

**Funding Strategies for Institutional Advancement of Private
Universities in the United States:
Applications for African/Congolese Universities**

by
Jean-Pierre K. Bongila

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DEDICATION

To the Blessed Mother of Heaven
for Her motherly faithfulness and tenderness

To Kulemfuka Likie, my brother,
for the undying memories he engraved on my heart
May he peacefully rest in the bosom of Abraham

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CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

American Private Colleges and Financial Leadership

The United States is the most affluent country in the world; its philanthropy is acknowledged by the third world countries as well as by institutions of higher learning. Institutional advancement, which actually includes fund raising, is a part of the philanthropic process. Fund raising is philanthropy (Fisher and Koch, 1996), and American private institutions of higher education are deeply involved in the business of philanthropy. The first higher education fund raising campaign in the United States occurred at Harvard University in 1641 when the institution sent three preachers on a begging mission to England (Willmer, 1993). Organized philanthropy, however, supported by systematic advancement policies, developed in the twentieth century in American institutions of higher education (Fisher, 1996).

As a country with a high level of productivity, the United States has a larger economic capacity than many other nations, which enables it to invest in its socioeconomic infrastructure, raise its citizens' standard of living, and improve its educational offerings. Defined as the gross domestic product (GDP) per employed person, productivity is a measure of the average productive capacity of a country's employees. Statistics released by the United States Department of Labor (1993) revealed

that in 1961, the United States had the highest productivity level in the world. From 1961 to 1991 the United States experienced the lowest average annual increase in productivity of all the industrialized countries (G-7). Its productivity, however, has remained above that of the other G-7 countries as summarized in the table below.

Table 1

Productivity and Average Annual Percentage Increase in Productivity for G-7 Countries: 1961-91

Country	1961	1971	1981	1991/3	1961-91
Canada	72.4	77.1	84.3	87.3	1.68
France	52.6	69.3	86.2	98.0	3.17
Italy	46.3	65.9	85.5	94.2	3.47
Japan	26.4	47.3	64.4	79.0	4.80
United King.	55.8	60.6	69.0	74.8	2.04
USA	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.05
West. Germ.	55.2	68.3	82.7	90.1	2.71

Note. From United States Department of Labor, 1993.

According to a Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) statistical report on world development, the United States was consistently superior to the other G-7 countries for 27 years (1970- 1997) with regard to the Real GDP (CIA, 1999).

This economic capacity of the United States permitted growth in the number of institutions of higher education from 3,389 colleges and universities in 1981 to 3,595 in 1994, according to *The Carnegie Classification of Academic Institutions* (1994). In 1998, the United States had a total of 4,096 colleges and universities, 2,389 of which were

privately-run institutions (*The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac*, 1999). The 1994 *Carnegie Classification of Academic Institutions* revealed a healthy and expanding network of higher learning institutions in the United States. Post-secondary institutions enrolled 14.4 million students, of whom 3.2 million attended private institutions in 1998 (*The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac*, 1999). American institutions of post-secondary education rely upon advancement functions and operations for financial stability. Overall, these institutions of higher learning, particularly private institutions, find it vitally important to use highly appropriate strategies to attract organizations and individuals to invest in their colleges and universities through gift philanthropy. Colleges and universities cling to advancement or development offices to get the maximum return from existing financial and human resources. The statistics released by the Counsel for Aid to Education revealed that colleges and universities received a total of 20.4 billion dollars from voluntary support in 1999 alone (Hall, 2000).

The same statistics indicated that some private institutions of higher education figured among the most successful fund raisers in 1999, such as Harvard University (452 million dollars), Stanford University (320 million dollars), and Princeton University (159 million dollars) (Hall, 2000). These institutions are also counted among the most endowed in the United States and in the world: Harvard (14.2 billion dollars), Princeton (6.5 billion dollars), and Stanford (6 billion dollars) (Klinger, 2000).

