

ETSU Annual Giving Operating Plan 2020-21 August 6, 2020

Executive Summary

This document establishes the plan and schedule for annual giving activities for East Tennessee State University. University Advancement developed this plan with the cooperation of the academic units.

Annual Giving Vision, Mission, Values, and Goals:

Vision – the Annual Giving Office will build and sustain a significant base of supporters, ensuring a continuing source of annual, expendable, and unrestricted funding for the University.

Mission – we will acquire, upgrade, and renew contributors to the University, providing thoughtful and compelling case statements and acknowledge/communicate the impact of donors' actions. We will also identify and cultivate future major and planned gift supporters and collaborate effectively with Advancement colleagues.

Values – we are guided by strong ethics (as reflected in University policy and the ETSU Core Values), by a high level of accountability, and by the pursuit of excellence.



Annual Giving Goals:

1. Develop, Document, and Communicate Consistent Practices:
 - a. Benchmark with colleagues and aspirational peers
 - b. Review/document procedures
 - c. Develop methods to analyze data and target specific opportunities
 - d. Develop a means to communicate with deans and other senior leaders
2. Increase Annual Giving (benchmark numbers are off due to COVID) (goal is to raise ~\$1.94M)
3. Increase Donor Participation:
 - a. Analyze historical data and patterns
 - b. Segment donor populations to prioritize and maximize effectiveness
 - c. Reach out to constituents on a regular basis to build giving habits and provide stewardship
 - d. Develop themed giving communities to promote passion, belonging, and teamwork
 - e. Plan and conduct ETSU Day of Giving (DoG), including a faculty and staff giving campaign
4. Improve the awareness/importance of student philanthropy and heighten the visibility of Annual Giving among students (Gold Cord Circle; Student Giving).
5. Increase Social Media activities – continue to enhance Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter activity.

Plans and Activities

Unit-Specific Solicitation Activities:

- **Major Gift Officers** – annual giving will work closely with all advancement officers to ensure the close collaboration needed to provide consistent solicitations to prospects.
- **Targeted Direct Mail and E-mail Appeals** – we will prepare and send one direct mail letter per year, targeted to alumni of each major ETSU unit, with follow-up via e-mail.
 - o In 2020-21, we will do combined letters (not specific to unit, but with variable data inserted via mail-merge), segmented by donor/non-donor. We will insert information and contacts for the recipients’ “preferred units.” Alumni will have the option of changing their preferred unit.
 - o Absent a donor choice of unit, we will use the first unit from which they graduated as their preferred unit.
 - o Dual-alumni households with differing preferred units will receive a different letter, addressing this duality.
 - o Letters are prepared to be generally consistent with other annual fund letters for that fiscal year, but customized to include content, branding, and/or signatures from the unit in particular.
 - o Letters will include a customized reply slip recommending designations specific to the unit.
 - o For Graduate Studies, Honors College, Libraries, Roan Scholars, Student Life & Enrollment, and other units as determined, Annual Giving will work closely with Advancement Services and assigned directors of development to establish and maintain constituent lists. These lists may include past donors of the unit/program, past student interns, past employees, those with a personal passion, and others. Annual Giving will use these constituent lists to solicit annually on behalf of these programs.
 - o Unit heads will approve unit inputs and Annual Giving will distribute as shown in Appendix 1.
- **Phonathon** – after a two-year “pause” (2018 – 2020) the ETSU Phonathon has been eliminated. While a systematic phonathon program will not take place, Annual Giving may call or otherwise communicate with households who have consistently given via the phone channel in past years. The College of Medicine Phonathon will continue as in the past and Annual Giving will provide support for credit card acceptance and pledge follow-up.

Central Activities:

- **End-of-Year Message and Calendar** – one letter per year, mailed around the first part of December, targeting all donors of the past ~six years. This letter/calendar stewards loyal donors and serves as a reminder to make tax-deductible contributions before the end of the year. This letter will include content regarding current events on campus, but will not be customized by unit. Letter will include a pocket calendar, reply slip, and link to online giving.
- **Events** – we will attend selected events to help attendees better understand philanthropy in general, and the purpose of the Annual Fund, in specific. In addition, we want students to understand there is a gap between the amount paid for tuition and the total cost of higher education. Examples of events include community showcase, graduation celebration, graduation rehearsals, etc.
- **Day of Giving:**
 - o **Fall** – we will continue to participate in GivingTuesday (December 1, 2020), but we will do so primarily as a means of saying thank you to our donors. Annual Giving will manage this program with the advice and guidance of unit directors of development.
 - o **Spring** – we will plan a separate giving day (April 14, 2021 [tent.]). This will include solicitation activities and will emphasize a faculty/staff/retiree campaign, student philanthropy, and outreach to partners and friends. Annual Giving will form a cross-campus committee (to include

representatives from units) to plan and conduct giving day activities and to recruit ETSU advocates to help spread the word.

