The story of Max O’Connor and the St. Louis Spartans is one we all know (and if you don’t, you’ll be excited to read on). For the STL Spartans, there was little doubt that Max had all the makings of a Spartan, he just needed the financial help to get him here. This story is powerful and inspiring and has all the “pieces” needed to be a successful driver of scholarship and endowment donations.

**ST. LOUIS SPARTANS**

From Homelessness to Private Jets
James Maxwell “Max” O’Connor

Max O’Connor was homeless as a teenager. He knew that a college education would help him get on track to a better life. MSU held scholarships, including the Greater St. Louis MSU Alumni Club award, helped him to attend Michigan State University. He will graduate with a degree in mechanical engineering.

The question for you is this...who is your “Max?”

So what would these types of posts, emails and stories look like? We’ve gathered some really great examples from last year’s Day. The following few pages will show you some samples and give you a breakdown on how or why we felt it succeeded and give you some ideas on how you could leverage these to your own benefit.
COMMUNICATING THE MSU STORY
Supporting an Existing Fund

For 2017, we are still focusing on “student support” here at MSU, and for good reason. As you all know, the need for student support is great. Costs continue to rise and so does student debt. The goal for units here on campus should be focused on students, but the fund doesn’t have to say “student” or “scholarship.” However, it should be something you would be able to tie a specific story to and relate to your club’s mission. Your fund, or mission, can be broad, but your focus should be tailored to students.

Keep your audience in mind when choosing a fund you’d like to support. Here is an example of what you might see from a college for the Day of Giving this year:

Residential College in the Arts and Humanities
DEAN’S INITIATIVE FUND

Refugee families immigrating to the United States must learn how to navigate their new community and society. They are challenged to understand the basic cultural dimensions of life in the U.S., from how education and healthcare systems are organized and accessed, to common understandings of appropriate behavior for children, and what foods are nutritious and healthy to eat. These challenges can often create a generation gap within families, especially among grandparents, parents, and young adults. As younger generations adapt more quickly to their new, adopted culture and society, older generations can feel increasingly isolated and disconnected from their heritage.

RCAH chose a broader fund, but told a specific story that helped donors understand how the fund would help students.

James Madison College
JMC EMERGENCY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Students never know when something beyond their control will happen to disrupt plans for completing their undergraduate studies. A family crisis or sudden health issue are two of many possible scenarios that can derail the determined student in achieving their undergraduate degree. This emergency scholarship fund will assist students who are on the right track academically and motivated to complete their degree in James Madison, but have been sidetracked by unforeseen circumstances that create financial hardship. They are often to the point of having to leave school for a semester or more. Emergency scholarships of as little as $750 or $1,500 make all the difference in the world to keep them on track to complete their education from MSU!