



## MEMORANDUM

To: University of Wyoming Board of Trustees

From: University of Wyoming Foundation

Re: Liaison Report for July 2024 meeting

Date: June 28, 2024

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Thank you for this opportunity to update you on the activities of the University of Wyoming Foundation through our liaison officers, Trustees Bonner and Fall. Please see below.

### **YTD PHILANTHROPY**

As reflected in the monthly giving report through May 31, year-to-date private support to UW is \$55,867,573.

### **ADVANCEMENT SERVICES**

*Gift Administration* is tracking and writing agreements for the 2024 State Match funds. Ten new funds and/or pledge agreements have been created, three agreements are in process, and 35 proposals are in process. As of the writing of this report, the faculty match is 88 percent committed and the student success match is 96 percent committed.

The *Prospect Research* team is working to publish a number of new dashboards/reports, which will allow fundraisers and senior leadership immediate access to up-to-date data. This will allow for proactive moves management and data related to the feasibility of a comprehensive campaign.

The *Donor Relations* team has started the FY24 Endowment Report process. Campus partners will be completing 454 narrative impact reports and the Donor Relations team—in partnership with the Financial Services team—will create over 1,900 individual financial reports.

The *Information Services* team has been exploring various solutions to resolve retrieval issues with the foundation's electronic document storage application. They are collaborating with the current vendor while also assessing alternatives.

### **DEVELOPMENT**

The UW Foundation Development team continues to effectively engage alumni and donors by connecting their passions with university priorities.

Fundraising numbers are trending positive. The total amount raised for the current fiscal year and the previous fiscal year is set to be the highest in a two-year period in UW history. Additionally, the



total number of donors for this fiscal year has reached a five-year high, which is notably contrary to the national trend of decreasing donor counts.

Major gift solicitations have been peaking in the past month. Development staff and academic partners have been actively engaging with donors to discuss state matching program funds totaling \$17.5 million, appropriated during the 2024 legislative session.

One notable recent contribution is a significant deferred gift commitment from Doug and Deniz Stark, intended to support UW faculty. Doug Stark will assumed the role of chair of the UW Foundation Board of Directors on July 1, 2024.

*Senior Vice President:* Jill Higham—a Wyoming native, University of Wyoming alumna and accomplished fundraiser and higher education leader—has been hired as the new senior vice president for development at the UW Foundation after a national search. She began her new position June 5. Since 2019, Higham has held the position of inaugural general counsel for the Colorado State University (CSU) Foundation. Her tenure at CSU also included various development roles in the colleges of Agricultural Sciences, Engineering and Natural Sciences.

Higham earned her bachelor’s degree in English and secondary education from UW and, out of college, she worked as an English teacher at Central High School in Cheyenne. She returned to UW in 2003—this time as a nontraditional student with her two young children in tow—and went on to serve on the Wyoming Land and Water Law Review and earn her law degree.

### **INVESTMENT SERVICES**

The estimated endowment one-year and fiscal-year-to-date lagged performance through March 31, 2024 is 9.4%, and 7.1% respectively, while the endowment pool value as of March 31 is estimated to be \$821.2 million.

In June this year, the Investment Committee approved the following:

- A \$5 million commitment to a credit strategy.
- An additional \$15 million commitment to an opportunistic credit strategy.
- Opportunistic credit co-investment totaling \$5 million with existing manager.
- A \$2 million investment to a venture capital strategy.

### **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

The Financial Services team is currently engaged in a series of critical year-end activities to ensure smooth operations and financial integrity. These include finalizing the internal operating budget, renewing internal foundation insurance agreements, and completing year-end processes to close out the fiscal year. In preparation for the upcoming full-scope audit, the foundation is collaborating with outside auditors. Additionally, there is a strategic reinvestment of funds over 2X in coordination with the campus’s input and business plans. Concurrently, efforts are underway to interview and onboard new employees to fill both open and new positions within the foundation.

### **CAMPAIGN READINESS**

The UW Foundation is actively preparing for a comprehensive campaign. The team is currently evaluating professional campaign consultants and recently visited the South Dakota State University Foundation to learn about their successful campaign and collaboration with a consultant. This preparation involves assessing resources and infrastructure, developing the case for support, and defining the campaign's vision and goals. Additional efforts will continue throughout the summer, aiming to finalize a draft plan by fall.

### **FOUNDATION BOARD MEETING**

At the summer Foundation Board Meeting in June, the UW Foundation said goodbye to three longtime board members whose terms ended: Clayton Hartman, Pat Higgins, Ron Salvagio, and Peter Sherman. The board also voted in the new committee chairs, and the new leadership. Starting on July 1 for the next two years, Doug Stark will serve as chair, Scott Macdonald will serve as vice chair, and Martha Brown Wyrsh will be secretary.

### **GIVING DAY**

University of Wyoming Giving Day is set for noon to noon, October 23-24, 2024—the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Last year, Giving Day raised nearly \$3.6 million from 8,976 total donors. Over the years, Giving Day has transformed into a campus-wide initiative, and further promotes a culture of philanthropy at UW.

In addition, at the summer Foundation Board meeting, the board voted to support Giving Day this year with \$360,000 in reserve funds. The funds will be used to create matching and challenge funds to encourage donor support for colleges, units, and programs across campus.

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING GIVING DAY