In 1999, some Catholic universities and colleges were among the best-endowed private institutions of higher education. These included University of Notre Dame (2 billion dollars), Boston College (908 million dollars), and Georgetown (684 million

dollars) (Klinger, 2000). Other Catholic institutions were listed whose endowments were over \$100 million in 1998: Saint Louis University, Trinity University (Texas), Loyola University of Chicago, University of Dayton, University of San Francisco, and De Paul University (*The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac*, 1999). In 1998, private gift-giving to private institutions of higher education increased by 12% for research universities, and 24% for liberal arts colleges (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 1999).

However, many small private institutions are financially struggling and constantly on the verge of bankruptcy, while the majority of American private institutions remain fully dependent on tuition for survival (Altbach, 1998). A study conducted by Breneman (1994) of more than 200 private liberal arts colleges suggested that many institutions have endured financial deficits. Three concerns are mentioned as causes for the financial turmoil of these private institutions: the growing competition for philanthropic support, the decrease or lack of alumni and trustee support, and the failure of the institutions to establish a clear image with their various publics.

Elsewhere in the world, conditions of higher education have deteriorated in response to financial constraints (Altbach, 1999). Even in most of the major industrialized countries, including Germany and France, enrollments have risen, but financial resources have not kept up with the needs. Although academic leaders worldwide worry about funding sources and strategies, conditions vary from one country to another. In sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, there has been a dramatic decline in academic conditions due to funding crises, and to the lack of funding strategies (Altbach, 1999).

Crisis of Funding Sources and Strategies in Congolese Universities

Higher education suffers a severe crisis of quality funding in many African states (Askin, 1993; Ping, 1995). In the Democratic Republic of Congo, like in many African countries, private universities are faced with serious challenges regarding funding sources and funding strategies. Overall, independent financing, which sets private universities so distinctly apart from their public counterparts, is the biggest challenge of African universities and colleges. Finding the money to run even a small private university represents a serious difficulty (Useem, 1999).

Useem (1999) identified tuition and subsidies from religious organizations as the two main funding sources of African private universities. Most private institutions use tuition to cover operating expenses, whereas a few religiously affiliated institutions receive some subsidies from their religious establishments. These two sources of income do not usually suffice to develop campus infrastructures, expand libraries, and hire more staff members. To remain functioning, Useem urged African private universities to use all the creativity they could muster to raise money for their institutions.

However, many African university presidents, administrators, and faculty are not familiar with the procedures, techniques, and resources needed to attract funding. Hayward (1991) also maintained that most administrators of African universities have little experience with writing grant proposals to the World Bank, the African Development Bank, foundations, and other agencies. Most African universities do not possess current information on available sources of funds or foundation guidelines, and the schools that do have this information do not share it with other colleges or

universities in need of such basic information. Also, the leaders of African Universities have almost no experience of alumni giving as a considerable source of funding. In an attempt to provide a solution to the financial crisis of African universities, Hayward proposed a careful look into the American experience.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the advancement strategies that seven of the most successful American private institutions of higher education utilize to obtain financial support. The study further intended to analyze the advancement roles of seven successful private college/university presidents and trustees, and to appraise the positive effects of public relations on the institutional advancement results of the seven private universities and colleges. Finally, the study drew practical implications for Congolese/African post-secondary institutions.

Background and Need

Historical Evolution of Philanthropy

Western society holds that philanthropy was born out of charity (Fisher and Koch, 1996). Charity is considered to be an act of goodness designed to reduce or eliminate human suffering, pain, or any other unfortunate condition. The first evidence of charity might go back to Egyptian civilization as mentioned in the *Book of the Dead*, which dates back to about 4000 B.C.. Egyptians gave bread for the hungry and water for the thirsty with the belief that doing good would improve the afterlife (Budge, 1967). Though charity provides some relief to its beneficiaries, it also allows individuals to remain

dependent on their benefactors. While charity is for the short run, philanthropy is for the long run.

