

CULTIVATING A GIVING-BACK CULTURE:
AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE MOTIVATIONS OF MILLENNIAL DONORS

by

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Abstract

Cultivating relationships with millennial donors -- individuals born between 1982 through 1995 -- has become a topic of interest for researchers, organizations and fundraisers. Kansas State University had begun creating a “giving-back culture” among current students through a student-led campaign, in the hope of augmenting alumni donations to the university in the future. This study explored current students’ motives to give back to their university, determined the factors influencing their decision-making process, and discerned the effects of a student-giving campaign on postgraduates’ giving behavior. Roger’s Diffusion of Innovations model helped explain the influence of communication channels and opinion leaders on the decision-making process of millennial donors, both alumni and current students. This study found that millennials are motivated to donate based on several campaign factors, such as the mission, how the money is be used, the receiving of a gift for their donation, and pride in the institution. Friends and close colleagues have a positive influence on millennials’ donation decisions. Millennials also were found to have a preference for the traditional medium of newspaper, along with a high degree of influence for campaign events with face-to-face communication. The lack of apparent effect for students’ self-reported preferences for social media seems to indicate that either diffusion is not at work for this campaign, or that the diffusion process has yet to accelerate for giving back. These findings support previous research on alumni-donor motivations as well as build a foundation for future studies on millennial-donor motivations.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Cultivating relationships with millennial donors -- individuals born between 1982 through 1995 -- has become a topic of interest for researchers, organizations and fundraisers. The groups are particularly interested in knowing what motivates millennial donors to donate and how to engage them. The 2010 Millennial Donor Study found that this specific group of people is motivated to give and volunteer as a result of personal engagement and human connections, more so than technology or social media (Feldman & Grossnickle, 2010). But, do the same motivations apply to college students and alumni ages 18 to 28?

Universities and colleges target alumni as donors in order to raise additional funds. Research has found that alumni are motivated to give by a variety of economic, psychological, and behavioral factors (see Baade & Sundberg, 1993; Belfield & Beney, 2000; Hueston, 1992; Marr, Mullin & Siegfried, 2005; Monks, 2003; Okunade, 1996; Okunade, Wunnava & Walsh, 1994; Weerts & Ronca, 2007). A growing number of universities and colleges have begun to develop a “giving-back culture” among current students, in the hope of augmenting alumni donations to the university in the future. The 2010 Millennial Donor Study surveyed individuals within the same age segment as current students and young-adult alumni and revealed compelling results. Yet, research lacks studies on college students as donors to the university while they are attending. Several organizations have conducted surveys on millennial donors’ giving behavior. These studies have found that the young-adult segment, individuals ages 18 to 25, of the millennial generation are more likely to volunteer their time than donate money, but have the potential for giving back sometime in the future (see Korn, 2009; Roberts, 2006; Stone, 2009). Most of the research for universities and colleges focuses on alumni giving, rather than current students and their motivations for donating.

The following section provides background information on the K-State Proud student campaign. Kansas State University is a research I, public university located in Manhattan, Kan. Approximately 23,000 students attend the university. The K-State PROUD student campaign began in 2007 as part of Kansas State University’s \$500-million Changing Lives Campaign, a comprehensive initiative for K-State students, faculty and staff, and the facilities that they use.

K-State PROUD Student Campaign

K-State PROUD is the first ever all-university, student-led annual campaign at Kansas State. The PROUD effort is run under the motto “students helping students.” The campaign is under the direction of staff representatives for the Kansas State University Student Foundation, campaign co-chairs (current students), and a student advisory committee. K-State PROUD has raised more than \$345,000 within four years. (M. Weixelman, personal communication, January 1, 2011)

Each year a fundraising goal is set: \$35,000 for 2007, \$70,000 for 2008, \$100,000 for 2009, and \$115,000 for 2010. The campaign has seen success. It had exceeded its goal each year: \$63,000 in 2007, \$93,000 in 2008, \$107,500 in 2009, and \$95,000 in 2010. The K-State Proud student campaign begins with a ceremonial kickoff event to encourage student involvement both as donors and volunteers, to announce the year’s fundraising goal, and to introduce the campaign’s organizers and honorary spokesperson. (The honorary spokesperson is an individual who is well known and respected in the K-State community such as a coach, faculty member, or K-State supporter. This individual serves as the campaign’s spokesperson for one year.) Key student leaders on campus attend the Volunteer Kickoff event by invitation only. The volunteer kickoff aims to employ the influence of these student leaders to inspire other students to participate in the campaign. (M. Weixelman, personal communication, January 1, 2011)

K-State PROUD Week is the focus of the campaign. The week targets students through various on-campus events and activities to encourage donations. Activities take place at an information table set up in the K-State Student Union during the week. Past activities included donating at the table, taking pictures with Willie the Wildcat (K-State’s mascot), passing out free cookies, and getting autographs from K-State celebrities (i.e., basketball players). Student donors receive a coveted K-State PROUD t-shirt for a minimum donation of \$10. (T-shirt sales account for roughly \$7,000 of the total amount raised. Additional funds come from private donations and sponsorships.)The weeklong events lead up to a campaign celebration and pep rally at the K-State PROUD game. This culminating celebration is held before a K-State men’s basketball game, in which invited students fill the student section of the stadium wearing the year’s K-State PROUD t-shirt, and head men’s basketball coach Frank Martin reveal the year’s fundraising total. (M. Weixelman, personal communication, January 1, 2011; KSU Foundation, 2011; Schrag, 2009)

All of the money raised through the campaign goes into a Student Opportunity Award fund, creating two types of awards: K-State Hero awards and K-State Proud awards. According to the campaign's website, the K-State Hero awards recognize students who have shown an outstanding commitment and dedication to the K-State community through campus leadership, community service or other areas of student life. K-State Proud awards help students who are experiencing extreme financial hardship, who need temporary financial assistance, who exhausted all other forms of financial assistance, or whose future at K-State may be in jeopardy. All K-State students are eligible to apply for a K-State Proud award themselves, or a faculty member or fellow student can nominate them for a Proud or Hero award. K-State Hero awards are given in the fall and spring semesters with five awards of up to \$500 each awarded each semester. A student allocations committee apportions K-State Proud awards. The committee meets weekly to review recent applications and makes funding recommendations based on each student's situation. (KSU Foundation, 2011; Schrag, 2009)

K-State PROUD organizers have utilized media for promotional purposes since the campaign's inception, specifically Facebook and YouTube videos. The KSU Student Foundation created videos in 2008 and 2009 to thank donors for their support. In 2010, a digital ethnography class produced a flash mob video, called "Students Helping Students." The flash mob video portrays a group of 100 students coming together to help other students in various ways on campus and in the community. Helpful acts included buying lunch and textbooks, picking up a car to fit it into a parking spot, and carrying a student across the street. The students involved in the video donated their own money to use toward the random acts of kindness for other students. The flash mob video was created to demonstrate that K-State PROUD is more than just a t-shirt; it's about students helping students. The video was uploaded to YouTube and has had more than 32,000 viewers and received 82 comments. Some of the comments are from people who are not associated with K-State. The video even helped the campaign gain national attention. Congressman Jerry Moran commended the efforts of the K-State Proud student campaign for enriching the college experience and elevating K-State students' commitment to one another during a speech to the House of Representatives in February 2010. K-State PROUD launched a Twitter feed in 2011 to expand marketing efforts one step further. (Sharp, 2000)

This study explores current students' motives to give back to their university, determines the factors influencing their decision-making process, and discerns the effects of a student-giving campaign on postgraduates' giving behavior. Roger's diffusion of innovations theory serves as theoretical support. K-State Proud, the five-year-old, annual student-giving campaign at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kan., is used as the subject of this research. The following research questions are investigated: 1) What factors have helped successfully transition postgraduates who participated in the campaign to become alumni donors? and 2) What are millennial donors stated motivations for donating to K-State Proud?

The following chapter reviews the literature on factors influencing alumni giving; young adults, also known as millennials, and their involvement in philanthropy; and Rogers' diffusion model. Subsequent chapters entail methodology, data analysis and results of the study, and a discussion of the implications of the findings.

Chapter 2 - Review of Literature

Factors Influencing Alumni Giving

Researchers and organizations have been investigating alumni giving for decades. Since 1955, the Council for Aid to Education has campaigned for individuals to give back to higher education. The council researches and analyzes voluntary contributions to higher education, including alumni giving. The annual Voluntary Support of Education survey shows that alumni giving and participation declined sharply in 2009, due to the recession (Council for Aid to Education, 2010). The 10 percent alumni-giving rate for 2009 was the lowest on record for the survey (Council for Aid to Education, 2010). Yet, educational institutions should not be discouraged by the drop in alumni giving over the past several years. Alumni did donate and they may donate again, especially if they really care about the institution and its cause. Universities must concentrate on understanding what motivates alumni to give back and what may deter them in order to cultivate a good and meaningful relationship and foster supportive behavior (Sung & Yang, 2008). Past research shows that many factors, including economic, psychological, and behavioral, can contribute to a graduate's decision to give back to his or her alma mater. This section discusses the various motivations prompting alumni to give back.

Alumni giving can be influenced by demographic factors (i.e., age, gender, place of residence) and socio-economic factors (i.e., employment status, social class, income). Some studies have found that occupation, age and household income affect alumni's capacity and likelihood of making contributions to their alma mater (Belfield & Beney, 2000; Monks, 2003; Weerts & Ronca, 2007). For example, young alumni may not be financially secure enough to feel that they can donate to their alma mater after graduating due to entry-level salaries or a single income, whereas older alumni are potentially more secure in their jobs and have accumulated wealth. Weerts and Ronca (2007) state that as alumni increase in age, the more likely they are to donate. To elaborate, Okunade, Wunnava and Walsh (1994) investigated the age-donor profile of alumni at a large metropolitan public university over a 63-year cycle (1926/27-1989/90), which revealed that "the growth rate of alumni charitable gifts for academic purposes is projected to remain positive until about age 52" (p. 78). Likewise, Hueston (1992) analyzed 34,938 alumni case files at New Mexico State University, and found that the typical alumni donor is a white male, 45 years or older, married to an alumna of the university, and still

living in the state. Past research, however, has not been able to determine the significance of gender on alumni contributions.

Alumni's financial circumstances as students also can play a part in their philanthropic decisions. Marr, Mullin and Siegfried (2005) investigated alumni's likelihood of making at least one contribution during the eight years after graduation, and found that alumni donor intentions are impacted by financial aid and their family's household income. In the study, undergraduates who received need-based loans were less likely to donate after graduation as opposed to those who received need-based or merit-based scholarships. The latter had an increased probability of future alumni generosity. Parental income had a significantly favorable effect on alumni giving among participants (Marr, Mullin & Siegfried, 2005). Baade and Sundberg (1993), however, state that parental income does not guarantee alumni support.

A graduate's interests, perceptions of self, perceptions of the institution, values and beliefs can impact his or her decision to give back as well. Marr and his colleagues (2005) determined several psychographic factors that stimulate alumni giving behaviors. These college experience variables include: 1) membership in non-academic groups, such as fraternities, sororities and athletics, 2) academic success, such as GPA, and 3) major (Marr, Mullin & Siegfried, 1993). (Economics, mathematics, engineering, and science majors had large, statistically significant effects on donation intentions (Marr, Mullin & Siegfried, 2005)). Okunade, Wunnava and Walsh (1994) found that alumni who were involved in non-Greek social clubs, graduates of the business school, or earned their graduate degree from the same university donated more generously. Likewise, Okunade (1996) determined that individuals who pursued advanced graduate degrees (i.e., MBA, MS or doctoral) were most likely to donate. Graduate and doctoral students were found to give back to the university where they received their graduate degree. (Okunade, 1996). Doctoral graduates gave the most (Okunade, 1996). These findings are important for fundraising purposes because alumni with advanced degrees are more likely to give to the university that they received their graduate degree from rather than the one they received their baccalaureate degrees (Okunade, 1996). Also, Okunade (1996) found that giving increases even more if an alumnus receives two graduate degrees from the same university.

