



Campaign Report

Fisher Forward

2015-2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

St. John Fisher University's Fisher Forward Campaign stands as a landmark achievement in the institution's storied history. Initiated with the bold ambition of securing Fisher's future and enriching experiences for generations of students, Fisher Forward represents the largest and most impactful comprehensive fundraising effort ever undertaken by the University. The campaign was guided by a vision rooted in four foundational pillars: enhancing the campus, shaping the student experience, creating immediate and lasting impact, and securing Fisher's future.

At its launch, Fisher Forward set an initial fundraising goal of \$75 million, with a target completion date of May 2023 corresponding with the institution's 75th anniversary. Driven by tremendous community support and the generosity of alumni, friends, parents, and institutional partners, the campaign far exceeded expectations. Remarkably, the original \$75 million goal was achieved 18 months ahead of schedule, underscoring the extraordinary momentum and enthusiasm driving the campaign's success. In December 2022, the goal was raised to \$100 million and the campaign timeline extended to May 2025 to align with the Strategic Plan. This new ambitious milestone was achieved by December 2023, again 18 months ahead of schedule, affirming the collective commitment to Fisher's mission and values.

This report analyzes the results of the Fisher Forward Campaign demonstrating the growth and improved effectiveness in the University's Advancement program and looks ahead to build upon this campaign for future fundraising and engagement efforts.

FISHER FORWARD

The Campaign for St. John Fisher University

ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

FY16 Leadership phase of the campaign launched on July 1, 2015, marking the first day of Dr. Gerard J. Rooney's presidency; first year secured \$9.8M in fundraising commitments.

FY18 Partnership with Marts & Lundy for internal assessment, capacity analysis, case for support, and external feasibility study.

FY20 Public campaign phase launched, September 19, 2019, marking the anniversary of the first day of classes in 1951; Fisher awarded Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) grant for \$2,555,000, June 2019; \$1M gift from Jack '73 and Donna DePeters (with \$1M match from Danny and Colleen Wegman in recognition of Jack's 52-year career with Wegmans) establishing the Jack '73 and Donna DePeters Family Center for Innovation and Teaching Excellence; COVID-19 shutdowns implemented in March.

FY22 \$75M goal achieved; Dennis '72 and Denise Tepas gift established Tepas Commons and the Terrace at Tepas Commons; \$2.5M gift from Joseph R. '78 and Karen Rulison ensured the longevity of the President's Residence, supporting immediate renovations and establishing an endowment for ongoing maintenance and capital improvements.

FY24 \$100M goal reached; alumni engagement metric introduced; Spire Society updated to allow one-time, one-year contributions; major gifts: Tom Golisano (\$4M), Golisano Foundation (\$1M) for GIDDN; conditional \$5M pledge from Wegmans Family Foundation Inc. for the Wegmans School of Nursing; \$5M HECAP Grant awarded in March 2024.

FY17 Board of Trustees Institutional Advancement Committee broadened campaign planning; launch of the Spire Society leadership annual giving society.

FY19 Major gifts from Tom Golisano (\$5M) and Golisano Foundation (\$800K) supporting the establishment of the Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing (GIDDN); the Presidents Society was established with 17 pioneer members, acknowledging donors with lifetime gifts totaling \$1 million or more.

FY21 Institutional Advancement infrastructure enhanced to support campaign growth; \$1.8M estate gift from Leon Creek '60 which would later be designated for the Lavery Library Modernization and Renovation Project.

FY23 Transition to St. John Fisher University; campaign goal raised to \$100M; 75th Anniversary celebrated; began efforts to raise funds in support of the Lavery Library project.

FY25 Alumni survey conducted; \$5M gift from Golisano Foundation for Board Designated Strategic Projects; \$3,843,494 HEOP grant awarded in July 2024; campaign closed on May 31, 2025, raising more than \$139M.



Campaign Leadership

Fisher Forward stands as a testament to the extraordinary generosity and commitment of our community. At the heart of this campaign's foundation lies the unwavering belief of our campaign chair, Victor E. Salerno, Jr. '66, honorary co-chairs, Wayne and Beverly LeChase, and the support of our major donors whose leadership gifts have propelled St. John Fisher University into a new era of transformative opportunity. Their dedication not only fuels our mission but also inspires the larger Fisher community to imagine and realize a vibrant future.

We extend our deepest thanks to the campaign leaders, donors, and volunteers whose significant philanthropic contributions and steadfast belief in Fisher's vision have been instrumental to the campaign's success.

The Board of Trustees

Throughout the duration of the campaign, the Board of Trustees and the Institutional Advancement Committee played an integral role in guiding the Fisher Forward campaign to unprecedented heights, providing strategic oversight, vision, and advocacy. The Institutional Advancement Committee included champions of Fisher who played a pivotal role in overseeing fundraising efforts and facilitating engagement with prospective donors. Through regular meetings and ongoing collaboration, the committee was instrumental in driving momentum and fostering a culture of philanthropy within the Fisher community.

We proudly acknowledge the distinguished Fisher Forward campaign leadership. Their work has been essential in harnessing the collective energy and generosity of our donor community. Together, they have championed Fisher's vision, fostered a culture of philanthropy, and set the stage for continued growth and impact.

CAMPAIGN CHAIR

Victor (Vic) E. Salerno, Jr. '66

HONORARY CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS

R. Wayne and Beverly LeChase

PRESIDENT

Gerard J. Rooney, Ph.D.

A Legacy of Vision and Generosity: VICTOR E. SALERNO, JR.



Victor E. Salerno, Jr. '66, a proud alumnus, has left an indelible mark on St. John Fisher University through his unwavering commitment, visionary leadership, and extraordinary generosity. As chair of the Fisher Forward campaign, Vic exemplified the very spirit of the University—compassionate, dedicated, and deeply rooted in the belief that education transforms lives.

A longtime member of the Board of Trustees and former chair, Vic's leadership extended well beyond titles. He was a guiding force during pivotal moments in Fisher's history, always encouraging the University to dream bigger and reach higher. At the outset of the Fisher Forward campaign, Vic challenged the institution to set a lofty goal—not merely for the sake of ambition, but because he believed deeply in the transformative power of a Fisher education. His call to action was not just rhetorical; it was an inspiring message that brought the University community together and set the tone for a campaign that would exceed expectations.

Vic's belief in Fisher was personal and profound. As an alumnus, he understood the value of a Fisher education and the doors it could open. His generosity throughout the Fisher Forward campaign—and in previous campaigns—was a testament to his commitment to ensure that future generations of students will benefit from the same opportunities that shaped his own life. Whether through scholarships, capital projects, or strategic initiatives, Vic's philanthropy touched nearly every corner of campus life.

His impact was not limited to financial contributions. Vic was a mentor, a motivator, and a model of servant leadership. He inspired others to give because he led by example. His presence at events, meetings, in the classroom, and University celebrations was a constant reminder of his dedication and his belief in the mission of Fisher.

The Fisher Forward campaign, under Vic's leadership, became more than a fundraising initiative—it became a movement. It united alumni, faculty, staff, and friends around a shared vision for the future of the University. His legacy is woven into the very fabric of Fisher's growth and evolution.

As the University reflects on Fisher Forward, it does so with deep gratitude for Vic's leadership. His legacy is measured by the transformation inspired by his leadership, his philanthropy, and his goodness, discipline, and knowledge.

Victor E. Salerno, Jr. believed in Fisher. He believed in its people, its purpose, and its promise. And through his vision and generosity, he helped ensure that Fisher will continue to thrive, inspire, and transform.



Campaign Planning and Preparation

In October 2017, Fisher engaged the consulting firm Marts & Lundy to support the early phase of the Fisher Forward campaign. Marts & Lundy conducted a comprehensive internal assessment, delivered in December 2017, and completed a customized capacity analysis. They also provided vital input in the refinement of the case for support for the campaign and undertook an external feasibility study between March and June 2018, which included 23 interviews with 28 potential high impact donors.

Based on the findings, Marts & Lundy advised that Fisher had the capacity to pursue an ambitious campaign goal of \$75 million to be achieved by the institution's 75th anniversary in 2023. The consultants recommended increased specificity and prioritization of funding needs and opportunities, emphasized the importance of leveraging the campaign as an opportunity to deepen Board of Trustees' engagement at the major gift level, called for increased investment in the Institutional Advancement program, and encouraged the cultivation of long-term major gift relationships.

Marketing and Outreach Efforts

Advancement and Campaign Communications: Sharing Stories of Success and Inspirational Philanthropy

During the Fisher Forward campaign, advancement communications at St. John Fisher University experienced notable development and growth, driven by a strategic, multi-channel approach that elevated donor engagement and institutional storytelling.

A cornerstone of this evolution was the deliberate use of email communications to enhance awareness, drive engagement, and support fundraising efforts. Campaign updates, donor spotlights, and event invitations were crafted with precision, ensuring that messages reached alumni and donors with relevance and resonance. These communications were not only informative but also compelling, often eliciting emotional nostalgia among

recipients while highlighting mission-driven impact and student success stories.

