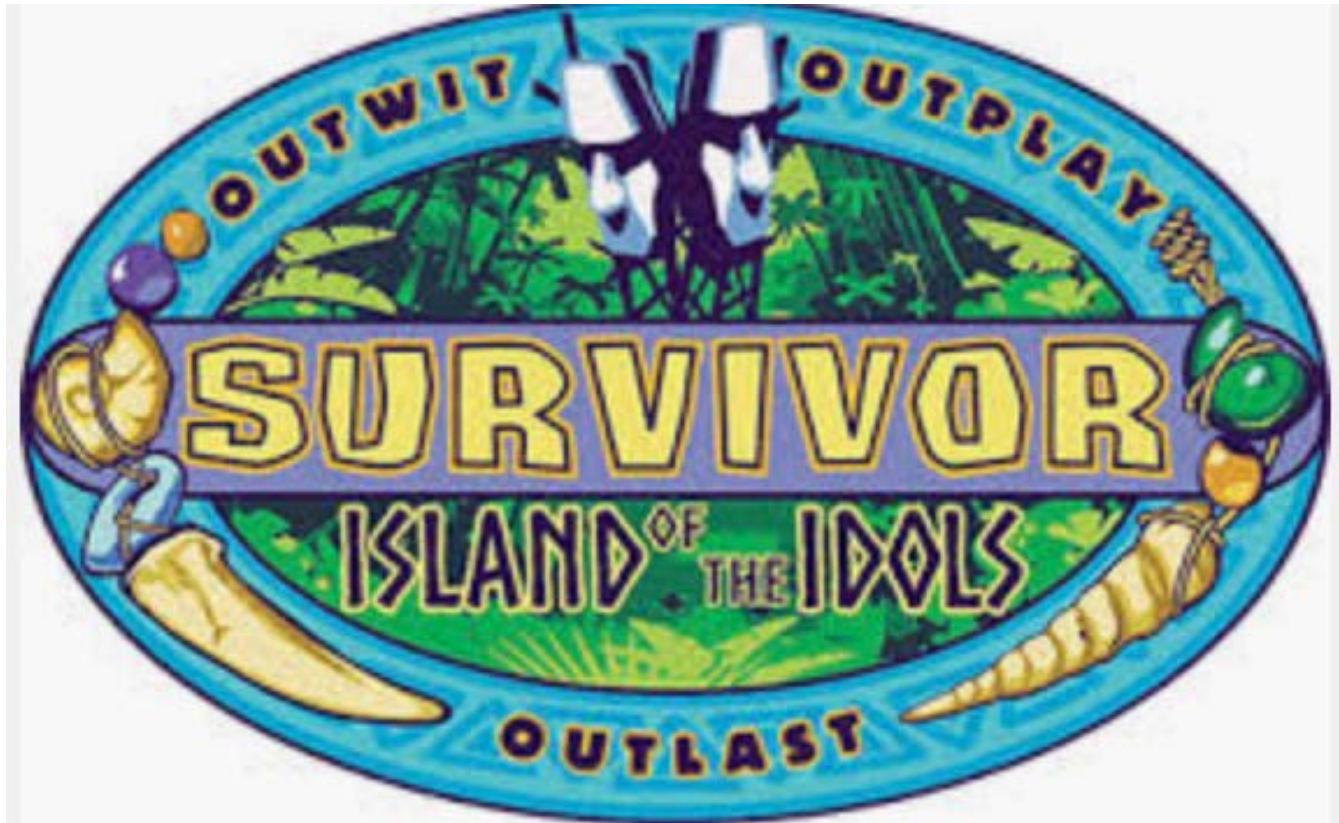


# Communicating with Donors in Uncertain Times COVID-19 Edition

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Donor Relations Guru  
@donorguru



# Our New Reality



@DONORGURU



# Donor Crisis Communication



## NEAR

### Be in contact!

Leverage technology to remain in touch with your donors. Use social media, email, and other, more traditional means of communication to stay in touch.



## DEAR

### Express Gratitude

For major donors, video-conference, good old-fashioned phone calls, and hand-written cards (don't lick them closed, please!) all go a long way.



## CLEAR

### Be clear & honest

Donors need to know the reality of any crisis and how it is affecting your mission. Organizational leadership must put out meaningful statements about the crisis.



# Questioning Status Quo

- Hard conversations about what to keep and not keep
  - Events
  - Initiatives
  - How do we engage?
  - Overlap in audiences
  - Take a step back and look at larger picture
  - Let data lead the way



# Stellar!!!

Thank you for being such a caring and generous member of the Gonzaga family. Your support for Gonzaga University students is proving exceptionally meaningful right now.

