

BLAIR SETH WALKER

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Executive Summary

- Highly skilled senior executive with over 17 years of experience.
- Highly effective relationship manager skilled in building rapport and stewardship and managing hundreds of development relationships with a dynamic portfolio of prospects, including senior leaders of major U.S. corporations.
- Respected leader and mentor entrusted to lead a team of volunteer board members and staff through strategic planning, goal setting, and solicitation training designed to increase participation in institutional activities.

Experience

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Edwardsville, IL

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) is a public university in Edwardsville, Illinois. SIUE was established in 1957 as an extension of Southern Illinois University Carbondale. It is the younger of the two major institutions of the Southern Illinois University system and, as of 2018, has the largest enrollment. Among Illinois public institutions, SIUE ranks 4th on Forbes magazine's list of America's Top Colleges.

Vice Chancellor for Advancement and CEO of the SIUE Foundation

2022-Present

Leading and implementing strategic strategies to advance our 30-individual team in the advancement division. Managing and leading as CEO of the SIUE Foundation, working closely with the Board of Directors, and guiding the institution's fiduciary obligations. Leading efforts to re-engage 600,000 prospects of SIUE alumni, donors, and corporate partners. Managing the university's five volunteer boards and the Chancellor's portfolio for leadership donors.

Accomplishments:

- Serves as one of four campus Vice Chancellors reporting directly to the University Chancellor
- Restructured Major Gifts Team
- Implemented robust metrics policy, led to increasing major gift proposals by over 200% over 10 months
- Led efforts to conduct the most consequential bylaw review and update in the Foundation 46 year history
- Updated Foundation use of funds policy to allow for easier access and clarity for campus partners
- Identified, solicited, and received the single largest alumnus gift in the institution's history

Kennesaw State University

Kennesaw, GA

Kennesaw State University is a leader in innovative teaching and learning, Kennesaw State University offers undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees to its nearly 43,000 students. With 11 colleges on two metro Atlanta campuses, Kennesaw State is the third-largest university in the state.

Senior Director of Development, Michael J. Coles College of Business, Graduate College, Professional Education, and Global Affairs

2017- 2022

Served as the Chief Fundraising Officer for the Michael J. Coles College of Business, the largest college by enrollment and the most extensive group of over 40,000 alumni. Worked with the Dean to plan and implement a coordinated program of fundraising activities for College of Business. Oversaw a professional staff of major gifts officers(s) and related support staff. Established goals and implemented strategic fundraising plans to identify, cultivate, solicit and steward major and principal gift prospects. Identified and recruited advisory board members to advance the academic and philanthropic mission of the College. Solicited gifts of \$50,000 to \$10,000,000. Responsible for securing yearly gifts and commitments of \$4 million to \$6 million. Oversaw a team responsible for securing gifts totaling \$5 million to \$8 million annually.

Accomplishments:

- Increased alumni giving by 200% over the last five years
- Increased study abroad scholarship dollars by 300%
- Developed a Young Alumni Society for the College of Business
- Oversaw all fundraising efforts for the Graduate College, Professional Education, and Global Affairs units
- Solicited and received first-ever PhD scholarships for the Graduate College

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- Developed comprehensive campaign strategies for the Colleges and divisions, including marketing materials, case statements, and recruiting prospects for the campaign task-force committee
- Provided philanthropic leadership to Associate Deans, Department Chairs, and Institute/Center directors and their various boards to increase giving and participation in programs
- Collaborated across university departments to advance the Dean's fundraising priorities
- Primary manager for 35 of 50 University Trustees
- Served as a member of the KSU Foundation Investment RFP committee

Georgia Southern University

Statesboro, GA

Georgia Southern is the state's largest and most comprehensive center of higher education south of I-20. With almost 27,000 students, and approximately 140 different degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels, Georgia Southern is a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution with three vibrant campuses — the Statesboro Campus, the Armstrong Campus in Savannah and the Liberty Campus in Hinesville.

Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, Atlanta Region

2015-2017

Front-line development officer responsible for planning and implementing a coordinated program of fundraising activities for the Atlanta Region. Use professional relationship-building skills to establish and effectively manage relationships with significant corporate and foundation prospects for the Metro Atlanta region. Solicit gifts of \$10,000 to \$5,000,000. Responsible for securing yearly gifts and commitments of \$1.5 million to \$2 million.

Accomplishments:

- Identified, cultivated, solicited, and stewarded a portfolio of over 180 corporate and foundation prospects
- Represented Georgia Southern with Atlanta-based business groups, including Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Technology Association of Georgia, and Georgia Chamber of Commerce
- Designed all corporate and foundation fundraising marketing materials
- Interfaced with over 15 individual school-based advisory boards and Georgia Southern University Foundation boards
- Assisted in the identification and assessment process for new prospects in Atlanta for unit gift officers

Georgia Aquarium

Atlanta, GA

Georgia Aquarium is a public aquarium in Atlanta, Georgia. It exhibits hundreds of species and thousands of animals across its seven major galleries. It was the largest aquarium in the world from its opening in 2005 until 2012 when it was surpassed by the S.E.A. Aquarium in Singapore and the Chimelong Ocean Kingdom in China; the Georgia Aquarium remains the largest aquarium in the United States. A \$250 million donation from the foundation of local businessmen and The Home Depot co-founder Bernard Marcus provided the bulk of the funding needed to build and stock the new facility.

Manager Corporate and Foundation Relations

2013- 2015

Front-line development officer responsible for planning and implementing a coordinated program of fundraising. Use professional relationship-building skills to establish and effectively manage relationships with significant corporate and foundation prospects. Solicit gifts of \$10,000 to \$9,000,000.

Accomplishments:

- Managed 50-75 key Fortune 1000 corporate accounts
- Cultivated portfolios of 50-75 high-level foundations
- Successfully discovered, cultivated, and solicited a new title sponsorship partner (8 figure commitment)
- Managed title sponsorship program ensuring proper stewardship
- Provided department leadership during Vice President for Development Search
- Created major giving recognition societies
- Formulated Capital Campaign, including developing case statement and "silent" phase planning
- Established gift recognition and gift acceptance policy for the organization

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United Way of the Coastal Empire

Savannah, GA

Established in 1938, the United Way of the Coastal Empire was created for the community by the community to support and serve in good times and bad. As the largest non-profit organization in the Savannah metro area, United Way has evolved to meet the needs of the times, providing solutions to our communities' toughest problems.

Division Director, Campaign

2010- 2013

- Coordinated annual fundraising campaigns for over 300 firms and 10,000 individuals
- Raised over \$4,500,000 in annual giving
- Collaborated with senior administrators and board members to identify potential donors
- Represented United Way at business development and networking functions in the community
- Coordinated training and managed over 40 volunteers and Loaned Associates
- Maintained integrity of the internal database by daily research and updates
- Designed and completed over 30,000 annual pieces of direct mail
- Lead group presentations of 5-500 people

Assistant to the President/Loaned Associate

2006-2009

- Coordinated day-to-day operations of the President's Office
- Organized employee review process
- Coordinated campaign operations for a variety of firms
- Ensured proper distribution and collection of campaign materials

Education

Georgia Southern University

- Doctor of Education: Higher Education Administration

(Expected May 2024)

Georgia Southern University

- Master of Business Administration

2012

Georgia Southern University

- Bachelor of Health Sciences: Health Services Administration

2009

Certification

- Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE), International

2015

Professional Development & Community Leadership

Greater St. Louis Inc. Investor, Council Member August 2022

Southwest Illinois Leadership Council, Executive Board Member August 2022

Rotary Club of Edwardsville, IL., Member August 2022

Journal of Education Advancement and Marketing

- The Myth of Relationship Building- Publication January 2021

Georgia Education Advancement Council

- Track Session Speaker- Corporate Success- 2015 Conference
- Track Session Speaker- Fundraising through Chaos- 2018 Conference
- Track Session Speaker- The myth of relationship-building- 2019 Conference

Council for Education Advancement

- 2020 Conference Judge

Association of Fundraising Professionals, Greater Atlanta Chapter