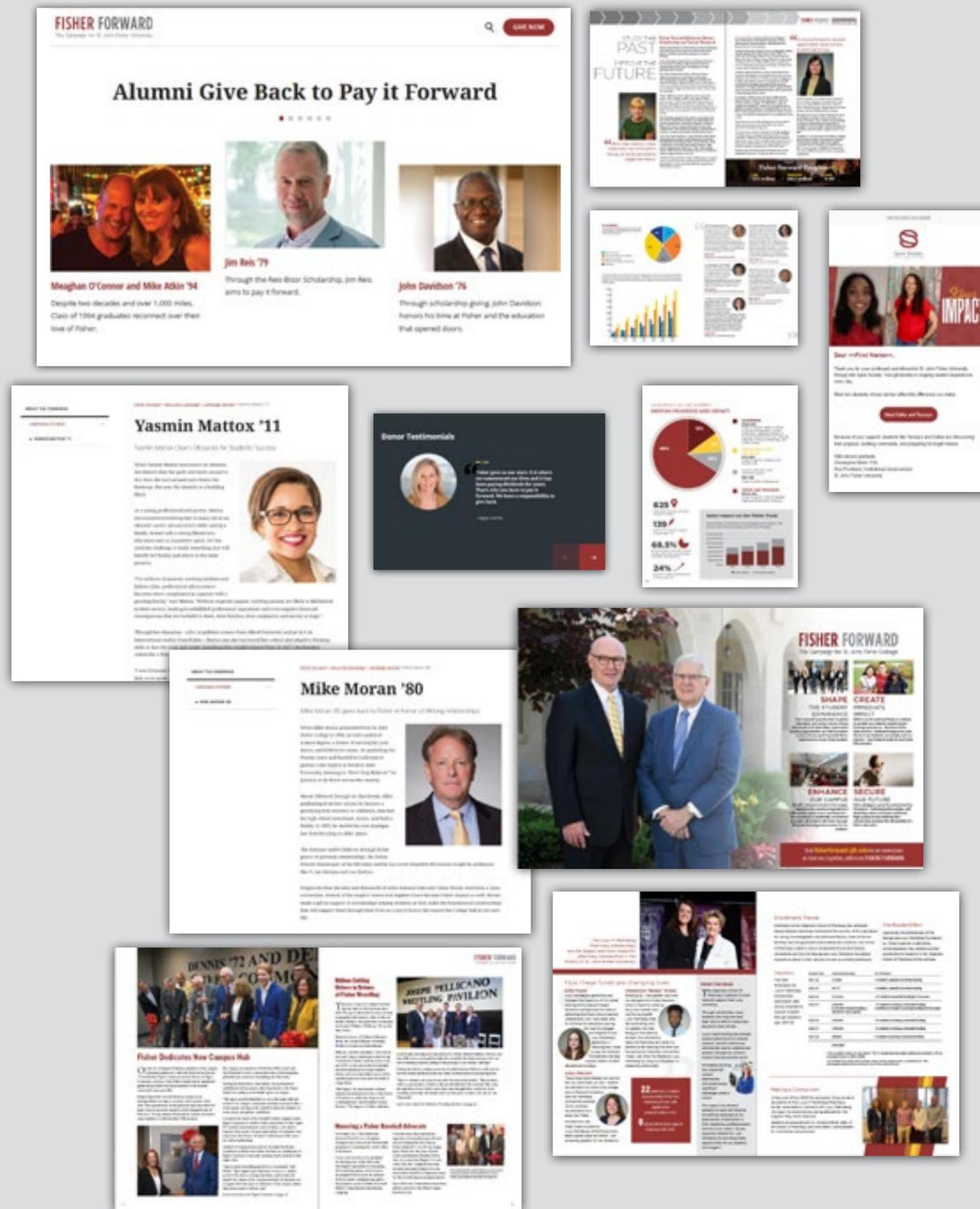
Impact reporting emerged as a vital tool in donor stewardship. Through collaborative efforts between the Institutional Advancement and Marketing & Communications teams, reports were designed to showcase tangible outcomes of donor generosity and included interactive elements such as maps and visual storytelling, which were discussed in campaign planning meetings as ways to deepen donor recognition and reinforce the value of their contributions.

Storytelling was central to the campaign's communication strategy. Across platforms—emails, printed materials, and web-based reports—the narrative of Fisher Forward donors was consistently framed around generosity and mission alignment. From first-time contributors to longtime benefactors, each profile emphasized the transformative power of giving and its alignment with Fisher's values and mission. This approach helped personalize the campaign and foster a sense of shared purpose.

A new website, created for the campaign, shared goals, progress, benefactor testimonials, and donor stories. A variety of outreach, including social media and email, brought viewers to impactful video and stories that shared the inspiring individuals dedicated to the success of Fisher and the campaign.

Importantly, the campaign celebrated gifts at all levels and across all priorities. Communications efforts highlighted not only major gifts but also smaller, meaningful contributions, reinforcing the message that every gift mattered. This inclusive tone was reflected in donor event planning and campaign materials, which acknowledged the breadth of support and the diverse motivations behind giving.

Together, these efforts reflect a maturing advancement communications strategy—one that is data-informed, mission-centered, and deeply collaborative. The Fisher Forward campaign not only raised funds but also built lasting relationships, strengthened institutional identity, and set a new standard for donor engagement at Fisher.



Engagement Tactics with Donors and Stakeholders

At the start of the campaign, engagement tactics were heavily centered on in-person events. The largest of these included Buffalo Bills Training Camp, various regional gatherings, the board and donor holiday party, and Alumni Weekend. Many of these events are long-standing traditions within the University's alumni engagement landscape.

The pandemic necessitated a significant shift in engagement strategies. In-person events were reimagined as virtual experiences, including the Accounting Awards, First Friday Lecture Series, and Alumni Weekend.

Post-COVID, many events resumed their pre-pandemic formats, while some maintained a hybrid approach, offering both in-person and virtual options, as seen with the First Friday Lecture Series.

There was also a renewed focus on data-informed engagement. This began with the use of the Alumni Engagement Metric, adhering to the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) framework. This framework identifies four key engagement areas, three of which Fisher prioritized: volunteer engagement, experiential engagement, and philanthropic engagement.

To complement these metrics, University enrollment data, regional demographics, and past event performance were analyzed. Additionally, a broad-based alumni survey was administered—the first of its kind for the University—to gain deeper insights into the alumni community. These efforts informed strategic shifts in Fisher's engagement approach.



Research and institutional experience consistently show that alumni who are deeply engaged with the University are significantly more likely to contribute philanthropically. To target under-engaged segments of Fisher's alumni, new initiatives were introduced and others brought back to life. Low-barrier, family-friendly activities including Breakfast with Santa, the Alumni Weekend Carnival, and the Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch were offered to engage alumni who graduated since 2000—Fisher's largest alumni cohort.

Engagement with undergraduates and recent graduates (within five years post-graduation) was also prioritized, with a focus on fostering meaningful connections that support student success and long-term alumni involvement. Signature programs such as the annual Fisher Flight initiative connect current students with alumni mentors. Through collaboration with Career Services, programs have expanded to include alumni employer site visits, participation in the career fair, and strategic use of LinkedIn as the primary networking platform.

Insights from this campaign are shaping the evolution of Fisher's engagement strategy, moving beyond measuring success solely by event attendance and toward a broader, more impactful definition of alumni engagement.



One of the most successful events was Breakfast with Santa, which was offered with the goal of engaging local alumni with young families. In 2023 and 2024, attendance rivaled long-standing events, growing from 170 guests (42 alumni) in 2023, to 370 guests (176 alumni) the following year. This growth underscores Fisher's commitment to offering engagement opportunities tailored to alumni at different life stages, particularly those rooted in the Rochester community.



Campaign Milestones

Campaign Launch

The Campaign launch, held in September 2019, marked the beginning of a bold new chapter in St. John Fisher University's history, one that would move Fisher Forward. The event, held at the Wegmans Conference Center, brought together the University's supporters for an evening that evoked nostalgia through a reflection on Fisher's history, while also unveiling the Fisher Forward campaign and its priorities. The celebration generated excitement and support for the largest campaign in the University's history.



Recalibrating the Fisher Forward Campaign Goal

In the winter of 2022, after surpassing the original \$75 million goal ahead of schedule, the University initiated a review of its existing campaign gift table to identify opportunities for additional contributions.

The goal revision process followed three primary steps:

1. The original campaign gift table was reviewed and pledges and gifts of \$50,000 or more were added to the table, along with any open proposals meeting the same threshold.
2. An analysis of expensed federal and state grants during the campaign period was conducted to determine the average annual amount.
3. A wealth screening of 5,897 prospect records was performed using the vendor DonorSearch. The analysis excluded organizations such as foundations and corporations and focused solely on individual prospects.

Following the wealth screening, prospects were segmented into quadrants based on capacity and inclination. The largest concentration of prospects fell within the \$100,000 to \$249,000 capacity range. At that point in the campaign, nearly all gift bands had met or exceeded their targets, with the exception of the \$10 million and above band and the \$2.5 million to \$4.9 million band.

Three revised campaign goal scenarios—\$85 million, \$100 million, and \$125 million—were presented to the Institutional Advancement Committee. Based on the wealth screening results, the average annual federal and state grant funding, the average yearly contributions under \$50,000, and the campaign's current progress, a revised goal of \$100 million was deemed an ambitious yet attainable stretch target. The revised strategy emphasized increased focus on securing gifts of \$2.5 million and above.

Transition from College to University

On June 20, 2022, President Rooney announced that Fisher would become in name what it had been in practice for more than a decade: St. John Fisher University. This historic announcement took place on the anniversary of the institution's groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of Kearney Hall.



Celebration of Fisher's 75th Anniversary

The 75th Anniversary Celebration opened Alumni Weekend 2023 by bringing together alumni, donors, and friends to celebrate St. John Fisher University's robust history and 75-year legacy. The event inspired excitement for the University's future, strengthened pride in the Fisher community, and showcased the Fisher Forward campaign. Guests experienced a prestigious and memorable evening that reflected Fisher's rich traditions, enduring impact, and bright future.



Lavery Library Modernization and Renovation Campaign

In fiscal year 2023, St. John Fisher University started work on a multimillion-dollar library modernization and renovation project, the largest capital project both in scope and investment in the institution's history. Lavery Library opened in 1975 and was named for Fisher's longest serving president, Rev. Charles J. Lavery, CSB. In 2021, a \$1.8 million estate gift from Leon Creek '60 funded a comprehensive study of the library space and services by the planning firm Brightspot. Following this study, Fisher partnered with HOLT Architects, an Ithaca-based firm with expertise in higher education, whose design was guided by Brightspot's findings. The library modernization design included a welcoming public lobby and lounge space, a sharpened book collection, technology-rich classrooms, increased seating for student workspaces, and flexible areas for quiet study and collaborative areas for group work.

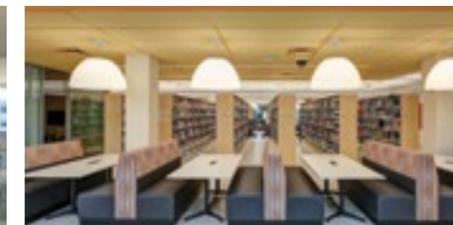
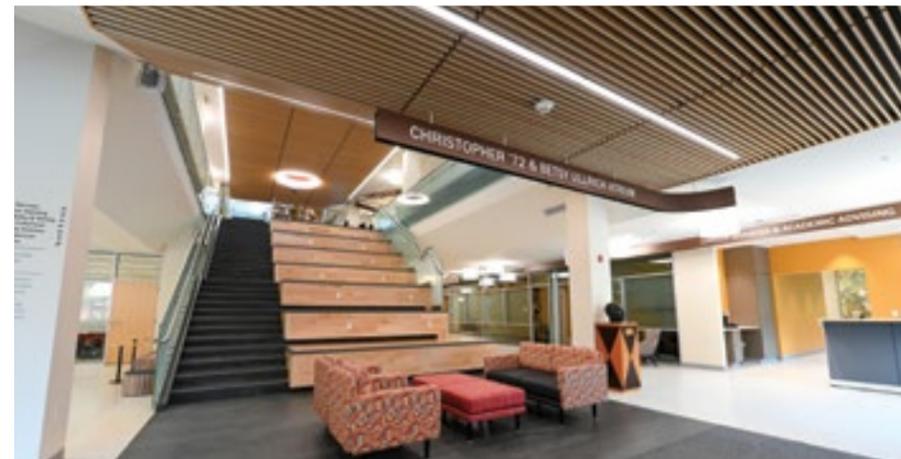
A campaign gift table was created to determine a feasible fundraising goal to support the project and potential library donors were identified along with naming opportunities for dedicated spaces. The proposed library campaign gift table was presented to the Board of Trustees' Institutional Advancement Committee and approved.

