


**Strengthening
Long-Term Relationships:**

**Membership Program Strategies for
Retention & Growth**



POLL

The first thing that comes to my mind when I hear the term “**membership program**” is . . .

1. I don't think about membership programs
2. A lot of work for little return on investment
3. A lot of work with the potential for a return on investment
4. A lot of work; I'm not sure if there is/would be a return on investment

POLL

In my organization, a
“**member**” is best described
as...

1. A board member who has oversight but does **NOT** contribute financially (donates)
2. A board member who has oversight and does provide at least some regular financial support (donates)
3. An adviser who has voting privileges and provides guidance and/or pro bono services
4. An individual donor who regularly attends our events or programs
5. An individual donor who does **NOT** regularly attend our events or programs
6. A corporate donor whose employees regularly attend our events or programs
7. A corporate donor whose employees do **NOT** regularly attend our events or programs

Ailey Organization- Overview

- Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
- Ailey II
- The Ailey School
- The Ailey Extension
- Ailey Arts In Education and Community Programs

- Founded in 1958
- Has performed in 71 countries
- Typical season (pre-Covid): international tour, U.S. tour, and NYC home season
- Each year, the organization reaches @ 500K people around the world

Development Department (during my tenure)

- Raised \$8-9Million each year for the annual operating budget
- Funds raised from corporate sponsorships, foundation & government grants, special events, and individuals (including memberships)
- \$1.5Million raised from Memberships
- 2 full time staff dedicated to Membership

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS
WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Friends

Family

Partners

Circle

Society

Ambassadors

Insiders

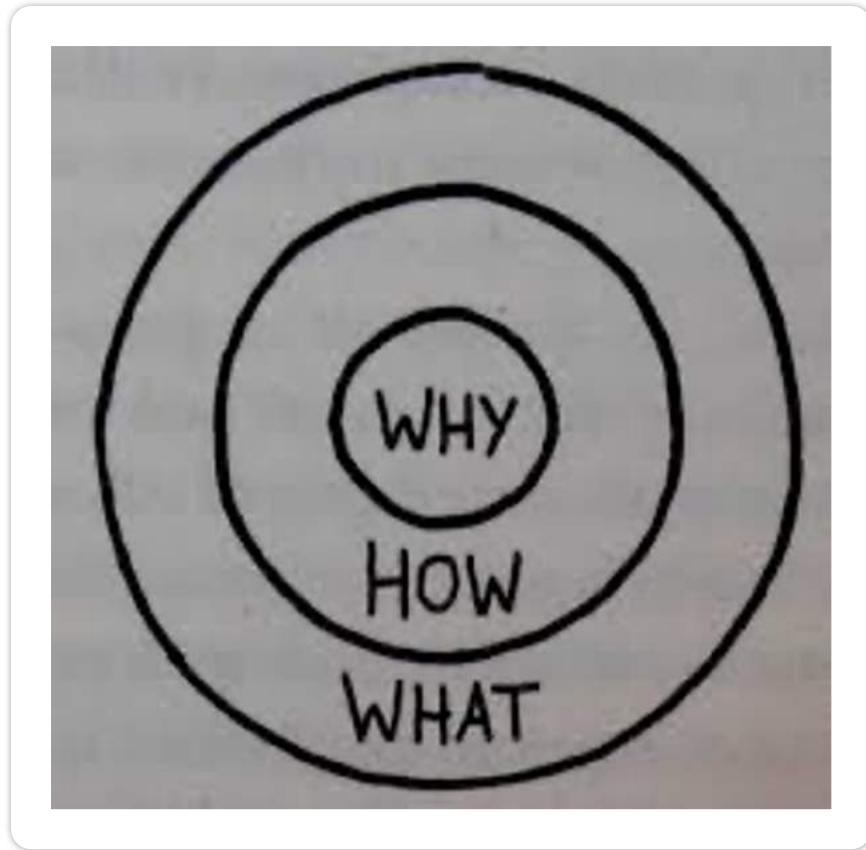
Investors

Belonging, Community, & Connection

Ongoing annual support

MOVING FROM TRANSACTIONAL TO RELATIONAL

1. Commit to Mission & Vision - “Start with Why”
2. See Donors as Investors - “Put Away the Tin Cup”
3. Build a Membership Program
4. Implement Moves Management in Membership - Connect. Engage. Deepen.



