	0.08		
University Performance (Question 10)												
10b: Student Relationships									-0.06	0.10		
10c: Academics									0.16	0.12		
10d: Faculty Relationships									0.11	0.10		
10e: Athletic Events									0.02	0.09		
10f: Cultural Events									-0.09	0.10		
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opps.									0.03	0.09		
10h: Orientation									0.13	0.09		
10i: Administrator Relationships									-0.10	0.10		
10j: Student Leadership Opps.									0.24	0.11*	0.27	0.07***
10k: Student Employment Opps.									-0.08	0.09		
10l: Skills/Training for Career									0.09	0.10		
10p: Alumni Interaction									0.04	0.09		
Change in Model Chi-Square (df)	105.69(1)***		6.42(5)		25.45(9)**		0.26(3)		23.54(12)*			
Model Chi-Square (df)	105.69(1)***		112.12(6)***		137.56(15)***		137.82(18)***		161.36(30)***		166.66(4)***	
Prediction Accuracy	65.0%		65.0%		65.3%		65.1%		66.8%		65.6%	
R-square	8.6%		9.1%		11.1%		11.1%		12.9%		11.3%	

^p ≤ 0.1    \*p ≤ 0.05    \*\*p ≤ 0.01    \*\*\*p ≤ 0.001

meaning there is more (91.4%) to donor outcome that generation. Given these model statistics, it is not surprising that the coefficient for generation was also found to be significant,  $B = -1.32$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ . The negative coefficient indicates that there is a negative relationship between the generation variable and donor status. Because of the coding used for the two variables (i.e., Generation X = 0, Millennial = 1; Non-Donor = 0, Donor = 1), the negative relationship indicates that Generation X alumni are more likely to donate to their alma maters than Millennial alumni.

**Model Two.** Variables for gender and ethnicity were added as predictors of donor status in Model Two. Four dummy variables were used to represent the five ethnic categories; White was used as the reference category for Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander and Other. With gender, then, a total of five predictor variables were introduced in Model Two. Gender was found to be significant in research questions two for Generation X, but not for Millennials. Ethnicity was found to be significant in research questions two for Millennials, but not for Generation X. The introduction of the demographic predictors did not produce a significant change in the predictive utility of the logistic regression model (see Table 15), *Change in Model Chi-square*(5) = 6.42,  $p = 0.267$ . However, the overall model was still significant, *Model Chi-square*(6) = 112.12,  $p \leq 0.001$ . None of the ethnicity dummy variables were found to be significant, but the gender coefficient did approach significance,  $B = 0.24$ ,  $p \leq 0.10$ . Because females were coded as “0” and males as “1,” the positive regression coefficient indicates that males are more likely to donate than females. Adding the demographic predictors in this model yielded a 65.0% *Prediction Accuracy*, and an *R-square* of 9.1%, which is a minimal change. Despite the addition of the demographic variables, the regression coefficient for generation remained negative and significant,  $B = -1.29$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ . The negative relationship



indicates that Generation X alumni are more likely to donate to their alma maters than Millennial alumni, even after controlling for demographic variables.

**Model Three.** Nine more predictors were introduced in Model Three. They were the significant variables from AAS question nine that asked alumni what activities they were involved in as an undergraduate. The nine-predictor variables were: Honor Society (9a), Fraternity/Sorority (9b), Intramural Athletics (9c), Intercollegiate Athletics (9d), Community Service (9f), Residence Halls (9h), Academic Clubs (9j), Professional/Career Related Organizations (9i), and Ethnic/Cultural Centers (9k). The addition of these nine predictors produced a significant change in the model's predictive utility, *Change in Model Chi Square*(9) = 25.45,  $p \leq 0.01$ , with the overall model also being significant (see Table 15), *Model Chi-square*(15) = 137.56,  $p \leq 0.001$ . The only activities that were found to be significant predictors of donor status, however, were Fraternity/Sorority involvement (9b) ( $B = 0.35$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) and Intramural Athletics involvement (9c) ( $B = 0.38$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Gender remained a predictor that continued to approach significance,  $B = 0.24$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ . Adding the involvement activities to the generation and demographic predictors in Model Three created a *Prediction Accuracy* of 65.3% and an *R-square* of 11.1%. Despite the addition of the involvement variables, the regression coefficient for generation continued to be negative and significant,  $B = -1.31$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ . The negative relationship indicates that Generation X alumni are more likely to donate to their alma maters than Millennial alumni, even after controlling for demographics and involvement activities.