Naming opportunities for dedicated spaces within the Library were determined and donor recognition plans were developed ensuring that the generosity of alumni, families, and friends would be permanently celebrated within the newly redesigned and renovated space. These gifts transformed Lavery Library into a place that not only supports research, collaboration, and discovery, but also tells the story of Fisher's philanthropic community through named study rooms, classrooms, lounges, and gathering spaces.



Each named space reflects both the personal connection of the donor and the mission of the library as a place for learning, reflection, and community:

- » *John A. '73 and Donna DePeters*
Donna DePeters K-12 Resource Collection
- » *Robert '74 and Theresa Dumas*
Bob '74 and Terry Dumas Patio; Bob '74 and Terry Dumas Cardinals' Perch; Bob '74 and Terry Dumas Group Study Room
- » *Christopher '72 and Betsy Ullrich*
Christopher '72 and Betsy Ullrich Atrium
- » *Catherine D'Amico '78*
John S. D'Amico Silent Study Room;
John S. D'Amico Silent Study Lounge
- » *Steven W. '84 and Susan M. Barnstead*
Steven W. '84 and Susan M. Barnstead Classroom
- » *Davenport-Hatch Foundation*
Davenport-Hatch Foundation Career Services Suite
- » *Janice C. Loss '92 and Dr. Frederick Cohn*
Janice C. Loss '92 and Dr. Frederick Cohn Study Room; Loss Cohn Family Study Room
- » *David '83 and Robin Pritchard*
Pritchard Family Seminar Room
- » *Edward Finnerty, Esq. '73*
Edward Finnerty, Esq. '73 Study Room





Investing in Institutional Advancement

Setting a New Standard for Institutional Excellence

During the Fisher Forward campaign, the University undertook a significant investment in its Institutional Advancement program, reaching new heights in both staffing and operational capacity. This strategic move was not only a direct response to the recommendations of consultants, Marts & Lundy, but also an intentional step toward fulfilling the campaign's institutional excellence pillar. The campaign's commitment to building a model institutional advancement program was foundational to meeting and exceeding the Fisher Forward campaign goal.

Growth in Institutional Advancement Staffing

At the outset of the campaign, the Institutional Advancement team was comprised of 11 dedicated professionals. Recognizing the need for expanded capacity to achieve the ambitious goals of Fisher Forward, Marts & Lundy recommended a substantial increase in staffing and resources for Institutional Advancement in December 2017. Their proposal envisioned an organizational chart with approximately 21 positions, encompassing new roles such as:

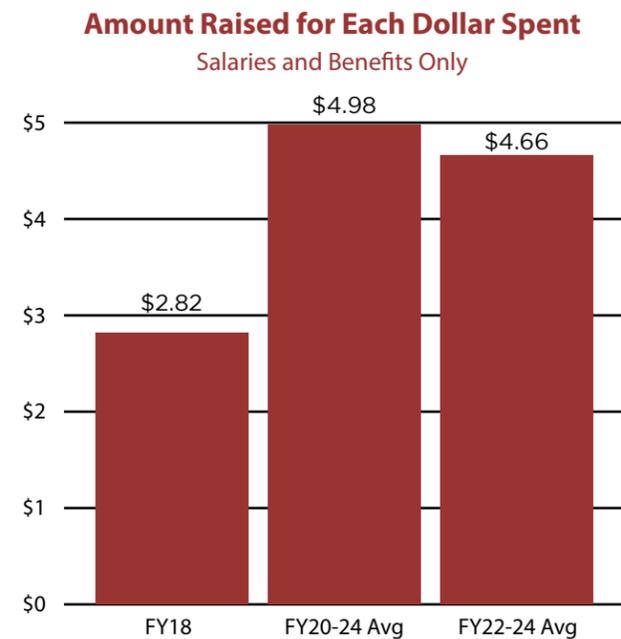
- » A dedicated annual giving position
- » At least two full-time, experienced major gift officers
- » A dedicated planned giving position
- » A foundation and corporate relations role
- » A biographical records and data input support position
- » A prospect research coordinator

Following these recommendations, existing staff were realigned, and new team members were hired, propelling Advancement staff to 18 positions in fiscal

year 2019. Continued investment and strategic hiring further strengthened the team. In fiscal year 2024, two additional roles were introduced to fortify gift and data entry infrastructure, alongside a new position dedicated to the Spire Society giving society. These advances brought the team to its current 21 positions—a historic high for Fisher's Institutional Advancement program.

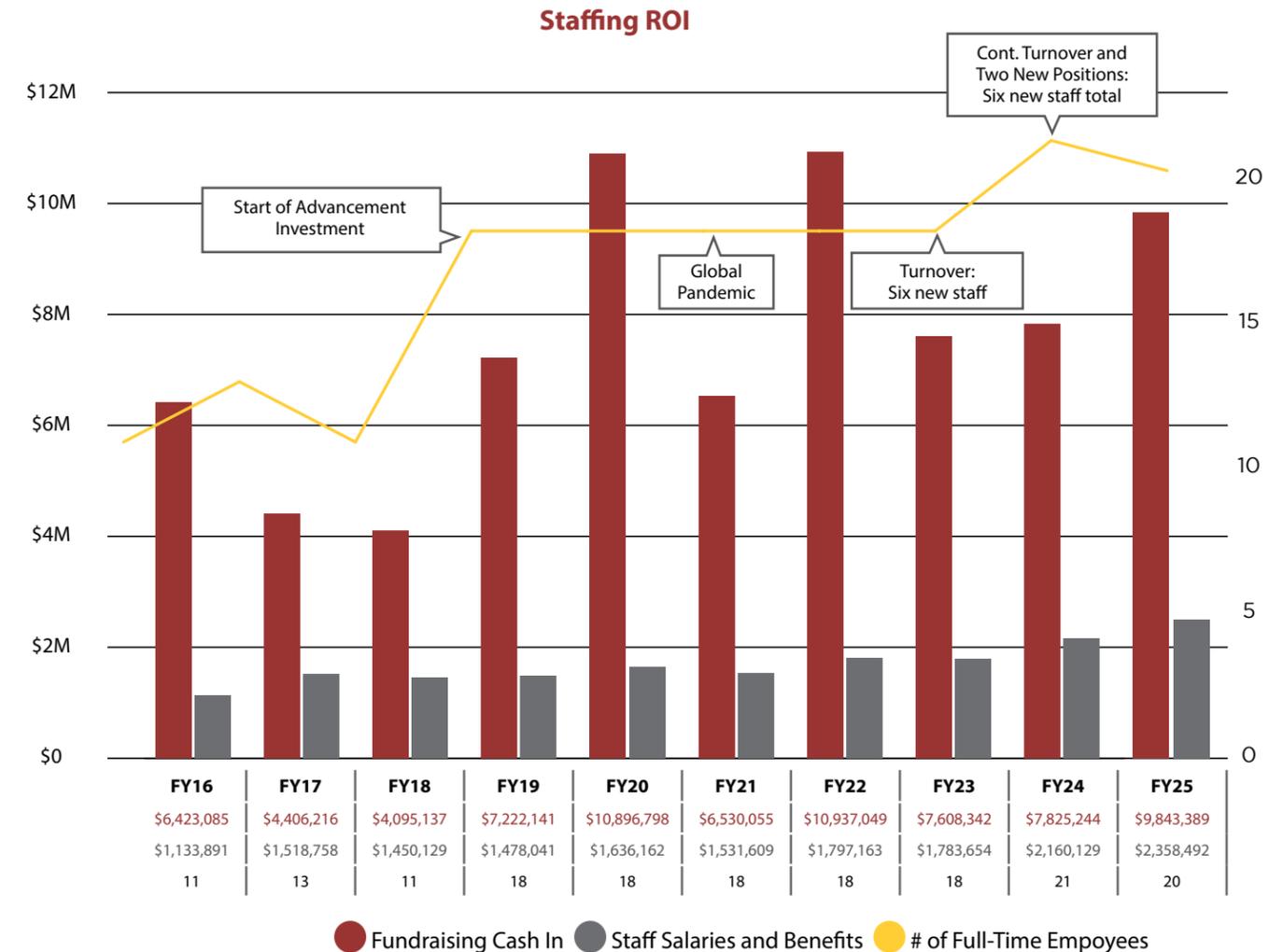
Return on Investment in Fundraising Performance

Notably, the financial impact of this investment was compelling: on average, over the five years following the fiscal year 2019 staffing enhancements, every dollar allocated to Institutional Advancement staff compensation yielded \$4.98 in cash raised—an almost 500% return on each dollar invested.



The staffing growth within Institutional Advancement was designed to drive not only internal excellence but also measurable external results. Throughout the Fisher Forward campaign, fluctuations in staff size were closely

linked with fundraising outcomes. Typically, for each new staff member added, there is a 12 to 18-month period before their contributions translate into tangible fundraising returns.



Despite these typical ramp-up periods, the correlation between staff investment and fundraising results remained evident. The lone exception occurred in fiscal year 2021, when the disruption of the global COVID-19 pandemic appears to have temporarily curtailed fundraising capacity and results. In fiscal years 2023 and

2024, as six new staff members joined each year, the increase in dollars raised was more muted as the team navigated turnover and growth. However, by fiscal year 2025, fundraising outcomes realigned with the expected trajectory, underscoring the value of sustained investment in talent and the critical role of staff stability

in driving advancement success. By adopting best practices, enhancing data and relationship management infrastructure, and investing in the specialized skills needed for a modern advancement office, Fisher has established a model for Institutional Advancement that will serve as a foundation for the future.



Campaign Results

Financial Metrics and Breakdown

The final fundraising total, including federal and state grant expenditures, reached \$139,176,449.88. This amount was comprised of new gifts and pledges, new documented bequests and conditional pledges, and federal and state grant expenditures.