The concept of charity evolved into the modern conceptualization of philanthropy in ancient Greece and Rome. Philanthropy extended to the idea that the key to self-sufficiency and freedom lies within the individual: once the individual is independent, there will be no need for charity. The Greeks and pre-Romans inaugurated philanthropy since they gave for the benefit of any worthy citizen or for the state, rather than out of pity for the needy (Fisher and Koch, 1996). They made long-term investments for the good of society (philanthropy) rather than short-term investments to relieve the needy (charity).

The Hebrews had a religiously motivated charity that dated back to the Egyptians. *Tzedakah* is a sort of charity meaning “sharing what we have with the poor and doing good deeds” (Fisher and Koch, 1996). The Hebrews’ charitable practices were similar to the Egyptians’ and suggested a strong degree of mutual influence. Jesus set up a high ethic for givers, a standard that most givers and receivers, such as colleges and universities, should recognize. The teachings of Jesus emphasized the good intention of the giver as opposed to the size or amount of the gift (Mk 12, 41-44).

In the fourth century, Christianity as an organized religion under Emperor Theodosius I gave form to a more restrictive giving or charity that replaced the Roman philanthropy. The new charity inadequately helped the poor, the widowed, the aged and the infirm, orphans, and others by creating dependency and providing short-term relief.

Christian charity was exclusively concerned with the poor, whereas there was little concern for the general betterment of the individual and society.

In the later Middle Ages, religious motivation was tempered by the reentry of a measure of philanthropy. The Church became less influential as the state's power and wealth grew stronger. In 1225, Louis VIII gave 100 *sous* to each of the 2,000 leper houses of his realm. Nobles and other wealthy individuals made gifts to charitable causes. Religion continued to motivate contributions to charities, but the Church was no longer the exclusive conduit (Fisher and Koch, 1996).

In the fifteenth century, endowments for schools, scholars, sermons, and orphanages began to spring up in England. The English poor laws called for public collection of funds for the relief of the poor. The poor laws, and those undertaken under Elizabeth I, were the starting point of government responsibility over charitable activities (Payton, 1988). To create, control, and protect giving funds, the Statute of Charitable Uses became law in 1601 under Queen Elizabeth I. This statute has constituted the cornerstone of the American laws of giving and the legitimator of American charitable foundations (Bremner, 1960).

Toward Institutional Advancement in the United States

Organized philanthropy and systematic fund raising developed in the twentieth century in the United States. However, the sending of three clergymen to England by the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1641 to obtain financial support for Harvard College marked the beginning of systematic fund raising for the institutions of higher education in the United States (Cutlip, 1965). Current institutional advancement began to take shape

in the early years of the twentieth century. The first major organized fund raising campaigns occurred when universities hired the first fund raising consultants and appointed the first institutional advancement officers (Fisher and Koch, 1996).

Earlier Attempts at Systematic Fund Raising

Harvard University received the initial bequest of John Harvard in 1638, setting the pattern of fund raising practices and problems that exist today. In the second half of the 1800s under the presidency of Charles Eliot, gifts for three dormitories and a building for Harvard's Law school came without solicitation by Eliot or any of his officers (Curti and Nash, 1965). Early in the 18th century, private support of institutions of higher education by philanthropists became a trend, primarily in American universities in the East. The evangelist George Whitefield (1714-1770) is known as the most successful early college fund raiser in the United States. In seven visits of the colonies, Whitefield preached philanthropy, sought charitable gifts, and secured books and financial assistance for hard-pressed colonial colleges. Cutlip (1965) wrote that Whitefield's assistance benefited Harvard, Dartmouth, Princeton, and the University of Pennsylvania.

The half-million-dollar estate that British chemist, James Smithson, left to the United States in 1829 to found an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men appeared to be a systematic fund raising activity (Cutlip, 1965). In 1834, the early fund raiser Miss Mary Lyon solicited subscriptions house-to-house to found Mount Holyoke College, a women's seminary. She was able to raise \$30,000 in about two months. Miss Lyon's method of fund raising extended to many colleges up to

World War I. Financial agents, such as college presidents, played an important role in traveling to eastern cities to gather funds on behalf of western and southern colleges.