- **Simple Simon Appeal** – once per year, mailed to coincide with Day of Giving, targeting all alumni, aside from those who’ve given in the past three years. Work to track recipients of past appeals and draw down the number of solicitations sent to non-donors.
- **Website, and Social Media** – Annual Giving will prepare content for use on our own website and in social media and other similar media channels. Content will always include an invitation to engage and/or to give. Stories will be from the general viewpoint of ETSU and won’t be customized by unit, although we may use examples of students, programs, or curriculum. Stories will always include the link to online giving and Annual Giving contact info.
- **Pledge Confirmation/Reminders** – Annual Giving will follow up on pledges made through the College of Medicine Phonathon, through personal calls to phone givers, and through WETS-FM drives. Reminder process will be:
 - o Pledge Confirmation Letter – sent approximately 2 weeks from date pledge is made
 - o Reminder 1 – sent ~60 days after the date of the original pledge
 - o Reminder 2 (e-mail) – sent ~90 days after the date of the original pledge, if not already paid
 - o Reminder 3 – sent ~120 days after the date of the original pledge, if not already paid.
 - o Approximately 150 days after the date of the original pledge, outstanding pledges will be marked as unhonored.
- **Failed Credit Cards** – follow up on failed transactions whether one-time or recurring. Work with Foundation Accounting (for TouchNet), WETS-FM, iModules, and donors to get accepted transactions for all credit card gifts.
- **No-contact Confirmation** – once per year, Annual Giving will reach out to alumni and friends who have indicated more than 5 years previous, they do not want to be solicited. The letter will provide updated information regarding ETSU and ask them to either renew or retract their request that we not contact them.
- **Last Year but Unfortunately Not This (LYBUNT) Letters** – the December edition of this letter will be combined with the Pocket Calendar mailing and will include a reminder of the upcoming deadline to make tax-deductible donations. Throughout the year, we will send Anniversary Cards to donors one year from the date of their last gift. See Appendix 3. We are working to transition the anniversary cards to renewal letters. Annual Giving will keep the AVP for Advancement and DoDs in the loop on these communications, to include sending them a list of the current LYBUNTs. Major Gift Officers may reach out personally (in person or by phone, letters, or e-mail) in an effort to remind people to give. Appendix 3 includes information DoDs can use to contact constituents.
- **President’s Circle Solicitations & Reminders** – Annual Giving will reach out periodically to remind President’s Circle members of the commitment to donate \$500 per fiscal year. Refer to the President’s Circle Policy.
- **Scholarship Funding** – we will monitor unspent scholarship funding. Specifically, we will work with DoDs to ensure award criteria/documentation is appropriate and that funds are being awarded. When we identify endowments needing modification, the unit DoD will take the lead role to do so, contacting the donor as appropriate. We will work to solicit regional (by county) scholarships.
- **Matching Giving** – Annual Giving will promote, monitor, and help administer the corporate matching giving program.
 - o Links and information will be added to all communications, including the acknowledgement people receive when they make a gift online.
 - o We have subscribed to the HEP Matching Giving database and have incorporated the link in our website and into our online giving form.

- We are working to proactively remind annual gift donors to prepare/send matching forms after they donate.
- **Leadership Annual Giving** – we are working on developing a program focusing on consistent givers, encouraging them to aspire to major gift-level support. We will work closely with advancement officers to ensure consistency and to make sure we don’t duplicate efforts.