Fisher Forward Total: **\$139,176,449.88**



Achievements, Impact, and Significance in Fisher's Fundraising History

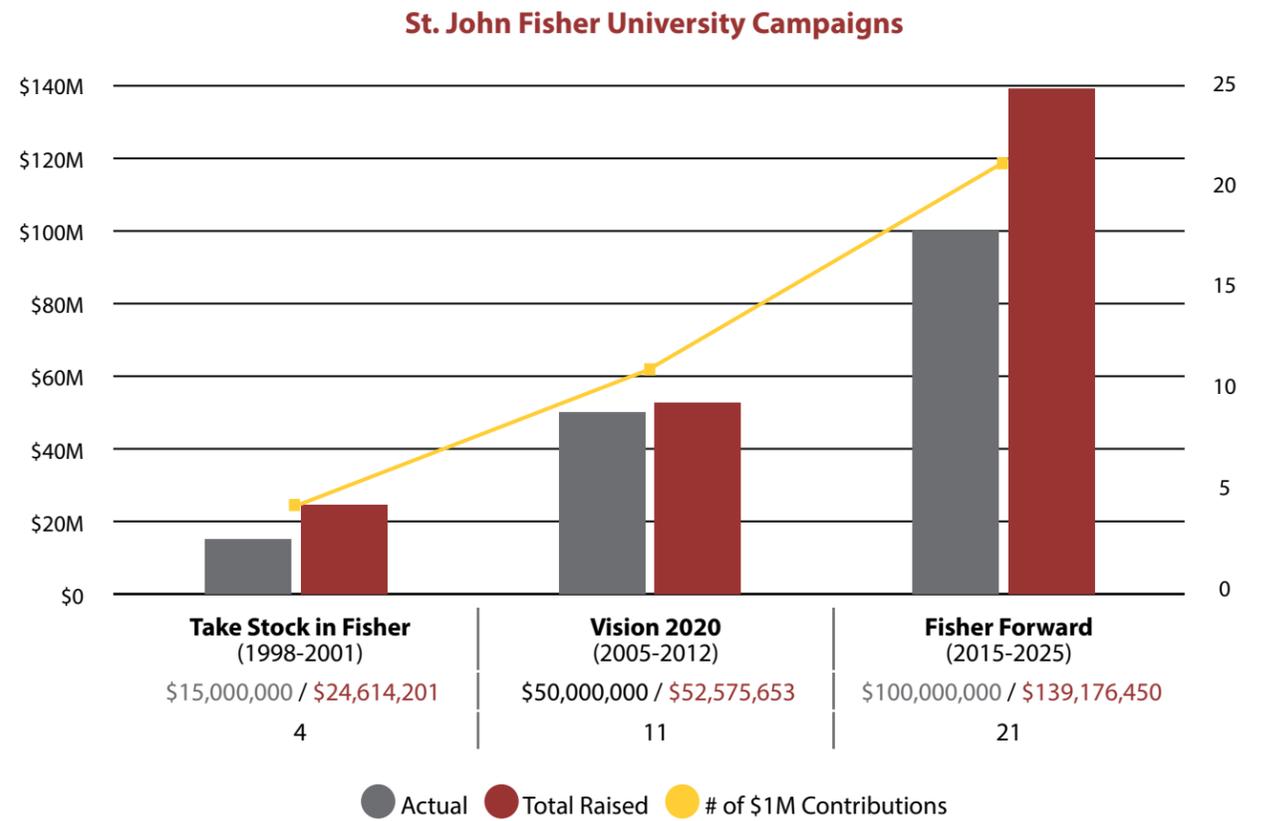
Through the dedicated support of donors, strategic cultivation of major gifts, and the engagement of the Fisher community, the campaign more than doubled the dollars raised by the prior Vision 2020 campaign. The remarkable achievements of Fisher Forward not only set new records in terms of financial metrics but also redefined donor participation, impact, and the evolution of advancement efforts at the University.



Comparison of Campaign Goals and Outcomes

Fisher Forward, the longest of the University's fundraising campaigns to date, raised \$139.2 million over ten years, surpassing Vision 2020's \$52.6 million and Take Stock in Fisher's \$24.6 million. The surge in major gifts of \$1 million or more continued a trend set by Vision 2020 and contributed

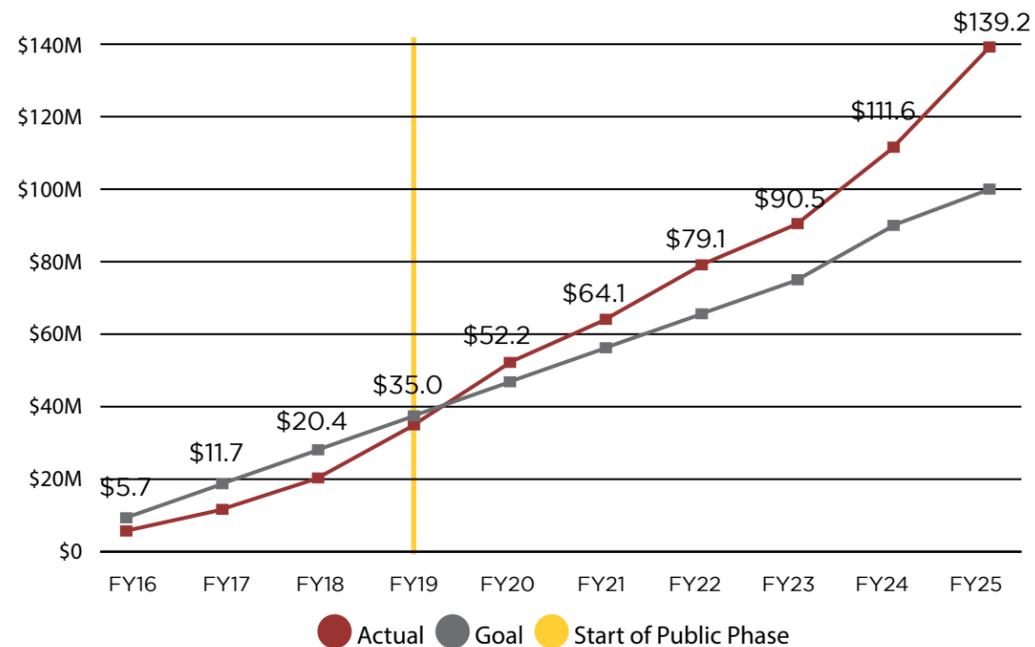
substantially to the campaign's success, reflecting the University's strengthened relationships with high-capacity donors. Fisher Forward saw 21 gifts of \$1 million or more, up from 11 in Vision 2020 and four in Take Stock in Fisher.



Year by Year Growth

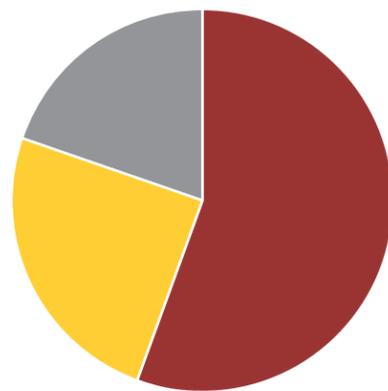
The campaign's leadership phase spanned four years (July 1, 2015–September 19, 2019), raising approximately 47% of the initial \$75 million goal before the public launch. The announcement of the public phase triggered a significant uptick in donations, and by the end of fiscal year 2020, Fisher Forward was pacing ahead of its goal. The original \$75 million target was achieved ahead of schedule in fiscal year 2022, prompting an increased campaign goal of \$100 million in fiscal year 2023. The campaign's final year was its most successful, producing the largest annual increase in fundraising results and culminating with a total well above the final goal.

Fisher Forward Campaign Growth



Donor Participation and Giving Trends

The Fisher Forward campaign saw a significant shift in donor composition. Individual donors contributed 56% of the total new gifts and commitments, amounting to \$77.5 million. In comparison, individual donors represented 66%, or \$34.5 million, of the Vision 2020 campaign total. Organizations and public grants represented 44% of the total dollars raised during Fisher Forward, a notable increase from Vision 2020 which sourced 34% of the campaign total from organizations. This reflects a broader national trend in higher education philanthropy, with foundations and organizations increasingly becoming major contributors.¹



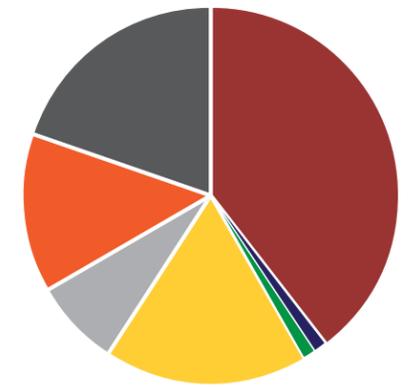
Gifts by Source

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| People | \$77.5M |
| Organizations | \$34.5M |
| Federal and State Grants | \$27.2M |

¹Source: TIAA Institute Research Dialogue | Issue no. 158, March 2020 – How donors give to higher education: Thirty years of supporting U.S. college and university missions

Alumni and Non-Alumni Giving

Alumni giving increased significantly during Fisher Forward, totaling \$54.9 million—an increase from \$11.7 million in Vision 2020. Alumni accounted for 39% of the total raised, compared to just 22% in prior campaigns. However, most alumni dollars came from about 1% of the alumni base, reflecting a trend toward fewer donors making larger gifts.² Friends of the University (non-alumni donors) gave \$20.7 million, representing nearly 15% of the campaign total—a decrease from 34% in Vision 2020. This was mainly due to the absence of a transformational gift from a non-alumni donor akin to Robert Wegman's gifts at the beginning of the Vision 2020 campaign—\$5 million to establish the Wegmans School of Pharmacy and \$8 million to establish the Wegmans School of Nursing.



Gifts by Category of Donor

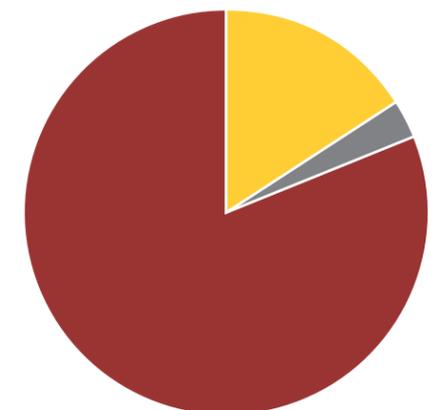
| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Alumni | \$54.9M |
| Faculty and Staff | \$1.5M |
| DAF/Family Fdtn | \$1.8M |
| Foundation | \$24.3M |
| Organization | \$10.2M |
| Parent/Student/Friend | \$19.1M |
| Federal and State Grants | \$27.2M |

Government and Foundation Support

With the establishment of the Office of Sponsored Programs in fiscal year 2022 and consistent investment in foundation and corporate relations, federal and state grant support increased by 246% over Vision 2020, far exceeding the projected \$18.95 million for a total of \$27.2 million. This public sector investment signaled strong institutional confidence in Fisher's strategic direction and amplified the reach of philanthropic contributions. Foundation support showed the most dramatic growth, rising by 534% to \$24.3 million. These increases underscore the campaign's success in strategic donor cultivation and the growing importance of institutional and foundation partners.