https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action?language=en

SHARE THE “WHY” OF YOUR ORGANIZATION



AILEYCAMP Newark Ballet Class. Photo by JOE EPSTEIN

WORD CASCADE/CHAT BOX

In a few words or a short phrase describe your organization.

In a few words or a short phrase share how your donors would describe your organization.

NEW PARADIGMS

“Put away the Tin Cup.”

- Kay Sprinkel Grace

Investors

rather than Donors

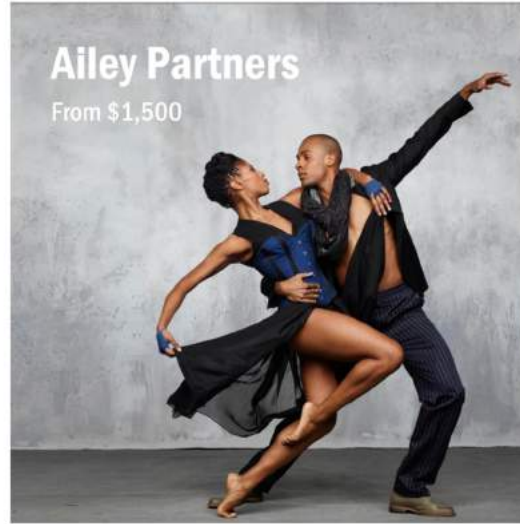
Investment

rather than Donation

Social Return on Investment rather than
Return on Investment

CREATING MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

- **Study** your patron base - - interest and affinities, capacity, and propensity for involvement and giving.
- **Offer** a range of giving levels and benefits that align and complement patron interests, capacity, and propensity.
- **Build** connections and (ultimately) relationships with members through activities, events, and donor communications.
- **Connect** members with other members. Tip: engaged members are the best ambassadors for your organization.
- **Encourage** current members to become *more involved* – at a higher giving level.
- **Reach** potential new members.



Study your patron base: learn interests and affinities, capacity, and propensity for involvement and giving.

Build connections and (ultimately) relationships with members through activities, events, and donor communications.

Friends of Alvin Ailey

With the support of our Friends, Ailey reaches nearly 500,000 people around the world each year. Your annual gift will help bring breathtaking performances to communities around the world, provide students across the country the opportunity to unlock their creative potential through innovative outreach programs, and help make young dancers' dreams become a reality.

Join Now

Give a Gift Membership

Sustainer
\$150

Leader
\$300

Patron
\$500

Sponsor
\$800

- ✓ Two passes to an open rehearsal at New York City Center
- ✓ Exclusive members-only information and updates
- ✓ A complimentary Ailey Extension class at the Ailey studios
- ✓ Advance notice for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performances and access to 40% savings on tickets regularly priced \$55-\$139 for Ailey's June 2019 Lincoln Center performances
- ✓ 20% discount on merchandise at the Ailey Boutique
- ✓ Access to Friends of Alvin Ailey workshops
- ✓ Invitation to observe the Ailey II dancers in their daily technique class
- ✓ Invitation to an exclusive Ailey II studio showing and a reception with the dancers
- ✓ Recognition in Ailey performance programs
- ✓ Season passes to Ailey's VIP Lounge at New York City Center
- ✓ Invitation to an exclusive preview of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's new works

Become a Sponsor, \$800

Offer a range of giving levels and benefits that align and complement patron interests, capacity, and propensity.

Revelations turns **50**



Sign the Card

Scroll down to read *Revelations* memories and share your own



Give a Gift/Get a Gift

Support *Revelations at 50* and we'll send you a limited edition iconic *Revelations* fan



Invite Your Friends

Share this card with your friends



See More *Revelations*

Revelations images, video, timeline, performance schedule and more

Connect members with other members.
Tip: engaged members are the best ambassadors for your organization.

