website had 210,554 page views and 58,098 unique visitors from 199 countries during the search.

“Our results demonstrate that when individuals care about a topic and are consistently offered the opportunity to participate, they will,” says Evans. “We gave them something to talk about, and we kept up our end of the conversation.”

Credits: Susan T. Evans, director of creative services; Joel Pattison, web designer and project manager; Eric Pesola, web designer and project manager; Spencer Milne, director of marketing, promotion, and ticket operations.

REACH OUT AND READ

AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE Gold for Regular Alumni Programs

How does a maxed-out staff with a flat budget increase regional alumnae outreach in preparation for a campaign? Agnes Scott College asked alumnae to host a nationwide book discussion that ultimately enabled 480 people in 57 locations to share the first-year students’ common reading experience.

Targeting the 7,500 alumnae outside the college’s metropolitan Atlanta area, staff recruited hosts for Scottie Book Month via an e-mail that asked, “Can Agnes Scott borrow your living room?” That e-mail garnered more than 100 responses, which staff narrowed to 57 hosts, each of whom chose a time in October to discuss Alan Lightman’s Einstein’s Dreams.

“Being able to treat the event as one event enabled us to do one invitation that listed all 57 events, do one mailing, and get all of the RSVPs at about the same time,” says Kimberly Vickers, director of alumni relations.

The $9,500 budget covered $3,800 for printing and mailing and $100 per event—$50 of which went to reimburse the hosts for refreshments and $50 for the “event in a box,” which contained a DVD of a faculty member who introduced the book, discussion questions, college cocktail napkins, a copy of the book, a sign-in sheet, nametags, and a school logo T-shirt and journal for hosts to keep or give away.

The gatherings ranged from live to 15 people, many of whom provided feedback similar to this note from a Class of ’69 alumna: “Our group ranged from a 20-something to a 90-something, and we hope to have future book talks together. Thanks for keeping us connected!”

Staff attended about 12 of the events, and Vickers credits the hosts for engaging more alumnae in more locations than the college’s regional programming ever had. “There wasn’t a single city where the host didn’t do a superb job in taking ownership and being invested in the success of the event.”

Credits: Kimberly Vickers, director of alumni relations; Naylene Felt, associate director of alumni relations; Julia Stover, alumni relations coordinator; Emi Peterson, graphic designer; Calvin Burgamy, instructional technologist; Chris De Pree, professor of astronomy.

Schools raise $58.9 million by the deadline. The endowment grew from $152 million to $280 million in a little over a year, moving Culver from 15th to fifth place among national boarding schools.

Regarding his initial doubts, Hogan says, “I’m a realist—$50 million in 16 months with the economy tanking? That’s a major challenge, even within a culture where people have the attitude that no challenge is too great. But everyone associated with the schools said, ‘We’re not going to leave any money on the table.’ And they didn’t.”

Credits: Frank and Jane Batten, Culver Academies’ alumni, parents, faculty, staff, students, and friends; the entire development staff.