Our mission is ambitious in the best of times; as we navigate this uncharted territory, your support ensures we will deliver. It is nearly impossible to forecast expenses for both individuals and the University as a whole. Because you care deeply enough to give to Gonzaga's unrestricted Fund for Gonzaga, you are providing flexible help for those who need it most at a time of growing need.

We hope that you find comfort in knowing that the action you took to support Gonzaga is helping during a uniquely difficult time. You are a blessing for which our community is truly grateful. Thank you.



# Awful-

While our community always confronts challenges, often serious ones, the challenge that the COVID-19 pandemic creates has a quality that is discordant with many aspects of how our community functions.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not our only challenge, but it is certainly one of the salient challenges of our time. It is up to us as a community to address it. I am deeply confident that we shall, and I want to acknowledge the sacrifice this sometimes entails, and express my profound thanks, appreciation, and admiration for your work and commitment to the University, its community, and the many larger communities of which we are a part and to which we have a responsibility.





Dear alumni, donors and friends,

Thanks for watching this **personal video** just for you. You mean so much to Whitworth and I am grateful for you. Stay well.

Blessings,

Beck





## Los Angeles

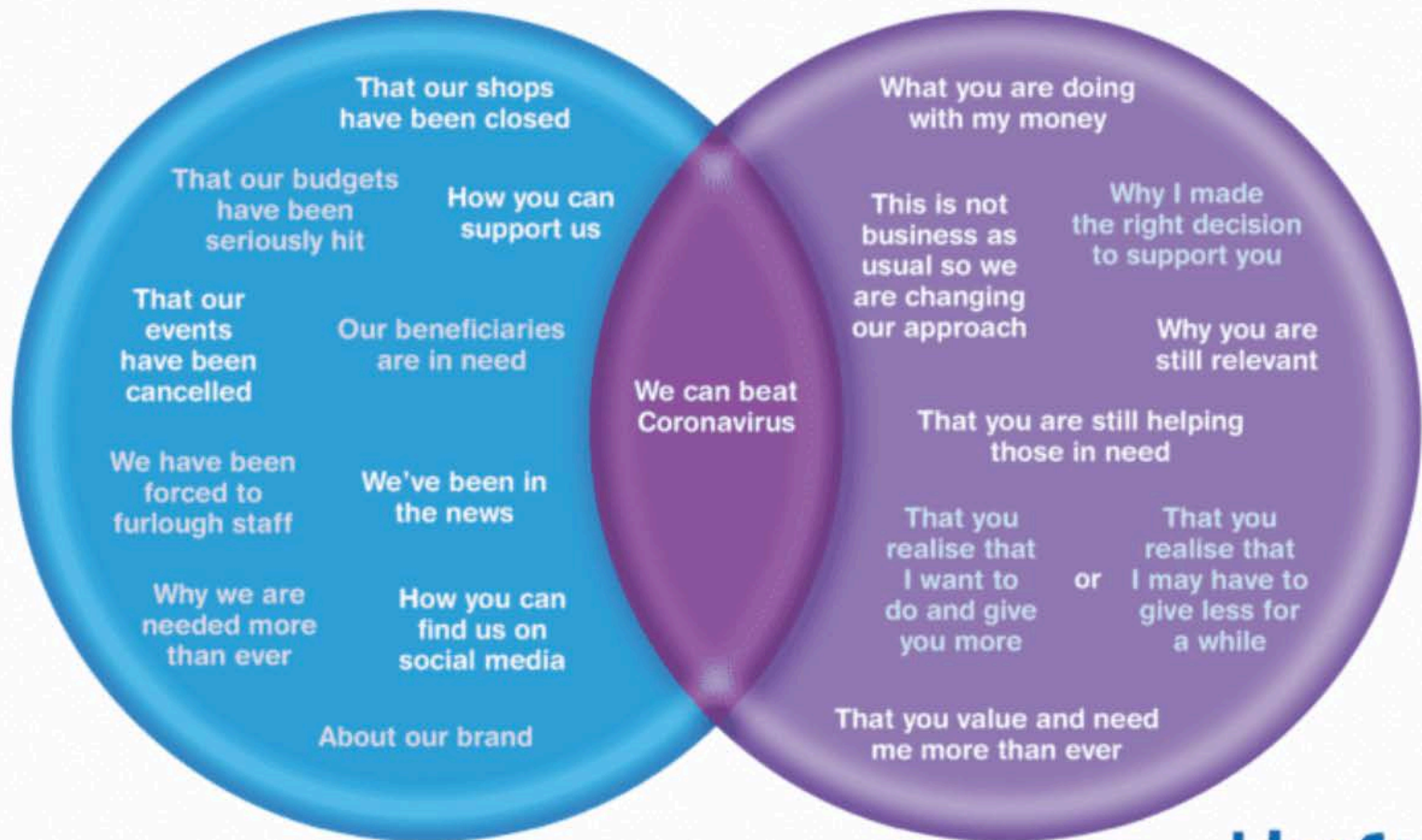
In partnership with the **Los Angeles Unified School District** and the **LA Red Cross**, we are handing out 20,000 fresh meals each day to students and families as schools remain closed. We are now serving meals at 60 different schools across the region from Long Beach to the San Fernando Valley, and we'll continue ramping up our efforts in Los Angeles thanks to generous donations from **Katie McGrath & JJ Abrams Family Foundation** and **Phil and Monica Rosenthal, Rosenthal Family Foundation**.