Encourage current members to become *more involved* – at a higher giving level.

Share a *Revelations* Memory

ALVIN AILEY
AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Opportunities for Young Patrons

Join our dynamic group of supporters aged 21 to 40 committed to carrying on the legacy of visibility, representation, and access to the arts established by the visionary Alvin Ailey. While the curtain stays down, we hope our dedicated Young Patrons Circle members will stay connected to the important work that we do. Members will continue to receive exclusive behind-the-scenes access along with professional development opportunities in a virtual format.

By joining or renewing today you will enjoy exclusive benefits while supporting Alvin Ailey's mission to inspire, educate, and uplift through dance.

Join Now

Give a Gift Membership

Young Patrons Circle Individual

\$250

Young Patrons Circle Plus One

\$400

Young Patrons Circle Platinum

\$1,000

✓ While the theater is dark, members can enjoy a virtual opportunity to network with the Ailey Board of Trustees, a special Virtual Season Night, Virtual Masterclass, and other great occasions to connect with our cultural community.

Entitles members to bring a guest to all members-only events throughout the year.

Special opportunities throughout the year to engage in additional exclusive events.

Become a Young Patrons Circle Individual, \$250

Reach
potential
new
members

PRO TIPS: MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Cost to Benefit Ratio is a “net positive” for both your members and your organization.
- Appropriate to the level of donor support and comparable to benefits offered at peer organizations.
- Sustainable for your organization to deliver and Usable for your members to access.
- Connect to and Complement your mission and programs.

MEMBERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

General Operating

When you support our **General Operating** expenses, you are funding all of the activities of the Ailey organization and creating a stable base from which Ailey can thrive financially, expand artistically and fulfill our mission – to provide dance performances, training and community programs for everyone.

New Works

You can provide underwriting support for Ailey's **New Works** furthering our commitment to building a diverse repertory and nurturing the growth of talented dancers and choreographers.

Scholarships

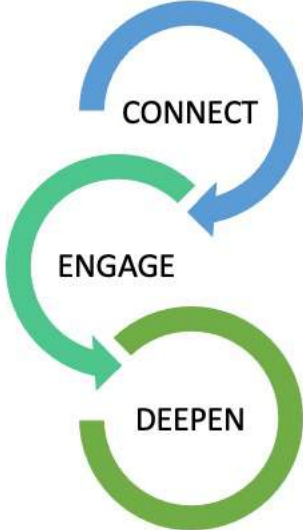
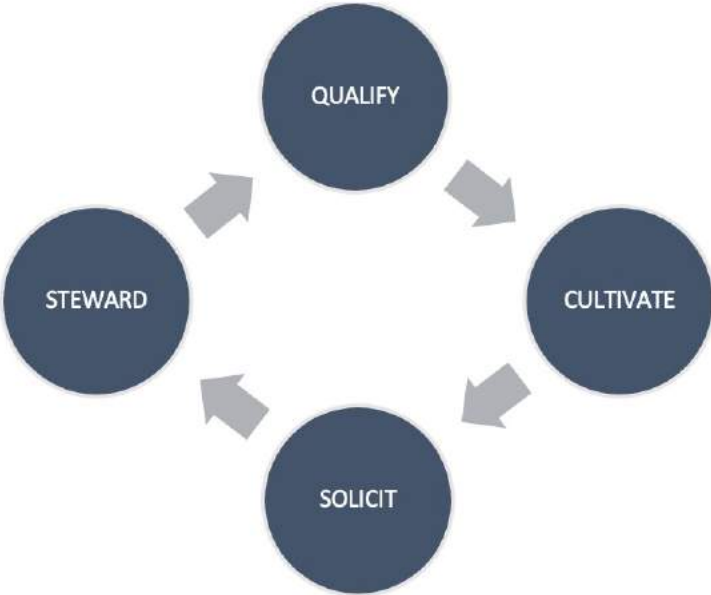
Together we can provide vital financial assistance through **Scholarships** for The Ailey School's most talented and deserving young dancers.