**Model Four.** Three more predictor variables were introduced in Model Four. They were the significant variables from AAS question 10, which asked alumni about the activities they believe were an important part of their undergraduate experience. The three predictor variables

were Faculty Relationships (10d), Athletic Events (10e), and Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities (10g). The addition of the three importance variables did not impact the predictive utility of the logistic regression model, *Change in Model Chi Square*(3) = 0.26,  $p = 0.968$ , but the overall model was still significant (see Table 15), *Model Chi-square*(18) = 137.82,  $p \leq 0.001$ . None of the importance variables were significant predictors of donor status. The Fraternity/Sorority involvement coefficient was no longer significant,  $B = 0.30$ ,  $p = 0.111$ . Intramural Athletics involvement continued to remain significant,  $B = 0.37$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ , and Gender continued to approach significance,  $B = 0.24$ ,  $p \leq 0.10$ . Adding the importance of certain activities in Model Four created a *Prediction Accuracy* of 65.1% and a *R-square* of 11.1%. The regression coefficient for generation remained unchanged from Model Three,  $B = -1.31$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ . The negative relationship indicates that Generation X alumni are more likely to donate to their alma maters than Millennial alumni, even after controlling for demographics, involvement activities, and importance variables.

**Model Five.** Twelve more predictor variables were introduced to predict donor status in Model Five. These 12 predictors were the significant variables from research questions two that asked alumni how well their alma mater performed on specific activities (AAS question 10). These predictor variables are: Student Relationships (10b), Academics (10c), Faculty Relationships (10d), Athletic Events (10e), Cultural Events (10f), Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities (10g), Orientation (10h), Administrator Relationships (10i), Student Leadership Opportunities (10j), Student Employment Opportunities (10k), Skills/Training for Career (10l), and Alumni Interaction (10p). The addition of these performance variables increased the *Prediction Accuracy* of the logistic regression model (see Table 15), *Change in Model Chi Square*(12) = 23.54,  $p \leq 0.05$ , with *Model Chi-square*(30) = 161.36,  $p \leq 0.001$ . Despite the

increase in predictive utility for the overall model, only one performance variable, Student Leadership Opportunities (10j), was found to be a significant predictor of donor status,  $B = 0.27$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ . With the introduction of the performance predictor variables, Gender's significance increased to  $B = 0.26$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ , thereby suggesting that males are more likely to donate than females. Intramural Athletics involvement continued to remain significant,  $B = 0.37$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ . Adding the alma mater's performance of certain activities to the model created a *Prediction Accuracy* of 66.8%, which was an increase of 1.7 percentage points from Model Four, and a *R-square* of 12.9%, which was an increase of 1.8 percentage points from Model Four. Generation remained a significant predictor,  $B = -1.39$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ , with the coefficient increasing in magnitude slightly from -1.31 in Model Four to its highest value of -1.39 in Model Five. As in Models One through Four, the negative relationship indicates that Generation X alumni are more likely to donate to their alma maters than Millennial alumni, even after controlling for demographics, involvement activities, importance, and performance variables.

**Trimmed Model.** In the final logistic regression model, the number of variables included was trimmed to only those that were significant predictors (or those that approached significance) in Model Five. This final step was called the Trimmed Model. In the Trimmed Model, the goal is to reduce the influence of spurious relationships, and to increase the statistical power associated with each variable in the model so that the relationships between the predictors and the outcome can be more accurately assessed. The four-predictor variables that were retained in the Trimmed Model include: Generation, Gender, Intramural Athletics involvement (9c), and alma mater performance on Student Leadership Opportunities (10j). Together, these four variables produced a significant prediction model (see Table 15), *Model Chi-square*(4) = 166.66,  $p \leq 0.001$ .

Unlike in Models Two, Three, Four, and Five, Gender no longer approached significance as a predictor of donor status,  $B = 0.15$ ,  $p = 0.199$ . Intramural Athletics involvement remained significant, but compared to Model Five, it became more significant in the Trimmed Model,  $B = 0.37$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ . The alma mater's performance on Student Leadership Opportunities (10j) also increased in significance in the Trimmed Model,  $B = 0.27$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ . Generation remained a significant and negative predictor of donor status,  $B = -1.42$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ . Again, Generation's regression coefficient grew stronger and did not diminish; it increased and was the highest of all the models. The negative coefficient indicates that those in Generation X are more likely to donate to their alma maters than those in the Millennial generation, even after controlling for gender, participation in intramural athletics and the provision of quality student leadership opportunities.

Together, the four-predictor variables in the Trimmed Model ( $n = 3,218$ ) produced a *Prediction Accuracy* of 65.6%, which was higher than Models One, Two, Three, and Four, but 1.2 percentage points less than in Model Five. The *R-square* was 11.3%, which was greater than Models One, Two, Three, and Four, but 1.6 percentage points less than in Model Five. The slight decrease in prediction accuracy and variance accounted for in the donor status from Model Five to the Trimmed Model was likely due to a loss of degrees of freedom, but in my opinion the gain in model simplicity provided by the Trimmed Model more than outweighs the loss in predictive utility.