Legacy Giving and Planned Gifts

Legacy gifts from 1948 Society members played a transformative role in Fisher Forward, accounting for 19% of the campaign total—up from 6% in Vision 2020. This aligns with best practice recommendations for planned gifts to make up 10-20% of total campaign revenue. Of these, \$3.6 million were realized during the campaign, with the remainder representing revocable planned gifts that may be realized in future years. Strategic education and outreach around planned giving helped foster this growth, with initiatives focused on tax-smart giving and estate planning targeting alumni and friends.



The Role of Legacy Gifts

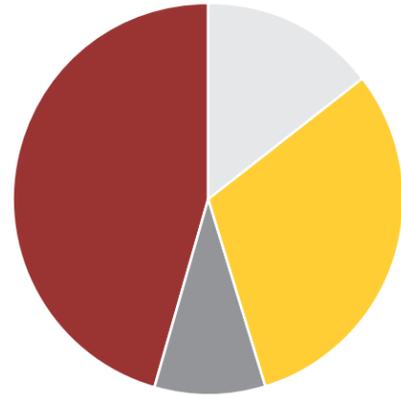
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|----------------------|-----|
| Bequest Expectancies | 16% |
| Realized Bequests | 3% |
| Pledges and Cash | 81% |

²Source: Blackbaud The ENGAGE Blog, October 2024 – Rethinking Annual Giving Metrics: A New Storyline for Higher Ed

Breakdown by Campaign Priorities

Excluding federal and state grants, nearly \$112 million of the campaign total was directed to one of four pillars: capital expansion, student experience, the Fisher Fund for immediate impact, and endowment growth.

Restricted giving like scholarship support resonated most strongly with donors and accounted for 45% of non-government grant dollars.³



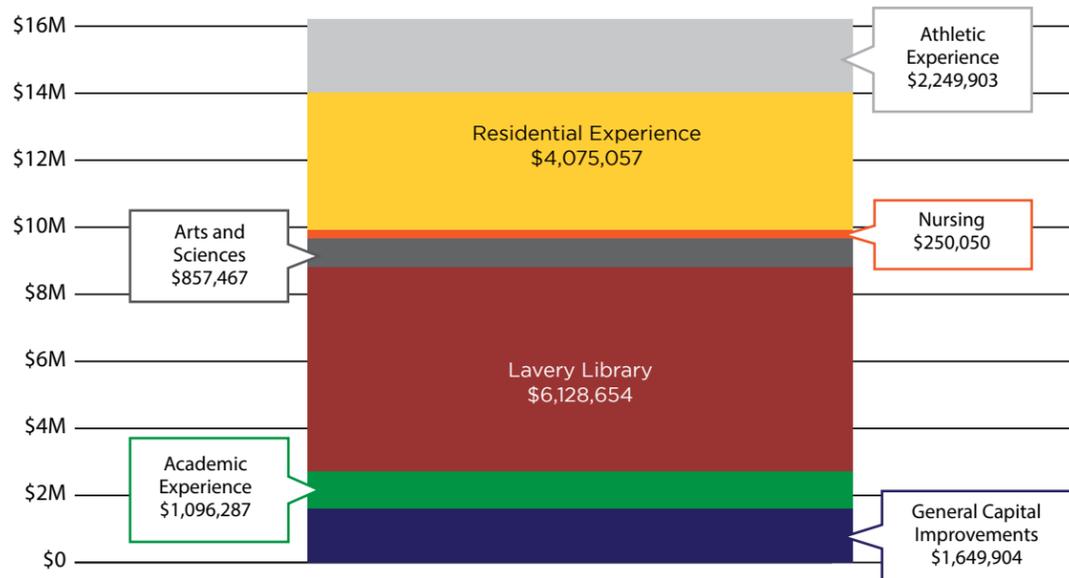
Breakdown by Priority

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Capital Expansion | \$16.3M |
| Endowment | \$34.5M |
| Fisher Funds | \$10.2M |
| Scholarship | \$50.9M |

Enhancing Fisher's Campus

The campaign enabled major investments in campus facilities, including the largest capital project in Fisher's history: the modernization of Lavery Library, supported by \$6.1 million in campaign gifts and \$5 million from the New York State Higher Education Capital (HECap) Matching Grant Program. Residential experience enhancements funded through donor philanthropy included the Dennis '72 and Denise Tepas Commons and the Terrace at Tepas Commons; the Hermance Family Chapel of St. Basil the Great; the Player Development Center at Dugan Yard; Growney Stadium improvements; the Joseph Pellicano Wrestling Pavilion; and the Boyce Family Varsity Weight Room.

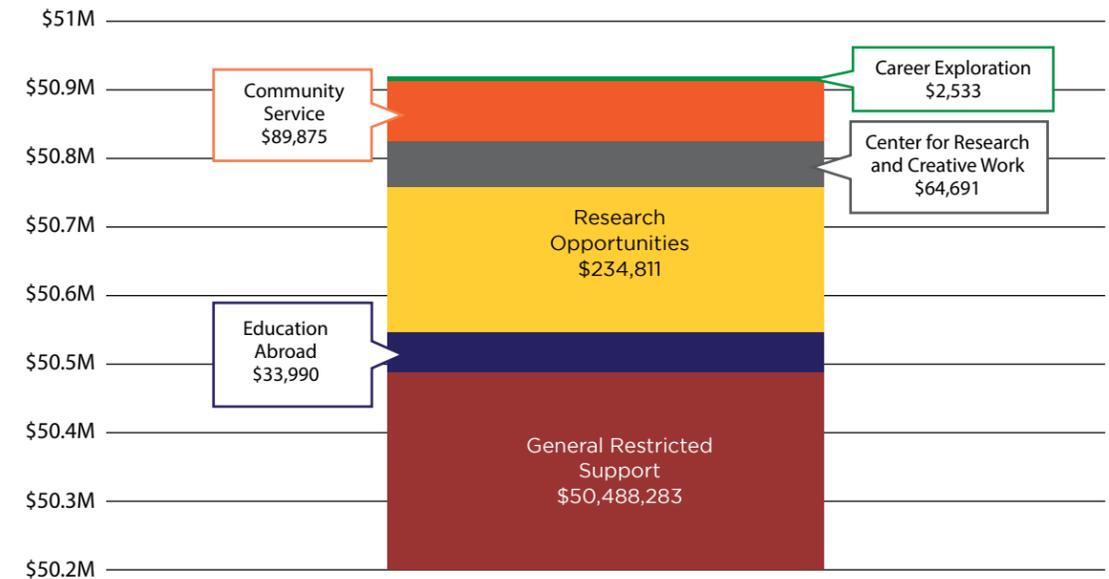
Enhancing Fisher's Campus \$16,307,322



Shaping the Student Experience

This area of the campaign saw a substantial rise in restricted giving, especially through significant foundation gifts, including generous support for the Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing and the Wegmans School of Nursing. Scholarships such as the James R. Reis and Robert T. Bisor Scholars Program, Lucy P. Malmberg Pharmacy Scholarship, Davidson Education Opportunity Bridge Scholarship, Farash Foundation First in Family Scholarship, John and Carol Sloan Almeter Accounting Scholars Fund and Fund for Accounting Innovation, and Thiem Nursing and Pharmacy Scholarships helped provide transformative opportunities and experiential learning for Fisher students.

Shape the Student Experience \$50,920,732



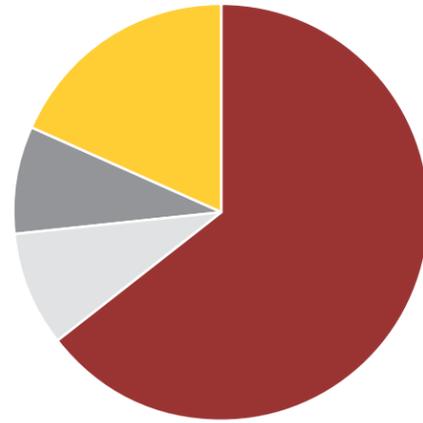
³Source: CCS Fundraising, August 2023 - The State of Planned Giving in Fundraising: Legacy Giving as the Future Cash Opportunity

Immediate Impact: Fisher Fund

The Fisher Fund raised \$10.2 million in new gifts and commitments, supporting vision and progress, scholarships and opportunities, engagement and athletics, and academics. Annual fund growth and the strategic designation of dollars across these priorities ensured wide-reaching benefits for the University and its students.

A Decade of Unprecedented Growth

At the start of the campaign in fiscal year 2016, the Fisher Fund raised \$318,685.94, providing critical unrestricted support for student scholarships, academic innovation, and campus enhancements. As the campaign advanced, it became increasingly clear that strengthening annual giving was key to sustaining Fisher's momentum. By the close of Fisher Forward in 2025, the Fisher Fund had reached \$1.6 million, reflecting a remarkable decade of growth.

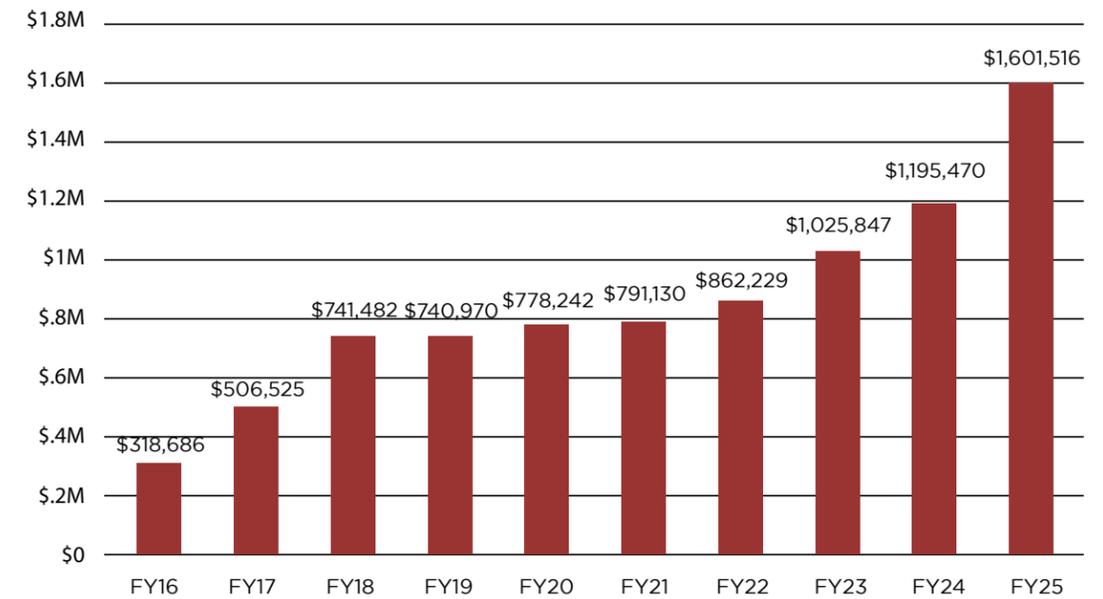


Fisher Fund \$10,231,178

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| ● Vision and Progress | \$6,593,805 |
| ● Scholarship and Opportunity | \$923,991 |
| ● Engagement and Athletics | \$851,928 |
| ● Academics | \$1,861,454 |



