

Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations

Seminary of the Southwest | Austin, Texas

Key Details

POSITION	Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations
DEPARTMENT	Advancement and Communications
SUPERVISOR	Vice President for Advancement and Communications
FLSA STATUS	Exempt
DATE REVISED	6/9/2026

Summary

The Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations provides strategic and operational leadership for Seminary of the Southwest's Annual Fund while strengthening lifelong alumni relationships and managing a focused portfolio of leadership annual giving and major gift prospects.

This position plans, manages, and executes a comprehensive annual giving program that increases unrestricted support, donor participation, donor retention, alumni giving, and overall revenue. The Director develops data-informed fundraising strategies, writes and coordinates compelling appeals, manages segmented campaigns, tracks progress toward goals, and works closely with Advancement and Communications colleagues to build a consistent culture of philanthropy.

The Director also advances alumni engagement by supporting alumni volunteers, strengthening student-to-alumni connections, planning alumni events, and ensuring alumni communications serve both relationship-building and philanthropic goals. The position requires strong project management, excellent writing, creativity, data analysis, technical aptitude, attention to detail, and clear, persuasive communication with donors, alumni, colleagues, volunteers, and church leaders.

Allocation of Responsibilities

- Annual Giving: 60%
- Alumni Relations: 30%
- Major Gifts and Leadership Annual Giving: 10%

Key Responsibilities

Annual Giving Leadership and Execution: 60%

- Lead the planning, execution, and evaluation of the Annual Fund, with responsibility for growing unrestricted giving, participation, retention, and revenue.
- Develop and manage an annual giving calendar including direct mail, email appeals, digital giving, giving days or focused campaigns, stewardship touches, phonathon or personal outreach as appropriate, and year-end and fiscal-year-end solicitations.
- Create segmented fundraising strategies for alumni, trustees, former trustees, parents, friends, faculty and staff, clergy, bishops, parishes, and institutional supporters.
- Write and coordinate Annual Fund copy, including appeal letters, emails, giving forms, stewardship messages, impact stories, talking points, and campaign updates.
- Partner with Communications to ensure fundraising messages are timely, mission-centered, visually consistent, and aligned with the seminary's brand, voice, and priorities.

- Use donor data to analyze giving patterns, identify acquisition and renewal opportunities, improve segmentation, and recommend strategies to increase revenue and participation.
- Monitor Annual Fund progress and report on revenue, donor counts, retention, LYBUNT/SYBUNT performance, pledge fulfillment, alumni giving, and other key metrics.
- Develop strategies for monthly giving, recurring gifts, pledge reminders, donor upgrades, lapsed donor reactivation, and leadership annual giving.
- Coordinate timely and meaningful stewardship for Annual Fund donors.
- Identify donors with capacity to move from occasional giving to consistent annual support, leadership annual giving, planned giving, major gifts, or campaign support.
- Evaluate campaign performance and recommend improvements to strategy, messaging, timing, segmentation, and return on investment.
- Work closely with the Database Manager to improve data integrity, segmentation, reporting, and campaign processes.
- Maintain strong organization and project management across multiple deadlines, campaigns, audiences, vendors, and collaborators.

Alumni Relations and Engagement: 30%

- Develop and implement annual and multi-year alumni engagement strategies that strengthen alumni connection and support a growing culture of alumni philanthropy.
- Strengthen the Southwest Alumni Association through volunteer engagement, leadership development, regional activity, alumni recognition, and programs that foster pride in the seminary.
- Plan and manage signature alumni events, including the Blandy Lecture and Alumni Convocation, regional gatherings, alumni receptions, and other events that support community-building and stewardship.
- Engage alumni across all programs, including MDiv, MHC, MAR, MSD, DAS, and Iona Collaborative constituencies.
- Create and coordinate alumni communications that celebrate accomplishments, share seminary news, invite participation, and connect alumni giving to the seminary's mission.
- Build meaningful student-to-alumni connections through mentorship, vocational conversations, event participation, and transition efforts.
- Work with faculty, program leaders, and Advancement colleagues to identify alumni stories, engagement opportunities, and philanthropic interests.

Major Gifts and Leadership Annual Giving: 10%

- Manage a focused portfolio of alumni, friends, clergy, parish, diocesan, and leadership annual giving prospects.
- Identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward donors capable of making leadership annual gifts, special project gifts, planned gifts, or future campaign commitments.
- Partner with the Vice President for Advancement and Communications and Advancement colleagues to move prospects through qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.
- Demonstrated experience in annual giving, fundraising, alumni relations, advancement, nonprofit development, or a related field.

- Proven ability to manage fundraising campaigns, donor communications, direct response appeals, or annual giving programs with measurable results.
- Excellent writing and editing skills, with the ability to craft persuasive, mission-centered fundraising and engagement messages.
- Strong project management skills and ability to manage multiple campaigns, deadlines, audiences, and details.
- Demonstrated ability to use data to guide strategy, evaluate performance, and improve fundraising results.
- Experience with donor databases, preferably Raiser's Edge, and comfort with reports, lists, segmentation, coding, and constituent records.
- Strong verbal communication, relationship-building, volunteer management, and collaboration skills.
- Experience working with alumni, donors, volunteers, board-level constituents, or church leaders preferred.
- Familiarity with The Episcopal Church, theological education, higher education advancement, seminary settings, counselor education, or mental health counseling programs preferred.
- Comfort with digital communications, email marketing tools, spreadsheets, reporting dashboards, and fundraising technology.

Attributes for Success

- Commitment to Seminary of the Southwest's mission and ability to communicate that mission with clarity, warmth, and conviction.
- Results-oriented approach to fundraising, with commitment to revenue growth, donor participation, retention, and stewardship.
- Excellent judgment, discretion, professionalism, and attention to detail.
- Strong numeric and technical aptitude, including comfort with fundraising reports, donor data, spreadsheets, campaign analysis, and database systems.
- Creative and strategic thinker who can develop fresh approaches to appeals, alumni engagement, donor messaging, and campaign execution.
- Strong organizational habits and ability to move projects from idea to completion.
- Collaborative colleague who contributes to a healthy team culture.
- Curiosity, initiative, and willingness to test, measure, learn, and improve.
- Ability to balance relationship-building with disciplined execution, follow-through, and measurable results.

Supervisory Relationship

The Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations reports to the Vice President for Advancement and Communications and works collaboratively with the Advancement and Communications team.

Performance Priorities

Success will be evaluated through progress in Annual Fund revenue growth, donor retention and reactivation, new donor acquisition, alumni giving participation, leadership annual giving growth, appeal and donor communication quality, data and reporting accuracy, alumni event participation, volunteer engagement, collaboration with Advancement and Communications colleagues, and identification of prospects for major gifts, planned giving, and campaign support.

To Apply

Applicants should submit a cover letter and current résumé describing their interest in the position and how their experience and qualifications align with its responsibilities.

Application materials should be sent by email to:

Eric Scott

Vice President for Advancement and Communications
Seminary of the Southwest
eric.scott@ssw.edu

Please include the title of the position in the subject line. Applications will be reviewed as they are received and will remain confidential to the extent possible. No calls please.