These results suggest that Generation X was more likely to donate to their alma maters than Millennials. Furthermore, generation was a significant predictor variable throughout all six models, while holding demographics, involvement, importance, and performance variables constant. Thus, generation seems to be a strong predictor of donor status, independent of other

activities, which suggests that age was an important variable in understanding which alumni are more or less likely to give back to their schools. Thus, more Millennial alumni may have the capacity to donate later in life. The only other variables that were found to predict donor status were opportunities for student leadership and involvement in intramural athletics. Based on the *R-square* of 11.3% in the Trimmed Model, however, it was evident that there was more to alumnus donating than these variables are able to account for. Based on these results, the null hypothesis that undergraduate Millennial alumni giving does not differ from undergraduate Generation X alumni giving after controlling for demographics, involvement, importance and performance variables are rejected.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and causes of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. Data was collected from the *Alumni Attitude Survey* and Millennial ( $n = 2,108$ ) alumni were compared with Generation X ( $n = 1,110$ ). Three research questions guided the data analysis and Astin's (1984) student involvement theory directed the research model. Table 16 provides the significant findings from all three research questions.

The analysis of data showed that Millennial alumni donors are likely to be male and Millennial student involvement does have an impact on donor behavior, specifically involvement in Honor Society (9a), Fraternity/Sorority (9b), Intramural Athletics (9c), Community Service (9f), Residence Halls (9h), Professional/Career Related Organizations (9i), and Ethnic/Cultural Centers (9k). Results from the Logistic Regression analysis showed that involvement in intramurals and the alma mater's performance on student leadership opportunities had the largest

relative impact on the likelihood that alumni will become donors. The analysis also showed that Generation X alumni had a greater likelihood of donating than Millennial alumni. The final chapter of this study provides a discussion of the major findings.

Table 16

*Significant Findings by Donors among Generation in Research Questions One, Two, and Three*

Variables Measured	Millennials	Generation X	Research Question 3
Research Question One			
Demographic Characteristics			
Gender	Significant		
Ethnicity		Significant	
Research Question Two			
Question #9 – Involvement			
9a: Honor Society	Significant		
9b: Fraternity/Sorority	Significant	Approached Significance	
9c: Intramural Athletics	Significant	Approached Significance	Significant
9d: Intercollegiate Athletics		Approached Significance	
9e: Music/Theater/ Arts			
9f: Community Service	Significant	Approached Significance	
9g: Religious Organization			
9h: Residence Halls	Significant		
9i: Professional/Career Related Orgs.	Significant		
9j: Academic Clubs		Approached Significance	
9k: Ethnic/Cultural Centers	Significant	Approached Significance	
9l: Newspaper, Radio, or Yearbook			

Table 16 continued

*Significant Findings by Donors among Generation in Research Questions One, Two, and Three*

Variables Measured	Millennials	Generation X	Research Question 3
Question #10 - Importance			
10a: Admissions Process			
10b: Student Relationships			
10c: Academics			
10d: Faculty Relationships	Significant		
10e: Athletic Events	Approached Significance		
10f: Cultural Events			
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities	Approached Significance		
10h: Orientation			
10i: Administrator Relationships			
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities			
10k: Student Employment Opportunities			
10l: Skills/Training for Career			
10p: Alumni Interaction			
Question #10 – University Performance			
10a: Admissions Process			
10b: Student Relationships	Approached Significance	Significant	
10c: Academics	Significant	Significant	
10d: Faculty Relationships		Significant	
10e: Athletic Events	Approached Significance	Significant	
10f: Cultural Events		Significant	
10g: Fraternity/Sorority Opportunities		Significant	
10h: Orientation	Significant	Significant	
10i: Administrator Relationships		Significant	
10j: Student Leadership Opportunities	Significant	Significant	Significant
10k: Student Employment Opportunities		Significant	
10l: Skills/Training for Career	Significant	Significant	
10p: Alumni Interaction	Significant	Significant	
Generation	n/a	n/a	Significant

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

Before this dissertation's completion, no large-scale, nationally representative study examined the population of undergraduate Millennial students, their involvement activities, or their donor behavior as alumni. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation was to identify the characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and predictors of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. The problem for this study came from no existing research examining the factors that lead to undergraduate Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater. While specific institutions have sought to learn more about why their alumni donate to them, the research makes no effort to examine the larger population of Millennial alumni donors. Therefore, this dissertation added to the literature concerning student development by increasing the research focused on how institutions of higher education can better understand how student satisfaction influences an alumnus to donate to their alma mater. This dissertation sought to establish if the demographic and involvement characteristics of Millennial undergraduate alumni influenced their decision to financially donate to their alma mater and if those characteristics differed from Generation X alumni.

This study was based on data from the Alumni Attitude Survey. A random sample of 20,000 respondents was selected. From that sample, the data set was composed of 2,108 Millennial respondents and 1,110 as Generation X respondents.

In this chapter, I will discuss the research findings for this dissertation and how they relate to the prior literature. I will also make suggestions for future research and offer suggestions for the Alumni Attitude Survey, and recommend actions for higher education administrators.



### **Research Question One Results**

Research question one was “What are the demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and undergraduate Millennial alumni nondonors?” Gender and ethnicity were the two demographic variables used from the Alumni Attitude Survey.

There was significant difference in giving by gender among Millennial respondents. A larger percentage of males (41.4%) were donors compared to females (33.3%). This was inconsistent with WealthEngine’s (2012) finding that female Millennial alumni are more likely to donate than male Millennial alumni. There was not significant difference in giving by gender among Generation X respondents. Ethnicity among Millennial respondents was not significantly different between donors and nondonors. However, among Generation X respondents, ethnicity was significant. White, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander Generation X alumni gave back at higher rates than Black/African American, or Other Generation X alumni. There were no significant demographic differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors.

