

The Importance of Annual Giving

Every gift keeps Moravian strong



PHOTO BY JOHN KISH IV

We recently sat down with Gary Carney, vice president for institutional advancement, to discuss the importance of Annual Giving.

Q: *Just what is Annual Giving?*

A: Annual Giving is the lifeblood of any college or university. It is the financial support from alumni, friends, and parents that keeps the institution strong. By definition, these are donations made to a college that are utilized in the same year the gift is made. Known by different names at different schools, Annual Giving falls into two distinct categories: unrestricted giving—gifts in support of the college budget—and restricted giving—gifts to support a specific area of the college.

Q: *Explain unrestricted giving.*

A: Unrestricted gifts address the most pressing needs of the college, and donors understand that the institution will put those dollars where they are most needed. At Moravian, we identified financial aid as the most pressing need and thus created the Moravian Scholarship Fund to provide financial support for deserving students. In turn, Moravian has budgeted a certain amount in donations for financial aid and all gifts to the Moravian Scholarship Fund are used for this purpose.

Q: *So if I make a donation to the Moravian Scholarship Fund, I know that it will go directly to students in the form of financial aid?*

A: Yes.

Q: *What happens if you don't raise the amount that the College has budgeted for the Moravian Scholarship Fund?*

A: If we do not raise that budgeted amount, then the College has to take the shortfall from other programs to fund the financial aid that we have already committed to our students.

Q: *Explain restricted giving.*

A: This is simply when a donor directs his or her gift

to a specific area of the College. These funds are used solely to enhance that specific program, such as the Music Alliance, the Friends of Reeves Library, Blue & Grey Club, or a specific academic program.

Q: *So there really are a lot of options for giving in the Annual Giving program?*

A: Yes. I would be hard pressed to identify an area of the College that cannot be supported through the Annual Giving program. Having said that, it is our hope that a donor's first consideration for a gift is always the Moravian Scholarship Fund, as these gifts directly support deserving students.

Q: *How has unrestricted giving (Moravian Scholarship Fund) been doing here?*

A: The positive news is that our supporters have been steady in their giving. The negative news is that as the College's expenses have continued to rise, contributions have not kept pace with inflation and costs. If we were looking at a graph of unrestricted giving over the past fourteen years, the giving line would be flat. However, if we graphed the College's budget over that same period of time, we would see a steady increase that reflects the increasing costs of goods and services. Unfortunately, the gap between what we have received in donations and our budget needs has grown steadily over the years.

The only way we can close this gap is to increase the number of alumni, friends, and parents who support the Moravian Scholarship Fund while at the same time encouraging some of our consistent and loyal donors to increase their giving.

Q: *So what does the future hold for Annual Giving?*

A: I have been struck by the great affection that alumni have for this College. With a concerted effort by the College to reach out to these alumni and with the physical improvements that are taking place on campus at this time, I am confident that alumni will respond positively to our efforts to engage them.