Organizational and personal characteristics can affect alumni contributions beyond their scholarly and social interests. Alumni attachments and pride in their alma mater, as well as the scope of academic programs offered at the university and the quality of the education received,

can dramatically impact their financial support (Baade & Sundberg, 1993). Baade and Sundberg (1992) conducted a study using data from about 750 private and public colleges in the United States from 1985 to 1990. The researchers discovered that “generous alumni evolve from students who are the most compatible with the institution’s character and mission from the beginning of their college careers” (Baade & Sundberg, 1993, B2). Therefore, institutions that offer a high-quality, prestigious education, and forge to build strong bonds with students from the beginning, in order to give them a worthwhile educational experience, will see more willingness among alumni in their donation intentions (see Baade & Sundberg, 1993).

Alumni may even factor in the sense of belonging that they feel toward their alma mater in making charitable decisions (see Sarason, 1974, for the seminal work on the “psychological sense of community”). In 1986, McMillian and Chavis conducted a seminal study on community psychology, or simply “sense of community,” in which they define the concept as “a feeling that members have of belonging, feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together.” The researchers (1986) proposed that a sense of community entails four elements: 1) membership (i.e., boundaries, emotional safety, sense of belonging, identification, personal investment and a common symbol), 2) influence (i.e., trust, authority/power, pressure to conform and group cohesiveness), 3) integration and fulfillment of needs (i.e., rewards for membership, shared values, interdependence, and similarities, and 4) a shared emotional connection (i.e., shared history, successful shared event, spiritual bond, honor for time and energy, high quality of interaction).

Alumni already have a sense of community that is inherent in their admission to the university (i.e., membership) and evident in positive college experiences (i.e., integration and fulfillment of needs). College students are bound by location (i.e., residence in dormitories and shared living in apartments and houses) and spend time together in classes, student organizations, social events, and extracurricular activities (i.e., membership boundaries are set and personal interactions increase). Students advance through the curriculum from year to year (i.e., investment of time and energy) and become empowered by the knowledge and connections they gain. This investment and connection, in turn, builds trust in the institution and group cohesiveness among impending graduates (i.e., influence). Finally, 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. Fundraising and volunteering are possible efforts for engagement, similar to those opportunities offered through K-State Proud.

Research has found that an attachment or connection can be to an institution or organization through a shared value. Dalton et al. (2008) conducted small focus groups with 12 volunteering college students between the ages of 18 and 25 to discuss poverty aid appeals and charitable giving. The researchers found that the discussants often drew upon their position as a student, which was defined as one of impoverishment, valuing of education, responsibility, and intellectual ability. The participants also used the position of student in various manners to adopt or negotiate a perspective that better suited the poverty context (Dalton et al., 2008). Potential donors construct their attitudes toward charitable giving in ways that fit with their self-image (i.e., student or former student), as mentioned above. Students adopted a purposeful and functional construction by “calling upon education as the best response [for that context], and to demonstrate the value of education as an activity in which they are currently invested” in the context of poverty due to human failing (Dalton et al., 2008, p 502).

Some researchers have suggested that charitable giving is based on behavioral responses, such as altruistic and moral motivations (see Staub, 1991). Staub (1991) found that altruistic motivations are translated into action via varying degrees of empathy (i.e., feeling sad when another feels sad, or compassion for another who suffers, or anger at the conditions or people who make someone suffer), value-based altruism (i.e., guidance by other people, such as parents, can lead to valuing, rather than fear or devaluing human beings), personal responsibility (i.e., feeling concern for other’s welfare or feelings of obligation), and moral principles. Researchers have found that donors want to be praised as kind, sympathetic, generous, compassionate, or helpful for their donation behaviors, which helps donors to foster positive relationships with the charitable organization on an emotional level (Arnett, German and Hunt, 2003, Bendapudi, Singh and Bendapudi, 1996, and Tsao and Coll, 2005). Several important external factors also can influence a giver’s donation behavior. For example, the nature of the appeal, past and/or current involvement with the institution and the availability of alternative courses of action for potential donors can provide motivation for donations (see Tsao and Coll, 2005).

Some alumni are motivated to give back based on generational ideals and experiences. These factors have become apparent in past research on millennials and philanthropy. These studies reveal that young adults may be more charitable than other generations because of changing and differing values. The following paragraphs examine the available literature on millennials and philanthropy.

Millennials & Philanthropy

While all of the abovementioned factors can influence alumni, not all of these factors may be true for young donors, either alumni or current students. Millennial donors can differ on their motivations from middle-aged or older donors. For instance, the majority of donors today are 65 or older (Tsao and Coll, 2005). The baby boomer generation, defined as individuals born after World War II and between 1946 and 1964, has been known to be cynical toward philanthropy (Tsao and Coll, 2005). Baby boomers tend to consider their donations an investment in the organization and feel it appropriate to request that a charitable organization proves accountability for their support (Guy & Patton, 1989). Middle-aged individuals appear to be even more skeptical. A 2001 study by the United Way of America found that “Generation X people [those who are born in the 1960s and 1970s] demand more information before making a gift, tend to distrust large organizations, and are more likely than previous generations to choose volunteer activities that provide challenges and social change” (Roberts, 2006, p F.4). In addition, a 2003 study by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University in Indianapolis showed that “53 percent of Generation X households made donations of \$25 in 2000, compared with 75 percent of baby boomer households and 80 percent of prewar households” [also known as the baby boomer generation] (Roberts, 2006, p. F4). In the meantime, Generation Y, also known as millennials and individuals born in the late 1970s through the 1990s, are becoming a strong source of volunteerism with the most potential for further support. Fifty-eight percent of young adults believe that giving time to a charitable cause is most important, while 23 percent say that money is the most important gift, according to a study by Thrivent Financial, a not-for-profit Fortune 500 financial service organization (Lifestyle Editors, 2004). As stated by Michael Hais, co-author of *Millennial Makeover: MySpace, YouTube & the Future of American Politics*, “Other generations were reared to be more individualistic. This civic generation has a

willingness to put aside some of their own personal advancement to improve society” (Stone, 2001, p. E1).

Many young adults are unable to make financial contributions to a charity or cause of their choice because of student loans and insubstantial incomes. Even those millennials who can donate seem to be unsatisfied. Thus, a number of millennials have given back by donating their time. The Center on Philanthropy reports that the overall rate for volunteerism for individuals ages 18 to 25 had increased to 22 percent, from below 20 percent in 2002 (Roberts, 2006). In fact, the rate of volunteerism among individuals ages 20 to 24 increased by almost half to 18.7 percent between 1989 and 2005, and participation increased to 23.4 percent from 20.2 percent among individuals ages 25 to 34, according to data collected by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a federal organization overseeing AmeriCorps and other programs (Korn, 2009). Overall, the volunteerism of young adults ages 16 to 24 nearly doubled during the six-year span, from 12.3 percent to 23 percent (Stone, 2009).

Volunteering in America 2009, the comprehensive report from CNCS, which is based on annual surveys of about 100,000 individuals collected by the U.S. Census and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, found that 61.8 million Americans volunteered through an organization in 2008, dedicating more than 8 billion hours of service, worth approximately \$162 billion. CNCS also reported that volunteering by young adults ages 16 to 24 rose from 7.8 million individuals in 2007 to 8.2 million in 2008 (Real Estate Weekly News, 2009). A John Hopkins University study, which was supported by CNCS and aligned with the 2009 report, found that individuals who volunteer are more than twice likely to donate to a charity or nonprofit organization as opposed to individuals who do not volunteer. In fact, 78.2 percent of volunteers made a charitable contribution worth \$25 or more as compared to 38.5 percent of non-volunteers (Real Estate Weekly News, 2009).

Unlike Generation-Xers, millennials have been bred to give back from early ages. More than 80 percent of millennials were required to perform community service in high school, whereas people in their 30s and 40s rarely did (Stone, 2009). Analysts also cite several additional reasons for millennials’ philanthropic nature: 1) The times—Millennials have been shaped by collective experiences due to the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and the economic downturn; 2) Global connections—Millennials are closely attached to the world and want to make a difference. Plus, there is the

added influence of the Internet, social networking sites, the growth of study-abroad programs and volunteer projects, and ethnic diversity; 3) Practicality—Millennials have been encouraged to continue volunteering because colleges influence many young adults to view volunteerism as a lifetime commitment or even a career instead of just a hobby; 4) The Obama effect—Many millennials seemed to embrace Barack Obama’s call to service; and 5) Economic troubles—The miserable economic market has added a reason to volunteer, and a good alternative to unemployment (Stone, 2009).

Volunteer trends among millennials may begin to show trends for their charitable contributions in the future. American Eagle Outfitters, Inc., along with Sovereign Marketing, conducted an online survey of 1,009 individuals ages 15 to 25 on how they feel about volunteering. The survey found that 34 percent of respondents do not volunteer because they have not found anything they are passionate about, and 29 percent do not know how to get started (Atlanta Inquirer, 2004). In addition, non-volunteers would be motivated to get active if volunteering did not take too much time (53%), if they could volunteer with friends (46%), if they knew it would make a real difference (39%), and if they knew how and where (38%) (Atlanta Inquirer, 2004). For those who already volunteer, their top reasons included makes me feel good (43%), feel they should do something to help (62%), and are passionate about the cause (45%) (Atlanta Inquirer, 2004). These findings reveal potential motivations for millennials as donors. Millennial donors may be influenced to donate based on whether their passionate about cause, whether their donation will make a real difference, and whether the organization or institution that is seeking their donation is accessible to them.

Most charities have failed to communicate with young adults because evidence shows that individuals under 25 years old cancel their support more frequently, especially in the first few months (see Wiggins, 2010). Often times, this discontinuance is a result of peer pressure rather than an authentic interest and true commitment to the organization (see Wiggins, 2010). Moreover, some fundraisers have “dramatically improved attrition among regular givers after discovering that supporters under the age of 25 were twice as likely to cancel as those over 35” (Wiggins, 2010, p 17). Yet, charities that fail to cultivate millennials risk increasing their costs by targeting certain segments, reducing the number of supporters per fundraiser hour, alienating potential lifetime supporters, and decreasing their overall return on investment (see Wiggins, 2010). Wiggins (2010) stated that it is not wise to omit under-25s altogether because there is a

growing need to recruit younger donors. The 2010 Millennial Donor Study (discussed previously) found that young adults ages 18 to 28 want to be engaged in the giving process in ways that make them feel connected to the organization, that involve them in work with leadership to create direction for the organization, and that help them understand specifically how their gifts will benefit the organization's constituents. Therefore, young adults possess a willingness that their predecessors do not with their innate ability to give back what they can to help.

Middle-class young women ages 17 to 19 are more likely to support charities than other young people, but their affinity to charities, by way of fundraising, campaigning, or donating, wanes as they get older, according to the UK's Youth Engagement Monitor, a biannual report by nfpSynergy that tracks 11- to 25-year-old individuals' feelings about charities, including how charities campaign and how they raise funds (Barrett, 2006). The report also shows that young adults are most interested in charities that they deem "effective." Significantly more young adults enjoy fundraising (36%) as opposed to campaigning (19%) or volunteering (35%). Along the gender scale, 19 percent of young women said they are involved in charities regularly, compared with 11 percent of young men (Barrett, 2006). Sixty-three percent of young women ages 21 to 25 have donated to charity in the past three months, compared with 51 percent of young men (Barrett, 2006).