### **Research Question Two Results**

Research question two was “How do undergraduate Millennial alumni donors compare to nondonors in regards to their undergraduate involvement characteristics?” Data came from AAS question nine, which asked respondents to identify which activities they were involved in as an undergraduate. AAS question ten asked respondents their perceived importance of certain campus activities and the university’s performance on those activities. The results showed that there are significant differences between undergraduate Millennial alumni donors and nondonors related to their involvement characteristics.

The data showed a larger percentage of Millennial nondonors were involved in activities as undergraduates than donors, however, the data also showed that a larger percentage of nondonors were not involved as well when compared to donors. Thus, among Millennial respondents, nondonors made up a larger percentage of the respondents than donors. However, among Generation X respondents, this was not the case; donors were more involved than nondonors. As alumni grow older, there is a greater chance for a donation, which is consistent with Olsen, Smith, and Wunnava (1989), thus alumni who were involved are more likely to donate than those who were not involved.

Millennial respondents' undergraduate involvement was categorized by the researcher into three different categories; they were academic involvement, faculty involvement, and peer involvement based on Astin's model. The academic involvement variables that significantly relate to donor status were participation in an honor society, professional or career related organizations, and ethnic and cultural centers. The alma mater's performance with orientation, preparing students for skills or training for a career, and their alma mater's performance with academics and classes also relate to donor status. Among faculty involvement, only the alumnus' importance with faculty relationships relate to donor status. Peer involvement includes many variables that relate to donor status. They were fraternity/sorority involvement, participation in intramural athletics, community service, residence halls participation, and the alma mater providing or encouraging relationships with other students, encouraging the attendance at athletic events, providing student leadership opportunities and providing opportunities to interact with alumni.

Faculty Relationships among Millennials alumni had a negative correlation with donor status. Reasons for this negative correlation could be that alumni who had close relationships

with faculty as undergraduates peruse a graduate or professional degree soon after their bachelor's degree. Since they are continuing with their education and are not working fulltime, may hinder them from making a financial donation to their undergraduate alma mater. Another reason is that alumni never developed a relationship with faculty because of the number of different instructors students have; they rarely had the same instructor more than once. Also, large class sizes may prevent a personal relationship with instructors.

Regarding involvement in a fraternity or sorority, this study's findings are consistent with other research by Bhattacharya, Hayagreeva, and Glynn (1995), Bruggink and Siddiqui (1995), Harrison, Mitchell, and Peterson (1995), and Marr, Mullin, and Siegfried (2005) who found that donor status was positively associated with undergraduate involvement in a fraternity/sorority. Regarding community service, this study's findings are consistent with research by Astin, Sax, and Avalos (1999) that involvement in service was associated with donating money to one's alma mater.

When combining the significant involvement variables between both Millennial and Generation X, this study's research shows that alumni who were involved in community service, intramurals, intercollegiate athletics, academic clubs, and fraternities and sororities over time were more likely to donate to their alma mater than those who were not involved in those activities. Undergraduate involvement may relate to alumni satisfaction, which may lead to a donation to one's alma mater. This is consistent with research from Marr, Mullin, and Siegfried (2005), Oglesby (1991), Shadoian (1989), Sun, Hoffman, and Grady (2007), and Tsao and Coll (2005) who all concluded that alumni - who were satisfied with their previous student experience - were more likely to donate to their alma mater.

### **Research Question Three Results**

Research question three was “What is the influence of generation on donor status holding demographics, importance, and performance variables constant?” The influence of generation on donor status holding demographics and undergraduate involvement constant was a significant predictor of donor status. Hierarchical Logistic Regression was used to test the effects of the 30 variables found to be significant in research questions one and two for either the Millennial generation or Generation X.

In research question three, a series of significant variables from research question one and two were introduced in five different models. The male gender served as a predictor of donor status in three of the six models, but after introducing additional variables, it no longer became a significant predictor. Similarly, fraternity and sorority involvement was a significant predictor in one model, but it too was no longer significant upon the introduction of additional variables. Three variables were significant predictors or influencers of donor status throughout research question three; they were involvement in intramural athletics, the alma mater offering student leadership opportunities, and Generation X.

Undergraduate leadership opportunities can develop one’s leadership and interpersonal skills. Being involved a variety of extracurricular activities, such as intramurals, fraternity or sorority, honor societies, residence halls, intercollegiate athletics, community service, etc. can provide opportunities to develop one’s leadership skills. The foundation of this dissertation was Astin’s (1984) involvement theory, which stated that the more students are involved academically and socially in college, the more their learning increases. As concluded by Thomas and Smart in 2005, undergraduate involvement experiences have a significant impact on future motivation to donate to one’s alma mater. These involvement experiences as an undergraduate

help create leadership skills and through this a connection with the institution is created; this connection continues past graduation. This connection is based on leadership opportunities, specifically intramural athletics, and is a predictor of donor status.