Stewardship Activities:

- *Thank You Notes from Students* – placed in the envelope with the gift acknowledgement to all donors, except WETS-FM, Athletics, and Quillen College of Medicine.
- *Giving Levels, Clubs, and Societies* – **these are still under development**, but will be utilized to help encourage donors to renew and to “move” to higher levels of giving. Refer to the figure below for general giving levels.
 - First-time Donors – because donors are difficult to engage and because they are more likely to give next year if they gave this year.
 - Consecutive Year Donors – a process to provide recognition for people who donate for 5 years or more consecutively.
 - Gap or Returning Donors – a process to provide recognition for people who have donated again after not donating for 3 years or more.
 - Graduation to Higher Giving Levels – a process to provide recognition for people who have attained one or more giving levels.
- *Tax Statements* – no later than January 31 of each year, **Advancement Services** will provide recurring givers (credit card, EFT, payroll, and those sending monthly checks [bill pay]) with a summary of their donations for the year. This summary will give the total amount donated through all means.
- *Endowment Reports* – Annual Giving will prepare reports for endowments, providing financial status of accounts. Reports, (completed ~December of each year), will be provided to DoDs to deliver according to the preference of each donor.
- *Holidays* – Annual Giving will periodically recognize holidays and other events that may tie in with giving activities. Recognition may take place via electronic means or through cards/letters/calls.



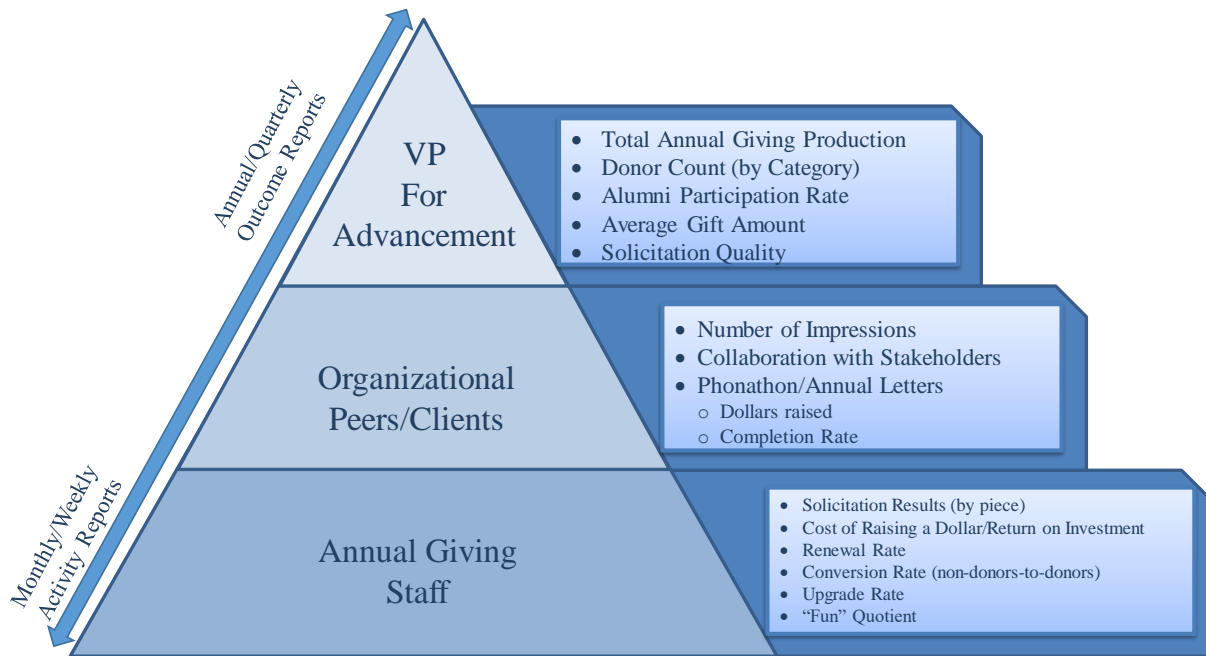
Calendar of Activities – see Appendix 1

Themes and Branding

- The Annual Giving portfolio is referred to generally as the ETSU Annual Fund. All materials generated will be similarly branded, including ETSU and/or college markings, as appropriate. Content will be developed to convey a consistent message/theme. Specifically, it will reflect our efforts to sustain ETSU and that even though this is an “annual” fund, the nature of our work is perpetual and continuing, without regard to specific campaign objectives.
- All print communications and graphics will be coordinated with University Relations.
- See Appendix 2 for a sample communication.

