



## STEPS TO AN IMPACTFUL DEPARTMENT AWARD CEREMONY

- 1.) The Alumni Foundation wants to help! Awards ceremonies are great opportunities to increase engagement with scholarship donors. Donors are often eager to learn how their gift has impacted your student recipients. The success of these events can be increased in many ways. To start, here are the roles we each play for these events:

<b>DEPARTMENT ROLE:</b>	<b>ALUMNI FOUNDATION ROLE:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Pick a date a minimum of <u>3</u> months in advance of the event. Fill out the Scholarship Foundation Event Form! You don't have to have all the details ironed out. Just a starting point.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>After being notified by the form, run a list report with all the requested parties for the event. (This takes up to 3 weeks!) Provide the list back to the department with ample time for producing invitations.</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Refer to the spreadsheet provided in February from the Director of Foundation Financial Operations to determine scholarships and fund balances for the next academic year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>The Donor Relations Coordinator will designate specific donors and begin outreach in collaboration with your Development Officer for their engagement.</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Submit student scholarship offers in UCM Scholarship Finder. Submit the certificate request. This will need to be completed 2 weeks in advance. This allows the Fund Management Coordinator time to prepare certificates for pickup prior to your event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Begin special planning for scholarship donors who will attend. This may include a gift or a special meal after the ceremony.</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Plan the event. Work with IMC on email or print invitations. Reserve your space, order refreshments, prepare your program. ***Be sure to communicate with your Dean so that they can attend your events.***</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>A representative will attend and capture the event with photos and gratitude videos with recipients. Connect donors with their recipients.</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Advise the Foundation of any changes to the program, invitations, or who will make remarks. Please share the program with the Donor Relations Coordinator a week in advance of the event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Follow up with the scholarship donor to express gratitude. This might include developing Thank View videos, handwritten cards, or a phone call.</b></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Have an amazing event! Pass out the certificates and enjoy watching your deserving students be acknowledged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Follow up with the department. This may include providing pictures to department heads and ensuring gratitude from UCM is expressed to donors!</b></li> </ul>

**2.) IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION:**

**WHY 3 MONTHS?!?**

- Pulling a list of alumni, partners, and donors will take at least 3 weeks through our database. Many donors have specific tags and preferences on how they are communicated with, and we have over 200,000 records to pull information from. These records are updated regularly.
- Starting conversations with donors or alumni you would like present can take a while. Extending invitations for these events 2 months or more in advance is courteous. Just like you and I, our donors and alumni have demanding schedules. Inviting early allows them plenty of time to plan their attendance.
- The Foundation is typically in full swing with other donor events around campus at the same time of year the awards ceremonies occur. Planning early allows all of us ample time to make these ceremonies organized and impactful for everyone.

**3.) Important Foundation Contact Information:**

**Fund Management Coordinator**  
*Scholarship Awarding Process & Information*  
**Jen Skidmore**  
[jskidmore@ucmo.edu](mailto:jskidmore@ucmo.edu) | 660.543.7701

**Donor Relations Coordinator**  
*Stewardship, Donor Outreach, Communication*  
**Bonnie Seelinger**  
[seelinger@ucmo.edu](mailto:seelinger@ucmo.edu) | 660.543.8413

**Development Officers:**

*Darla Harmon*  
 College of Health, Science, and Technology  
 Harmon College of Business and  
 Professional Studies  
[dharmon@ucmo.edu](mailto:dharmon@ucmo.edu) | 417-872-9710

*Billy Ukrazhenko*  
 Athletics & Affinity Giving  
[ukrazhenko@ucmo.edu](mailto:ukrazhenko@ucmo.edu) | 785-447-1212

*Pat Smithson*  
 College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences  
 College of Education  
[psmithson@ucmo.edu](mailto:psmithson@ucmo.edu) | 913-963-3941

#### 4.) Important Clickable Links to help you plan your event:

- a.) Foundation Scholarship Event Form:  
 \*\*\* MUST BE COMPLETED 3 MONTHS IN ADVANCE OF THE AWARD DATE\*\*\*  
[Award Event Form](#)
- b.) Planning and Printing/Emailing Invitations  
 To design:  
[IMC Production Request Form](#)  
 To print:  
[Print & Copy Center Job Request Form](#)
- c.) To reserve and request set-ups for an event space:  
[Meeting and Conference Services and 25 Live Training and Links](#)
- d.) To order refreshments for your event through our campus contracted caterer.  
 \* You will need a waiver from Sodexo for outside catering.\*  
[Sodexo Menu and Order Link](#)
- e.) UCM Scholarship Finder  
[Scholarship Finder](#)
- f.) UCM Scholarship Certificate Form  
[Scholarship Certificate Request Form](#)

#### 5.) Things to Remember

- Include invitations to your College Deans, Chairs, and Faculty members. Be sure to include the parents of recipients in the invitations when appropriate.
- Communicate with your campus partners early to ensure enough time to plan and execute your event.
- Drive home to your students the importance of their attendance at your ceremony. As a donor, attending an event to meet recipients for your scholarship and showing up to find the students are not there is not a good look for anyone. We want to enrich donor experiences so they will be more engaged with your program. When possible, we would also like to provide a video clip of gratitude from the students if donors are not in attendance.
- The UCM Foundation has worked hard to establish strong relationships with our donors. We do this by ensuring a clear and current understanding of how donors want to invest their time and money. This is done by planning well-thought-out stewardship and communication plans through the Development Officers and the Donor Relations Coordinator. We do not encourage you to reach out independently to donors for your events. Please coordinate through us unless they have reached out to you specifically.
- The Foundation is excited and happy to assist you with your award events. A great MULE team working together can make amazing things happen. Let's work together!