Arts in Education

Supporting our unique educational initiatives across the country allow Ailey's **Arts In Education** programs to reach nearly 100,000 youth each year.

Simon Sinek: “**People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it.**”

MOVES MANAGEMENT & MEMBERSHIP





CONNECT

Finding
Prospective Members



Collect Contact Info:

- During ticket orders
 - phone
 - online
 - at the box office
 - At special events
 - On your website
 - Insert in program/guide
 - Visits to your organization
 - Merchandise Purchases
-
- Opt-In/Permission Marketing
 - Build trust

ENTER TO WIN

Join the Ailey email list and enter to win a prize... tickets on Southwest Airlines

... followed by your FULL NAME & EMAIL ADDRESS to 56512

Example: Ailey Your Name yourname@email.com

OR

COMPLETE THIS FORM
to be entered to win

First Name: Thomas

Last Name: Cott

E-mail: tcott@alvinailey.org

Address: 405 West 55 Street

City, State, Zip: NY, NY 10019

Please return this form to an Ailey Ambassador or in a designated box in the lobby, or mail to:
Ailey Marketing Department
400 W. 53rd St., NY, NY 10019

By entering to win, you agree to receive news and offers from

ALVIN AILEY
AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Your email address will never be shared, lent, or sold to third parties. The winner(s) must be 18 years old at the time of entry... (fine print text continues)

BILL

PROSPECTING RESOURCES

Online

- Google
- Social Media
- Data Overlays
(demographics)
- Wealth Screening

Advocates/Ambassadors

- Connections
- Introductions
- Background Information

GET TO KNOW YOUR PROSPECTS

In-Person

- Events
- One-on-One Meetings

At the Theater/Venue

- At Their Seats
- Patrons' Lounge
- Backstage Tours

Online

- Website
- Social Media
- Email/Text
- Online Events

COMMUNICATION CASCADE

Subscribe to Alley News

Drop*

First Name*

Last Name*

PHONICOPY*

Please indicate*

Send me the latest news Send me the latest news

Send me the latest news Send me the latest news

*Required Fields

Sign up for email
Select email preferences



Receive auto response
Immediate email introduction to your organization



Email "cascade" follows
Based on location and preferences, automatically receives a series of emails over first 30 days after sign up



Special offers made
Emails include offers on classes, merchandise at the Shop, and tickets for upcoming performances



Develop closer ties
Requests for donations are made only after a period of other patron engagement via performances, classes, etc.

INGREDIENTS OF THE “ASK”

1. Inspiration
2. Information
3. Motivation

Still, We Dance

Inspiration



Inspiration

“ I believe that the dance came from the people and that it should always be delivered back to the people. —Alvin Ailey

Information & Motivation

Thanks to our many supporters, the Ailey organization has maintained its commitment to bringing dance back to the people with initiatives like online streaming of historic and new works and a continued focus on our vital dance education and community programs. While we miss sharing the magic of live performance with you, we are finding new and innovative ways to use dance as a vehicle for joy and hope.

Through it all, we continue to be inspired by the strength and resilience of our Ailey community. From the students following safety guidelines while honing their talents at The Ailey School, to the incredible dancers sharing their gifts through works created for film, and those moved by watching from their homes, to the AileyCampers showing up to learn new skills virtually, Mr. Ailey's vision propels us all forward with a message of strength and love.

Now more than ever, your generosity makes it possible for our work to continue despite these uncertain times. **Please consider making a gift today** to support Ailey's important initiatives. Your contribution, large or small, sustains the Ailey organization as we find new ways to inspire and uplift people all over the world through dance.

Thank you for your commitment to spreading Ailey's inspiring message.

