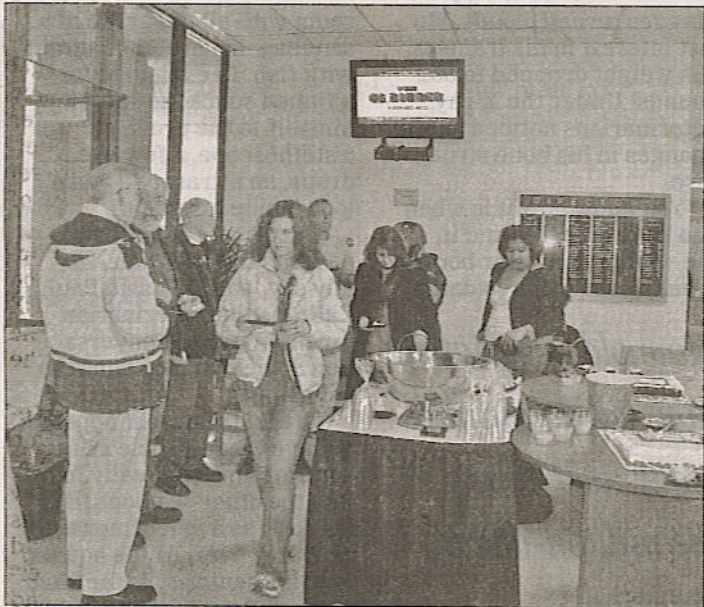


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Kapil Mandrekar | Special to The Sun

Events such as the dedication of The Hall of Science at Arkansas State University help establish an early bond between future alumni and the institution in which they are obtaining their degree.

Fund-raising challenges on horizon for schools

BY ALDEMARO ROMERO
SPECIAL FOR THE SUN

According to a recent study, the growing diversity of student bodies, enrollment declines, expansion of community colleges and the rising cost of a college education will challenge the way colleges and universities will have to finance themselves in the near future.

This is the conclusion reached by a recent report released by the consulting firm Changing Our World.

This report states that with less support from legislative bodies, institutions such as state universities will have to seek more and more philanthropic revenues.

Because the weak economy and increasing student debt are hitting alumni and their families, they are less willing to give back to their alma mater.

Also, because more students are getting more advanced degrees, that dilutes their loyalty to their undergraduate institutions, the report says.

Diversity issue

This study calls for development offices and offices of student affairs to work together more closely. Because of the increasing diversity of the alumni population, chances to increase alumni giving are also dim. Philanthropic giving is largely an Anglo-Saxon cultural phenomenon and the new wave of graduates that are largely first generation from Latin American families are less culturally inclined to give back to the institutions in which they received their college degree.

Therefore, reaching out to an increasingly diverse alumni population and un-

QuickINFO |

The consulting firm Changing Our World recently published a report in which it delved into the ways universities and colleges will be challenged when it comes to fund-raising in the future.

The report pointed at growing diversity of student bodies, enrollment declines, expansion of community colleges and the rising cost of education as major fund-raising hurdles.

derstanding the growing influence of globalization in higher education will be critical to successful fund-raising, the report stated. Right now one-third of students on college campuses are from minority groups. Alumni who reside in their country of origin or outside of the United States in general, even if they are U.S. citizens, are also less likely to give back.

The same thing can be said for women who are completing their bachelor's degrees at higher rates than men.

The report calls for development offices to become more familiar with their students before they graduate. They should also study cultural characteristics, appropriate language and philanthropy in different cultural contexts. The report also says that female and minority alumni are forming loyalties and priorities earlier than ever, so colleges and universities that have so far failed to engage those students early on are more likely to disenfranchise them even before they graduate. Further-

FUNDS: Report urges universities, colleges to chase private funding

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more, the report indicates that colleges and universities need to reinforce their presence abroad to widen their alumni networks.

In the United States, about 86 percent of philanthropic giving comes from individuals, with 12 percent from foundations and 4 percent from corporations. Therefore, giving by alumni is critical for the financial survival of state-sponsored institutions of higher education.

In addition to strengthen alumni giving, institutions of higher education will have to work harder to obtain funding from private foundations and corporations. The leadership of those foundations is increasingly made up by people from a younger generation. That means they have different views and priorities than those with whom development officers have been dealing in the last few decades. In-

stead of going to them with specific requests, donors seem to be more comfortable with the idea of being listened to and then being offered giving opportunities.

The report also says that fund-raising by community colleges, especially through building corporate partnerships, may become more and more important. For them it is essential that they look at the personnel needs of corporations so they can fill the rank and file of their staff with well-prepared professionals.

This report can be requested on the Changing Our World Web site: www.changingourworld.com/site/PageServer.

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