



Women in Philanthropy

UNLOCKING THE POWER
IN GIRLS' SCHOOLS

*When women are connected
to purpose, possibility, and each other,
extraordinary things happen.*



meitler

Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.



icgs

International
Coalition of
Girls' Schools



The Question We've Been Asking

"Can we fundraise?"

For years, many girls' schools have quietly asked this question—in planning meetings, in leadership transitions, and in moments of uncertainty.

Today, we suggest we may have been asking the wrong question.



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.

The Better *Question:*

What if we're uniquely
positioned to **succeed?**



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.



What Feels Most *True at Your School?*



"Our alumnae aren't engaged"



"We don't have the staff/resources"



"Events aren't working"



"People are uncomfortable asking"



"We don't have major donors"



Let's start honestly.

Raise your hand if one of these feels familiar at your school.



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.

Before We Go There...Let's Be Honest

Common challenges across girls' schools



These challenges are real.
We see them across regions, cultures, and countries.



You are not alone.
These patterns show up in girls' schools everywhere.



Naming the reality
helps us move from frustration to possibility.



This is not about blame—
it's about building a better way forward.



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Stronger mission.

Barrier 1

“Our alumnae aren't wealthy.”



Many of our graduates enter helping professions.



Our donor base is smaller, with fewer major gifts.



So we assume the potential isn't there.



Barrier 2 -

“We don’t have the resources”



Limited staff



No CRM



No Time for strategy

Some of the most meaningful engagement initiatives begin with almost no budget at all.

What they require first is intentionality.

Barrier 3 -

Events aren't working



High effort



Low return



Donor fatigue

Some of the most meaningful engagement initiatives begin with almost no budget at all.

What they require first is intentionality.



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Stronger mission.

Barrier 4

Our culture doesn't support asking



Discomfort



Cultural norms



Donor fatigue

“*Asking isn't just a strategy.
It's a reflection of the culture
we build together.*”

”



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Stronger mission.

Barrier 5

Our alumnae aren't engaged



Low turnout



Limited connection



Hard to reach

“ Sometimes disengagement is not absence of care. It's absence of invitation. ”



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.

Pause

You Are *Not Alone*



These are
global patterns.



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Stronger mission.



The Reframe



Not a **capacity** problem



A **strategy + confidence** problem



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Stronger mission.



What's Changing Globally

“Women hold approximately 40 percent of wealth worldwide and make or influence roughly 85 percent of charitable giving decisions in affluent households.”



Women's wealth **rising**



Intentional giving



Impact-driven

*Women rarely give because they were **asked** well.
They give because they feel **connected** well.*



Mercer Advisors, “Women in Philanthropy: Expanding Leadership, Impact, and Global Giving” (2026)



What Women Donors Often Want



“ Women rarely give because they were asked well.
They give because they feel connected well. ”



Why Girls' Schools *Are Aligned*



Women investing
in **women**



Mission
alignment



Community
strength



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Stronger mission.



What *Actually Works*

Organizations that thrive are those investing deeply in *donor relationships* rather than transactional asks.



Start with **belonging**



Build **relationships**



Tell **human stories**



Create pathways for **involvement**



Invite participation before **philanthropy**



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.

Candid – Fundraising insights on
donor relationships (2026)



Key Shift



Events → Relationships



Asking → Inviting



Transactions → Belonging

Transactions create **gifts**.

Belonging creates **advocates**.



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Stronger mission.



What Does This Look Like in *Practice?*

Real-world **examples**



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Stronger mission.



It Wasn't a Giving Problem.

*It was an
engagement problem.*



Celebrating the
WOMEN of Saint Joseph's University



So We Started With *Belonging.*



No pressure.




No ask.




Just connection.

*It began simply as gatherings
of alumnae.*



*It started
right here.*



SJU Celebrating the **WOMEN**
of Saint Joseph's University

Make A Gift

SheUnited | SheUnited Committee | Women's Leadership | Scholarships For Mature
Pre-Conference Events | Volunteer Opportunities | Media Resources | Contact Us

sheunited **SheUnited Conference 2013**
Saturday, March 23

Michael J. Hagan '85 Arena
Conference benefits scholarships for mature adult women

Register Now

YOU CAN FOLLOW US ON:
in f t @SJUSheUnited #SJUSheUnited

What is SheUnited?