Fisher Fund Growth Over the Campaign



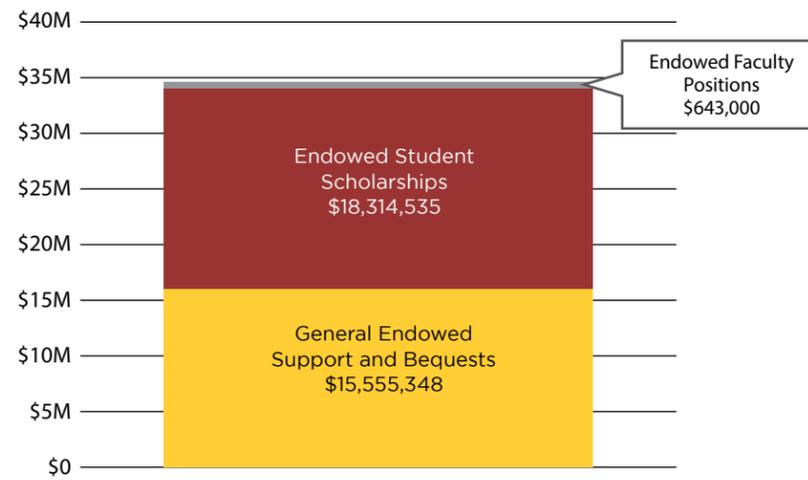
A pivotal element of this growth was the launch of the Spire Society in 2016, Fisher's leadership annual giving program. Its creation fulfilled a key recommendation from the Vision 2020 campaign, which called for "a complete rebranding of the St. John Fisher College giving circles and a major campaign to upgrade annual giving" to build the philanthropic base for Fisher's future. The Spire Society delivered on this vision by recognizing and stewarding leadership-level donors, fostering deeper connections to Fisher's mission, and providing a clear pathway into major and planned giving conversations.

Looking ahead, continued investment in the Fisher Fund will be critical to sustaining this growth. Strategies such as enhancing digital outreach, expanding Giving Day participation, and deepening stewardship for first-time and leadership donors will ensure that the Fisher Fund remains a strong foundation for the University's next campaign. Strengthening the culture of annual giving will not only maintain momentum but also build the pipeline of engaged donors necessary to advance Fisher's strategic goals for decades to come.

Securing Fisher's Future - Endowment

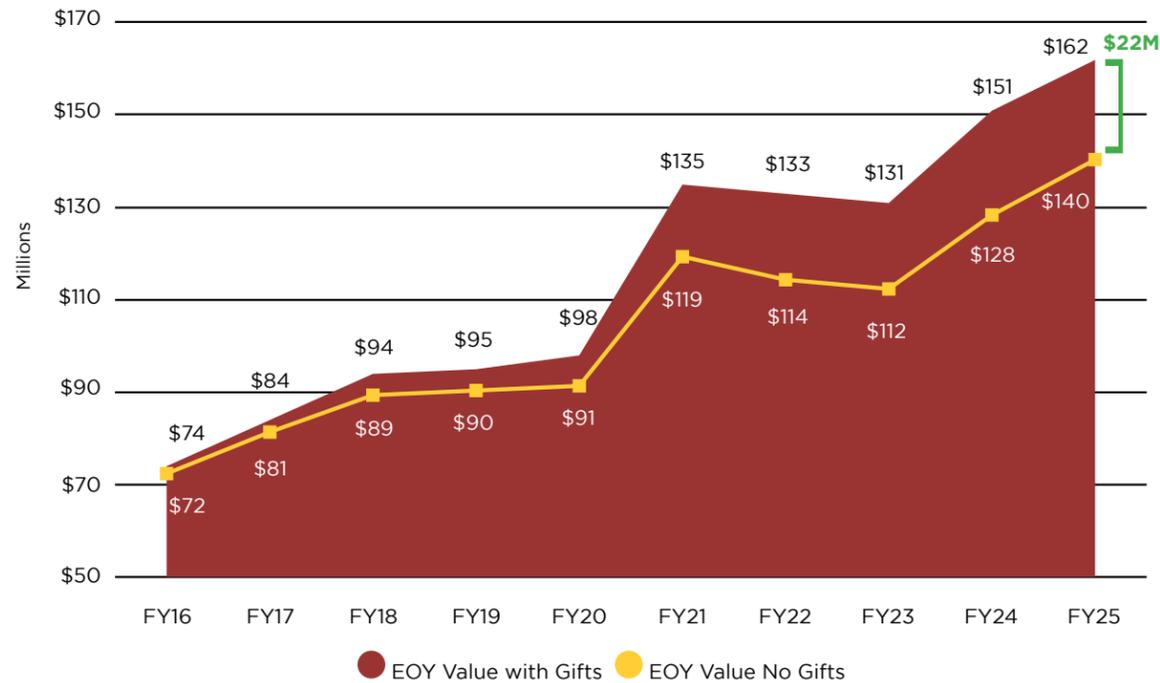
Fisher Forward's efforts to grow the endowment resulted in \$34.5 million raised. This included expanding the number of endowed scholarships to 161 and adding \$18.3 million in new endowed scholarship dollars. The endowment's value reached \$161.8 million by fiscal year 2025, compared to an estimated \$140 million if no new gifts had been received, demonstrating the powerful impact of campaign fundraising.

Secure Fisher's Future - Endowment \$34,512,883



Endowment Value with and without Gifts

FY16-FY25



Momentum Across Giving Levels

The campaign's success was rooted in its broad base of support. A total of 24,763 gifts from over 11,000 donors reflects widespread participation from a deeply engaged community. This support underscores the significance of Fisher Forward's mission and the effectiveness of its outreach strategy.

While the top-tier \$10 million+ gift remains aspirational, the \$5M-\$9.99M and \$2.5M-\$4.99M ranges delivered \$25.9 million through just six gifts, demonstrating strong traction among principal gift level donors. The \$1M-\$2.49M tier exceeded its goal by 76%, contributing over \$17.6 million from 15 donors.

| Gift Range | Gifts Needed | Subtotal Goal | Gifts Attained | Subtotal | Cumulative Total |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| \$10,000,000+ | 1 | \$10,000,000 | - | \$- | \$- |
| \$5,000,000 - \$9,999,999 | 1 | \$5,000,000 | 3 | \$15,000,000 | \$15,000,000 |
| \$2,500,000 - \$4,999,999 | 1 | \$2,500,000 | 3 | \$10,900,000 | \$25,900,000 |
| \$1,000,000 - \$2,499,999 | 10 | \$10,000,000 | 15 | \$17,614,380 | \$43,514,380 |
| \$500,000 - \$999,999 | 18 | \$9,000,000 | 21 | \$13,389,852 | \$56,904,232 |
| \$250,000 - \$499,999 | 27 | \$6,750,000 | 44 | \$13,774,186 | \$70,678,417 |
| \$100,000 - \$249,999 | 120 | \$12,000,000 | 90 | \$12,919,640 | \$83,598,058 |
| *\$50,000 - \$99,999 | 120 | \$6,000,000 | 124 | \$7,471,483 | \$91,069,541 |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | Many | \$19,800,000 | 171 | \$5,278,781 | \$96,348,322 |
| \$10,000 - \$24,999 | | | 399 | \$5,556,538 | \$101,904,861 |
| \$5,000 - \$9,999 | | | 520 | \$3,125,284 | \$105,030,145 |
| \$2,500 - \$4,999 | | | 874 | \$2,703,408 | \$107,733,553 |
| \$1,000 - \$2,499 | | | 1,540 | \$1,971,744 | \$109,705,297 |
| \$500 - \$999 | | | 1,222 | \$673,679 | \$110,378,976 |
| \$250 - \$499 | | | 1,630 | \$457,044 | \$110,836,019 |
| \$100 - \$249 | | | 5,978 | \$723,420 | \$111,559,439 |
| \$1 - \$99 | | | 12,129 | \$412,677 | \$111,972,116 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Gift Total | 298 | \$81,050,000 | 24,763 | \$111,972,116 |
|-------------------|------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Fed/State Grants as of FY25 Q4 | \$18,950,000 | \$27,204,334 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Grand Total | \$100,000,000 | \$139,176,450 |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|



Strength in Major Gifts

Major giving has proven to be a keystone of the campaign. The \$250K-\$999K range collectively contributed over \$27 million, far surpassing its combined goal of \$15.75 million. These gifts reflect a robust pipeline of committed supporters who are investing significantly in Fisher's future.

The \$100K-\$249K and \$50K-\$99K tiers also outperformed expectations, bringing in \$12.9 million and \$7.47 million respectively, with high donor counts and strong yield rates. These results highlight the effectiveness of targeted cultivation and stewardship strategies.



Mid-level Gifts

The campaign's foundation was built on the generosity of our leadership gifts level donors. Gifts from these donors account for over \$18.6 million from approximately 3,500 gifts, with an average gift size of \$5,318. These results highlight the effectiveness of the Spire Society and the addition of a Leadership Annual Giving program.



Participation Level Gifts

Gifts from \$1 to \$999 account for more than \$2.2 million raised, with thousands of donors contributing to the momentum. Notably, the \$1-\$99 tier alone saw 12,129 gifts, totaling \$412,676, a testament to the campaign's inclusive appeal and the community's belief in Fisher's vision.



Looking Ahead

At the close of Fisher Forward, the campaign's achievements reflect a broad transformation in the University's approach to fundraising, donor engagement, and strategic advancement. Fisher Forward has set a new standard for institutional success and future philanthropic growth, redefining what is possible for St. John Fisher University. The campaign's success across donor levels and its strong appeal to institutional funders point to a vibrant future.

As we look ahead, the untapped potential in the \$10 million+ tier offers one compelling opportunity for continued growth and transformational giving.

Sustaining this momentum will necessitate continued investment in developing a robust donor pipeline and strengthening relationships with existing donors through effective communication and stewardship, positioning Fisher to reach even greater philanthropic achievements in the future.



Donor Recognition

Donor recognition was a foundational element of the Fisher Forward campaign, reflecting the University's deep gratitude for the generosity that has shaped its future. Through a thoughtful blend of public acknowledgment, personal stewardship, and meaningful experiences, Fisher celebrates its benefactors in ways that are as distinctive as their contributions. From the prestige of giving societies and the permanence of named spaces to the warmth of a personalized thank-you and the intimacy of exclusive events, these recognition methods not only honor philanthropic leadership but also strengthen the bond between donors and the campus community. Together, they create a holistic philanthropy experience—one that inspires continued engagement, fosters pride in impact, and ensures that the spirit of Fisher Forward continues well beyond the close of the campaign.