Without sufficient research on millennials and giving, charitable institutions are responsible for figuring out what strategies to use to engage and motivate them. Roger's diffusion of innovations model can help universities understand how a new idea moves through a system and the influence of interpersonal communication networks on the decision-making process.

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations

Diffusion of innovations has been used to assess the adoption of a variety of new products, technologies, services and ideas in many areas, including agriculture, public health, politics, automobiles, management, education, and marketing. The model has yet to be applied to fundraising.

In 2006, a group of students at Kansas State University recognized a need for financial assistance and recognition of fellow students. This recognition stimulated the development of

activities designed to create an innovative campaign for students helping students, in order to fulfill that financial need and the desire to award fellow students for their dedication and hardwork. The new concept of giving back and the young K-State PROUD campaign has millennials processing information and deciding whether to adopt (or reject) the idea of donating to the K-State Proud and the university. Targeted individuals must make a series of choices and actions over time about whether or not to incorporate the innovation into practice. In this specific case, students also deal with uncertainty in deciding whether to adopt this new alternative to a preexisting idea already in practice, which is volunteerism.

Rogers defines diffusion as “the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (2003, p. 5).

Therefore, the diffusion model consists of four main elements:

1. Innovation—“An idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual” (Rogers, 2003, p. 12).

2. Communication channels—“The means by which a message gets from an individual who has knowledge of, or experience with, the innovation, to another individual who does not yet have knowledge of, or experience with, the innovation” (Rogers, 2003, p. 18).

3. Time—This dimension can be assessed by “a) an individual’s passing from first knowledge of an innovation through its adoption or rejection, b) the relative earliness/lateness with which an innovation is adopted; and c) an innovation’s rate of adoption in a system, usually measured as the number of members of the system who adopt the innovation in a given time period” (Rogers, 2003, p. 20).

4. Social system—“A set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (Rogers, 2003, p. 23).

Diffusion research has found that interpersonal networks, opinion leaders and interconnectedness impact the diffusion of an innovation. A classic study in diffusion research was conducted by sociologists Katz, Menzel and Coleman at Columbia University. The study

focused on the diffusion of a new drug that “investigated the interpersonal networks through which subjective evaluations of an innovation are exchanged among individuals in a system,” and the role opinion leaders played at the start of diffusion when the adoption rate rises slowly (Rogers, 2003, p. 65). (The rate of adoption for an innovation is described by an S-shaped curve, in which the distribution of adopters “rises slowly at first when there are only a few adopters in each time period. The curve then accelerates to a maximum until half of the individuals in the system have adopted. Then, it increases at a gradually slower rate as fewer and fewer remaining individuals adopt the innovation” (Rogers, 2003, p. 272)). In the drug study, opinion leaders were created from the doctors who first accepted and prescribed the new antibiotic drug to their patients by the eighth month after diffusion, and then shared their knowledge and personal assessments of the effectiveness of the innovation with people in their network, who were thus influenced to adopt the drug as well (Rogers, 2003). Rogers calls this the “critical mass,” “the point at which enough individuals in a system have adopted an innovation so that the innovation’s further rate of adoption becomes self-sustaining” (Rogers, 2003, 343). The social system itself influences the adoption of an innovation. Rogers states:

“A social system is a kind of collective learning system in which the experiences of earlier adopters of an innovation, transmitted through interpersonal networks, determine the rate of adoption of their followers. Such learning by doing in a social system can, of course, take a negative turn if the innovation is not efficacious in solving the problem... Thus the social system in which the innovation diffuses acts like a participatory democracy in which the aggregated individual adoption decisions of its members represent a consensus vote on the new idea” (2003, p. 67).

Both social learning and diffusion of innovations seek to explain how individuals change their overt behavior as a result of communicating with other individuals. The crucial point to consider for any innovation is the social power of peers talking to peers. A communication network consists of “interconnected individuals who are linked by patterned flows of information” (Rogers, 2003, p. 337), and a personal communication network consists of “the individuals who are linked by patterned communication flows to a given individual” (Rogers, 2003, p. 338). Thus, the diffusion of an innovation may be only as strong as its weakest link among individuals in the social system.

Diffusion research has integrated communication models (i.e., the two-step flow model) and concepts (i.e., homophily and heterophily) to better understand how communication flows throughout an interpersonal network (see Rogers, 2003). The two-step flow model suggests that

“ideas often flow from radio and print to opinion leaders and from these to the less active sections of the population” (Rogers, 2003, p. 304; Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). This is not to say that communication only flows in two steps, but rather to recognize that mass communications can impact an individual directly as well as interpersonal communications in the long run. In diffusion, individuals make decisions about an innovation beginning with 1) knowledge of the innovation, 2) to persuasion (i.e., forming a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the innovation), 3) to a decision to adopt or reject, 4) to implementation (i.e., an overt behavior change), and then 5) to confirmation of this decision (i.e., reinforcement) (Rogers, 2003). Communication channels create knowledge, whereas interpersonal networks persuade individuals to adopt or reject (Rogers, 2003). Opinion leaders, however, are not the only ones who have access to the communication channels (Rogers, 2003).

Communication tends to flow easiest through interpersonal networks with individuals who have similar, or homophilous, attributes such as beliefs, education, occupation, socioeconomic status, etc. Communication is also more likely to be effective among similar individuals because interacting is comfortable, while communication among dissimilar, or heterophilous, individuals can be uncomfortable, difficult, misinterpreted, and ineffective overall. Yet, narrowing communications to groups that are socially homogeneous can impede the spread of the innovation and limit it to a closely-tied network. Rogers states:

“New ideas usually enter a system through high status and more innovative members. A high degree of homophily would mean that these elite individuals interact mainly with one another, and thus the innovation would not trickle down to nonelites. Homophilous diffusion patterns cause new ideas to spread horizontally, rather than vertically, within a system” (2003, p. 307).

Fundraisers need to be particularly aware of the potential that lies in communication links, especially those that are somewhat dissimilar within the university network. Fundraisers that overlook dissimilarities among students may hinder the cultivation of relationships with a larger number of students. Overall, an interconnected community, such as a university, has greater potential to propel an innovation into adoption and success as long as information flows vertically among individuals and is mutually inclusive.

K-State Proud relies on interpersonal networks, opinion leaders (i.e., student leaders on campus), and the interconnectedness of students within the university’s social system to propel the campaign into continued adoption. The evolution of the campaign’s marketing and branding

efforts in these first few years (i.e., an initial reliance on word of mouth and the website to the use of the social media) proves that campaign organizers are attempting to reach, and hopefully engage, a larger audience. K-State Proud utilizes social learning as perhaps its most powerful diffusion tool. The cultivation of student leaders via the annual volunteer kickoff event and the campaign's acknowledgement of these opinion leaders' influence on the social system provide K-State Proud with a constant and consistent connection to the university's communication network through opinion leaders' personal and interconnected networks. (Student leadership positions can change hands each year or every two years depending on the election process; thus, potential growth for the campaign is dependent on the interconnected flow of communication about the campaign among and outward from these leaders each year.)

K-State Proud also utilizes the two-step flow model. Opinion leaders can gather information about the innovation directly (i.e., through the exclusive volunteer kickoff event) or through campus news (i.e., campus email and newspaper), which they later communicate to their friends and fellow students who may be less active in the university community. These student leaders are particularly important to the success of K-State Proud because if they receive sufficient information about the campaign, form a favorable attitude toward it, choose to adopt the donation behavior, implement the donation behavior by giving back, and the giving-back behavior is confirmed through continued positive reinforcement of campaign communication (i.e., communicating about the success of the campaign and telling about recipients of the awards), then other students who receive the same information about the campaign will potentially form a favorable attitude as well and adopt the innovation because student leaders have confirmed that giving back is acceptable and gratifying.

The K-State community has the added benefit of being homophilous through education. Students may not have similar beliefs, socioeconomic status, or degrees, but they share a similarity in pursuing a higher education. This similarity can be emphasized through K-State Proud's mission of students helping students. The potential harm of a homophilous network impeding the flow of communication is not as worrisome for the university setting because campaign communication is not narrowed to a specific segment of the student population but rather is inclusive of all students. All students have access to communication about the campaign through the various channels it employs, such as campus email, campus newspaper, and the campaign's website. The vertical spread of communication and the acceptance of the innovation

can be potentially limited by an individual student's decision to expose himself or herself to this information by opening the email, reading the newspaper, or seeking out the information provided on the campaign's website. Luckily for fundraisers, a university can act as a participatory democracy in which a consensus vote for the adoption decision (i.e., acceptance) of the new idea is good enough (see Rogers, 2003).

Chapter 3 - Methods

Design & Procedure

Data were gathered at Kansas State University in mid-February 2011 over a two-week period that fell before and during the K-State PROUD campaign week. The sample consisted of 200 alumni and 200 current students who donated to the campaign *at least* once between 2007 and 2010 and were 18 to 30 years old (within the millennial demographic). The sample size was derived per recommendations from staff of the Kansas State University Foundation. (The KSU Foundation had no set expectations for response rates.) Dillman's (2009) Internet survey guidelines for response yields were used to determine an expected response rate of 40 to 60 respondents, or 20 to 30 percent, for both 200 alumni and 200 current students.

Subjects were randomly selected from a compilation of individuals who met these criteria in the Kansas State University Foundation's donor database for the K-State Proud student campaign. All subjects were sent an initial email inviting them to participate in the online questionnaire with the purpose of gaining donors' insights about the K-State PROUD student campaign. The email also informed subjects of the selection process, gave a brief description of the nature of the questionnaire and contained directions for accessing it. (See Appendix B for a sample of the initial email invitation.)

Two emails were sent after the initial email invitation as reminders to subjects of the importance of their participation in the questionnaire, to thank those who had already completed the questionnaire and to encourage the participation of those who had yet to complete it. The second reminder email contained the same content. The first reminder was sent to all participants four days after the initial email, and the second was sent out four days after the first reminder email. The implementation procedures for this online questionnaire were in accordance with Dillman, Smyth and Christian's (2009) three e-mail contact strategy and their guidelines for web survey implementation. Ten emails (i.e., five for alumni and five for current students) bounced back as undeliverable, so ten additional subjects were sent the email invitation and invited to participate. (See Appendix B for a sample of the reminder email.)

Questionnaires

The researcher and KSU Foundation staff determined the content and order of the questions and the answers. Two versions of the questionnaire were developed to account for either current or past involvement in the campaign. The version for current students contained questions in present tense, and the survey for alumni contained the same questions as current students but in past tense. Dichotomous questions for both groups consisted of branching to other questions for further insight into a positive or negative answer. For example, all participants were asked whether they have volunteered their time (yes) or have not volunteered their time (no) with the K-State Proud campaign. Based on answers of yes or no, participants were given additional questions. Participants who have volunteered were asked to indicate how many years they volunteered. Current students who have volunteered were also asked to indicate yes, no or maybe for whether they would volunteer with K-State Proud in 2011. For no answers to volunteering, current students were asked to indicate their degree of willingness on a five-point scale for volunteering in the future, and alumni who have not volunteered were directed to the following questions for all participants. With the exception of these three branched questions for alumni and current students and five alumni and four current student demographic questions, the questionnaire consisted of 14 questions for current students and 13 questions for alumni. Twenty pretests of alumni and 21 pretests of current students were administered in early February to assess the consistency of questions, clarity of language, ease of access to and operation of the online format, and the overall flow of the questionnaire in its entirety. (See Appendix B for questionnaire samples of the alumni and current student versions.)