Evaluation

The Annual Giving Office will review this plan each year, make updates, recommend changes, and solicit feedback from all Advancement staff. DoDs should share with their deans and/or department heads. We will post the final plan, including the communications calendar, to the Policies section of our website. To evaluate effectiveness of our programs, we use the metrics and process shown in the Annual Fund Metrics Pyramid (below).



Appendix 1 – Calendar of Annual Fund Activities

ETSU Annual Giving Activity Calendar

	Direct-Mail	E-Mails	Day of Giving	Social	Events/Other
July, 2020	Prepare Draft Letter Coordinate with Units President's Circle				
August, 2020				Welcome Back	
September, 2020	7 - Alumni Donors (16.2K) 15 - Alumni Couples (5K) 21 - Friend Donors (5K)	21 - Donors		Student Features	Community Showcase Preview EXPO
October, 2020	1 - QCOM Ltr (2.5K)			Student Features Tailgates & Fball	2 - Homecoming 9 - Grad. Celeb.
November, 2020	15 - Pocket Cal (11K)	9 - Non-Donors 17 - Giving Tuesday		2nd - Homecoming Thanksgiving	
December, 2020	5 - Holiday Cards (PC)	15 - Holiday	ID Volunteers & Unit Champions	GivingTuesday EOCY Giving Holidays	13 - Grad. Rehearsal
January, 2021	President's Circle	Football Schedule	Unit Toolkits Committee Mtg	Welcome Back Spring Semester	
February, 2021	5 - Val. Cards (4,700) 15 - SLE, Honors, Lib (4,700)		Advance Mssging Committee Mtg Promo Items	Student Features Holidays	
March, 2021	2 - DoG Pre (10,500) 15 & 29 - Alumni Non- Donors (33,600 ea) 15 - Class of 71 (1,200)	DoG	Advance Mssging Committee Mtg	DoG Info Video	Grad. Celeb.
April, 2021	14 - Day of Giving (see DoG Schedule)	Non-Donor Alumni DoG	Committee Mtg Day of Giving (4/14/20)	Faculty/Staff Retiree Posts Student Giving	
May, 2022	President's Circle		Stewardship TY to Volunteers	Graduation Student Giving	8th - Grad Rehearsal
June, 2022	Unsubs LYBUNTs Targeted Segments	Final Push	Lessons Learned Committee Mtg	EOFY Giving	

Thank You Notes from students = prepared daily

Anniversary Cards/Renewal Letters = prepared monthly

LYBUNT = Last Year But Not Yet This Year

Simon = No Frills Appeal Typically Sent to Alumni Who Haven't Given to ETSU Before

Appendix 2 – Sample Annual Appeal (front side)



September 2020

[Barcode]
[Combined Salutation Name]
[Address Line 1]
[Address Line 2]
[City], [State] [Zip Code]

Dear [Combined Salutation Name],

Our university – just like our world – endured unique challenges over the past year. In keeping with the Buccaneer spirit, ETSU will fight through these and new difficulties and emerge even stronger than before. *You* help us do just that. Giving by our alumni and friends ensured we could quickly help students, faculty, and staff who were in need at the beginning of this crisis. Going forward, your continued support guarantees we can continue to develop even more educated, impassioned citizens, ready to lead us wisely through the winding roads ahead.

It's my pleasure to reach out to you because of your involvement with [Unit]. You can change your preferred unit on the reply slip below. Doing so ensures you get information and contacts from the ETSU area about which you are most passionate. Here's some of what is happening in our world today:

- [Unit Bullet 1, 2 lines, 155 characters max]
- [Unit Bullet 2, 2 lines, 155 characters max]
- [Unit Bullet 3, 2 lines, 155 characters max]
- [Unit Bullet 4, 2 lines, 155 characters max]

Please continue to give and invest in our region and future! A donation today also counts toward the *Campaign for ETSU*. Contact [DoD Name], Director of Development, [Phone] or [e-mail] for more info.

Sincerely,

[Graphic with Dean signature and text]

P.S. [Unit PS (up to 2 lines)]

(cut here)

Gift to ETSU

I am enclosing \$_____ to support ETSU as shown on the reverse.