A selection of specific recognition methods utilized:



GIVING SOCIETIES

- Presidents Society:** Lifetime giving of \$1 million or more.
- Spire Society:** Annual commitments of \$1,000 or more.
- 1948 Society:** Planned and estate gift donors.



NAMED SPACES AND FUNDS

- Facility Naming:** Buildings, rooms, or spaces named in honor of benefactors.
- Fund Naming:** Named scholarships, professorships, or programmatic funds.
- Commemorative Installations:** Donor walls and plaques.



EVENTS AND CEREMONIES

- Dedication Events:** Ribbon-cuttings or unveilings celebrating transformational gifts.
- Donor Gatherings:** Events such as the Presidents and Benefactors Receptions Buffalo Bills Training Camp, and Annual Holiday Party.
- Early Access and Sneak Peek Events:** Early access to new spaces, such as a Hard Hat Tour of Lavery Library.



PERSONALIZED STEWARDSHIP

- Impact Reports:** Custom reports sharing fund performance, student stories, and gift outcomes.
- Presidential Acknowledgement:** Personalized letters from University leadership.
- Student Gratitude:** Notes and videos created by student beneficiaries.



PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- Honor Roll:** Digital recognition (Spire Society and donors to the Hermance Family Chapel of St. Basil the Great).
- Website Spotlights:** Features on campaign webpage and social media.
- Annual Reports:** Donor names or stories highlighted in institutional publications such as the President's Report.
- Press Releases:** Gifts of \$50,000 or more are recognized with a press release.
- Collegium:** Gifts are frequently woven into larger stories in *Collegium*.



TOKENS OF APPRECIATION

- Commemorative Gifts:** Framed photos, renderings, and items symbolizing a named space or initiative. Presidents Society members receive a commemorative plate.

Giving Societies

ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENTS SOCIETY

Honoring a Legacy of Transformational Philanthropy

In 2019, St. John Fisher University established the Presidents Society to recognize the highest level of philanthropic leadership—individuals and organizations whose lifetime giving totals \$1 million or more. As the University's most prestigious donor distinction, the Presidents Society celebrates those whose generosity has helped shape Fisher's past and is actively shaping its future.

Seventeen founding members were honored at the Society's launch, their names permanently inscribed on the pillars of Kearney Hall—the University's original and most iconic building. This lasting tribute stands as a visible reminder of their extraordinary impact. Since then, the Presidents Society has continued to grow, welcoming 12 new members in 2021 and 13 in 2023. These inductees, including families, foundations, and corporate partners, have supported student scholarships, academic innovation, major capital projects, and more. Collectively, Presidents Society members contributed 44.6% of the dollars raised from private sources (excluding federal and state grants) during the Fisher Forward campaign—an extraordinary \$49.9 million.

Presidents Society members are recognized as essential partners in the life of the University. They are celebrated at a biannual on-campus ceremony hosted by the President of the University, where new names are formally unveiled on Kearney Hall. A reception or dinner follows, offering a special moment of connection and appreciation. Members also receive invitations to campus events and dedications throughout the year.

Through the Presidents Society, St. John Fisher University honors those whose transformational giving fuels opportunity, drives excellence, and carries forward the vision of its founders for generations to come.

Leading the Way

The Presidents Society recognizes Fisher's most visionary philanthropists—those whose lifetime giving totals \$1 million or more.

44.6%

of all private dollars raised during Fisher Forward came from Presidents Society members.

\$49.9 million

contributed to scholarships, academic innovation, and capital projects.

42 members

inducted during the campaign.

2019 Inductees

Rev. John R. Cavanaugh, CSB[†]
Charles A. '61[†] and Elaine M. Constantino
Maurice[†] and Maxine[†] Forman
B. Thomas Golisano
James P. Growney '66[†]
Ronald E. Hermance, Jr. '69[†] and Kris Hermance
Paul D. Hogan '69[†]
William J.[†] and Jane Napier
Wanda and Gene[†] Polisseni
Victor E. Salerno, Jr. '66[†] and Eileen T. Salerno
Robert B.[†] and Margaret[†] Wegman
Mr.[†] and Mrs. Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.
Joseph[†] and Irene[†] Skalny
Fred L. Emerson Foundation
Congregation of St. Basil (Basilian Fathers)
Alvin F. and Ruth K. Thiem Foundation
Davenport-Hatch Foundation



2021 Inductees

Steven '84 and Susan Barnstead
Leon Creek '60[†]
Carol (John) '76 and Michele Davidson
Jack '73 and Donna DePeters
Kevin '70 and Margaret (Peggy) Dugan
Dr. Henry '64 and Lynn Hess
James '71 and Kathleen Leo
Walter and Barbara Parkes
Dominic '60 and June '85 Piazza
James Reis '79 and Robert Bisor
Excellus BlueCross Blue Shield
The Max and Marian Farash Foundation

2023 Inductees

Anonymous
John '71 and Carol '74 Almeter
Thomas F. '71 and Heather Bonadio
Glover-Crask Charitable Trust
Michael '82 and Christine Haefner
Paul F. Haney '63[†]
R. Wayne and Beverly LeChase
Dr. Lucy Malmberg
Polisseni Foundation
Joseph '78 and Karen Rulison
Dennis '72 and Denise Tepas
Theodore & Cashmere M. Mendick Foundation, Inc.
Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.

[†] Indicates member is deceased

CELEBRATING THE 1948 SOCIETY

Recognizing and Stewarding Planned Giving Champions

Founded in 2005 with 12 pioneer members, the 1948 Society was established to honor and steward donors who commit to supporting St. John Fisher University through their estate plans. This planned giving society has since become a cornerstone for recognizing those who choose to invest in Fisher's future through charitable bequests and other future gifts.

Prior to the launch of Fisher Forward in fiscal year 2016, the 1948 Society had received less than

\$950,000 in planned gift payments and recorded an additional \$2.8 million in pledged commitments. The Fisher Forward campaign marked a transformational period for planned giving at Fisher. By its conclusion, the University celebrated over \$26 million in planned gift commitments, with \$3.6 million realized. Today, the 1948 Society stands more vibrant than ever, with over 160 living members.

LAUNCHING THE SPIRE SOCIETY

Elevating Leadership Giving through Fisher Forward

As St. John Fisher University embarked on its ambitious Fisher Forward campaign, it recognized an essential fact: sustaining the University's mission would require not only transformational major gifts, but also a strong and growing base of leadership annual donors. To meet this need, the University launched the Spire Society, establishing a new era of annual giving designed to deepen donor commitment and fuel immediate impact for Fisher students.

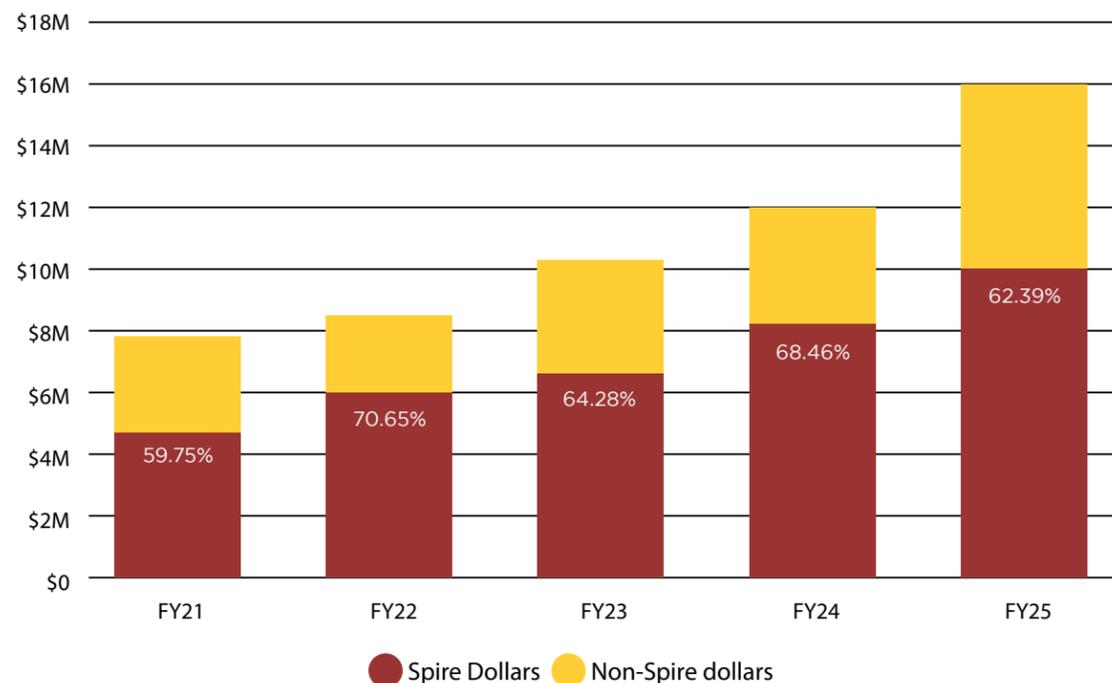
At its inception in 2016, the Spire Society invited donors to join by making a three-year pledge of \$1,000 or more annually to the Fisher Fund. This approach created a reliable stream of annual support, bolstered campaign momentum, and began to build a culture of philanthropy rooted in leadership-level annual giving. The Spire Society's launch as part of Fisher Forward marked an important strategic milestone: it formalized what it means to be a leadership donor at Fisher. For the first time, these generous supporters were brought together under a clear and unifying banner. Their contributions provided critical funding for scholarships, academic innovation, and the student experience—priorities at the heart of Fisher Forward.

While the initial years of Spire focused on establishing structure and securing pledges, the groundwork laid during this period proved invaluable. By creating a defined pathway for leadership donors and integrating it into the campaign from the start, Fisher ensured that annual giving would remain a central pillar of its advancement strategy long after the campaign's conclusion.

Since its launch, the Spire Society has continued to grow and evolve, more than doubling its membership since fiscal year 2017 and increasing its impact on the Fisher Fund year after year. The Spire Society has transformed into a dynamic leadership giving program, offering robust stewardship, flexible giving options, and meaningful opportunities for members to connect with Fisher's mission.

Today, the Spire Society stands as a legacy of Fisher Forward—a testament to the vision of campaign leaders who understood that true institutional strength comes not just from transformative gifts, but from a thriving community of donors who invest in Fisher students year after year.