Subjects were prompted to follow a URL link to access the online questionnaire from the initial email (as well as subsequent emails). Upon accessing the questionnaire, all subjects were told that their participation was voluntary and that no personally identifiable information would be associated with their name on any reports of the data. They also were asked to give their consent in order to proceed through the questionnaire. (If a subject declined consent, then he or she was thanked for his or her time and asked to exit the questionnaire.) Next, subjects were asked to indicate their current status in relation to the university by selecting either “I am a current student.” or “I am an alumnus.” Participants who completed the questionnaire were invited to submit email address to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a prize.

Instrumentation

The independent variables include psychographic concepts (i.e., perceptions of the campaign), behavioral concepts (i.e., involvement in the campaign) and demographic concepts. Psychographic variables are a participant's perceptions of the K-State PROUD student campaign. Perceptions were measured by assessing communication preferences, social influences and judgments of campaign features. Communication preferences were measured by assessing responses to the statement: "Please indicate to what degree you dislike (disliked) or like (liked) receiving information about the K-State Proud student campaign from the following channels," and the 12 channels were 1) Phone, 2) Mail, 3) Face-to-face conversations, 4) K-State Collegian (newspaper), 5) K-State Proud website, 6) Email, 7) Facebook, 8) Twitter, 9) YouTube video, 10) K-State Proud Volunteer Kickoff event, 11) Information table in the K-State Student Union, 12) Events where K-State Proud is promoted (i.e., basketball game), plus the inclusion of "Other" so participants could specify an additional channel if necessary.

Social influences of alumni and current students were measured by responses to the statement: "Please indicate to what degree the following people do (did) not influence or influence (influenced) your decision to donate to the K-State Proud Student Campaign," and eight social influences were offered: 1) family, 2) friends, 3) fellow students, 4) co-workers, 5) professors, 6) student organizations, 7) K-State Proud representatives, 8) campus leaders, and "Other" so participants could specify an additional social influence if necessary.

Judgment of campaign features was measured by assessing responses to the statement: "Please indicate to what degree the following factors do (did) not influence or influence (influences) your decision to donate to the K-State Proud Student Campaign," and possible options were 1) How the money is used, 2) Quality of messages that K-State Proud provided, 3) The gift of a K-State Proud t-shirt, 4) The mission of the campaign, 5) K-State pride, 6) Personal values, and "Other" so participants could specify an additional feature of the campaign if they chose. In a separate question, participants were also asked to indicate to what extent their liking for the campaign's sponsoring organizations had been influenced by their support of the K-State Proud Student Campaign.

Behavioral variables focused on current students' interactions and alumni's past interaction with and involvement in the campaign. To assess participants' interactions with the campaign, a two-part set of scale questions and three multiple-choice questions were used. The

first part of the scale questions included measuring how often a participant took part in certain communication channels in the past three months. Options included 1) Read articles in the K-State Collegian about the K-State Proud Student Campaign, 2) Visited the K-State Proud website, 3) Read email messages about the K-State Proud Student Campaign, 4) Visited the K-State Proud Facebook page, and 5) Read the K-State Proud Twitter feed. The second group of scale questions asked participants to indicate how often they interacted with the campaign's social media in the past three months. Options included 6) Post a comment to the K-State Proud Facebook page, 7) Post a comment to the K-State Proud Twitter feed, and 8) Watch a K-State Proud YouTube video. For all of these questions, participants had the option of indicating never, daily, weekly, monthly, more than weekly but less than monthly, monthly, I did not know this existed, or not applicable. The later two options were included to account for the evolution of the campaign over four years. Social media were acquired at different times since the inception. Therefore, alumni may not have used them for the campaign when they attended the university, or any participants may not know that one or all of these social media existed for the campaign.

The three multiple-choice questions pertained to how many years participants had participate in or attended a K-State Proud related event. Options included 1) Participated in K-State Proud Week events, 2) Attended the K-State Proud Volunteer Kickoff event, and 3) Attended the K-State Proud basketball game. The answer options (in years) were 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, "I did not know this existed", and "Other." The latter two options were included to account for the youthfulness of the campaign and the exclusivity of the kickoff event (i.e., only invited student leaders) and the basketball game (i.e., season tickets holders). The "other" option also allowed participants to account for campaign participation in 2011, in which the answer could be five years if they had already donated to the campaign before answering the questionnaire. (Note: The 2011 campaign week fell within the two-week distribution of this questionnaire.)

A participant's involvement in the campaign was assessed by measuring participants' responses to two questions: 1) Do you know an individual(s) who helped organize the campaign? and 2) Do you volunteer your time to help with the campaign? Depending on a yes or no answer to the volunteer question, a participant was branched to additional questions for further explanation of his or her volunteer behavior in relation to the campaign (as discussed on pg. 18).

Demographic question pertained to gender, age, major, year in school for current students, graduation year for alumni and field of work for alumni.

Dependent variables measured included a current student's willingness to donate to the campaign again, and both alumni's and current students' intention to donate to the university via the KSU Foundation in the future. (If an alumnus participant did not already indicate that they donate to the university currently.) Alumni and current students were asked how many years they have donated to the K-State Proud student campaign from 2007 to 2010 and how much money they donated on average to the campaign each year. Alumni were given the option of selecting "I do not remember" since a couple years could have passed since an alumnus donated as a current student. Current students were asked if they would give to the K-State Proud student campaign in 2011 and to what extent they would be willing or unwilling to donate to Kansas State University after graduating. Alumni were asked whether they had given to Kansas State University since graduating. If the answer was yes, alumni participants were asked to indicate to what extent his or her decision to donate to the university was influenced by his or her participation in the K-State Proud campaign. If the answer was no, alumni participants were asked to indicate to what extent he or she would be willing or unwilling to donate to Kansas State University in the future.

All participants were provided space at the end of the questionnaire to freely express additional comments that they might have about the campaign.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science, also known as SPSS. Cross tabulations were used to show the frequency among the number of participants in each bivariate category, such as respondent status (alumni vs. current student) and volunteer status (volunteer versus not volunteer).

This study only looks at the processes utilized to gain knowledge about the campaign, and how they relate to donor and volunteer behavior. The effect of specific campaign messages or similar content related to the K-State Proud student campaign is not measured or addressed.

Limitations

The most important limitations of this study are response rate and self-reporting data. The response rate was low, especially for current students. The unevenness of the groups' size (i.e., a greater alumni response rate of 56 respondents with 27 current students) also caused for generalizations of the data to be swayed toward the answers and preferences of alumni

respondents. This sample, therefore, may not be a true representation, or as accurate of a representation, of the motivations of millennial donors or K-State Proud donors. The low numbers have influenced the results, particularly in its failure to produce significant findings.

The response rate could have been impeded by the medium of an email survey. The Pew Research Center conducted a research project on the use of the Internet among generations in 2010. The research found that 95 percent (a total of 35 percent of all Internet users) of the millennial generation goes online (Zickuhr, 2010). Of that 95 percent, 96 percent engage in email, both sending and reading; however, online millennials are also engaging in a variety of other activities, such as using a search engine (92%), watching video (80%), using social network sites (83%), looking for health information (85%), getting news (76%), buying a product (68%), and sending instant messages (66%) (see Pew Research Center, 2010, for the complete table of online activities). Email use among millennials has not changed, whereas social network site use, watching video online, using online classifieds, and streaming music have increased from 8 to 25 percent since 2008 (Pew Research Center, 2010). These other more interactive online activities may distract millennials from taking the time to access an online questionnaire and complete it. A printed questionnaire administered in person may have evaded the response rate problem.

Self-reporting data is a limitation of this study as well. A self report is a quantitative research method that entails questionnaires and interviews predominantly. Self reports ask participants about their feelings, attitudes and beliefs in a quick and easy format. Self-reporting data has an inherent bias on part of the participants and a potential for misunderstandings on part of the researcher. Participants may have a desire to portray themselves in a good light by answering question in a manner that does not represent their true selves. In addition, self-report data also may be based on a participant's feelings at the time that he or she is taking the questionnaire. Researchers also interpret participants' feelings, beliefs and attitudes solely on the basis of how they answered the questions, which respondents may have misunderstood. Results may be biased as well due to the differences between individuals who participant and those who do not. Therefore, questionnaires often lack validity. (Including an open question and maintaining confidentiality improves validity, as was done in this study.)

In addition, this research contains the pro-innovation bias of most diffusion studies (see Rogers, 2003, p. 106-118). The pro-innovation bias means that researchers favor innovations that

have already been adopted by the social system, rather than innovations that are rejected, discontinued, or re-invented (Rogers, 2003). This study shows that diffusion can be applied to nonprofit fundraising communication. K-State Proud is still undergoing diffusion with many members of the university's social system still in the decision-making process. The 83 respondents of this study can be classified as innovative, early adopters; thus, belated adopters are not represented in this sample.

Chapter 4 - Results

Demographic Variables

The demographics of the sample show that 56 respondents (alumni = 37, current students = 19) are female and 27 respondents (alumni = 19, current students = 8) are male. Respondents ranged in age from 19 to 27 years old, with the average age of respondents being 21. Twenty-nine alumni respondents graduated in 2010, three in 2009, nine in 2008, and 15 in 2007. Seven current student respondents are of sophomore status as well as seven of junior status, 12 of senior status, and one of graduate status. A cross tabulation of respondent status (alumni vs. current students) and year (year in school for current students and graduation year for alumni) suggests that the more a student's needs are fulfilled by the university (i.e., progressing through the curriculum and acquiring knowledge as the student advances a year in school), the more likely he or she is to donate.

Twenty-nine respondents are studying a major (i.e., current students) or received a degree (i.e., alumni) from the College of Arts and Sciences, 14 from the College of Engineering, 11 from the College of Business Administration, 10 from the College of Human Ecology, 8 from the College of Agriculture, eight from the College of Education, one percent from the College of Architecture, Planning, and Design, one from the College of Veterinary Medicine, and two respondents did not indicate their degree. Ten alumni respondents have careers in the field of business, eight in education, six in the health care industry, five in mass communications, five in engineering, two in architecture, two in construction, and one alumnus each for the fields of agronomy, law, milling, agriculture, cosmetology, real estate, geology and information technology. One alumnus is a homemaker. Five alumni are students. Four alumni did not provide an answer.

The relationships among respondent status, demographic variables, donating behaviors and involvement in the campaign are reported in the following sections

Participation Variables

Twelve alumni donated and six current students have donated to the K-State Proud student campaign for one year (total = 18), 18 alumni and 6 current students for two years (total = 24), 14 alumni and 11 current students for three years (total = 25), and 12 alumni and 4 current

students for four years (total = 16). Thirty-six total respondents (alumni = 19, current students = 17) donated on average \$1-\$10 to K-State Proud each year, 33 total respondents (alumni = 26, current students = 7) donated \$11-\$20, 8 total respondents (alumni = 5, current students = 3) donated \$21-\$30, one alumnus respondent donated \$31-\$40 (current students = 0), two alumni respondents donated \$41-\$50 (current students = 0), and three alumni respondents did not remember how much money they donated on average each year (current students = 0). The data indicates that the more years a respondent donated to the campaign, the more he or she gave, and that respondents ages 21 to 24 account for the majority (Total = 66) of campaign donations, large and small: 46 out of 36 respondents donated \$1-\$10, 27 out of 33 respondents donated \$11-\$20 donations, 5 out of 8 donated \$21-\$30 donations, and all three donated \$31-\$40 (1) and \$41-\$50 (2).

Female respondents were more likely to give higher amounts of money to the campaign than male respondents. Male respondents gave a maximum of \$20 to K-State Proud, while female respondents were dispersed throughout the entire range from \$1 to \$50. Forty-five out of 56 female respondents, however, gave \$1-\$20 donations.

