

Philanthropy Matters

We Share Your Passion! June 2020

Dear Colleagues,

With all the challenges that you are facing with COVID-19, we thought it would be helpful to invite two experienced and successful development professionals to share with you how they are navigating the crisis on a day by day basis.



Jenny and Mike are Presidents of hospital foundations in the Dayton Ohio area, which are part of Premier Health – and have over 50 years of combined experience. As a result, our PM newsletter this month is a little longer with these questions and answers



Jenny Lewis, President & CEO
Miami Valley Hospital Foundation
Good Samaritan Foundation

Miami Valley Hospital is a large urban hospital in Dayton. The hospital has two additional locations: Miami Valley Hospital South in Centerville, Ohio, and Miami Valley Hospital North in Englewood, Ohio.



Michael D. Stautberg, President
Atrium Medical Center Foundation

Atrium Medical Center is a full-service acute care hospital with a level III trauma center located in Middletown.

1. What have you learned personally?

Jenny – *During the pandemic, I learned that life can be lived very simply. Being home for 12 weeks, I found that our home is a safe and beautiful place to work and enjoy life even during difficult times.*

Mike – *Listen, continually assess the situation, lead with an open mind. The importance to remain calm while constantly pivoting. Never stop communicating.*



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2. What have you learned about your donors?

Jenny – *The crisis truly confirmed what we know about our donors – when a crisis happens in our community, they step up and give to support their hospital. 2020 celebrates 130 years of Miami Valley Hospital serving the community and the community supporting the hospital.*

Mike – *Our donors never stopped wanting to be communicated with. We kept standard publications in process and found innovative ways to build an online platform and newsletters. We also hosted several live TEAMS meetings for the public to interact with our CEO and other guests during the Covid Crisis.*

3. What tactics or strategies will you do differently moving forward?

Did you have to implement a virtual event?

Jenny – *We are changing our communication strategies. During the pandemic, we hosted virtual Coffee Chats with the president of the hospital and other leaders. It was very effective and greatly appreciated.*

We found our donors were watching the news – local and national- but wanted an up close and personal message about their hospital. At the end of the virtual session, there was an opportunity for questions. I look for us to continue this type of communication going forward.

Mike – *With all the golf outings canceled prior to the one we held on June 22nd we challenged ourselves to think differently about how this event could take place. By working closely with the golf pro reviewing their operational practices and wanting to maintain high levels of safety we found a practical and safe way to continue to have this event. The sponsors and the golfers were excited, and we had one of our best years ever keeping the funding available for the Maternal Health Center that relies heavily on philanthropy!*

Our fundraising approach consisted primarily of continuing to communicate and implementing software that allowed us to go to a nearly cashless event. We designated tee times instead of the shotgun start typical of these events. It was a great day and our focus on safety was appreciated.

4. Your Board...how have they responded to you during the pandemic?

Jenny – *The board was very supportive and willing to adapt as needed. They were helpful in our efforts to continue fundraising during the pandemic.*

Mike – *Our Board was very supportive and engaged in our efforts. We moved our meetings to virtual meetings they wanted the open communication process to continue. We made a significant number of one on one calls and called to check in on them frequently. Many of them gave during this pandemic and they also were willing to help us make contacts when and where necessary. The biggest challenges we had we're helping them understand the technology needed to communicate during these times but eventually they all were able to do it.(TEAMS, ZOOM, etc.).*

5. Staffing: what were the difficult changes that you made?

Jenny – *All staff continued working. Everyone worked from home and we used TEAMS for meetings.*

Mike – *We continued to work throughout the crisis but had to quickly implement a work from home strategy that went relatively well. We were able to move to this new work environment within days. We also had to endure some furloughs, reduced workloads and pay decreases. However, everyone kept working as a strong team and understood the sacrifices made. Honest, candid conversations about the situation we were faced with led to increased cooperation, innovative thinking and continued productivity. In partnership with the other foundations within our health system we found ways to share resources; going forward that will allow us to be nimbler in the event of other unforeseen events.*

6. Has this pandemic made you stronger both personally and professionally for the future?

Jenny – *Absolutely, the pandemic has reassured me that our team is strong and able to make change happen quickly. It has also proven that once again, in the middle of a crisis, our community rose to the challenge and supported the hospital and the healthcare heroes on the frontlines.*

We were innovative and creative – continually communicating with our donors and families making sure they had what they needed and were safe.

Mike – *The pandemic has renewed my feelings about being calm in the face of adversity, listening to others, continually assessing the situation and finding the right path to move forward with flexibility. I believe my leadership skills were enhanced by the ability to be open to new and creative ideas of others giving greater access to alternatives than perhaps the potentially narrow path of my singular opinion.*

I challenged the team to think differently about how we can achieve our goals and stay connected quickly while adjusting to the new reality the crisis was presenting. We moved off a campaign that needed to be temporarily put to the side moved to significantly implement a campaign that was more appropriate and currently under development that allowed for better messaging for fund raising for our most current needs.

Due to these efforts our fundraising goals are still on target for the year, our relationships are deepening, and our momentum is increasing.

My motto throughout this was to focus on what we can do versus what we can't and never stop communicating.

One final thought, our success was also based on many years of deepening relationships and having a true sense of trust with our donors in the community. They needed not only to hear of our current needs but how their past support created a safe hospital with advanced care and well-trained caregivers for the people of our community. Our communication with them was filled with messages of gratitude and appreciation for their kindness.



I have included a message from Seth Godin, look him up, he is an amazing marketing guru. He shared what many of us may be feeling today.



www.sethgodin.com (Seth's Blog)

Without ambiguity: Black Lives Matter – Seth Godin

This isn't a current events blog. It might be inspired by them, but I try to write something every day that's worth reading in a month or a year.

And so, I choose to ignore the specifics of breaking news, because breaking news keeps changing.



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Sometimes, though, ambiguity isn't called for. Sometimes, it's misunderstood. In my town and my city and my country, we're coming to grips with issues that have been simmering for far too long. And you've certainly heard from people with clear and actionable things about what you can do right now, and about their commitment going forward. I don't want to confuse anyone about my take on it.

Avoiding breaking news is a privilege that I have, because there's insulation for me.

Black Lives Matter.

The systemic, cruel and depersonalizing history of Black subjugation in my country has and continues to be a crime against humanity. It's based on a desire to maintain power and false assumptions about how the world works and how it can work. It's been amplified by systems that were often put in place with mal-intent, or sometimes simply because they felt expedient. It's painful to look at and far more painful to be part of or to admit that exists in the things that we build.

We can't permit the murder of people because of the color of their skin. Institutional racism is real, it's often invisible, and it's pernicious.

And White Supremacy is a loaded term precisely because the systems and their terrible effects are very real, widespread and run deep.

The benefit of the doubt is powerful indeed, and that benefit has helped me and people like me for generations. I'm ashamed of how we got here and want to more powerfully contribute and model how we can get better, together.

It doesn't matter how many blog posts about justice I write, or how clear I try to be about the power of diversity in our organizations. Not if I'm leaving doubt about the scale and enormity of the suffering that people feel, not just themselves, but for their parents before them and for the kids that will follow them.

It's easier to look away and to decide that this is a problem for someone else. It's actually a problem for all of us. And problems have solutions and problems are uncomfortable.



Stay safe. Stay healthy. Stay strong.



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Dawn Hensley, Editor