[Make a Contribution](#)



ENGAGE

Cultivate Relationships



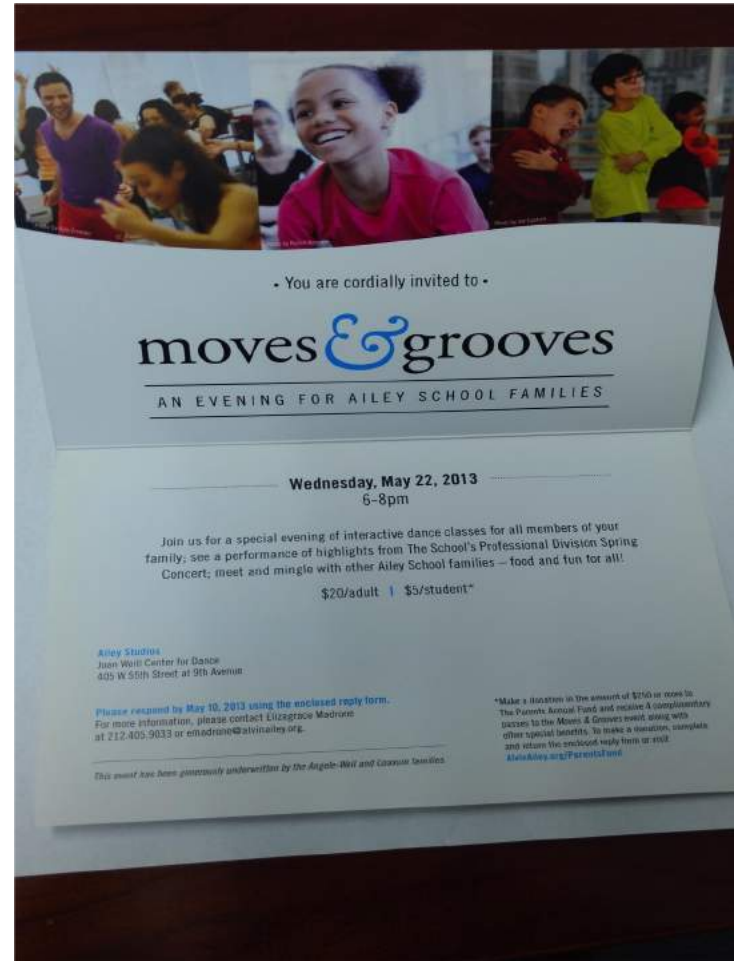
SOCIAL CARE

- Personal customer-service
- Donor-centric/Donor-focused
- Responsive and Pro-Active

Source: "Six Ways Personalization Trends are Affecting Museums and Cultural Centers," by Colleen Dilenschneider, *Know Your Bone*, May 5, 2015.

NEW MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM KICK OFF EVENT

- “Fun” Event Name
- Range of interactive activities
- Invitation to meet and mingle with other members



ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Robert Battle, Artistic Director

Masazumi Chaya, Associate Artistic Director

ADMIT

2

OPEN
REHEARSAL



You are cordially invited to attend

AN EVENING WITH
ROBERT BATTLE

AND SPECIAL GUEST RONALD K. BROWN

An event for Artistic Director's Circle Members



Artistic Director Robert Battle will unveil new works for the upcoming 2013-14 season, followed by a conversation with choreographer Ronald K. Brown. The Ailey Company will premiere Mr. Brown's *Four Corners* at Lincoln Center on June 12th.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6TH

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

AT THE HOME OF

AILEY TRUSTEE DARIA FOSTER

62 WEST 62ND STREET, PENTHOUSE

NEW YORK



To RSVP or for more information, please contact
Christine Waldon-Hoos at 212.405.9037 or cwhoo@ailey.org

This invitation is non-transferable.

DIGITAL CONNECTIONS

Attract New Donors
Listen. Look. Engage.