Ten alumni respondents and three current student respondents have volunteered with the campaign for an overall total of 13 respondents. Of the 13 respondents who have volunteered their time with the campaign, 6 volunteered for one year (alumni=5, current students = 1), 3 for two years (alumni=2, current students = 1), 2 for three years (alumni = 1, current students = 1), and 2 for four years (alumni = 2, current students = 0). All three current student respondents who have volunteered their time with the campaign within the past four years indicated they will volunteer with K-State Proud again in 2011. Forty-six alumni respondents and 24 current student respondents do not volunteer with K-State Proud for an overall total of 70 respondents. Of the 24 current student respondents who do *not* volunteer with the campaign, five are very much willing to volunteer with the K-State Proud student campaign in the future, seven are somewhat willing, seven are neutral, two are somewhat unwilling, and three are very much unwilling.

Gender, age, year in school and graduation year were applied to volunteerism using cross tabulation. Forty-seven respondents are female and do not volunteer whereas 23 are male and do not volunteer. Correspondingly, nine respondents are female and volunteer while four are male and volunteer. Of those respondents who do volunteer, the majority of male and female respondents have volunteered for one year. Of the four male respondents who have volunteered,

three have volunteered for one year and one has volunteered for three years. Of the nine female respondents who have volunteered, three have volunteered for one year, three for two years, one for three years, and two for four years. More female current student respondents who volunteer their time with K-State Proud are willing to donate in 2011 than male current student respondents who volunteer. Overall, gender, age, graduation year of alumni, and year in school for current students affected the data results in terms of donations and volunteerism. Respondents' status in school (graduation year for alumni and year in school for current students) appeared to have an effect on the frequency of donations but not on the size of the donation. Gender and age appeared to affect respondent's willingness to donate and volunteer, but did not reveal an apparent trend for the amount of money donated or the length of their volunteerism. A small, and relatively critical, number of respondents (13) both donate and volunteer based on the data gathered from the 83 respondents. All cross tabulations of these demographic and volunteer variables are consistent with the results of cross tabulations between dependent variables.

Twenty-nine alumni respondents knew and 16 current student respondents know individuals who help organize the campaign. Twenty-two alumni respondents did not know and 11 current student respondents do not know individuals who help organize the campaign. Five alumni respondents indicated that they do not remember if they knew anyone who helped organize the campaign when they attended the university. Alumni respondents who give to the university appear to not be clearly influenced by knowing an individual who helped organize the campaign. Yet, of 35 alumni respondents who do not give to the university, 20 knew individuals who helped organize the campaign and 10 did not know individuals. Alumni respondents' willingness to donate to the university in the future appears to be positively influenced (i.e., a combination of alumni respondents who are somewhat willing and very much willing to donate) by knowing an individual who helped organize the campaign. The willingness of current students to give to K-State Proud in 2011 and to the university as postgraduates also appears to be positively influenced by knowing an individual who helps or has helped with the campaign.

Of the 21 alumni respondents who have given to the university since graduating, two indicated that their decision to donate to the university was very much influenced by their participation in the K-State Proud student campaign, six were somewhat influenced and 13 were not influenced. Of the 35 alumni respondents who have *not* given to the university since

graduating, 14 are very willing to give to the university in the future, 11 are somewhat willing, four are neutral, four are somewhat unwilling, and one are very unwilling.

Research Questions

While the results are not statistically significant in relation to the two research questions discussed below, their direction is as can be expected in the following ways: 1) the strong influence of several campaign factors, such as the mission of the campaign and pride in the institution, on donation intention; 2) the preference for traditional media and face-to-face communication over new media such as social media and videos; and, 3) the strong influence of friends on millennials' volunteer and donation decisions.

Research question 1 asked: What factors have helped successfully transition postgraduates who participated in the campaign to become alumni donors?

More male (13 out of 19) and female (22 out of 37) alumni respondents do not give to the university as postgraduates than do give back to the university. The majority of both male (15 out of 19) and female (27 out of 37) alumni respondents who do not give to the university as postgraduates are somewhat willing or very much willing to give back to the university in the future. The majority (32 out of 35, or 92%) of alumni respondents who do not give back to the university donated no more than \$20 to the campaign (\$1-\$10 = 17, or 49%, and \$11-\$20 = 15, or 43%), whereas 13 out of 21, or 62%, of alumni respondents who do give to the university donated no more than \$20 to K-State Proud (\$1-\$10 = 2, or 9.5%, and \$11-\$20 = 11, or 52%), four (19%) donated \$21-\$30, and two (9.5%) donated \$31-\$50 (\$31-\$40 = 1 (4.75%) and \$41-\$50 = 1 (4.75%)). Two (9%) alumni respondents who give to the university do not remember how much they donated. Furthermore, 12 of the 21 alumni respondents who do give to the university graduated in 2007 (57%), six (28%) in 2008, one (5%) in 2009, and 2 (10%) in 2010. In addition, 11 of the 21 alumni respondents who give to the university are 24 years old (52%) and 12 of the 21 graduated in 2007 (57%). Twenty-seven of the 35 alumni respondents who do not give back to the university graduated in 2010 (77%) and 27, or 60%) are between the ages 21 and 23 (21 = 10, 22 = 9, and 23 = 8). Of the 27 alumni respondents who do not give to the university and graduated in 2010, 10, or 64%, are willing to give to the university in the future.

This data is consistent with past studies, which found that older alumni are more likely to give back to their alma mater than recent graduates (see Weerts & Ronca, 2007). Eleven out of 21 alumni respondents who give to the university now gave to the K-State Proud campaign for at least two years. On the other hand, eleven out of 35 alumni respondents who do not give to the university gave to the K-State Proud campaign for one year, seven for two years, 10 for three years, and seven for four years.

Table 1.4				
Campaign Factors Influencing Alumni to Give Back				
		Degree of Influence		
		No influence	Somewhat influence	Very strong influence
Type of Factor	How the money is used	1	6	14
	Quality of messages provided	2	15	4
	Gift of K-State Proud t-shirt	1	4	16
	Mission of campaign	0	7	14
	K-State pride	0	2	19
	Personal values	0	11	10
	Other	20	1	0
Table 1 shows the degree of influence that donating alumni reported having for various campaign factors.				
Total number of donating alumni respondents = 21				

Twenty-one alumni respondents (out of 56 total alumni respondents) have donated to the university since graduating. Table 1.4 shows factors of the campaign that motivated alumni to donate. How the money is used, the quality of the messages, the gift of the K-State Proud t-shirt, the mission of the campaign, K-State pride, and personal values were all reported by alumni respondents to have played a part in influencing them to donate. Of the 35 alumni respondents who are willing (somewhat willing + very much willing) to give to the university in the future, 18 indicated that they were influenced by how the money is used, 15 by the quality of the messages, 17 by the gift of a t-shirt, 16 by the mission, 18 by their pride in university, and 16 by

personal values. These factors also have been reported to have influenced to the majority of alumni students who graduated in 2010. All alumni donors indicated that they were motivated by the accountability of the organization to make known how it plans to use the money donated. In addition, alumni donors stated they were influenced by positive feelings toward the organization and its cause.

Table 2.4

Communication Channels Influencing Alumni to Give Back

		Degree of Influence					
		Dislike very much	Dislike somewhat	Neutral	Like somewhat	Like very much	Not applicable
Communication Channels	Phone	3	6	2	0	1	9
	Mail	0	0	3	7	6	5
	Face-to-face conversations	1	0	5	5	6	4
	Campus Newspaper	0	0	5	7	9	0
	K-State Proud Website	0	0	5	4	8	4
	Email	0	1	2	8	9	1
	Facebook page	1	0	5	2	5	8
	Twitter feed	0	1	5	0	1	14
	Youtube video	0	1	2	2	6	10
	Volunteer Kickoff	0	0	4	6	4	7
	Information table	0	0	3	7	9	2
	Events/K-State Proud	0	0	3	4	13	1
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0	

Table 2 shows the degree of likeness that donating alumni reported having for various communication channels.

Total number of donating alumni respondents = 21

*Not applicable was defined as not having received information about K-State Proud from the specified channel.

Table 2.4 depicts that an alumni's decision to donate may have been influenced by how campaign information is delivered. Donating alumni respondents indicated that they preferred receiving information about the campaign from mail, campus newspaper, face-to-face conversations, email, website, information table in the K-State Student Union and events where K-State Proud is promoted. Of these influential factors, the largest number of donating alumni appeared to have preferred (somewhat like + very much like) the campus newspaper (16 out of 21), email (17 out of 21), information table (16 out of 21), and events where K-State Proud is promoted (17 out of 21).

Table 3.4				
People Influencing Alumni to Give Back				
		Degree of Influence		
		No influence	Somewhat influence	Very strong influence
Types of People	Family	14	5	2
	Friends	4	11	6
	Fellow students	8	9	4
	Co-workers	18	2	1
	Professors	21	0	0
	Student organizations	15	5	1
	K-State Proud representatives	9	6	6
	Campus leaders	12	6	3
	Other	20	0	1
Table 3 shows the degree of influence that donating alumni reported having for different types of people.				
Total number of donating alumni respondents = 21				

Table 3.4 shows that the largest number of donating alumni respondents (17 out of 21) indicated that they were influenced (both somewhat and very much) by their friends. Fellow students (13 out of 21 donating alumni) and K-State Proud representatives (12 out of 21) were indicated as having at least somewhat of an influence, whereas family, co-workers, professors, student organizations and campus leaders were indicated as having no influence. (All donating alumni indicated that professors had no influence.) Of the 35 alumni respondents who do not

give back to the university, 12 reported that they are somewhat willing and 14 reported that they are very much willing to give to the university in the future. Of these 26 prospective donors, 19 indicated that they were influenced by their friends to donate to the K-State Proud campaign.

Research question 2 asked: What are millennial donors stated motivations for donating to K-State Proud?

Table 4.4

Respondents' Degree of Likeness for Receiving Campaign Information from Various Communication Channels

			Degree of Influence					
			Dislike very much	Dislike somewhat	Neutral	Like somewhat	Like very much	Not applicable
Communication Channel	Phone	A	11	14	2	1	2	26
		CS	9	5	3	2	0	8
		Total	20	19	5	3	2	34
	Mail	A	1	1	8	19	13	14
		CS	2	0	4	9	4	8
		Total	3	1	12	28	17	22
	Face-to-face conversations	A	2	0	10	16	16	10
		CS	2	2	7	8	7	3
		Total	4	2	17	24	23	13
	Campus Newspaper	A	2	0	8	16	29	1
		CS	0	2	5	8	11	1
		Total	2	2	13	24	40	2
	K-State Proud Website	A	2	0	7	11	25	11
		CS	1	2	3	5	12	4
		Total	3	2	10	16	39	15
	Email	A	1	3	4	23	23	2
		CS	1	0	3	6	17	0
		Total	2	3	7	29	40	2
Facebook page	A	2	0	9	15	13	17	
	CS	3	0	4	11	8	1	
	Total	5	0	13	26	21	18	

Table 4.4 (continued)								
			Degree of Influence					
			Dislike very much	Dislike somewhat	Neutral	Like somewhat	Like very much	Not applicable
Communication Channels	Twitter feed	A	2	1	8	3	4	38
		CS	2	1	5	5	6	8
		Total	4	2	13	8	10	46
	Youtube video	A	2	1	6	8	12	27
		CS	1	0	7	9	6	4
		Total	3	1	13	17	18	31
	K-State Proud Volunteer Kickoff	A	1	1	11	11	7	25
		CS	1	1	9	7	2	7
		Total	2	2	20	18	9	32
	Information table in Student Union	A	1	0	6	22	19	8
		CS	2	0	7	11	4	3
		Total	3	0	13	33	23	11
	Events where K-State Proud is promoted	A	1	0	4	15	34	2
		CS	0	0	3	15	8	1
		Total	1	0	7	30	42	3
Other	A	1	0	7	0	2	0	
	CS	0	0	2	0	0	0	
	Total	1	0	9	0	2	0	
Table 4 shows the degree of likeness that millennial respondents (both alumni (A) and current students (CS)) reported having for various communication channels.								
Total number of respondents = 83								
*Not applicable was defined as not having received information about K-State Proud from the specified channel.								

