

ADRP Webinar Follow Up

Thanks a Billion! Celebrating Impact and Redefining the Campaign Celebration Donor Experience

February 24, 2026

Dear attendees,

Thank you for attending our webinar about the celebration of our *Boldly Buffalo* campaign! We asked ADRP to share all of the questions in the chat that we could not get to during our session. We have categorized your questions to cover as many areas as we could, so we apologize if we did not respond to your exact question.

If you'd like to follow-up on anything, please feel free to reach out to us directly, Katie: kehunt@buffalo.edu, Sam: sns7@buffalo.edu.

Thank you!
Katie & Sam

Alumni Achievement Awards

Our Alumni Achievement Awards event is held annually and is planned by our Alumni Engagement events team. We coordinated our events so we could include this event in the suite of offerings to our alumni and donors. We'd be happy to put you in touch with our alumni events person who plans this event annually. Please let us know via email if you'd like us to make an introduction.

Budget

Unfortunately, the total budget for our campaign celebration events was not disclosed to us.

Campaign

Boldly Buffalo: The Campaign for UB was the largest, most ambitious, comprehensive fundraising campaign in university history – a campaign that transformed UB in nearly every way imaginable. Raising funds for student support, faculty research and innovative programs that benefit the world.

Event

- The event itself was hosted on a Friday night – we always have better success hosting events like these on Fridays.
- Our Donor Relations and Stewardship (DR&S) team is a central office and is split into 2 areas: 1. Donor Experience which includes the donor experience, recognition and events and 2. Stewardship – acknowledgements, endowments scholarships, impact reporting, etc. Our donor experience colleagues were responsible for the event itself, and Katie/Sam coordinated the personalized stewardship efforts. Katie and Sam are stewardship experts who worked closely with event planning/donor experience team. We helped with the stewardship during and around the events and helped with who would be invited and which donors received what stewardship. Logistics for night-of

(catering, decor, sound systems, etc.) were managed by our donor experience/events team.

- Photography: we hired a photographer for the week of events. We provided a "handler" for the night of the big event but our handler provided limited direction to our photographer so there were a lot of missed photos ops – learning moment!
- QR codes: we used a lot of QR codes in our event materials and did not hear any criticism. If they didn't like them, we didn't hear about it.
- Virtual component to event: while we did not offer a virtual component to this event, we shared a highlight video from the event to people who were not able to attend. Also, for people unable to attend who received a stewardship box, their video book contained the program video if we did not have another video to share with them – this was well received.
- Production partners: we used our in-house Center for the Arts team for all of our event needs. They are amazing!

Gift Bags

We used as many alumni-owned local business as we could for pieces in our gift bags – chocolates, Little Victor pins, etc. None of these items were donated. The tags on the gift bags also had a QR code for a special student thank you video that our intern put together.

Planning Process

- Microsoft Co-Pilot was instrumental in crafting talking points and building out schedules for what needed to be done and when.
- We were very lucky to have a great leader for this event & she really managed the workflow for all of the moving pieces. We have a tenured team who already naturally split into a stewardship side & a donor experience/events side, but we have all done a lot of events together so we already knew going into this event what a lot of our responsibilities would be based on our job expertise & past events.

Post-Campaign Stewardship

The event was to celebrate the close of the campaign. Our office manages annual and repeated stewardship of all donors, so we are continuing the procedures we follow each year to continue to steward and engage them. The campaign impact mailer & the stewardship boxes were the only stewardship pieces we shared to celebrate our success and report on impact.

Robot Dog

His name is Sparky!

Stewardship Boxes

We created boxes for our top 100 donors and volunteers from the campaign and included people who had videos produced about them during the campaign. It took a couple months to curate each box and included everything listed in our presentation. Only donors who funded physical buildings and spaces received the 3D prints of their spaces. If you'd like more info on the boxes, please reach out to Katie.

Text platform

We used Textedly.com for the real-time texting during the event. On a personal note, I do NOT recommend using this company. As I mentioned in the webinar, we signed up for a trial membership the day before our event as a colleague had used this platform before. It was easy to use but after I deployed my first message at the event, I quickly realized that every text message I deployed counted as TWO messages per phone number so my first text message to 100 people counted as 200 messages. There was nothing on their website about this and I could not get ahold of anyone from customer service. The trial membership gave us "750 messages" and I had 7 text updates I wanted to deploy to 100 phone numbers. I thought 750 text messages would be plenty. I ended up purchasing additional messages during the event - 1,000 or so more at a steep price just to get us through our event. I then spent the next 2 months going back and forth with Textedly's customer service because of how misleading the trial membership was, they started charging me a monthly fee as a trial member and they would not allow me to cancel the trial membership. It was a battle I finally won after 2 months, and we will not be using them again.

ThankView

We have been ThankView customers since 2019 and have had great success with the platform. In order to get responses, we emailed a LOT of students and followed up with administrators in their respective departments to help get them to respond. In truth, we are lucky and have a lot of students who become involved with very little pushing from us. If you'd like more info on our utilization of ThankView, please reach out to Sam.

Video Books

We used Media Fast for the video books (www.mediafast.com). I found them through a Google search for "custom video books" and they were fantastic to work with! Please reach out to Victor Valdez (victor@mediafast.com) and tell him Katie Camm from UB sent you! We received overwhelming positive feedback on the video books. We ordered 110 books, and they cost \$38/each.