

CASE STUDY

Achieving Major Fundraising Goals With PRO & PROscreen

Background

For the Minnesota Historical Society, history matters. The Society is a dynamic and respected organization focusing on historic research and education. With resources including historic artifacts, as well as museum, library, and genealogy services, the MNHS is one of the largest and most prestigious historical societies in the United States. MNHS is responsible for preserving 26 historic sites and for providing educational outreach to schools and communities across Minnesota.



The Challenge



The Society relies on funding from the state government, but also depends on private donor support in order to deliver its most critical services. In 2015, the MNHS began raising funds for the Historic Fort Snelling project, with a goal of restoring the important historic site by 2020.

Susan Gahan, Prospect Management and Research Associate, is part of the Society's small development and major gift team. Susan is the only researcher on staff. "We are a very diverse organization," said Susan, "and it's tricky to balance launching new campaigns with meeting our fiscal financial goals." While juggling so many tasks at once, it was critical for Susan and her team to be confident they were approaching the right prospects for the right gift amount.

The Solution

With the Historic Fort Snelling project deadline looming, Susan turned to iWave's Prospect Research Online. "PRO is our primary research tool," she said. "It's the most comprehensive tool I've used. I appreciate the speed and efficiency, and I can trust the sources of information. Everything in PRO matches our other research work, and it helps everyone work faster than we ever have before."

Susan described how PRO helps her establish connections between prospects, especially by researching board affiliations. "It helps me verify affinity and see the different ways people might get involved."

Susan also had some thoughts about the new PROscreen feature launched in May 2016. "It's so easy to use. The first day, I found scores for several names from our lower tier that are now on our major gift level." Due to the efforts of the entire team, supporters, and volunteers, the MNHS has exceeded its fiscal fundraising goal and is making excellent progress in a major campaign that includes the Historic Fort Snelling project. "It's because PRO lets you verify records, know what to ask for, and we could establish real relationships with each of our donors. It's really exciting."

At a Glance:

Organization:
Minnesota Historical Society

Location:
St. Paul, MN

Industry:
Arts, Culture, and Humanities
Historical Society

Key Challenge:
Raise funds for a major capital campaign with only one prospect researcher on staff.

Key Benefit:
PRO's data and PROscreen's ease of use resulted in more major gift donors. The MNHS exceeded its fiscal fundraising goal and is making excellent progress in its long-term campaigns.



"Everything in PRO matches our other research work, and it helps everyone work faster than we ever have before."

Susan Gahan
Prospect Management & Research Associate
MNHS

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