

Client Spotlight: GiveCampus

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[GiveCampus](#), a fundraising and engagement platform for nonprofit educational institutions, is bringing crowdfunding and peer-to-peer fundraising to schools around the country. Founded by Kestrel Linder and Michael Kong, the company helps institutions increase alumni giving by meeting donors online in a social and interactive manner, rather than relying solely on the phone calls and snail-mail solicitations that most college grads know well.

More than 80 institutions have partnered with GiveCampus since it launched its platform in early 2015. They have used GiveCampus as a hub for annual giving campaigns, “giving days” and other short-term giving challenges, reunion fundraising, senior class gifts, and many other fundraising initiatives. Many have found notable success: on February 6, for example, College of the Holy Cross raised almost \$2 million from 6,226 individuals, setting a new GiveCampus record for the most donors to a private liberal arts college in one campaign. Three weeks later, Hamilton College raised more than \$900,000 for scholarships from 2,868 donors, in a single day.

Alumni and current students can also raise funds through the site to support athletics programs, campus projects and student group activities. GiveCampus reports that one group, a student-run international microloan program at St. John’s University, exceeded its usual fundraising total by 800% when it first used GiveCampus.

Partners [Jeffrey Johnson](#) and [Gary Schall](#) were “instrumental to the company’s early stability,” says Linder. They guided GiveCampus through the preparation and filing of incorporation documents, and counseled on negotiating service agreements, employee agreements and investor relationships.

GiveCampus continues to rely on WilmerHale’s cross-functional capabilities and practice strengths. As a demonstration of the company’s continued growth and success, GiveCampus hosted a conference at WilmerHale’s Washington DC office in February, during which the company and its partner institutions discussed best practices regarding digital fundraising and alumni engagement. The two-day event was attended by representatives from more than 25 colleges, universities and high schools around the country.

Linder and Kong founded GiveCampus to help schools access what they saw as the untapped

potential of younger donors. “About 90 percent of college graduates give to charity. Only 8.2 percent made a gift last year to their college,” Linder told [TechCrunch](#) in July 2015. “So there’s an enormous divide between people with the inclination and the capacity to give and people who give to higher education.”

The founders were also motivated by the increasingly challenging economics of education in the United States: “The quality, the affordability, the accessibility of education in this country is heavily dependent on private philanthropic support. And that’s a dependence that is growing,” Linder told [The Washington Post](#) in April 2016. “The irony is most people don’t view schools as charities, and they don’t treat education as a philanthropic cause.”

GiveCampus makes it easy for institutions and their alumni and students to reach potential donors by email and via Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms. The site also encourages savvy fundraising and peer-to-peer engagement through many of its features. It allows people to challenge friends and offer to match their gifts, for example. In April 2016, [EdSurge published a feature story on the company’s growth](#) that highlighted how its innovative technology is helping schools more effectively reach and engage new donors.

“The people behind GiveCampus bring so much passion and enthusiasm to the business,” says Partner [Stephanie Evans](#), who currently advises the company. “The company is truly transforming the way educational institutions think about fundraising. As a firm, we are thankful to have the opportunity to work with GiveCampus and look forward to witnessing its continued growth.”