There are several reasons to speculate why intramural involvement is a predictor of a donation. The competitive nature of intramurals may lead a person to be competitive in their career and thus possibly earn more money. Another maybe the pressure from intramural teammates to donate; because of a person's competitive nature to not be the only teammate not to donate.

Alumni who had leadership opportunities as undergraduates more than likely developed relationships with many students, faculty, and staff, and therefore were probably mentored by university faculty and staff. These relationships created loyalty to the alma mater and more than likely these relationships continue through social media and in other forms. Additionally, students who developed leadership skills probably have a greater network of friends, which may open doors for job opportunities. These job opportunities may lead to better paying jobs, but also because of their already established leadership skills, and if they were able to continue to hone their leadership skills, may lead to promotions and advancement in salary. Because of this, leadership opportunities are a predictor of donor status.

This study found that AAS respondents who identified as Generation X are a greater predictor of donating to their alma mater than Millennial alumni, while holding demographics, involvement, importance, and performance variables constant. This finding is consistent with Okunade, Wunnava, and Walsh (1994) finding that graduation year is the most significant predictor of alumni donation and Bristol's 1990 and Johnson Grossnickle Associates and Achieve's 2011 findings that the number of years between graduation and onset of giving had a

substantial effect on the magnitude of alumni giving. Younger alumni, such as Millennial alumni, when compared to older alumni, such as Generation X, may be paying off student loans and making less money and are less able to make a donation to their alma mater. When one's personal economic condition increases the chances of making a donation increases. This may occur when the economy improves or when one's salary increases, which may occur over time. This finding also supports research by Sun, Hoffman, and Grady (2007) and Marr, Mullin, and Siegfried (2005). Ultimately, undergraduate Millennial alumni giving does differ from undergraduate Generation X alumni giving after controlling for demographics, involvement, importance and performance variables.

The *R-square* values in research question three indicate that there were many other variables at play in predicting donor status other than generation, intramural involvement and leadership opportunities. An older alumnus may have been involved in intramurals and had many leadership opportunities as an undergraduate, but they are not the predictors for an alumnus to become a donor. Other variables that were not measured by this study are also factors in becoming a donor, such as if an alumnus has the disposable income to make a donation, the relationship the alma mater has with the alumnus, and if the alumnus is asked to make a donation.

### **Major Findings**

The major factors that lead alumni to donate to their alma mater was involvement in intramurals, the university performing well in providing leadership opportunities, and years from graduation. Regarding Millennials, involvement opportunities that provide leadership opportunities demonstrated a positive relationship with Millennial donor status, specifically peer involvement activities such as: fraternity/sorority involvement, participation in intramural

athletics, community service, residence halls participation, and the alma mater providing or encouraging relationships with other students, encouraging the attendance at athletic events, providing student leadership opportunities and providing opportunities to interact with alumni.

The number of years from graduation is the strongest predictor of donor status. When combining leadership opportunities through a variety of organizations, specifically, intramurals, the more years from graduation was a strong predictor of donor status, specifically when comparing younger alumni, such as Millennials, with slightly older alumni, Generation X.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations**

#### **Suggestions for Future Research**

No research exists that solely studied the impact of intramural athletic involvement and donating to one's alma mater. Additional research in the comparison between intramural involvement and donor status would add to the literature. Intramural sports departments should have access to past team rosters with each team member's campus identification number. These campus' intramural department should provide this data to their institutional advancement office. With this data, alumni can re-engage with their alma mater and teammates through reunions and alumni multi-media communications, such as alumni magazines, social media, and newsletters. Building this relationship with the alumni may lead to increased loyalty to the institution and possibly a donation in the future. Additional research on intramural involvement that could be measured, specifically the impact of team intramurals versus single/solo intramurals in relation to alumni donor status would add depth to the literature.

Additional research on what kind of leadership opportunities lead to donor status, specifically qualitative studies, such as focus groups and/or interviews with donors, could also prove to be helpful. Asking Millennial donors what are the biggest factors relating to their

donation to their alma mater and hearing their story will enrich this paper's research. Past research by Kinports (2009) and Broido (2004) show that Millennials are participating in community service more than past generations. Future studies on the impact of service by Millennial undergraduates in relation to donation to their alma mater is necessary in the future since there is more emphasis on service-learning within and out of the classroom.

### **Suggestions for the Alumni Attitude Survey (AAS)**

AAS demographic questions on age should be in the range of generations or more importantly choosing the year of one's birth would enrich the data. Allowing alumni to choose between a list of undergraduate majors or field of study would broaden the scope of the research. Additionally, including a broader list of additional organizations in question nine would be helpful, such as student government, type of religious organizations, and political organizations would be helpful for alumni, but also for the alma mater / institution. Additionally, AAS question nine asked if alumni were involved in residence halls. This question is somewhat confusing; does it mean one lived in a residence hall or was one involved while living in a residence halls, such involved in hall council/government, was a resident assistant, etc.? Broadening these questions would allow institutions to identify more areas of where their alumni show loyalties and pride while an undergraduate.

