



Encore

A Spotlight on Philanthropy in the
Performing Arts

Alexander-Haas
TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

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from the Coastal desk of
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Senior Partner

Let's Skip to the Good Part

As my mind was seeking some relief from the daily news of war horrors in Ukraine, fears of another pandemic surge, and culture war episodes, I recalled some of the moments of joy our work in philanthropy can bring, both as a consultant and as a development officer.

I remembered a donor with whom I had the chance to work some 20 years ago to bring about a \$10 million gift to transform a small program to a whole new level. It was by far the largest gift commitment he had ever made. On the day we were announcing the gift he called me over and whispered in my ear 'The night I decided to sign the gift agreement I was so excited about what it would do that I could not sleep a wink.' His joy was mine.

Then there was the church school campaign leader who pretended to be a curmudgeon at meetings but afterwards would confide how much he was enjoying going on solicitation calls. The \$6 million campaign had been designed to achieve the first four projects of more than 10 in a campus master plan. As the campaign became increasingly successful more projects were added, and the goal was raised twice, more than doubling the original goal.

As we got within \$500,000 of the goal the leader decided he wanted to wrap the campaign up with a bang. He had already made a \$1 million gift but decided to make an anonymous matching challenge gift of \$250,000 and cover the expense to invite the top 30 donors to the campaign to a fancy dinner at his club promising a major announcement. After dinner and a special performance from the school choir, he announced the matching challenge and within about 20 minutes there were pledges of more than \$275,000. He was over the moon and told me about 10 p.m. as the last guest was leaving that it was the most fun he had had in 30 years. He called me early the next morning to reiterate what a joyful moment it was when we went over the campaign goal. Again, his joy was mine.

Happily, there are many more such memories, but I will close with my favorite. During my time as a university development officer, I was blessed to work with a beloved volunteer (I will call him Joe to protect his good name) with a wicked sense of humor. He taught me a lot about major gift fundraising, but it was in annual

giving where we had the most fun. While we never asked our volunteers to make more than five calls in person, he would take the names of 10 of his closest friends who were donors.

Instead of calling on them in person, he would write a nice letter asking them to renew their gift. Some, did, indeed, do so. However, for those who had not responded within a month, he took great delight in writing them blistering letters along these lines.

'I cannot believe what a cheapskate you are or why I even consider you a good friend. I know how much your house is worth, I saw that new Mercedes in your driveway and heard you went to Europe for a month vacation. What kind of person are you who has all that money but won't make a gift to help deserving students at the university get a good education? I am ashamed to admit I know you. If you have any decency, you will write a check immediately for twice what you gave last year.'

He copied me on these letters and the first time I saw one I went into a panic and called him to ask about the wisdom of such an approach. His only response was 'trust me.' Sure enough, I began to get gifts from the recipients with notes like 'despite your poor judgment in involving a volunteer like Joe, I am making a gift again this year.' Later, I learned that Joe had used this approach on his friends in some other campaigns and they sometimes deliberately delayed their gift just so they would get such a letter from him. He confided in me that thinking up new ways to insult his friends for a good cause was one of the most enjoyable things he did. Once I understood that I looked forward to reading my copies of his letters every year and still recall them fondly some 40 years later.

Our Team

PBS Feature on Be Haas

She was our Founder. She was a force in Atlanta. She was a master at what she did in philanthropy. She had a way of looking over her glasses and reduce any titan of industry to adolescent status with just a glance. She was a badass.

Beatrice "Be" Hirsch Haas changed the civic engagement in Atlanta throughout the mid-20th Century with her community leadership, political activism, and fundraising campaigns. WABE, Atlanta's PBS affiliate, recently put the spotlight on Be, our Founding Partner, with their feature, [Be Haas: Atlanta's Fundraising Force](#), a look at the extraordinary life and career of the first fundraising consultant in the Southeast. Friends and colleagues reminisced about Be, sharing stories of how she helped mold what is now a very vibrant philanthropy community.

Whether you worked with her, knew her socially, or heard a story about this unique woman, you will have a heightened appreciation for our friend, our founder, Be. [Take a few minutes to watch here.](#)



Gifts Not Captured...Captured
New research suggests that a significant

In-Person & Virtual Event
Attendees Both Likely to Donate

share of Americans donate cash that isn't counted because it doesn't go to nonprofits. Nearly a third of Americans give money to structured community organizations that aren't registered charities, such as mutual-aid groups or rent-relief funds. Also, about a third make cash gifts to individuals, often friends or family, through direct payments, crowdfunding efforts, online fundraisers, or other means.

These findings are from the first in a series of reports by GivingTuesday and by Data Commons, GivingTuesday's research arm, and sets out to measure the range of informal and often individual ways that people pursue social good, including mutual-aid groups, GoFundMe-like crowdfunding platforms, meal trains for sick neighbors, and neighborhood rent-relief funds. *COP, 4-8*

[Read the report here.](#)

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Virtual attendees and in-person attendees are nearly equal in saying they would donate more than \$100 during an event, according to a new survey of 1,000 adults who attended a fundraising event.

Key Findings

- 21% of virtual attendees said they would kick in \$100 or more on top of event registration fees while 19% of in-person attendees said the same.
- More than a quarter said most events they attended between January 2020 and February 2022 were in-person events. A nearly equal share said they mostly attended events online.
- 96% of virtual event attendees said event experience as good or excellent, but 87% of in-person event attendees gave the same rating to their experience.
- Comedy shows, concerts, and other live events inspired 38% of respondents to say they'd attend in person, while 31% said they'd attend virtually.

We Know the Performing Arts

For more than 35 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with leading performing arts and cultural organizations across the country that help communities be a better place to live. Just ask our clients.

[Our Arts Clients](#)

Face It: Arts Organizations are Different

Our services aren't cookie cutter. We don't operate with a boilerplate, merely changing names and locations. We craft each and every service we provide to match your organization's unique needs, wants and abilities. We work hard and expect you to do the same. Together we can help you transform your arts organization, your fundraising, and the unique community you serve.

Whether your need is in Capital Campaign, Annual Fund Campaign, Major Gifts, Leadership Annual Giving, Planned Giving or all of the above, we take a fresh approach to nonprofit fundraising.

[Our Services](#)





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