The Involvement of College Presidents in Fund Raising

In the nineteenth century, college founders and presidents were forced to secure the necessary resources for the day-to-day operations of their colleges, such as living arrangements for students, books acquisitions, and faculty incentives (Rashdall, 1936). The responsibility of accomplishing these early advancement tasks rested upon college founders and presidents who solicited business people, merchants, and other college supporters for cash and other contributions. Fisher and Koch (1996) reported that Smith College became perhaps the earliest example of public-giving stimulation in 1871. To meet the condition of Sophia Smith's will, the citizens of Northampton, Massachusetts, were able to raise a matching fund of over \$25,000. Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller created benevolent foundations, most of them in support of higher education. Thus, large-scale philanthropy emerged through the efforts of the above capitalists and benefactors.

Early Capital Campaigns and Alumni Funds

Institutional campaigns to raise funds began as a serious strategy in the early 1900s in colleges and other institutions. Lyman L. Pierce and Charles S. Ward, then secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), developed the campaigns as a broad public enterprise rather than a hobby of the very rich. Pierce and Ward launched an intensive campaign to raise large sums of money for Harvard. Their activities were known as the Ward-Pierce Plan. This plan consisted of saturating the

target public with appeals and recruiting scores of volunteers. In 1914, the University of Pittsburgh was the first college that used the Ward-Pierce Plan to successfully raise capital funds. Following the success of this effort, hundreds of colleges implemented fund raising campaign strategies for their institutions.

The election of Bishop William Lawrence as president of the Alumni Association of Harvard in 1904 brought refinement to institutional advancement. The same year, under the impulse of president Charles Eliot, Lawrence called on Harvard alumni to give 2.5 million dollars to increase the salaries of the faculty in the liberal arts. Thus, Lawrence initiated the Alumni Fund, which today constitutes a major financial activity in support of American colleges, universities, and preparatory schools (Cutlip, 1965).

The Rise of Consultants and Advancement Officers

The rise of professional consultants in college fund raising followed the institution of alumni funds. According to Fisher and Koch (1996), professional consultants predated the first full-time college development offices, also called institutional advancement offices, and gave life to them. John Price Jones, a Harvard alumnus, was known for bringing together the best of Lawrence and Ward-Pierce by codifying fund raising principles and practice. Jones combined new techniques, systematic research and planning, as well as Lawrence's style of campaigning. In 1918, Jones was appointed at Harvard where he conducted a 10 million-dollar campaign the following year. He made fund raising history and changed the course of higher education in the United States. Cutlip (1965) wrote that Jones brought dignity and new techniques

to fund raising, and generated enthusiasm for giving to Harvard. Jones' techniques and strategies allowed Harvard to successfully raise 14.2 million dollars in about 10 months.

Advancement Offices Today

Rowland (1986) observed that advancement programs and activities are as old as educational institutions. These advancement activities and offices were not organized into formal structures until the early 1900s. Advancement structures, however, have changed names over time. They have also changed in the nature and scope of their functions. Even the diversity and professionalism of their programs and activities have shifted. Fisher and Koch (1996), however, believed that the patterns of institutional advancement in American higher education have been set in the 1990s.

The fund raising drive appears to be strategically organized on behalf of capital, annual fund, and alumni campaigns. Many constituencies are involved in institutional advancement: the presidency, institutional officers, trustees, volunteers, consultants and development experts. Activities such as careful prospect analysis, organized solicitation, active volunteerism, and internal and external communication constitute proven strategies and significant sources of support for a college or university.

College presidents have been active in raising money since the concept of faculty leaders' roles in soliciting gifts developed in the colonial colleges. Presidents who formerly were hiring and maintaining a staff of fund raising specialists have now returned to personal involvement and contribute to these specialists' work. In the 1990s, the college president has again become a chief actor in academic fund raising (Miller, 1991a).