### **Recommendations for Higher Education**

Some institutions are cutting funding towards student affairs areas, such as eliminating the vice chancellor/president for student affairs position and/or merging student affairs departments with academic affairs and/or other administrative departments. Consequently, student affairs areas may lose the financial and staff resources it once had. The new senior campus administrator or vice chancellor/president who is over these former student affairs



departments may not have the knowledge and experience to adequately lead these traditional student affairs departments because their backgrounds may be in academic affairs or managerial areas such as physical plant, accounting, or human resources.

Some institutions that have graduate programs focusing on student affairs administration or college student personnel are eliminating these departments or merging these programs with other departments that do not focus on higher education, education administration, student development theory, or student affairs. This study reinforces the importance that student engagement provides in relation to graduation in the short term (Astin, 1996 and Tinto, 1987), but also in the long term in relation to a donation to the alma mater.

This study reinforces the importance of having university staff who are trained and educated to promote student engagement; most of these staff were educated with graduate or doctoral degrees in student affairs administration. With continuing rising costs to operate colleges and universities, campus leadership should consider the possible negative long-term impacts in the form of donations if student affairs divisions and departments do not have the adequate staff, professional support, and professional expertise in the field of student affairs. Without adequate staff, the mentoring and the educational programs that develop leadership skills within student organizations, fraternities and sororities, intramurals, etc. members and teammates may not be as well developed.

Universities need to continue to reconnect their alumni with the institution. Focusing on alumni who were involved in specific undergraduate activities, such as intramurals, fraternity/sorority, may prove to be helpful in securing donations. Therefore, it is important for colleges and universities to keep accurate records of which organizations and activities their students were involved in while undergraduates, therefore accurate membership rosters are

important. Student affairs departments should consider working closer with their university's fundraising department and alumni association by sharing these rosters. With this information, fundraisers and alumni associations can remind alumni of their positive undergraduate experiences, which may lead alumni to volunteer for the institution, provide internships, or donate financially to their alma mater. It is important that institutions begin reconnecting these alumni earlier, rather than waiting when they are decades removed from their undergraduate years. Millennial alumni may not be able to afford to donate now because of their low income and/or they are paying off their student loans. However, it is important to legitimize the small donation. Their donation may increase in the future because of this positive relationship with their alma mater that is built over time.

Earlier it was mentioned how involvement relates to retention and eventually graduation (Tinto, 1987). Many of the factors that relate to donation are related to student involvement. Yes, academics and what occurs in the classroom are very important and are the primary reasons why students choose their institution, however, the outside the classroom experiences through leadership opportunities and the interaction with their peers, maybe the reason why students are retained. From my personal experience of 17 plus years working in student affairs, these outside the classroom experiences is where students can talk about what is going on in their classes with their peers and student organization advisors, relieve stress through intramurals and other activities, be mentored by their organization advisors, and hone their leadership, motivation, communication, and confrontation skills. If a student is retained, then they may graduate. If a student graduates, then there is a greater chance to have higher income. Through the development of the skills they learned as an undergraduate from their out of the classroom experiences, may prepare them for more leadership and/or supervisory roles in their profession,

which may lead to higher income as well. This reinforces the importance of involvement and the work student affairs departments do in developing these skills for students.

Additionally, it is important for institutions to document what organizations their students were involved in while on their campus. Historically, campuses have done a good job documenting fraternity or sorority membership because of the relationship they have with each fraternity or sorority's national organization, but this has not been the case with other student organizations.

### **Conclusions**

This study examined the characteristics and predictors of Millennial alumni who donated financially to their alma mater and those who did not by reviewing data from the Alumni Attitude Survey (AAS). The data set was composed of 2,108 Millennial respondents and 1,110 as Generation X respondents. This study can help university foundation and alumni association staff members to determine why their donors, specifically Millennial alumni, give to their institution and how to be more effective in requesting for a financial donation from them. Generating consistent support from alumni and other donors is an economic necessity for postsecondary institutions. As current students graduate, institutions need to know how they can entice these alumni to provide financial support. This dissertation fills the gap in the literature by providing new research on the effect Millennial student involvement has on the likelihood they will become donors to their alma mater.

This dissertation used Astin's (1984) involvement theory as a foundation for the research. The connection that alumni have with their alma maters and the outcome of donations after graduation may stem from the connections that these alumni established while involved in activities as undergraduates. Astin's involvement theory provides some insights into identifying

the experiences that help to inspire alumni to donate financially and helps institutions identify and devise new ways of using these experiences to help increase donations. The positive emotional experiences from undergraduate involvement may be motivation to donate to one's alma mater.

This study identified the involvement characteristics of undergraduate Millennial alumni donors, the differences between these donors and nondonors, and predictors of undergraduate Millennial alumni donor behavior. This study focused on the potential relationship between involvement and student satisfaction and subsequently, found statistically significant variables that influenced Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater. Specifically, Millennial alumni who were involved in organizations that relate to peer involvement; such as fraternity/sorority involvement, participation in intramural athletics, community service, residence halls participation, and the alma mater providing or encouraging relationships with other students, encouraging the attendance at athletic events, providing student leadership opportunities and providing opportunities to interact with alumni relate to one donating to their alma mater. These variables were statistically significant, but they were also practically significant, meaning that the findings do make a difference in helping to identify factors that lead to Millennial alumni to donate to their alma mater.