Spire Impact on the Fisher Fund

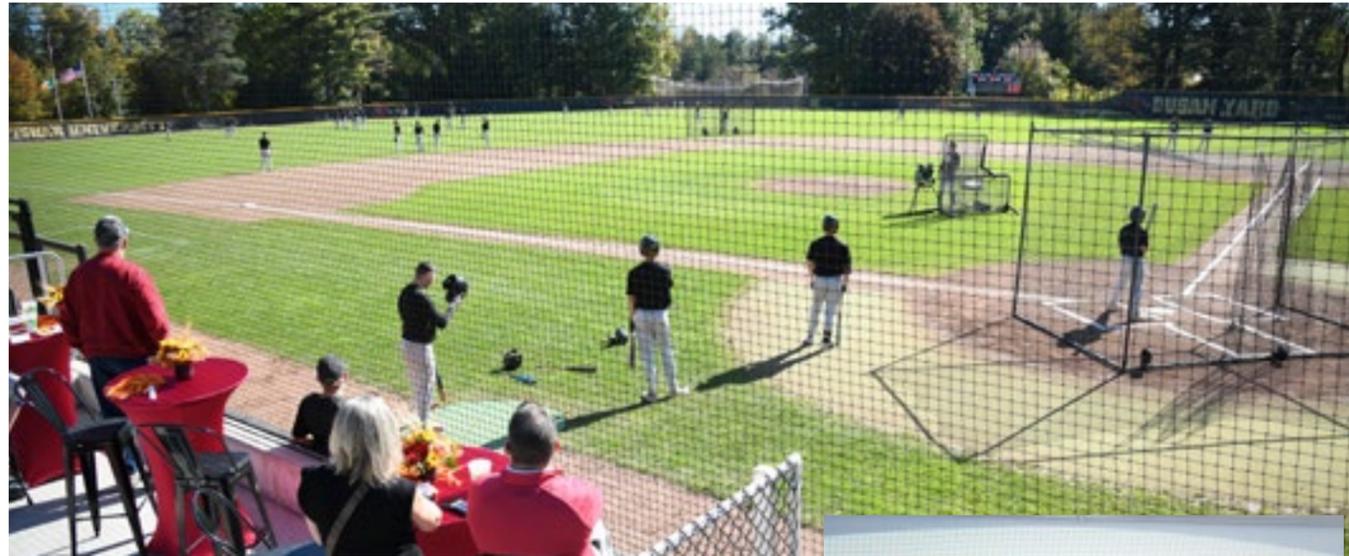


Donor Engagement & Stewardship

During Fisher Forward, the donor engagement program introduced a first-time donor program, established consistent and meaningful touch points for high-level donors, and implemented a range of elevated recognition methods—from customized dedication events and personalized impact reports to expanded public acknowledgements and thoughtfully designed commemorative gifts. The program also strengthened its scholarship reporting, ensuring donors receive timely, consistent updates on the impact of their support through annual reports that blend financial transparency with compelling student stories. Together, these enhancements brought a new level of personalization, professionalism, and creativity to the donor experience.

This thoughtful approach to relationship-building has produced meaningful results and will continue to set a standard for future interactions with donors.





Donor Recognition Events: Celebrating Legacy and Impact

St. John Fisher University hosted a series of dedicated recognition events designed to honor and celebrate the generosity and lasting impact of its donors throughout the Fisher Forward campaign. These events serve as meaningful opportunities to publicly acknowledge the commitment of individual donors and donor families, deepen connections between the University community and its supporters, and showcase the tangible outcomes made possible through philanthropy.

A prime example was the 25 Years of Dugan Yard Celebration held in October 2024, which commemorated the contributions of M. Kevin Dugan '70 and the Dugan family to Fisher baseball. This event featured a formal dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the newly established Player Development Center at Dugan Yard, symbolizing the profound legacy left by the Dugan family's philanthropic leadership.

Such recognition celebrations are a vital component of Fisher Forward's stewardship strategy, fostering lasting relationships with donors by honoring their philanthropic milestones in ways that are both personal and public, ceremonial and joyful.

Lessons Learned

Overall, the Fisher Forward campaign was a historic success for St. John Fisher University, setting new records for fundraising and engagement. Several key strategies proved particularly effective and are recognized below.

Clarity of Vision in Establishing Campaign Goals

One of the most significant contributors to the Fisher Forward campaign's success was the establishment of a clear vision and well-defined campaign goals from the very beginning. By articulating its objectives with precision, St. John Fisher University provided a unified direction for all stakeholders and consistent focus on shaping the student experience, enhancing our campus, creating an immediate impact, and securing our future.

Effective Use of Giving Societies

The campaign's success was rooted in a broad base of support, and the implementation of giving societies was instrumental in this effort.

- » **The Presidents Society**, established in 2019, recognized top-tier donors and contributed \$49.9 million to the campaign—44.6% of all private dollars raised.
- » **The Spire Society**, launched in 2016, elevated leadership annual giving and built a more reliable stream of support, doubling its membership since fiscal year 2017.
- » **The 1948 Society** for planned gifts grew to over 160 living members and secured more than \$26 million in commitments during the campaign.

Broadening the Donor Base Beyond Alumni

While alumni giving was a key contributor, increasing to \$54.9 million from \$11.7 million in Vision 2020, the campaign also diversified its funding sources. Government grants and foundation support showed dramatic growth, increasing by 246% and 534% respectively, compared to the previous campaign. This highlights the effectiveness of cultivating institutional partners and reflects a broader national trend in higher education philanthropy.

Strategic Investment in Institutional Advancement Staffing

The campaign's commitment to building a modern advancement program was foundational to its success. The decision to expand the Institutional Advancement team from 11 to 21 professionals, as recommended by the consulting firm Marts & Lundy, significantly increased capacity and directly contributed to the campaign's achievements.

Targeted and Inclusive Engagement

The campaign effectively balanced traditional events with data-informed and inclusive outreach. Family-friendly events like Breakfast with Santa engaged recent alumni who are Fisher's largest cohort, and this event grew from 170 guests to 370 in its second year. This demonstrates the value of tailoring engagement opportunities to different life stages and priorities.

Opportunities for Improvement



Strengthen Retention in the Institutional Advancement Team

The report notes that in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, the increase in dollars raised was “more muted” as the team navigated turnover and growth after six new staff members joined each year. This suggests that a renewed focus on staff stability and a robust onboarding process for new hires is critical to ensuring consistent fundraising results.



Targeting the Top-Tier Principal Gift Level

The campaign reached and exceeded its goals across nearly every giving tier, but it did not secure a gift at the aspirational \$10 million+ level. This represents a potential area for strategic focus and staffing in the next campaign.



Building a Broader Donor Base Among Alumni

While the total amount of alumni dollars raised was impressive, the report indicates that most of it came from about 1% of the alumni base. This reflects a trend toward fewer donors making larger gifts and highlights an opportunity to broaden alumni participation across the entire donor base, particularly with participation level gifts and first-time donors.



Tracking Progress and Demonstrating Impact

When creating campaign priorities, set sub-goals for each priority to track progress, show funding completion, and highlight the multi-year impact of Fisher Fund support over the course of the campaign.



Future Recommendations

Building on the momentum of the Fisher Forward campaign will require a continued strategic approach, with a focus on leveraging data, diversifying leadership, and deepening donor relationships.

Set a New, Aspirational Goal for Principal Gifts

The campaign report highlights an “untapped potential” in the \$10 million+ giving tier, as no single gift was secured at this level. Targeting and securing a principal gift in the next campaign could be a bold, strategic move to accelerate growth and set a new standard for future philanthropic endeavors.

Broaden Campaign Leadership

To cultivate the next generation of leadership donors, consider diversifying future campaign leadership to include alumni from post-2000 classes. This will help align with the University’s largest alumni cohort and will create a more robust pipeline for future major gifts.

Maintain Investment in Institutional Advancement Infrastructure

The campaign’s success was a direct result of the expansion and professionalization of the Institutional Advancement team. To sustain this growth, continue to invest in both staff and the underlying technology and data infrastructure. This will allow the University to effectively cultivate a robust donor pipeline and strengthen relationships for years to come.

Strengthen Data-Informed Engagement

By building on data from the alumni survey and the CASE engagement framework, future efforts will focus on a more nuanced approach. Instead of measuring success by event attendance, alumni involvement will be redefined by tracking engagement across multiple touchpoints—volunteer, experiential, and philanthropic. This enhanced strategy will directly strengthen fundraising outcomes. Segmenting alumni, especially those who graduated after 2000, will help create a robust pipeline of future major donors. By using data from the CASE Alumni Engagement Metrics and the Alumni Attitude Survey, we can target outreach to alumni who are most ready for deeper involvement. Accurate tracking of their engagement in the Advancement CRM will allow for personalized interactions and stronger, more meaningful relationships, ultimately driving long-term philanthropic support for the University.



Conclusion

The Fisher Forward campaign set new records for St. John Fisher University and redefined what is possible for institutional fundraising. As the largest and most significant fundraising effort in the University's history, the campaign not only more than doubled the dollars raised by the previous Vision 2020 campaign but also set a new standard for philanthropic growth.

Key Highlights of Campaign Success

The campaign's achievements were driven by a strategic and inclusive approach, resulting in significant growth across multiple areas:

Fundraising Totals

Fisher Forward concluded with a total of nearly \$139.2 million raised, far surpassing the initial goal of \$75 million and the revised goal of \$100 million. The final year of the campaign was its most successful, contributing to the largest annual increase in fundraising figures.

Major Gifts

The campaign saw a remarkable increase in high-level giving, with 21 gifts of \$1 million or more, compared to 11 in the Vision 2020 campaign. This success was largely due to the support of top-tier donors, including members of the newly established Presidents Society, who contributed nearly \$50 million, or 44.6% of all private dollars raised.

Diversified Funding

Fisher Forward broadened its funding base beyond alumni, with a notable increase in support from organizations and public grants. Federal and state grant funding saw a 246% increase over the previous campaign, while foundation support rose by a dramatic 534%.

Strategic Investment

The campaign was rooted in the University's commitment to building a modern Institutional Advancement program. The team grew from 11 to 21 professionals.

Expanded Engagement

Fisher Forward embraced a data-informed approach to engage the community. It introduced family-friendly events, which successfully connected with the University's largest alumni cohort. The campaign also strengthened leadership annual giving through the Spire Society, which more than doubled its membership since fiscal year 2017.

A Note of Gratitude

As the Fisher Forward campaign concludes, we extend our sincerest gratitude to the leaders and supporters who made this historic achievement possible. This success is a testament to the collective commitment of our community, fueled by the unwavering support of our major donors and the tireless efforts of our volunteer leaders.

We especially honor the visionary leadership of Campaign Chair Victor E. Salerno, Jr. '66, Honorary Campaign Co-Chairs R. Wayne and Beverly LeChase, and President Gerard J. Rooney, Ph.D. Their guidance and advocacy were instrumental in setting a bold vision for the campaign and inspiring the entire Fisher community to dream bigger and reach higher.

Every gift, regardless of its size, contributed to a legacy that will shape the St. John Fisher University community for generations to come. We celebrate the profound impact made and the enduring legacy created for our students.