Table 4.4 shows the total number of millennial respondents' (both alumni and current students) communication channel preferences for receiving information about the campaign. Twenty-nine out of 56 alumni respondents and 11 out of 27 current student respondents indicated that they very much like(d) receiving campaign information about K-State Proud from campus newspaper (40), 25 alumni and 12 current students for the K-State Proud website (37), 23 alumni and 17 current students for email (40), and 34 alumni and 8 current students for events where K-State Proud is promoted (42). Nineteen alumni and 9 current students indicated they somewhat

like(d) receiving campaign information by mail (28), 15 alumni and 11 current students for the K-State Proud Facebook page (26), and 22 alumni and 11 current students for the information table in the K-State Student Union (33). The plurality of respondents (alumni = 8, current students = 5) reported that they were neutral for the K-State Proud Twitter feed at 15 percent of respondents overall and the K-State Proud Volunteer Kickoff event at 24 percent overall (alumni = 11, current students = 9). Twenty-three respondents indicated they both very much liked (alumni = 16, current students = 7) and 24 indicated they somewhat liked (alumni = 16, current students = 8) receiving campaign information from face-to-face conversations. Yet, the majority of total respondents indicated that the following communication channels were not applicable to their knowledge of the campaign: 34 for the phone (alumni = 26, current students = 8), 46 for Twitter feed (alumni = 38, current students = 8), 31 for YouTube video (alumni = 27, current students = 4), and 32 for K-State Proud Volunteer Kickoff event (alumni = 25, current students = 7).

When discounting the respondents who indicated that these communication channels are not applicable to their knowledge of K-State Proud, the data show that a plurality of respondents (20) very much disliked (alumni = 11, current students = 19) receiving information about the campaign by phone (19 respondents indicated somewhat disliked). Along the same lines, the plurality of respondents who have gained knowledge about the campaign from these channels indicated that they are neutral for the Twitter feed with 13 respondents (followed closely by very much like with 10) and for the Volunteer Kickoff with 20 respondents (followed closely by somewhat like with 18 respondents). Furthermore, the majority of these respondents reported that they like (somewhat like + very much like) receiving campaign information in the mail (45 out of 83), through face-to-face conversations (47 out of 83), in the campus newspaper (64 out of 83), from the K-State Proud website (53 out of 83), via e-mail (69 out of 83), from Facebook (47 out of 83), from YouTube video (35 out of 83), from the Volunteer Kickoff (27 out of 83), from an information table in the union (56 out of 83), and from events where K-State Proud in promoted (72 out of 83).

Table 5.4				
Degree of Influence for People on Respondents' Decisions to Donate				
		Degree of Influence		
		No influence	Somewhat influence	Very strong influence
Types of People	Family	57	15	11
	Friends	13	36	34
	Fellow students	21	35	27
	Co-workers	66	14	3
	Professors	70	10	3
	Student organizations	42	24	17
	K-State Proud representatives	22	33	28
	Campus leaders	44	25	14
	Other	75	3	5
Table 5 shows the degree of influence that millennial respondents (both alumni and current students) reported having for different types of people.				
Total number of respondents = 83				

Table 5.4 depicts the overall number of millennial respondents' (both alumni and current students) degree of influence for people on their decisions to donate to the K-State Proud student campaign. Forty-one alumni and 16 current students indicated they were not influenced by family (totaling 57 out of 83 respondents overall), 46 alumni and 20 current students for coworkers (66), 50 alumni and 20 current students for professors (70), 32 alumni and 10 current students for student organizations (42), and 31 alumni and 13 current students for campus leaders (44). Twenty-five alumni and 11 current students indicated they were somewhat influenced by friends (36), 24 alumni and 11 current students for fellow students (35), and 21 alumni and 12 current students for K-State Proud representatives (33). Three respondents (alumni = 1, current students = 2) indicated "Other" as somewhat influencing their decisions to donate to K-State Proud. Five respondents (alumni = 2, current students = 3) indicated "Other" as very much influencing their decisions to donate to the campaign. Other people stated as influencing a respondent's decision to donate include resident hall assistants, leaders of Greek and scholarship houses, athletic coaches, honorary co-chairs of the campaign (which are selected faculty members and differs each year), fraternity brothers who are representatives of K-State Proud,

and campus organizations that support the campaign, specifically membership in one of these organizations (for example, members of the K-State Cat Band are required to wear the K-State Proud t-shirt for the K-State Proud basketball game).

Table 6.4				
Degree of Influence for Factors on Respondents' Decisions to Donate				
		Degree of Influence		
		No influence	Somewhat influence	Very strong influence
Type of Factor	How the money is used	4	23	56
	Quality of messages provided	14	39	30
	Gift of K-State Proud t-shirt	4	16	63
	Mission of campaign	7	25	51
	K-State pride	2	12	69
	Personal values	10	29	44
	Other	77	4	2
Table 6 shows the degree of influence that millennial respondents (both alumni and current students) reported having for various campaign factors.				
Total number of respondents = 83				

Table 6.4 shows the total number of millennial respondents' (both alumni and current students) for each level of influence for the various campaign factors on their decisions to donate to the K-State Proud student campaign. Fifty-six respondents (alumni = 37, current students = 19) reported they were very much influenced by how the money is used, 63 (alumni = 42, current students = 21) for the gift of a K-State Proud t-shirt, 51 (alumni = 36, current students = 15) for the mission of the campaign, 69 (alumni = 48, current students = 21) for K-State pride, and 44 (alumni = 28, current students = 16) for personal values. The plurality of all respondents (alumni = 30, current students = 9) indicated they were somewhat influenced to donate because of the quality of the messages that K-State Proud provides (39). (Note: Seventeen alumni and 13 current students for a total of 30 respondents reported being very much influenced by the quality

of messages.) Six respondents indicated “Other” as somewhat influencing (alumni = 0, current students = 4) or very much influencing (alumni = 1, current students = 1) their decision to donate to K-State Proud. Other responses included peer pressure (both positive and negative) to donate and the “get on the train” message (whether stated directly or implied) that the respondents feels K-State Proud conveys.

The majority of millennial donors who indicated they were influenced by these campaign factors donated no more than \$20 to K-State Proud, gave to the campaign for two or three years, and are 21 to 24 years old. Twenty respondents overall reported they were somewhat influenced (\$1-\$10 = 12, \$11-\$20 = 8) and 46 were very much influenced (\$1-\$10 = 22, \$11-\$20 = 24) by how the money is used and gave no more than \$20. Thirty-three respondents indicated they were somewhat influenced (\$1-\$10 = 14, \$11-\$20 = 19) and 23 were very much influenced (\$1-\$10 = 12, \$11-\$20 = 11) by the quality of messages and gave no more than \$20. Nine respondents indicated they were somewhat influenced (\$1-\$10 = 6, \$11-\$20 = 7) and 54 were very much influenced (\$1-\$10 = 30, \$11-\$20 = 24) by the gift of a t-shirt and gave no more than \$20. Twenty-three respondents indicated they were somewhat influenced (\$1-\$10 = 13, \$11-\$20 = 10) and 39 were very much influenced (\$1-\$10 = 18, \$11-\$20 = 21) by the mission of the campaign and gave no more than \$20. Eleven respondents indicated they were somewhat influenced (\$1-\$10 = 7, \$11-\$20 = 4) and 56 were very much influenced (\$1-\$10 = 28, \$11-\$20 = 28) by their pride in the institution (i.e., K-State pride) and gave no more than \$20. And, twenty-four respondents indicated they were somewhat influenced (\$1-\$10 = 11, \$11-\$20 = 13) and 35 were very much influenced (\$1-\$10 = 17, \$11-\$20 = 18) by personal values and gave no more than \$20. Overall, all campaign factors were reported as having at least some (positive) influence on donors’ decisions to participate in the campaign.

The influence of the campaign and respondents’ affinity toward the campaign come into play with millennial respondents’ motivations for donating to K-State Proud as discussed herein. The data analysis is based only on reported preferences for the various campaign factors, communication channels and social influences reported above. No direct assessment of the contents or effect of messages via media or interpersonally were addressed in this study. This analysis is not unusual, however, since diffusion studies normally focus on the means of communication, not the messages delivered.

Table 7.4								
Respondents' Participation in Specific Communication Channels in the Past Three Months								
		Time						
		Never	Daily	Weekly	More than Weekly, less than Monthly	Monthly	I didn't know this existed.	Not Applicable
Type of Participation in Channel	Read articles in Campus Newspaper	29	1	5	7	12	1	28
	Visit Website	46	3	0	5	14	7	8
	Read Email Messages	17	2	14	14	27	3	6
	Visit Facebook Page	42	2	3	4	11	11	10
	Read Twitter Feed	41	1	4	2	2	14	19
	Post a comment to Facebook page	61	1	1	0	0	7	13
	Post a comment to Twitter feed	55	0	1	2	1	8	16
	Watch a YouTube video	53	1	2	3	8	6	10
Table 7 shows how often millennial respondents (both alumni and current students) participated in various communication channels in the past three months.								
Total number of respondents = 83								
*Not applicable was defined as not having received information about K-State Proud from the specified channel.								

Table 7.4 shows how often millennial respondents participated in certain communication channels in the past three months. Twenty-nine out of 83 total respondents indicated they *never* read articles in the campus newspaper about K-State Proud *in the past three months*, 46 never visited the K-State Proud website, 42 never visited the K-State Proud Facebook page, and 41 never read the K-State Proud Twitter feed. In addition, sixty-one respondents *never* posted a comment to the Facebook page, 50 never posted a comment to the Twitter feed, and 53 never

watched a K-State Proud YouTube video. A plurality of respondents (27 out of 83) indicated they read email messages about the K-State Proud student campaign on a monthly basis in the past three months. The data suggests that a considerable portion of respondents, approximately 7 to 17 percent, did not know social media existed for the campaign, nor was social media applicable to involvement in the campaign.

The majority of respondents indicated they had little or no involvement in events related to the K-State Proud campaign. Three alumni and four current student respondents have never participated in K-State Proud Week events (i.e., donating at a table in the K-State Student Union, taking a picture with K-State's mascot, Willie the Wildcat, and receiving autographs of K-State celebrities). Five alumni respondents indicated they did not know K-State Proud Week events existed when they attended the university. Of the 73 out of 83 total respondents who have participated in a K-State Proud Week events, 22 respondents (alumni = 17, current students = 5) have participated for one year, 18 respondents (alumni = 11, current students = 7) for two years, 19 respondents (alumni = 10, current students = 9) for three years, and 12 respondents (alumni = 10, current students = 2) for four years.

The overwhelming majority of respondents with 60 out of 83 indicated they are not influenced to donate to K-State Proud because of the Volunteer Kickoff event, even though 23 respondents have attended the Volunteer Kickoff event. Fifty respondents (alumni = 32, current students = 18), or 58 percent altogether, stated that they have never attended the Volunteer Kickoff event, and 10 respondents (alumni = 8, current students = 2), or 12 percent total, did not know the Volunteer Kickoff event existed. Of the 23 respondents who have attended the kickoff, 12 attended for one year (alumni = 7, current students = 5), eight for two years (alumni = 6, current students = 2), one for three years (current students = 0), and two for four years (current students = 0).

