

# RISE

Results in Independent Schools E-newsletter  
Shining a Light on Fundraising

Alexander Haas  
TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

**First Things First**



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[www.fundraisingcounsel.com](http://www.fundraisingcounsel.com)



from the standing-desk of  
**David H. King** | President & CEO

## The Hiring Conundrum: Experience vs Relationships

Should you hire someone who has a strong background in development or someone who already has relationships in the community? This is a question we hear often from nonprofit leadership. The answer is simple. I believe a proven history of successful fundraising trumps existing relationships 100% of the time, and here are four reasons why:

### 1. Their relationships aren't with your nonprofit.

If a development officer's relationship with people is based on their role as a development officer at another organization, there is a good chance those relationships will not follow them to their new role. Those relationships are based on their role at another organization, not at yours. Not to mention, there is the possibility that the development officer leaving that organization for another could actually damage donor relationships in the process.

### 2. Donor interest doesn't transfer based on relationships.

The personal relationships development officers have with donors is not why those donors are giving. Donors give significant gifts to causes they believe in and organizations they trust, not because they like the development officer who is soliciting them. If the donor does not believe in the organization or the cause, the relationship they may have with a staff member is not going to move them to a major gift.

Donor interest is not transferable just because of a personal relationship. Consider this study on donor motivations - influence from others is at the bottom of the list of how donors choose a cause or organization to support. If you are a private school and hire a development officer who was previously president of the Junior League and "knows everyone in town" (or my least favorite, has a great contact list), do you really think those relationships will translate into contributions to the school?

Probably not.

[There are two very important reasons here....](#)



### What Do Donors Want?

by Nancy E. Peterman, Partner

Penelope Burk's second edition of *Donor-Centered Fundraising* was released this fall, coincidentally, the same year that *Crazy Rich Asians*, a movie based on the book by Kevin Kwan, hit the big screen.

Burk quotes from *Plutocrats: The Rise of the New Global Super-Rich and the Fall of Everyone Else* by Chrystia Freeland that in 1975, the top 1% of Americans earned 8% of all income. However, 35 years later, the top 1% takes more than 22% of the income pie.

It's no surprise that while total giving to most institutions continues to rise, the number of donors is shrinking. Many organizations work diligently to acquire new donors, only to see them lapse after the first year.

Burk's latest edition updates the research that she and her research firm started more than 20 years ago. Then, as now, donors continue to state that their needs (in my opinion) are fairly simple and must be met before they are asked to make another gift.

According to her research, donors still want to be thanked promptly. They don't want the thank-you letter to be a listing of the latest accolades or accomplishments of the organization, and strictly forbidden is an overt or veiled request for more funding.

[Read more....](#)

## Participate & Listen & Learn....

### The Importance of Planned Giving



"The key to being a good fundraiser is being donor centric." **Lula Dawit**, Director of Planned Giving for **The Woodruff Arts Center**\* joins Alexander Haas President and CEO, David King to discuss the importance of planned giving.

The two dive into the continued impact of the 2017 Tax Act, managing fundraiser/donor relationships and how the arts are shaping the local Atlanta community.

Go here to listen to this podcast.



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*\*Alumni Client Partner*

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## We'd Like You to *Know...*

### **Team Member Spotlight: Jarrad Howard**

Meet **Jarrad Howard**, Campaign Strategy Studies Coordinator at Alexander Haas! Jarrad's passion is rooted deep for nonprofits and the arts. With a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre from Brenau University, and as a member of the Gainesville Theatre Alliance, Jarrad's background in music and theatre led him to development and fundraising.

In this Team Member Spotlight, Jarrad shares what initially sparked his interest in the arts, his views on trends in millennial giving along with some humor and laughs!



### **Our Transformational *Fundraising Services***

You're just a jump away from learning about all the fundraising aids Alexander Haas has in its vault of Transformational Services.

[\*Jump!\*](#)

### ***Transforming Institutions***

For more than 30 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with some of the largest, and some of the smallest, independent schools that help transform our nations adolescents into our next leaders.

[\*Our Independent School Client Partners.\*](#)



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