



Loyola High School - Detroit

- Founded in 1993 as a joint development between the Archdiocese of Detroit and the Jesuits
- Current enrollment = 155 students composed of 9th-12th grade
- Predominately African American student population with over 65% coming from adjacent zip codes to the school and 90% coming from Detroit proper

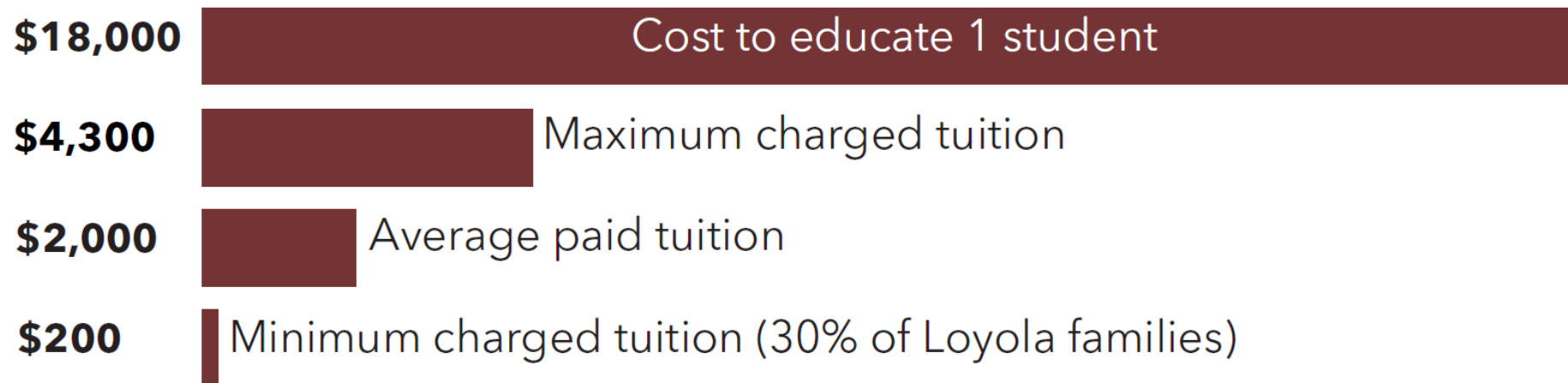
MISSION STATEMENT

Loyola High School of Detroit, a Catholic school in the Jesuit tradition, nurtures a culture of hope and academic success for young men challenged by an urban environment and prepares them to be men of Christian love, justice, and service who act with integrity, compassion, and courage.



Loyola High School - Detroit

- Most private schools are “tuition driven” – paid tuition covers 80-90% of revenue needs. Because of our mission and the young men and families we seek to serve, paid tuition at LHS typically represents 10-15% of our operating needs.



- Revenue from events typically represents about 25% of our revenue each year with the spring Tigers Event and Auction raising approximately \$160k.



Loyola Tigers Night & Auction

- “Normal Tigers”
 - Host 800 guests in the Pavilion area of the Detroit Athletic Club then head over to the Comerica for a Tigers game and fireworks
- “Moving Parts”
 - Sponsorships and Ticket Packages
 - Program Book with ad sales
 - Silent auction at the event
 - Raffle pull at event
 - Coin Toss
 - Scholarship paddle raise to wrap up
- “Timeline”
 - Sent out Save the Date and major sponsor/underwriter support packs in December 2019
 - Paper invitations, response cards and raffle tickets to drop by mid March
 - On-line auction to open May 1
 - Host the event live on May 8, 2020



Early March life begins to change...

- Met with our standing event committee meeting in early March:
 - What's the world going to look like in May? (No idea)
 - Will anyone let us (and do we even want to) host 800 people in-person then? (probably not)
 - Will the Tigers even be playing on May 8th---???
 - Do we still drop the paper invitations and see what happens?
 - Maybe just postpone but to what future date?
 - Do we cancel and just try again next year?
 - ????????????



Decision Time--

- **We need to do something** – the budget wasn't build to put a "\$0" on the scoreboard for Tigers - \$160k hole to fill
- People support our Tigers event because they want to support our mission. Tigers is fun and a great time but we host it to raise funds to support our work – not to eat hot dogs together.
 - This thought guided all of our decision making processes as we figured out what to do – people get it, they understand it, it's not a new event or new ask – simply focus on we're hosting Tigers (as we always do) but we'll be doing it from a distance.
 - Keep it "normal" as much as possible - same collateral, same date, same sponsor levels, same "moving parts" as much as possible.
 - Gives us a platform to seek support – "Can you support Tigers again this year" versus – "Our events are all cancelled and our budget has a huge hole we need your help to fill."



New “Virtual” Event!

- Kept the paper invite design the same with a small add for “virtual”
 - Contents in the invite all the same as years past: overview/ways to support, response cards, raffle tickets all the same.
 - Did include a small card/letter from the President of LHS and myself that explained why and what we were doing with the key phrase:
 - “Our world has changed but our mission has not. The young men we serve still need your support. And this year, more than ever, Loyola High School very much needs you”
- Many on our Board as well as most of my committee folks were not terribly enthusiastic about the virtual concept:
 - Who’s going to support a “virtual” event? There’s no tickets, no ballgame..?



Virtual---what's that going to look like?

- When we made this call/pivot we did not have any real plan for how to host a virtual event (but we'd figure out something).
- Guiding principals for us in developing our virtual program:
 - Needed to be as “live” as possible and taking place at 6:30pm on May 8th
 - Minimal pre-recorded material (as able)
 - Need to make people feel connected and gathering in real time (in community)
 - Pull the raffle in real-time – talk up the auction results as they’re coming in – let people know this is “live”.
 - Don’t go long – small window worked very well for us (we kept ours to 30m+/-).
 - Make it abundantly easy to access the livestream - even if you’re using an on-line auction platform that has livestream capabilities.
 - We only had one feed – but it was on our homepage and anyone could access it – did not require registering for the auction or downloading any software.
 - Made it easy, easy to access it – low barrier for entry to view.



So, how'd it turn out---

- When we made the pivot to virtual we had only secured pledges or payments for approximately \$30k.
- In the 2019 “Live” Tigers Night and Auction we grossed approximately \$160k – which we kept as our goal for the 2020 virtual pivot.
- We ended up grossing over \$170k with our virtual event – exceeding expectations and netting substantially more with much less hosting costs.
- Takeaways:
 - Lean in – host the event if you can - \$1 in revenue is better than \$0---
 - Keep it entertaining for your donor base – play to how they view you and your team
 - Leverage the heck out of your communications channels to promote (mail, print, social media, texts, on-line auction platform, etc.)
 - Keep your donors in cadence – particularly if it’s a well known, annual event –it’s in their giving cadence and they want to support you – give them a platform to do so