The findings in this dissertation reiterate the importance of student engagement on the campus. An institution's faculty and staff involvement with undergraduates, specifically those staff who work directly with student organizations, are vital for student engagement that lead to graduation and future donations as an alumnus.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A – CORRESPONDANCE



Dr. Saran Donahoo  
Educational Administration & Higher Education  
Pulliam Hall, Room 131, Mail Code 4606  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
475 Clock Tower Drive  
Carbondale, IL 62901

Dear Dr. Donahoo:

This letter relates to the doctoral research for Andy Morgan, a current doctoral student in Educational Administration & Higher Education at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The Performance Enhancement Group (PEG) has agreed to give Mr. Morgan data on alumni attitude toward their undergraduate alma mater using the Alumni Attitude Survey between January 1, 2001 and December 31, 2012. No identifying information of the respondents was collected in this process and therefore all the data that will be given to Mr. Morgan will be de-identified and anonymous.

PEG also gives Mr. Morgan permission to use and reprint images of the Alumni Attitude Survey in his dissertation as well.

Please do contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert D. Shoss".

Robert D. Shoss  
Member and Managing Consultant  
PEG, Ltd. and the Alumni Attitude Study

**AlumniAttitudeStudy.org**

4635 Southwest Freeway, Suite 220  
Houston, TX 77027  
713-527-0078

## APPENDIX B – ALUMNI ATTITUDE SURVEY

Welcome! ( xyzu\_o )

7/12/13 4:25 PM

### AAS Core Questionnaire

There are many different ways that we can help you customize your survey. Check out the red text below for a few examples of how we can put your institution's brand on this survey.



#### Section I

To start, would you please tell us a bit about yourself and your experience with the XYZ university?

1. How would you rate your decision to attend the XYZ University?

- Bad decision ☐
- Fair decision ☐
- Good decision ☐
- Great decision ☐
- No opinion ☒

2. How often do you promote the XYZ University to others?

- Never ☐
- Occasionally ☐
- Regularly ☐
- All the time ☐
- No opinion ☒

3. How close to the XYZ University do you currently live?

4. Which of the following best describes your experience as a student?

- Poor ☐
- Fair ☐
- Good ☐
- Excellent ☐
- No opinion ☒

5. Which of the following best describes your experiences as an alumnus/a?

- Poor ☐
- Fair ☐
- Good ☐
- Excellent ☐
- No opinion ☒

6. Which of the following describes your overall current opinion of **the XYZ University**?

- Poor ☐
- Fair ☐
- Good ☐
- Excellent ☐
- No opinion ☒

7. How well did the highest degree earned from **the XYZ University** prepare you for each of the following:

- |  | Poor<br>preparation   | Fair<br>preparation   | Good<br>preparation   | Excellent<br>preparation | No opinion                       |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Current work status   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| b. Commitment to continuous learning                                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| c. Responding to new career opportunities                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| d. Contributing to my community                                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| e. Deepening my understanding and commitment to personal development | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| f. Further graduate education  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

8. How important is it for you and alumni in general to do the following and how well does **the XYZ University** do at supporting alumni in doing them?

- |   | Importance for alumni to do the item |                        |                       |                          | Quality of support from the XYZ University |                       |                       |                       |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|   | 1 = Not important                    | 2 = Somewhat important | 3 = Very important    | 4 = Critically important | 1 = Poor                                   | 2 = Fair              | 3 = Good              | 4 = Excellent         |
| a. Mentoring students   | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Identifying job opportunities for graduates                                | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Providing feedback to <b>the XYZ University</b> about how it is perceived  | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Recruiting students  | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e. Serving as ambassadors or advocates for <b>the XYZ University</b>          | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f. Providing financial support for <b>the XYZ University</b> (e.g. donations) | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g. Networking with other alumni   | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| h. Volunteering for <b>the XYZ University</b>                                 | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| i. Providing leadership by serving on boards, committees, etc.                | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| j. Attending general alumni and university events                             | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| k. Attending athletic events  | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

## Section II

The following questions are about your experience as a student

The following questions are about your experience as a student.

9. In which of the following organizations/activities did you participate as a student? (Choose all that apply.)

- | No                               | Yes                   |   | No                               | Yes                   |                                  |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | a. Honor Society                                | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | b. Fraternity/Sorority           |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | c. Intramural athletics                         | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | d. Intercollegiate athletics     |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | e. Music/theater/art                            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | f. Community service             |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | g. Religious organizations                      | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | h. Residence halls               |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | i. Professional or career related organizations | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | j. Academic clubs                |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | k. Ethnic and/or cultural centers               | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | l. Newspaper, radio, or yearbook |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | m. Other <input type="text"/>                   |                                  |                       |                                  |

10. How important was each of the following to your experience as a student, and how well did the XYZ University do at providing them?