Nine respondents (alumni = 7, current students = 2) indicated they have *never* attended the K-State Proud basketball game. All respondents know the K-State Proud basketball game existed. Two alumni respondents (current students = 0) indicated "Other" for the number of years they have attended the game. One alumnus stated that he or she has never had season tickets to K-State basketball games. The other alumnus stated that he or she has attended the K-State Proud game for five years. Forty-seven alumni respondents and 25 current student respondents (total = 72) indicated they have attended the K-State Proud basketball game for one

to four years. Of these 72 respondents, 21 respondents (alumni = 14, current students = 7) have attended for one year, 20 respondents for two years, 18 respondents for three years, and 13 respondents for four years. Overall, the majority of respondents have participated in K-State Proud events including activities in the union and the basketball game but excluding the volunteer kickoff event.

These findings show that student opinion leaders make up a small portion of total respondents in terms of how campaign organizers have identified them, and as should be the case according to diffusion (see Rogers, 2003). Campaign organizers define opinion leaders as student leaders who have an innate ability and distinct power to influence other individuals' attitude and overt behaviors and who are invited to attend the Volunteer Kickoff event. Opinion leadership is more informal in terms of K-State Proud than campaign organizers have hoped for with the volunteer kickoff. While influence is a primary characteristic for Rogers' opinion leadership, diffusion actually consists of a more informal leadership style that is neither a function of an individual's formal position or status in a social system, nor exists because of a selection process, such as students elected or appointed to student government (Rogers, 2003). Rogers states that "opinion leadership is earned and maintained by the individual's technical competence, social accessibility, and conformity to the system's norms...Opinion leaders serve as a model for the innovation behavior of their followers" (2003, p. 27).

All respondents in this study can be categorized as opinion leaders and innovators in some manner, either because of their technical competence, social accessibility or conformity to norms, or a combination of these. Opinion leaders and innovators for K-State Proud are the respondents of this study, all of which have adopted the giving-back behavior within the campaign's first four years. Their degree of influence, however, varies depending on how involved respondents are (i.e., number of years donating, number of years volunteering, number of years attending K-State Proud events), how much money they donate, and whether they transition to be donors of the university as postgraduates. For example, true innovators are the small group of alumni who have donated to K-State Proud for more than one year. True innovators also have donated more than \$20, volunteered for at least one year, attended all K-State Proud events for at least one year, and currently donate to the university. These innovators are not current opinion leaders because they are alumni. They do not attend the university, and their influence no longer permeates throughout the university community. True opinion leaders

are the small group of current students who have donated to K-State Proud for two or more years, have volunteered for two or more years, attended all K-State Proud events for at least one year, have exposed themselves to all communication channels about the campaign thus acquiring much knowledge, and have been the friend or colleague to influence other early adopters to donate. True opinion leaders possess these criteria because these current students have accepted the call to action as a recurring behavior and have become the experts in terms of involvement in the campaign and exposure to campaign information.

All in all, respondents' years of participation in K-State Proud events were shown to not increase how much money they donated. The majority of respondents who participated in these events in the last four years donated no more than \$20 on average each year to the campaign. Respondents' attendance at the Volunteer Kickoff event was shown to increase donation amounts with the majority of donations being no more than \$10. The average donation for one to three years attendance at the K-State Proud basketball game is \$11-\$20. For four years of attendance at the game, the majority of respondents (69 out of 85) donated \$1-\$10. As the years of participation in K-State Proud-related events (i.e., week events in the union and the basketball) increase so does the years of participation in the campaign.

Contrary to past studies, millennials in this study had higher percentages of anti-volunteerism than those who are pro-volunteerism for this campaign. According to the data, 16 of the 21 alumni respondents who give to the university also did not volunteer their time to help with the campaign when they attended the university. Twenty-five alumni respondents who are willing to give to the university in the future also did not volunteer with the campaign. Nineteen of the 35 alumni respondents who do not give to the university also did not volunteer. Nine of the 46 alumni who did not volunteer also give to the university. Thirty-seven alumni respondents who volunteer also do not give to the university. The trend continues with current student respondents. Twenty-two current students who indicated they plan to give to K-State Proud in 2011 also do not volunteer for K-State Proud. Eighteen current students who are willing to give as postgraduates also do not volunteer. For all respondents, 70 do not volunteer and donated no more than \$20 to the campaign. Twelve millennial respondents do volunteer and also remember giving \$30 or less to the campaign: Two for \$1-\$10, six for \$11-\$20, and four for \$21-\$30.

Still, the number of years respondents volunteer their time to help with the campaign appears to impact whether he or she gives to the university. The more years a respondent donates

to the campaign, the more likely he or she is to donate. For instance, respondents who volunteer also have donated to the campaign for two or more years. The data shows that of the five alumni who volunteered with K-State Proud and currently give back to the university, four alumni volunteered for one year and one alumnus volunteered for two years. Of the five alumni who volunteered with K-State Proud and do not give to the university, two volunteered for four years and one alumnus each for one year, two years and three years.

Data were cross tabulated to show respondents' volunteer status (volunteer vs. not volunteer) with the K-State Proud campaign in relation to how often they participated in various communication channels in the past three months (i.e., read articles in the campus newspaper, visited the website, read email messages, visited or posted a comment to Facebook, read or posted a comment to the Twitter feed, and watched a YouTube video). The plurality of respondents (29 out of 83) who either volunteer (5 out of 13 total respondents) or do not volunteer (24 out of 83 total respondents) with the campaign indicated they have *never* read articles in the campus newspaper. A plurality of respondents at 28 out of 83 (volunteer = 4, not volunteer = 24) also indicated that reading articles in the campus newspaper does not apply to them in the past three months.) Three out of 13 respondents who volunteer and 43 out of 70 respondents who do not volunteer have *never* visited the campaign's website (total of 46 overall). Seven out of 13 respondents who volunteer and 35 out of 70 respondents who do not volunteer also have *never* visited the Facebook page (total of 42 overall). Ten out of 13 respondents who volunteer and 51 out of 70 respondents who do not volunteer have *never* posted a comment to the Facebook page (total for 61 overall). Five out of 13 respondents who volunteer and 36 out of 70 respondents who do not volunteer have *never* read the Twitter feed (total of 41 overall). Ten out of 13 respondents who volunteer and 45 out of 70 respondents who do not volunteer have *never* posted a comment to the feed (total of 55 overall). Six out of 13 respondents who volunteer and 47 out of 70 respondents who do not volunteer have *never* watched a YouTube video (total of 53 overall). Lastly, a plurality of respondents at 27 out of 83 (volunteer = 4, not volunteer = 23) indicated that they have read email messages about the campaign at least once per month (i.e., monthly) in the past three months.

Current Students

All eight male current student respondents indicated that they will give to the K-State Proud campaign in 2011, and 17 out of 19 female current student respondents will give in 2011 as well. Fourteen female and six male current student respondents (20 total) are willing (both somewhat = 12, very much = 8) to give to the university as postgraduates. This data aligns with past research on factors influencing alumni donors, which is undetermined on the impact of gender on alumni donation intentions, because there is not a clear indication of which gender has a greater willingness to donate than the other.

Twenty-five current student respondents indicated that they will give to the campaign in 2011, two maybe will give, and no respondents indicated that they would not give. Of the 25 out of 27 current student respondents who will give to the K-State Proud campaign in 2011, 16 donated \$1-\$10, 6 donated \$11-\$20, and three donated \$21-\$30. Furthermore, of the 12 current student respondents who indicated they are somewhat willing to give to the university after graduating, 11 gave no more than \$20 to the K-State Proud campaign, and of the eight current student respondents who indicated very much willingness to give to the university, six gave no more than \$10.

Eleven of the 25 current student respondents who plan to give to K-State Proud in 2011 have given to the campaign for two years, six for two years, four for one year, and four for four years. The plurality of perspective current student donors for 2011 are 21 years old (12 out of 27), seniors (12 out of 27) and are the most willing to give back to the university as postgraduates. The majority of all grade levels, sophomore to graduate student, are willing to give back to the university as postgraduates.

Eight current student respondents are very willing to donate to the university after graduating, 12 are somewhat willing, four are neutral, and three are somewhat unwilling. (No respondents indicated very unwilling to donate to the university after graduating.) Of the 20 current students who are willing (somewhat willing + very much willing) to donate to the university in the future, 15 are influenced by pride in the institution, 14 by how the money is used, 14 by the quality of messages, 14 by the gift of the t-shirt, 13 by personal values, and 12 by the quality of messages. Of the 27 total current student respondents, 17 are *both* willing to give to the university (both somewhat willing = 11 and very much willing = 6) as postgraduates and influenced (both somewhat = 8 and very much = 9) by friends to give to K-State Proud.

Of the three current student respondents who have volunteered with K-State Proud and who have done so for two or three years, all plan to volunteer with the campaign in 2011 and give to the campaign in 2011. Two out of the three current students are willing to give to the university as postgraduates. (The third current student is neutral.) Eight current student respondents do not volunteer, will give to the campaign in 2011, and are somewhat willing to volunteer with the campaign in the future. Six current students do not volunteer, will give in 2011, and are very much willing to volunteer in the future. Of the three current students who do volunteer with K-State Proud, three are willing (somewhat = 1 and very much = 2) to donate to the university as postgraduates. (The other current student is neutral.) Of the 24 current students who do not volunteer, six are very much willing to donate to the university as postgraduates, 12 are somewhat willing, and three each for somewhat unwilling and very much unwilling.

Additional Data

Respondents' affinity toward the two sponsoring organizations of the K-State Proud student campaign was also analyzed. GTM Sportswear has sponsored the campaign from the beginning and is the sole producer of the K-State Proud t-shirts (M. Weixelman, personal communication, January 1, 2011). Thirty-seven respondents indicated their liking of GTM Sportswear has not been influenced at all by the company's support of the K-State Proud student campaign. Twenty-eight respondents' liking for GTM appears to have been somewhat influenced by the company's support of K-State Proud. Eleven respondents' liking for GTM was reported as being very much influenced by its support of the campaign. And, seven respondents indicated that their liking and its corresponding influence is not applicable to this company.

Cox Communications has supported the campaign since 2008, and donates tens of thousands of dollars each year (M. Weixelman, personal communication, January 1, 2011). In 2010, the organization donated \$45,000 to help support the mission of the campaign (KSU Foundation, 2011). Fifty-two respondents indicated that their liking of Cox Communications has not been influenced by the company's support of K-State Proud. Eighteen respondents' liking was reported as being somewhat influenced by Cox's support of K-State Proud. And, four respondents' liking has been reported as being very much influenced by Cox's support of the campaign. Nine respondents indicated that their affinity and corresponding influence for support does not apply to Cox Communications.

Respondents were asked to provide additional comments about the K-State Proud student campaign. Figures 1 and 2 list general comments from alumni and current student respondents about the campaign (see Appendix A). Overall, the comments were positive. Some of these comments will be addressed in the Discussion chapter.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

This study analyzed many factors influencing or predicting alumni and millennial giving. (Note that these data are self-reported motivations and influences rather than direct data. Qualitative research would need to be used to find direct influences.) The results support previous research on alumni donor motivations and build a foundation for future studies on millennial-donor motivations. Age, relationship with the institution and a sense of community contribute to the intent of alumni to give back to their alma mater. Overall, millennials' donation decisions may be influenced by communication channels, friends, their perceptions of the cause and their connection to the university.

