A Word to the Wise on a Successful Communication Campaign

ADVICE FROM DANIEL SPADAFORE

Last year, it could be argued that the most successful campaign was run by Daniel Spadafore (you may remember him by his maiden name, Mathis) in his role over at International Studies and Programs (ISP). Our colleagues in University Advancement were able to ask Daniel why he was so successful, and here is what he had to share:

• Find a champion that reflects your history or mission — and also has lots of connections. In ISP, the blessing of David Horner, beloved former Director of the Office of International Students & Scholars, helped our effort gain credibility both internally and externally. David’s involvement attracted the support of MSU faculty and staff as well as international alumni who had never given before.

• We did several pre-Giving Day emails to all ISP and ISP leadership emphasizing David’s involvement as well as announcing the matching gifts from MSU staff. Emphasizing David’s gift helped us attract additional matching gifts.

• Our team worked hard to gain the buy-in of ISP leadership. We presented about Giving Day at the “ISP Director’s meeting” and sent email updates to this sub-group. It paid off, with many of our center and unit directors making gifts.

• Communicate with your club’s social media gurus. We identified, rather quickly, the ISP staff members that use social media frequently (whether professionally or personally) and asked them to help spread the word. We sent this group an email and also tagged them in posts on Facebook and Twitter — forcing them into the conversation.

• In addition to our unit-level communicator, we worked closely with the communicator specifically in the Office of International Students & Scholars. We gained her buy-in early, ensuring that we would have a presence on OISS social media. Her involvement led to the creation of a video highlighting our chosen fund:

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