	Importance				University's performance			
	1 = Not important				1 = Poor			
	2 = Somewhat important				2 = Fair			
	3 = Very important				3 = Good			
	4 = Critically important				4 = Excellent			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
a. Admissions process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Relationship with other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Academics/classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Relationship with the faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Attending athletic events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Attending cultural events including films, lectures, and other arts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Opportunity to participate in fraternity/sorority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Orientation for new students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Relationship with administration and staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Student leadership opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. Student employment opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. Skills/training for career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m. Lessons about life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
n. Exposure to new things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
o. Traditions or values learned on campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
p. Opportunity to interact with alumni	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Name one person who had a special impact on your experience as a student. Please also provide a brief description of the relationship.

12. Name one program or activity that had a special impact on your experience as a student. Please also provide a brief description of the program or activity.



### Section III

The balance of the questions pertain to your experience as an alumnus/a.

13. What are barriers to your participation in alumni activities? (Choose all that apply.)

- | No                                  | Yes                   | No                                  | Yes                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | b. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | d. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | f. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | h. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| i. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | j. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| k. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | l. <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| m. Other                            | <input type="text"/>  |                                     |                       |

14. How would you most like to be contacted by the XYZ University?

15. In your relationship with the XYZ University, please describe how often you do or have done each of the following.

- |   | Never                 | One time              | A few times           | Frequently            | No opinion                       |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Attend local Alumni Association events | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| b. Get in touch with other alumni         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| c. Read alumni e-mail                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| d. Read the alumni magazine               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| e. Use printed alumni directory           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| f. Use electronic alumni directory        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| g. Attend University sporting events      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| h. Attend class reunions                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| i. Visit campus                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| j. Visit University Web site              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| k. Volunteer to work on campus/event      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

16. For each of the communication methods listed below, please tell us how important that method is to you and also rate the XYZ University's effectiveness in utilizing that method.

- |                    | Importance            |                        |                       |                          | Effectiveness         |                       |                       |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                    | 1 = Not important     | 2 = Somewhat important | 3 = Very important    | 4 = Critically important | 1 = Poor              | 2 = Fair              | 3 = Good              | 4 = Excellent         |
| a. Alumni web site | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

d. University web site	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Electronic newsletter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Reunion mailings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. E-mail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Communication regarding services and benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Invitations to University activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. The alumni magazine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Periodic informational communications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Invitations to alumni activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. Viral videos/YouTube/Online Networking (MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Please indicate how much each of the following impacts your overall opinion of the XYZ University:

	No impact on my opinion	Some impact on my opinion	Significantly impacts my opinion	Critically impacts my opinion	No opinion
a. Value/respect for degree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
b. Campus aesthetics (e.g. buildings, grounds, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
c. Media visibility (e.g. newspaper, magazine articles, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
d. History/tradition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
e. Accomplishments of alumni	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
f. School rankings (e.g. U.S. News & World Report)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
g. Accomplishments of faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
h. Outreach to community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
i. Accomplishments of students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
j. Success of athletic teams	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
k. Providing scholarships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
l. Other	<input type="text"/>				<input checked="" type="radio"/>

18. What are the one or two things that are most important to you about being an alumnus/a?

19. What is the most meaningful thing the XYZ University can do for you in the next 5-10 years?

20. Which of the following best describes your financial support of the XYZ University?

- ☐ Have not financially supported the XYZ University and do not plan to in future  
☐ Have financially supported the XYZ University but do not plan to continue  
☐ Have not financially supported the XYZ University but plan to in the future  
☐ Currently financially support the XYZ University and plan to continue  
☐ Currently financially support the XYZ University and plan to increase in future  
☒ No Opinion

21. Please indicate your feeling regarding the frequency of the following.

	Way too much	A little too much	About right	Would welcome more	Not nearly enough	No opinion
a. Email correspondence from the XYZ University (newsletters, news flashes, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
b. Printed materials from the XYZ University (magazines, newsletters, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
c. Information regarding programs such as credit cards, insurance services, long distance services, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
d. Solicitations for donations (annual fund, support for athletics, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
e. Invitations to alumni activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

22. Please indicate the extent of your loyalty to each of the following:

	Not loyal	Somewhat loyal	Loyal	Very loyal	No opinion
a. My undergraduate college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
b. My major or academic area of study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
c. A faculty member or instructor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
d. A student organization or activity I was associated with	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
e. the XYZ University athletics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
f. the XYZ University in general	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

23. Please use the space below to provide any further comments you may have.

#### Section IV

You may choose to add your own custom questions to your survey: [Examples of custom questions](#)

**Thank you for your input. Your time is greatly appreciated.**

[Yes, submit my survey!](#)

**VITA**

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University

Robert Andrew Morgan

amorgan@siu.edu

Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, December 1994

Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
Master of Science in Education, Workforce Education and Development, May 1999

Dissertation Title:  
Factors that Lead Millennial Alumni to Donate to their Alma Mater

Major Professor: Saran Donahoo