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

23h · 🌐



Now - June 24 [New York City Center](#) is featuring Ailey as part of their Studio 5 | Dancing Across Continents digital series. Watch it for free at [Youtube.com/NYCityCenter](#)

Through intimate conversations and coaching sessions, you can explore the creative p... [See More](#)



You and 1.1K others

28 Comments 176 Shares




**Stream Video With
Ailey All Access**

**Support Ailey With
a Gift Today**



SOCIAL MEDIA: AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT



5 Dates · Sep 19 · Sep 23


Alvin Ailey - American Dance Theater au Théâtre du Léman

Théâtre du Léman

Programme A:
Stack Up
(interval)... More

SEP 19 Wed 8 PM UTC+02 **SEP 20** Thu 8 PM UTC+02 +5

269 people interested [Get Tickets](#) [★ Interested](#)



6 Dates · Sep 25 · Sep 30

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Theater 11 Zürich

„Dance is for everybody“ – mit dieser Vision haben Alvin Ailey und seine Tänzer vor über 50 Jahren die Wahrnehmung des amerikanischen Tanzes verändert. Heute b... More

SEP 25 Tue 7:30 PM UTC+02 **SEP 26** Wed 7:30 PM UTC+02 +5

David visited this place [Get Tickets](#) [★ Interested](#)

INFOGRAPHIC: TELL A STORY THAT INSPIRES

Do you remember how your first Alley performance **made you feel?**

HOPEFUL? UPLIFTED? MAYBE EVEN TRANSFORMED?

With your support, the Alley organization's education and community programs reach over

100,000 CHILDREN EACH YEAR.

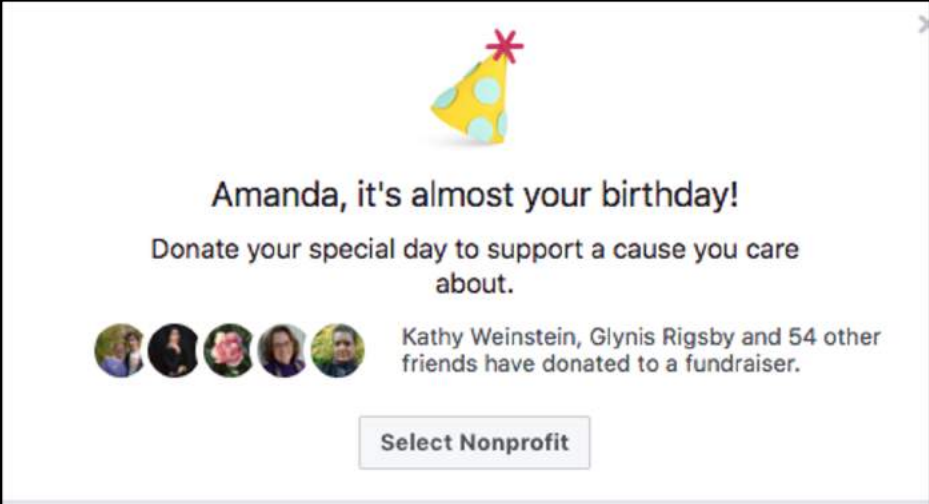
A GIFT OF JUST \$100 can give 10 underserved children the chance to see an Alley performance for free.

For many, it will be the first time they ever see a live dance performance.

During this season of **GIVING** we need **your help** to spread the **INSPIRATION**

The infographic is a vertical collage of four panels. The top panel shows three dancers in white on a blue stage, with one holding a white umbrella. The second panel shows a large group of children in yellow shirts performing a dance in a bright studio. The third panel shows a single male dancer in a white shirt and light pants performing a leap against a blue background. The bottom panel shows a group of children in yellow and black outfits performing on a stage in a dark theater.

SOCIAL MEDIA: FUNDRAISING THROUGH FRIENDRAISING



Amanda, it's almost your birthday!

Donate your special day to support a cause you care about.

Kathy Weinstein, Glynis Rigsby and 54 other friends have donated to a fundraiser.