This study found similar and additional motivations of millennial donors. Past studies concentrated on millennials' motivations to volunteer. American Eagle Outfitters (2004) found three millennial motivations for volunteering: 1) volunteer with friends, 2) make a difference and 3) passion or the cause. These motivations are similar to respondents' stated motivations for donating to K-State Proud. This study found that millennials appeared to be somewhat influenced by friends as well as fellow students and representatives of the campaign, who could be friends. They reported being very much influenced by the mission of the campaign. As stated previously, millennials volunteer with an organization because they are passionate about the cause. The apparent influence of the campaign's mission on respondents is comparable to being passionate about a campaign's cause. A mission statement is one way for an organization to articulate its cause to its audience.

In addition, these results support the findings of the 2010 Millennial Donor Study in finding that millennials want to feel connected to the organization and want to understand specifically how their gifts will benefit the organization's constituents. The plurality of millennials' decisions to give to the campaign appeared to be influenced by various elements of the K-State Proud campaign. Millennial donors reported being influenced to give back based on how the money is used, the offering of a gift for a donation (i.e., a common symbol to feel a sense of community and belonging) and pride in the institution. Fundraisers need to 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. Causes should have an identifiable and permeating mission statement as well.

The findings also provide motivating factors that expand past studies. The two samples of millennial respondents had varying exposures to social media, specifically Facebook, Twitter and YouTube videos, so its effect cannot be correlated, or even estimated. A majority of respondents did not even know these media existed for the campaign, which may be due to the newness of the campaign and the constant influx of new potential donors each year (i.e., freshmen). K-State Proud is only five years old; it is still evolving its marketing strategies. A university community creates a setting that requires a need for a continued effort of constant communication to ensure all new students are reached by with the campaign messages and are informed. An alumnus commented:

“K-State Proud is still in its relative infancy...I still believe very strongly that Proud can serve as the main ‘breeding ground’ for successful young alumni giving while those individuals are still on campus. Creating a successful ‘young alumni’ giving program that is connected to [K-State Pride] is also essential to creating a lifetime of giving, starting immediately after graduation.”

Respondents reported that they preferred receiving information about the campaign from the campus newspaper, email, the campaign website and events where K-State Proud is promoted. Email and website use are similar to the results in past studies, and are representative of millennials’ use of the Internet. Millennials seem to prefer information about the campaign to come to them by way of campus newspapers and event. They appear to like having the option to seek out information on their own. These traditional media allow them to do so in a setting where they are familiar.

In conclusion, Kansas State University and the K-State Proud campaign appear to create an environment that can cultivate meaningful and valuable relationships with millennial donors. The innovation is still being diffused, but the process may take some time. Millennials appear to appreciate the sense of community that the university has created and that the campaign upholds. Past research on alumni donor motivations found that alumni’s attachments and pride in their alma mater are predictive of alumni giving (see Baade & Sundberg, 1993). This study is no exception. Millennial donors reported being motivated to donate because of their pride in the university. A current student commented, “I think it is awesome what everyone does. It gives the

school a good reputation and does great things for students.” An alumna stated, “Great idea, great story. [I am] proud to have attended a college with so much passion for giving back.”

Millennials also report a reliance on the traditional medium of newspaper, along with a high degree of influence for events with face-to-face communication, i.e., the information table in the student union and events where K-State Proud is promoted, which correspond with Rogers’ (2003) traditional flow of information, i.e., the two-step flow model and peer-to-peer talking. The lack of apparent effect for social media (as was found in past research on millennial donors, see Feldman & Grossnickle, 2010) seems to indicate that either diffusion is not at work here, or the diffusion process has yet to accelerate. Diffusion relies on opinion leaders and other early adopters to be the first ones to access information about the innovation and process it. Yet, the respondents appear uninfluenced by social media; some of them did not even know these media are being used to market the campaign. This research indicates that an instructional or organizational social media presence just is not the same as a presence maintained by a close friend or reliable colleague, at least for diffusion purposes.

Conclusion

The relationship between the institution and young donors does not have a quick return on investment. A strong argument against targeting millennial donors is that institutions may not see substantial donations or any for several years or more (see Wiggins, 2010). The biggest drawback is time. Fundraisers can develop a program that utilizes a variety of communications with quality, authentic messages, interaction with and engagement of young adults, and emotional appeal, all the while millennial donors may withdraw their contributions after one or two years. But, younger donors have time. Their biggest advantage is their age. Millennials have the time to become financially secure and contribute more. Fundraisers need to be prepared by having a plan and program in place to support millennials when they become motivated to donate. Thus, a campaign that educates and motivates younger donors can be rewarding.

Young adults have proven to be generous with their time and seek out activities to give back. Organizations can begin by cultivating relationships with young adult volunteers, which in turn, can be helpful in cultivating them as donors. Young adults also find more enjoyment in doing things with their friends. The potential for additional donors grows in encouraging young adults to volunteer with their friends and become involved in the organization’s cause. It should

not be forgotten that millennials make up the most educated of all generations. They are the keepers of a wide array of opinions, feedback and ideas that can be used to an organization's benefit, but fundraisers must be willing to request their input and seriously take it into consideration. In conclusion, this research shows that while cultivating millennial donors does not have immediate rewards, their giving back nature implies a plethora of possibilities for future giving. Fundraisers, however, need to exercise patience with this generation in order to receive the dividends in the future.

Future Research

Future research needs to address the limitations of this study (see Methodology chapter, p. 22). Researchers should employ larger, even samples of alumni and current students to gain significantly stronger insights into millennials' donor motivations. Also, future studies can explore alternative approaches that address the pro-innovation bias of this research. K-State Proud has helped students without complete acceptance throughout campus. Researchers should investigate factors that would motivate students who not donate to the campaign to donate and examine the reasons for discontinuance of donations, including why did students who donated to the campaign for one year not donate again and what changed their perceptions of the K-State Proud campaign from one year to the next?

Future research needs to look at the conversations between nonprofit organizations and young donors. What is being said? What are the differences between the content of email messages and that content on social media sites? How does the medium influence the nature of the content? What messages are young donors exposing themselves to? What messages are having an impact on young donors? This study found that social media is a part of it, but that other factors are affecting millennials' giving-back behaviors that are beyond the scope of this study. Future studies also should explore other instrumentations.

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Appendix A –Respondent Comments

A.1 – Comments from Alumni Respondents

Figure A.1
Comments from Alumni Respondents
I believe the basketball game was the most influential aspect of the K-State Proud campaign. Having a 'black out' was very fun when I was at K-State. Most people bought the T-shirts just to wear them at the designated game. But, of course, the money went to a good cause. :)
I loved the t-shirt. That's why I donated.
K-State Proud is still in its relative infancy, so I am encouraged to see quantitative research being conducted on its effectiveness and operations. I still believe very strongly that Proud can serve as the main 'breeding ground' for successful young alumni giving while those individuals are still on campus. Creating a successful 'young alumni' giving program that is connected to Proud ('Forever Proud'???) is also essential to creating a lifetime of giving, starting immediately after graduation.
K-State Proud is an incredible opportunity for students to give back, whether small or large. This campaign portrays the idea of student unity, students helping students and keeping the University air friendly and welcoming. Great idea, and I hope the campaign continues on for years to come!
Good cause.
The campaign should develop more reliable means of communicating with alumni who are not able to be on campus, perhaps by coordinating regional events for recent graduates around the country.
Great campaign. I thought about it more when I was around Manhattan and less so since I've moved and gotten busy. But I remember the K-State PROUD basketball game fondly and still wear the t-shirt!
I have enjoyed the t-shirts. This year, I heard the t-shirts were black; I did not participate because I do not like black t-shirts. I will give to KSU in other areas instead.
Great idea, great story, proud to have attended a college with so much passion for giving back
I like the K-State Proud Student Campaign.
Great cause.
I really enjoyed the Sara Evans concert.
As an alumnus, I didn't know how to get a t-shirt. I never heard anything about it and didn't realize there was a Facebook page and twitter account. I would have liked to donate for the cause and for the t-shirt, had I known when the campaign was and how to donate. An influence would be if I had to pay for shipping on the shirt since I do not live in Manhattan.

I like the idea of the program and I think the yearly t-shirts are a great promotional tool.
Overall a great program and a great cause to donate towards.
Lose us the basketball game every year.
K-State PROUD is a very innovative way for students to help each other out. I am proud to wear my shirt, even here in Denver where I moved after graduation, and am very happy when someone asks about the shirt, because I can explain the campaign. The campaign is just another way that K-State truly is different than other universities.
Love the t-shirt and being able to vote on which one I liked the best while at KSU
I didn't know about any kick off events or anything like that and would probably be good idea to promote them more in the collegian. Also, I would have loved to have volunteered if I had known how or if it were advertised.
Never knew where the money went...thus stopped donating. Never knew any students that received the money.
It is a great program!

A.2 –Comments from Current Student Respondents

Figure A.2
Comments from Current Student Respondents
Look forward to the new t-shirt every year, Thanks!
I don't usually go through the union, so I don't know when the K-State Proud events are taking place. Perhaps it would be a good idea to send out e-mail reminders?
I appreciate the message the Campaign supports.
I like the whole idea of how the money is raised for students who need financial help. It would be great to know how I could benefit more from all the money raised. I could really benefit from receiving some of the money that goes into the K-State Proud campaign but I'm not sure how it is distributed out to current students. There should be an application that you could fill out to apply for some of the campaign money if you are in need of some financial help.
I think it's awesome what everyone does. It gives the school a good reputation and does great things for students.
I would be more likely to donate if there was a table at the College of Vet Med and feel like more people would also.

Appendix B - Questionnaire Materials

B.1 – Initial E-mail Invitation

Dear (recipient's name):

You have been randomly selected to be part of a group of K-State current students and alumni to participate in this survey. The selection process was based on the following criteria: 1) donated to the K-State Proud student campaign at least once in the past four years, and 2) are between the ages of 18 and 30. This survey is an effort by the KSU Foundation to gain donors' insights about the campaign. Therefore, your responses to this survey are very important to us, and will help advance the K-State Proud student campaign.

The primary contact for this survey is Sarah Hart, graduate student of mass communications at K-State, who is administering this survey in accordance with the KSU Foundation for her master thesis. This survey and the corresponding study have been approved by Dr. Fred Cholick, president of the KSU Foundation, and are supported by the KSU Student Foundation advisors. Mindy Weixelman, senior director of annual giving and KSU Student Foundation advisor, and Dr. Todd Simon, professor of mass communications, are overseeing this study. All data collected from this survey will be shared and stored with the KSU Foundation and the University after the researcher analyzes it.

This short survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. If you have any questions or comments about the survey, please email Mindy Weixelman or Sarah Hart at proudsurvey@k-state.edu.

To access the survey, please click on the link below.

**All participants who complete this survey will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of five \$15 e-gift cards to Amazon.com. The winners will be notified via email by Monday, Feb. 21. **

Many thanks,

Mindy Weixelman
Senior Director of Annual Giving & KSU Student Foundation Advisor
KSU Foundation

Sarah Hart
Mass Communications Graduate Student
Kansas State University

Dr. Todd Simon
Professor of Mass Communications
Kansas State University

B.2 – Reminder E-mail

Dear (recipient's name):

We need your input on the K-State Proud Student Campaign on ways to improve awareness and communications in the future. The survey will take about ten minutes. All information will be reported in a collective and no names will be used in reporting the results of the survey. Responses are kept confidential.

If you have already completed this survey, then thank for your time and continued support of the K-State community.

If you have not completed this survey, it is not too late to give us your opinions and be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of five \$15 e-gift cards to Amazon.com. To begin this survey, click the link listed below.

For questions about the survey, please contact us at proudsurvey@k-state.edu.

Thank you again!

Mindy Weixelman
Senior Director of Annual Giving
KSU Student Foundation Advisor
KSU Foundation

Sarah Hart
Mass Communications Graduate Student
Kansas State University

B.3 – Sample Questionnaire

(See attached)