[E-number]
[Combined Salutation Name]
[Address Line 1]
[Address Line 2]
[City], [State] [Zip Code]

My Preferred ETSU Unit of Communication is:

[Unit]

☐ **Change my preference to:** _____



Payment Methods

Check: # _____ (to ETSU Foundation)

Online: etsu.edu/give

We are compliant with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard and we work to ensure your data is protected. If you are not comfortable donating online (or by check) you are welcome to call our office at (423) 439-6141.

Appendix 2 – Sample Annual Appeal (back side)

WHY SUPPORT ETSU?



JAKE STANDRIDGE

A first semester junior at ETSU, Jake is focusing on Health Professions with an emphasis in Nutrition. He is also a cadet in Army Reserve Officer Training Corps Buc Battalion. Concurrent with college graduation, Jake will commission as an officer in the United States Army. Jake has a passion for leading soldiers to help those who cannot protect themselves, so he is striving to become an Infantry officer and hopes to command a unit.

Jake is one of several cadets to receive a housing scholarship, an award to help defray living costs. In addition, Jake has seen the impact – first-hand – of donors on the cadet experience. Several growth and development programs have been implemented and enhanced through donor dollars. Such events and opportunities, allow for active engagement in our communities and provide leadership experience to future warriors.

The impact of the support from donors is significant as it professionalizes the entire organization. Beneficiaries share their experiences with the entire battalion. In turn, the overall culture of the program improves while the quality of the future Officer also improves. Donor funds help support our recruiting effort as quality incoming Cadets are inspired by the enhanced training opportunities ETSU donors have provided.

According to Jake, "My family and I are incredibly grateful for all of this support. Without it, I may not have been able to attend or I may have had to work more, which would reduce the amount of time I could devote to my training. I am so appreciative of the people who donated and it's my goal to pay that forward in whatever way possible."



(cut here)

Designate my gift to the area(s) below. Gifts with no boxes checked will be directed to University Top Priorities.

[Graphic with Unit Designations]

☐ I (or my spouse) work for a matching gift company. Find out if your employer matches at www.matchinggifts.com/etsu.

Please send me information about:

- ☐ How to create a scholarship/professorship
- ☐ How to include ETSU in my estate plans
- ☐ How to make a stock or securities transfer

Office Use

AN21[XX]

ETSU is an AA/EEO Employer

Appendix 3 – Contacting LYBUNTs (those who donated last year but not yet this)

Background:

Retaining donors we have worked so hard to acquire is critical to growing production and increasing alumni participation.

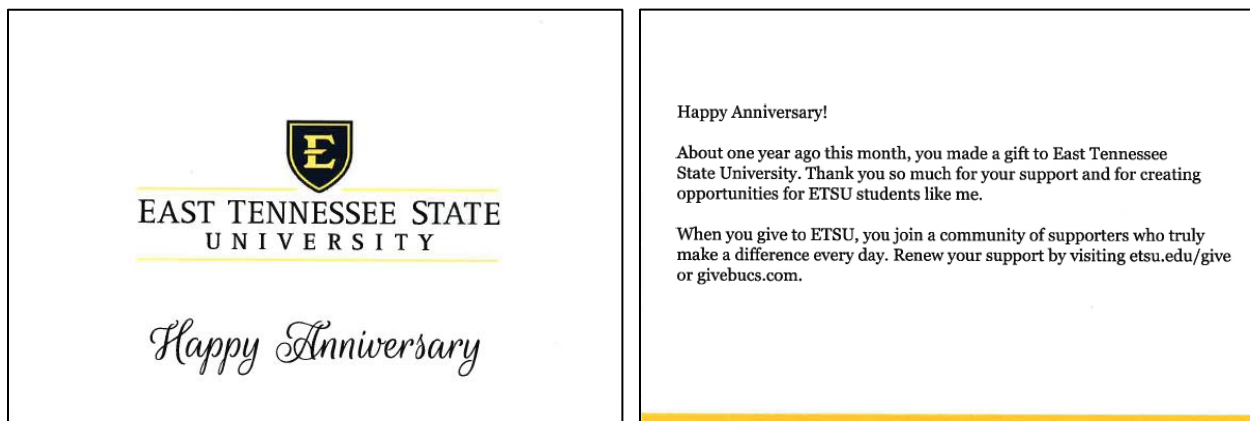
The Goals and Expectations Policy asks prospect managers to conduct or orchestrate a minimum of two substantive face-to-face contacts per year with each managed prospect. Ideally, at least one of these contacts will include a discussion about making an annual gift.