Things that a charity wants to tell a donor

Things that a donor wants to hear from a charity



**bluefrog**  
FUNDRAISING

@DONORGURU





	APR-JUNE 2020	JULY- SEPT 2020	OCT-DEC 2020	JAN-MAR 2021
LIKELIHOOD OF COMEBACK	UNLIKELY	UNLIKELY	SOMEWHAT LIKELY	SOMEWHAT LIKELY
RISK OF HOSTING YOUR EVENT	VERY HIGH	HIGH	MODERATE	MODERATE

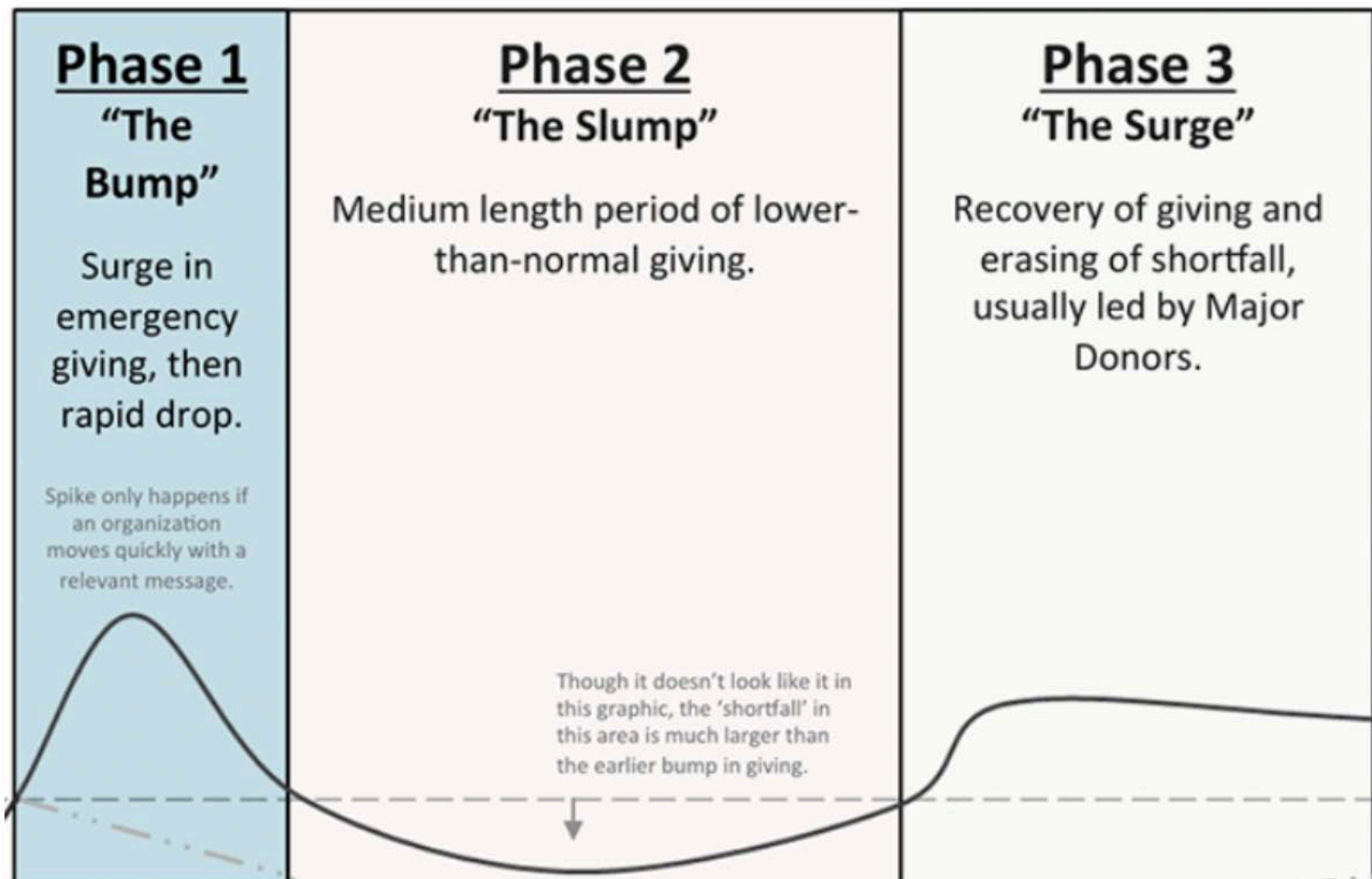
@DONORGURU



# Image Details Matter!

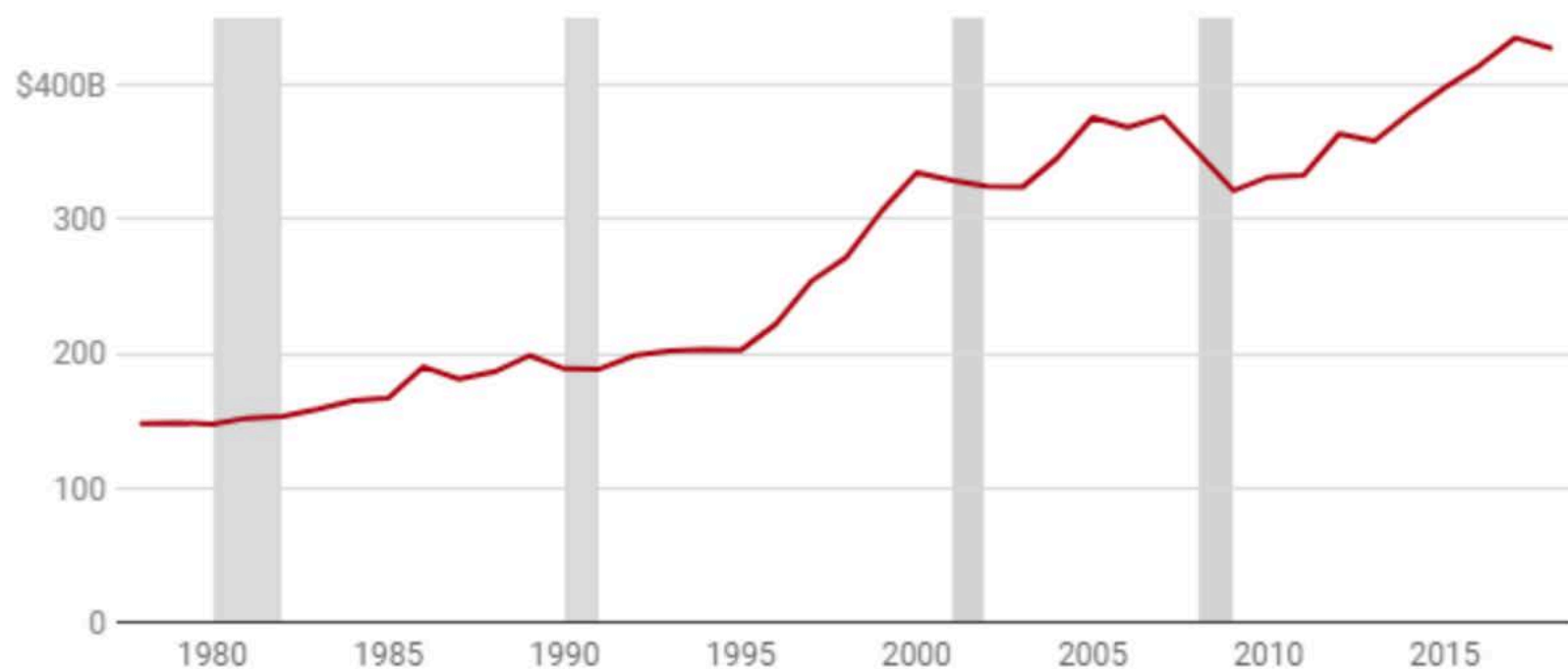


@DONORC



## American charitable giving during downturns

Total giving fell during most of the recessions shown by the shaded lines.



Amounts shown are 2018 dollars. Other factors caused the decline in giving in 2018.