SheUnited is comprehensive, year-long programming that connects the women of SJU through a variety of social, professional, service and spiritual events. For information about and photos from previous SheUnited events, [click here](#). These events allow SJU students, faculty, staff, parents, alumnae, spouses and friends of the University to connect, network and inspire one another. The signature SheUnited event is the on-campus conference complemented by other events in Philadelphia, New York City, DC, and other communities that our women work and live in. In addition to events, the women of SJU stay connected through our communities on **Facebook** and **LinkedIn**.

The Second SheUnited Conference will take place on Saturday, March 23, 2013.

About the Conference: The signature SheUnited event is the on-campus conference. Our 2013 conference presenters will interest women of all ages and backgrounds. Whether you wish to network and expand your professional circle, learn practical tips to improve your everyday life, discuss how you can live healthier at any age, or if you are looking for a day to rejuvenate and refresh with family and friends, SheUnited is for you!

The Energy *Built.*

CONNECTION → COMMUNITY → MOMENTUM

From gatherings to a conference. From conversations to community.

A movement was underway.

“When women feel connected, they give.”



GATHERINGS

Women coming together.



TALK

Stories shared.
Connections made.



INSPIRE

Encouragement
that lifts.



GIVE

Women inspired
to give.



GROW

A community
with purpose.

*From connection, came community. From community, came impact. **Together.***

Belonging Became a *Place.*

A home for connection,
leadership, and the
next generation.



BUILT BY WOMEN.



ROOTED IN MISSION.



DESIGNED FOR ALL.



A space that reflects our community. A legacy that will inspire generations.





LEAD
ON



DESIGNED FOR ALL
WOMEN
EST. 2025

“It’s Her Turn” *Campaign*

“Girls’ schools already have philanthropy in their DNA — they were founded on it.”



Women investing in women



Identity-driven messaging



Community rally point



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Stronger mission.





Giving *Circles*



Women giving **together**

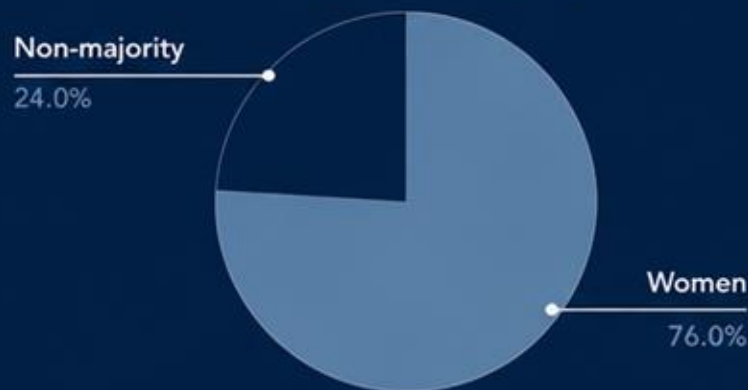


Shared **decision-making**



Community **building**

Giving Circles Majority



76%

of giving circles report that women make up the majority.



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.

*The NonProfit Times, reporting on
W.K. Kellogg Foundation-supported
research, 2017*

Mentorship → *Philanthropy*



Start with **engagement**



Build **connection**



Lead to **giving**



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.



**GWYNEDD FORCE
MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

GwyneddForce.com

Guide her future. Mentor a Monarch.

Bequest / Legacy *Giving*

“Planned giving is more than a gift—
it’s a powerful legacy that fuels the future of
curious, courageous, and compassionate
young women.”



Long-term impact



Values-driven



Underutilized

Legacy giving is
often less about wealth—
and more about **identity**.

It answers the question:
*“What part of me
continues after I’m gone?”*

That **resonates** deeply with
many women philanthropists.



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.



The Pattern



Engagement



Relationship



Philanthropy

Connection builds generosity.



Your Next Step



1 initiative

Start somewhere meaningful.



1 audience

Focus on connection.



1 story

Make it human.



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.



It's not new work. It's a **continuation.**

*Of the relationships, values,
and **community** your school
already builds **every day.***



Smarter decisions.
Stronger mission.





Smarter decisions.

Stronger mission.