DoDs can use the sample “invoice” letter attached as a starting point, as needed.

Schedule:

July	Fiscal year begins
July – June	Anniversary Cards to donors on anniversary of their last gift (central)
November	LYBUNT message added to calendar appeal (central)
November	Calls to people on the DPT “bubble,” and/or President’s Circle to include a LYBUNT appeal, as determined by directors of development (units)
April	Day of Giving LYBUNT appeal

Sample Anniversary Card (**central**):



Appendix 3 – Contacting LYBUNTs (Sample Scripts)

Hello, may I speak with [Name of Prospect]? Hi Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, I'm glad I was able to reach you – my name is _____ and I'm the (title) at East Tennessee State University. We're coming to the end of the fiscal/calendar year on [Date], and we are reaching out to our past donors to see if they will renew a gift to the University this year. **[For end-of-CY,]** If we receive your gift postmarked by December 30th, your gift qualifies as a tax-free charitable donation for the 20XX tax year.

"I already received a call; I said I'd think about it." Okay, thanks for your consideration. In the event you decide to make a gift before [Date], is it ok if I send you a postage paid return envelope in the mail? If yes, Is <address> the correct place to send? Also note that you can make an online gift at any time by visiting: www.etsu.edu/give

"I don't think I can do anything this year." I understand. We realize that it's not always feasible to support ETSU; however, at this point in the year, we are emphasizing alumni participation...so, really, even a gift of \$_____ would be more than generous. If not, perhaps \$20.20 for 2020?

"Yes and/or what did I give last year?" Last year you made a gift of \$_____ to _____. Do you think you could do \$_____ this year? (Upgrade giving level; work from last year's amount)

"Sure. Just send me something in the mail." Great. I will be more than happy to send you some more information. Is there anything in particular you would like to know more about? I just want to remind you that our giving year ends on June 30th. We would be so appreciative if you could make your gift by that date. Do you think you are able to do a gift of \$_____?" (Upgrade; if that's no good, perhaps another amount or \$20.20 for 2020.

No reply... There are a lot of great things happening right now on campus [talk about your area(s)]. Last year you made a gift of \$_____ to _____. Do you think you could do \$_____ this year (Upgrade giving level)

Pledge closure...

1. Thank again for gift
2. Verify contact info – emphasize **e-mail** and **employer name**
3. Make sure to provide/remind online giving link: www.etsu.edu/give
4. Thank again and tell donor to have a great night/afternoon

Rejection closure....

1. "Thanks for taking some time to talk with me."
2. "We hope we can count on your support in the future."
3. Thank again, and tell donor to have a great night/afternoon.

Voicemail Script:

Hello, I'm calling to speak with Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, My name is _____ and I'm the (title) at East Tennessee State University. We're coming to the end of our fiscal year on June 30th, and I am calling to see if you'd consider making a renewal gift to the University this year. You can give me a call back at _____ or, if you'd like to make a donation online, you can visit www.etsu.edu/give. Thanks very much for your time and have a great day!

Make checks payable to ETSU Foundation, PO Box 70721, Johnson City, TN 37614

Appendix 3 – Contacting LYBUNTs (Sample “Invoice” Letter)



July 1, 2019

John Doe
5 Dreamy Lane
Johnson City, TN 37604

Dear Mr. Doe,

Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me about ETSU. We appreciate your consistent support, especially to the College of XXXXXX. Your donation will go to work immediately, helping our most critical assets: our students.

To complete your gift, you can either fill in the form below and return in the envelope provided, or visit our website at www.etsu.edu/give. If you have questions or need more information, do not hesitate to reach out to me at (423) 439-6141 or seejs1@etsu.edu.

Thanks again for your generosity and involvement!

Sincerely,

Jon See, Exec Dir
Annual Giving

----- (cut here) -----

ETSU Annual Fund Gift

I am enclosing \$_____ to support East Tennessee State University
Designated to: _____

E01234567

John Doe
5 Dreamy Lane
Johnson City, TN 37604

Payment Methods

Check: # _____ (Payable to ETSU Foundation)

Online: etsu.edu/give

We are compliant with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) and we work to ensure your data is protected. If you are not comfortable donating online (or by check) you are welcome to call our office at (423) 439-6141 to make your gift by phone.