

“LET’S DEVELOP OUR CENTER”

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I recently read a story about a girl who was sitting in her first day of Philosophy 101 class, when the professor arrived carrying a glass jar with three large rocks inside. He asked the students, “Is this jar full?” They readily answered, “Sure is, professor!” After responding, “Not quite,” he pulled a bag of pebbles out of his drawer and poured them in. “How about now?” he inquired. When nobody answered this time, the professor continued: “Again, no,” he shared, and proceeded to pour sand in the jar, filling the spaces between the pebbles. “Now the jar is full,” he told the class. “And do you know what that precious jar represents?”

For the professor of Philosophy, the jar represented our lives.

For your Director of Development, that jar represents our Research Center.

As we begin another Annual Campaign, all of us need to be mindful that many different types of rocks – our donors – work together to fill our jar financially. There are the large-rock contributors: businesses, organizations that award us grant monies, and the wonderful members of our Legacy Society. Then there are the stone-sized contributors, who are the annual members that renew every year. Then we have the donors that are so numerous that they are like grains of sand – those individuals who give special gifts and memorials, provide immeasurable hours of volunteer work, assist with processing and preserving the Center’s archive, and helping prepare the newsletter for distribution. Each stone in the jar, regardless of size, complement its fellow stones to fill the jar and make it whole. Each stone finds its niche – its role, or its place – and makes the whole thing work and look like a mosaic. Our Research Center is a mosaic and every stone is a valuable piece of the artwork!

While we are all engaged in the work of *developing* our Center, we may ask: What is *development*? Although we may all use the same *word*, we do not all mean the *thing*.

From a purely financial perspective, the work of development is fundraising. The Annual Campaign is that period of time when the Center solicits funds, encourages membership renewal, invites new members, and rouses a spirit of generosity to support the Center and its mission.

This year, the financial goal for the Annual Campaign is \$41,000.

Let us take a moment to understand what *small* things – *easy things* – we can do to reach that goal:

1. If every member sponsors one new member for one year at the \$40.00 level, the Center would raise \$34,000!
2. If 100 members decide to become new Legacy Society members with an initial payment this year of \$250.00, the Center would raise \$25,000!
3. If 5 new businesses or organizations contribute \$500.00, the Center would raise \$25,000!

These are just three examples of what could happen during this campaign. So much more is possible. I am challenging you to help take the Center to the next level by making a gift; renewing your membership; sponsoring a new member; encouraging friends and family to join; making a pitch on behalf of the Center to a business or organization you know; making a difference.

The Annual Campaign is also an opportunity for the Center to recognize its previous achievements, its volunteers, its staff, its importance in the community and region, and its role as the leading organization in Sheboygan County for historical education and outreach programs. However, without adequate funding, the mission and programs of the Center cannot be fulfilled. Everything the Center owns and does costs money to operate.

Now is the opportunity to show our support; to demonstrate how much we love what the Center *has*, and what the Center *does*.

Development, however, is not just about fundraising. It is a broad-based activity that also involves the Center's programs, community outreach, publications, activities, publicity, and public awareness. All of us are developers and builders. We are helping develop our Research Center become a bigger archive, become a more significant presence in Sheboygan County, and become a more exciting organization by our volunteer work, how we talk to others about what the Center is all about, and how we encourage others to become involved. It is going to be gratifying and exciting to watch our Center propel forward this year with new growth and initiatives.

A Useful Factoid

Mark your calendars! The Center is hosting a new 2-day event this August. The 1st Annual Historical Symposium will take August 16-17. Eight speakers will be giving educational and entertaining visual presentations on subjects combining history and travel. The event will only cost \$65/person for both days. If the Symposium attracts 400 persons, the event will raise \$26,000! This is an excellent opportunity to enjoy some fun continuing education, while supporting the Center. Consider bringing your children, grandchildren, neighbors, and friends, and family members.

Please feel free to contact me with your ideas, suggestions, and recommendations for enhancing our fundraising efforts. You can contact me at 920-467-4667, or email me at steverogstad@schrc.org.

Thank you for your participation in the 2018 Annual Campaign. Let us make this campaign the best yet!