Select Nonprofit

INTEGRATED CAMPAIGNS

Digital and Direct Mail



ALVIN AILEY
AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

→ **TAKE YOUR SEAT!**
Great seats reserved for members only

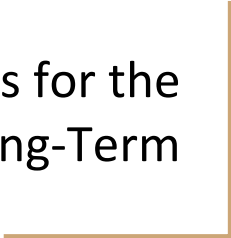
LEARN MORE

The advertisement features a red banner at the top with the text 'ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER'. Below this, a yellow arrow points to the headline 'TAKE YOUR SEAT!' in large white and pink letters. Underneath the headline, the text 'Great seats reserved for members only' is displayed in pink and white. The main visual is a photograph of eight dancers in white shirts and dark pants, each sitting on a black chair and performing a synchronized dance move with one arm raised. The floor in front of them is covered with several dark jackets. A red button with the text 'LEARN MORE' is located in the bottom right corner of the image.



DEEPEN

Building Member Relationships for the
Long-Term



Dictionary



em·pa·thy

/ˈempəTHē/ 

noun

the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

synonyms: affinity with, rapport with, sympathy with, understanding of, sensitivity toward, sensibility to, identification with, awareness of, fellowship with, fellow feeling for, like-mindedness, **togetherness**, closeness to; *informal chemistry*

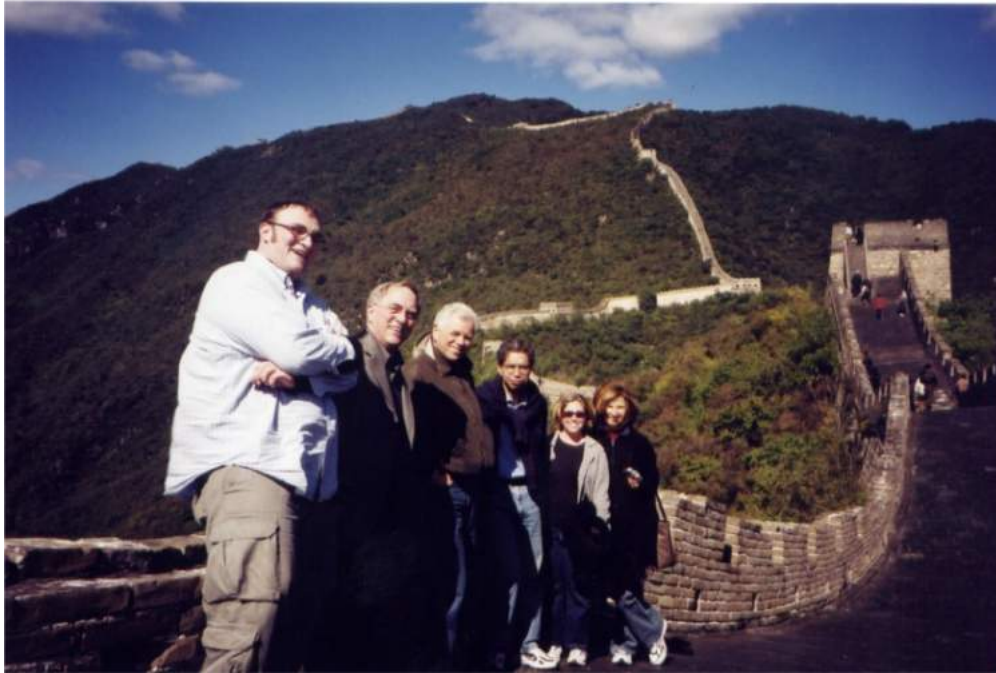
"what is really important about learning a language is learning **empathy for** another culture"

EMPATHY IN FUNDRAISING: VALUABLE INSIGHT & DEEPER CONNECTIONS



RECOGNITION AND STEWARDSHIP

- Thank You – video, phone, or text message from artistic staff
- Tweet to acknowledge a new donation
- Facebook post celebrating your members
- List names of supporters on website
- Ongoing engagement and communication



Sometimes building a membership program feels like...

You are trying to build the Great Wall of China.

Build it. They will come.

SOURCES

www.alvinailey.org

https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action?language=en

<http://www.kaygrace.org/>

Questions?

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