

Attention: Generosity U Review Committee

The Towson University Presidential Ambassadors are pleased to submit this letter and our video for consideration for the Sillerman Prize and the Generous U title. Towson University's Presidential Ambassador (PA) program was created in 2012 to bridge the gap between the student body and Towson University's (TU) philanthropic initiatives. PAs have the opportunity to express why they are grateful for donors at events hosted by the President of Towson University. In the fall of 2014, with the addition of a new Director of the Annual Campaign, the organization restructured its mission to be aligned with the philanthropic initiatives of the President.

The program has three fundamental goals:

- Educating the student body about the importance of philanthropic giving and initiatives,
- Expressing our unique TU stories to alumni, friends, faculty, and staff at events
- Asking our fellow students to give back to campus through our student campaign, *Gold and Black Giving Back*.

If we are selected to receive the Sillerman Prize, the award will be managed by the Towson University Foundation, Inc. (TUF). The TUF was established in 1970 to receive private contributions in support of Towson University and its initiatives.

Our websites:

- [Towson University Presidential Ambassadors](#)
- [Gold and Black Giving Back Campaign](#)

Contact person for the Presidential Ambassadors:

Rachel Ungvarsky
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Group advisor:

Brittany Shaff, Director of the Annual Campaign; [REDACTED]

University official:

Timothy J.L. Chandler, Interim President, Towson University; [REDACTED]
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Towson University Foundation official:

John J. Mease, Jr., Vice President of Towson University Foundation; [REDACTED]

Budget for Philanthropy related activities:

\$20,000

How Philanthropy Relates to the Mission of the Presidential Ambassador Program:

Educating TU students about philanthropy, why all students should be thankful for TU's donors, and asking students to give back to TU is the mission of the PA organization at Towson University. As leaders of the student campaign, *Gold and Black Giving Back*, each PA throughout the year will: write solicitation letters to the student body, sign thank you notes for student gifts, sign thank you letters for leadership level donors, and go to student organization meetings and talk to members about why philanthropy is important and how they can join the *Gold and Black* campaign.

How our Work Impacts our Student Community:

Prior to fall 2014, PAs did not talk with fellow students about philanthropy. In fall 2014, we came up with the idea of having a student campaign. We created all aspects of the campaign from naming it to having a student create our logo and website. *Gold and Black Giving Back* is a campaign by TU students for TU students that has raised nearly \$12,000 from roughly 300 students, with an average gift of \$43. We view the impact of this campaign not solely in dollars raised. Educating students on why philanthropy is important, what current donors have done for TU, and what an impact each student can have on current and future Towson Tigers by giving up one less slice of pizza, or coffee is just as important as a donation.



The Campaign does not ask students to give to one specific fund. We wanted to make sure students could donate to a fund they are passionate about. Students can donate to any of the TUF's 900 funds. Generally, students donate back to athletics, their major, campus life, or to the Towson Fund, the university's unrestricted fund.

The PA program also increases student engagement on campus by fostering a sense of pride, loyalty, tradition and a life-long relationship with Towson University. We educate students by tabling on campus, (writing/being featured in) articles in our student newspaper, sending out educational and solicitation emails to the entire student body, talking to student organizations, and creating educational and thank-you videos. We also have interactive events and programs for students to participate in. Such programs include or will include:

- Doc-Hug-A-Thon (February 2-12), named for our school mascot, Doc. Students fill out a Valentine's Day card for a loved one on campus, and Doc delivers the card to the recipient and gives them a hug. There is a \$5.00 suggested donation to the TU Foundation. In the first year of doing the event, we surpassed our goal and garnered 67 hugs and raised almost \$400 in donations.
- Paws for Thanks Day (March 3). In coordination with the Offices of Development, President, and Special Events, Towson has revamped its annual donor appreciation day. While our students are extremely grateful for the opportunities they have while at TU, PAs want to make sure donors are aware. In addition to having an event in the student union where students can sign a thank you sign and thank you cards, the PAs created over 40 large-scale gift tags that are placed all over campus so no matter where a student, faculty or staff member is on campus they see the range of support we all have here at TU. The gift tags indicate what object, room, or program benefits from private support. The event also has a photo-booth, a philanthropy education table, and is videotaped by TU. This year, the CASE Affiliated Student Advancement Programs (CASE ASAP) asked to videotape and feature our event as an example for other institutions.
- Campus-Wide Capture the Flag (May 3). This event is both a community building and fundraising event. Each participant is asked for a \$5.00 donation as part of the event. Based on the success of Doc-Hug-A-Thon, we foresee 150 signees donating \$5.00 each with a total of roughly \$750 given back to the TU Foundation.
- Student Donor Appreciation Day (May 8). This is a day where Towson University shows its appreciation to students who have given back through the *Gold and Black Giving Back Campaign*.

Our goals have a tremendous impact on our students and our community. In less than six months from launching the *Gold and Black Giving Back Campaign* and the revamped Presidential Ambassador organization, we have made a tremendous impact with creating a culture of philanthropy within our campus and by the dollars raised. In comparison, last year 54 students donated \$2,237 back to the TU Foundation. Since the launch of Gold and Black in November 2014, roughly \$12,000 from 300 students has been donated; participation has increased by 455% and by \$9,763.

How we will Increase the Number of Students on Campus Involved in Philanthropy:

Encouraged by our success this year, we are excited to see what next year brings. Some of the changes we will see in the next school year include:

- A larger Presidential Ambassador membership; growing to 40-50 members
- Including student athletes, graduate students, and other “non-traditional” students as members
- A fall fundraising event: TU Student Raffle, where faculty and staff will auction off activities that students can participate in with a suggested donation back to TU.
- Providing t-shirts to all student donors to wear during our homecoming game
- Students will be able to donate unused dining meals (roughly \$5 per meal) as their student gift
- Completing a 1,500 student participation goal in honor of our 150th year!

Our increased student involvement will be measured by participation to the campaign. We will continue to record how many students donate by cash, credit card, or by donating an unused meal. It will also be measured by how many students use social media to discuss why giving back matters. The campaign has its own hash-tags and logos that resonate with students.

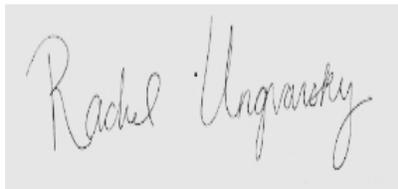
Presidential Ambassadors Advisors:

Presidential Ambassadors are primarily overseen by the Director of the Annual Campaign and the Director of the Office of Special Events. PAs are decentralized into three committees: Membership, Events, and Philanthropy. Each member picks a committee and each committee nominates co-chairs. The co-chairs work with an advisor to oversee the work of each committee. Each committee meets bi-monthly, and the entire Presidential Ambassador team meets once a month.

How the PAs Will Use a \$10,000 Prize:

We will use the awarded money to continue the growth of student philanthropy at Towson University. Money would go toward branded merchandise such as the t-shirts for student donors to wear during our homecoming football game. It would also go toward having a fall community building and fundraising event on campus. Lastly, money would go toward sending the PA Committee Chairs to a conference so they can learn more about effective ways to promote philanthropy on college campuses.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Towson University Presidential Ambassadors:



Rachel Ungvarsky '16

March 10, 2015