

2. MAKING A SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL FUND CALL

BEFORE THE CALL:

- 1) Make your own Annual Fund commitment first. It adds to your credibility and persuasiveness.
- 2) Review your contact form online at www.hamilton.edu/afvolunteer. The Office of Annual Giving can also provide a printed form (866-729-0315).
- 3) Do your “homework” before contacting your assignments. Look at a yearbook and the online Alumni Directory. Access other resources (classmates and friends, the Web or directory assistance at 1-area code-555-1212) to find current phone numbers and e-mail addresses where Hamilton’s records are outdated.
- 4) Help to ensure success by sending an e-mail/letter to introduce your call and schedule a time to talk and catch up.
- 5) Keep current on campus activities and get updates on the latest Hamilton student and faculty achievements by visiting the Hamilton Web site or calling your class manager.

DURING THE CALL:

- 1) Verify contact and demographic information found on the contact form (printed or Web). This is a great ice-breaker used by students and volunteers alike and helps Hamilton to keep its directory updated.
- 2) Thank them for their past support, making note and celebrating items like significant increases and/or an impressive number of consecutive years giving.
- 3) Do not simply ask for a gift; **ask for a specific amount**. If one is not provided on the contact form, you can devise one by reviewing your assignment’s giving history and suggesting an appropriate increase. You might say:

“I see that last year you generously gave \$____. Thank you! Tonight I’d like to ask you to consider [doubling][increasing] your gift to \$____.”

“I see that last year you generously gave \$____, which put you in the ____ Club. Thank you! Tonight I’d like you to consider becoming a member of the 1812 Leadership Circle with a gift of \$____.”

- 4) **Encourage credit card payment** (Visa, MasterCard or American Express). It saves on costs that would otherwise be incurred through additional solicitations and pledge reminders.
- 5) Finally, ask alumni if they have news to share for the *Hamilton Alumni Review* class notes and include that information on the paper contact form or the online open textbox.