Chart: The Conversation, CC-BY-ND • Source: [Giving USA Foundation/Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy](#) • [Get the data](#)



# Donor Relations Survival Kit

- Address situation but don't dwell
- Be the bright spot of positivity, the good news the do-gooders
- Show what IS happening, not what we're missing
- Increase personal outreach
- Lean on digital resources
- Focus on loyal donors



Since the pandemic began...

**The number of LGBTQ youth  
contacting us has doubled**

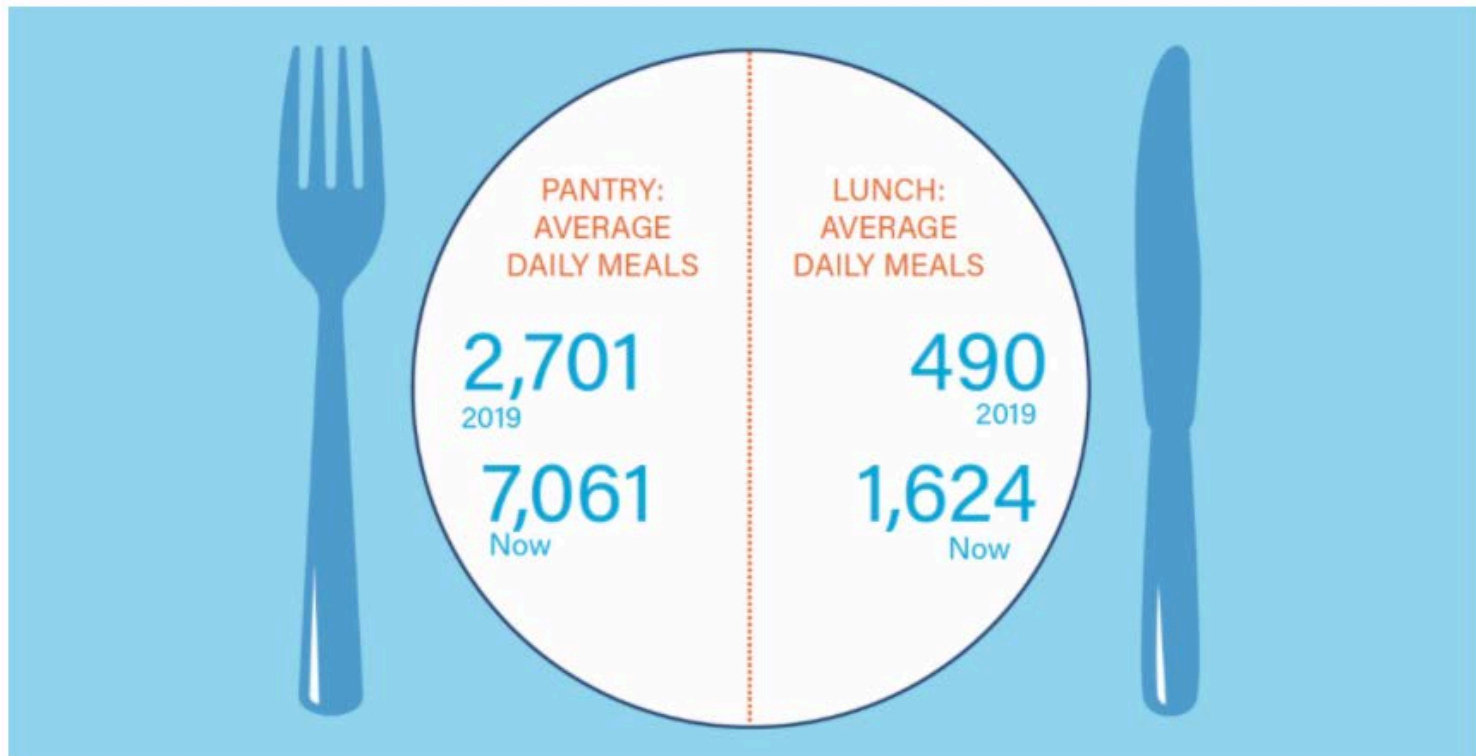
**Mentions of COVID-19 have  
increased 60x over the last month**

**25% of our crisis services  
conversations mention coronavirus**

**Because of you, Trevor is here for  
young people 24/7**



# Before and After





# The Good Stuff

- Creativity with little resources
- Leadership being more nimble
- Learned new skill sets
- People give each other much more grace
- We've learned what really matters
- We might be physically distanced but we're socially closer than ever
- We need people, generosity and gratitude win!



# Simple Keys to Success

- Embrace New Reality (or stop fighting it)
  - Work in a New Way
  - Question Status Quo
  - Demonstrate Impact
- Communicate with Empathy and Appropriately
  - Embrace the Good Stuff



# Thank YOU!

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