



**FROM ICE-BREAK TO INSPIRE:  
PLAYING TO YOUR STRENGTHS WHEN  
COMMUNICATING VALUE TO DONORS**

**Adriene Lim, Dean of Libraries & Kenna Barrett, Asst. Dean & CDO  
University of Maryland, College Park - ALADN, June 2023**

## ABOUT THE PRESENTERS



Dr. Adriene Lim, Dean of Libraries, UMD, and Professor of the Practice at UMD's iSchool

- Prior to joining UMD, Adriene was Dean of Libraries and Philip H. Knight Chair, University of Oregon.
- Earned PhD in LIS at Simmons University and MLIS at Wayne State University.

Dr. Kenna Barrett, Assistant Dean and CDO at the UMD Libraries

- Studied at Wellesley College, UC-San Diego, and the University of Rhode Island.
- As a coach and mentor, helps people make use of their unique talents to succeed in fundraising.





**ABOUT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND,  
COLLEGE PARK**

- Flagship, R1 Land-Grant Institution
- 40,000+ students
- 14,000+ faculty and staff
- 12 schools and colleges, including a highly ranked iSchool
- 104 undergraduate majors, 115 master's programs and 84 doctoral programs
- \$1.1 billion combined research expenditures in FY21 with the University of Maryland, Baltimore
- Raised a record \$1.5 billion during its multi-year "Fearless Ideas: The Campaign for Maryland," which ended in 2021.



- Largest university library system in the Washington D.C.- Baltimore area
- Six campus libraries, one off-campus library, and one high-density storage facility
- Member of the Big Ten Academic Alliance, ARL, USMAI, CRL, NERL, etc.
- 165 employees = 67 faculty librarians, 98 staff, 17 GAs, and 200-300 student workers
- \$42,665,000 gifts during last campaign (ended in 2021), with 73,437 new donors contributing to the cause!



## ABOUT THE UMD LIBRARIES





## WORKSHOP GOALS

- Practice the “ice-break / inquire / inspire” model to build authentic and positive donor relationships
- Practice navigating differences in identity and positionality in fundraising
- Hone your talking points in a safe, fun environment!

(Start thinking now about a particular fundraising situation or donor that you’d like to address in today’s role-playing exercise)

# NAVIGATING POSITIONALITY

- Positionality refers to identities, backgrounds, experiences, and characteristics that make up who we are, and shape our unique contexts *vis a vis* other individuals and groups
- Positionality informs our knowledge, beliefs, biases, perceptions – and our *strategies*
- Positionality is important to acknowledge in fundraising interactions and initiatives
- Being reflective about positionality helps us change and deepen our understanding as leaders and allies






# THE I<sup>3</sup> METHOD

- Ice-break
- Inquire
- Inspire

Three competencies  
to strengthen  
face-to-face  
fundraising





This is my first time at ALADN.  
Have you attended this  
conference before?

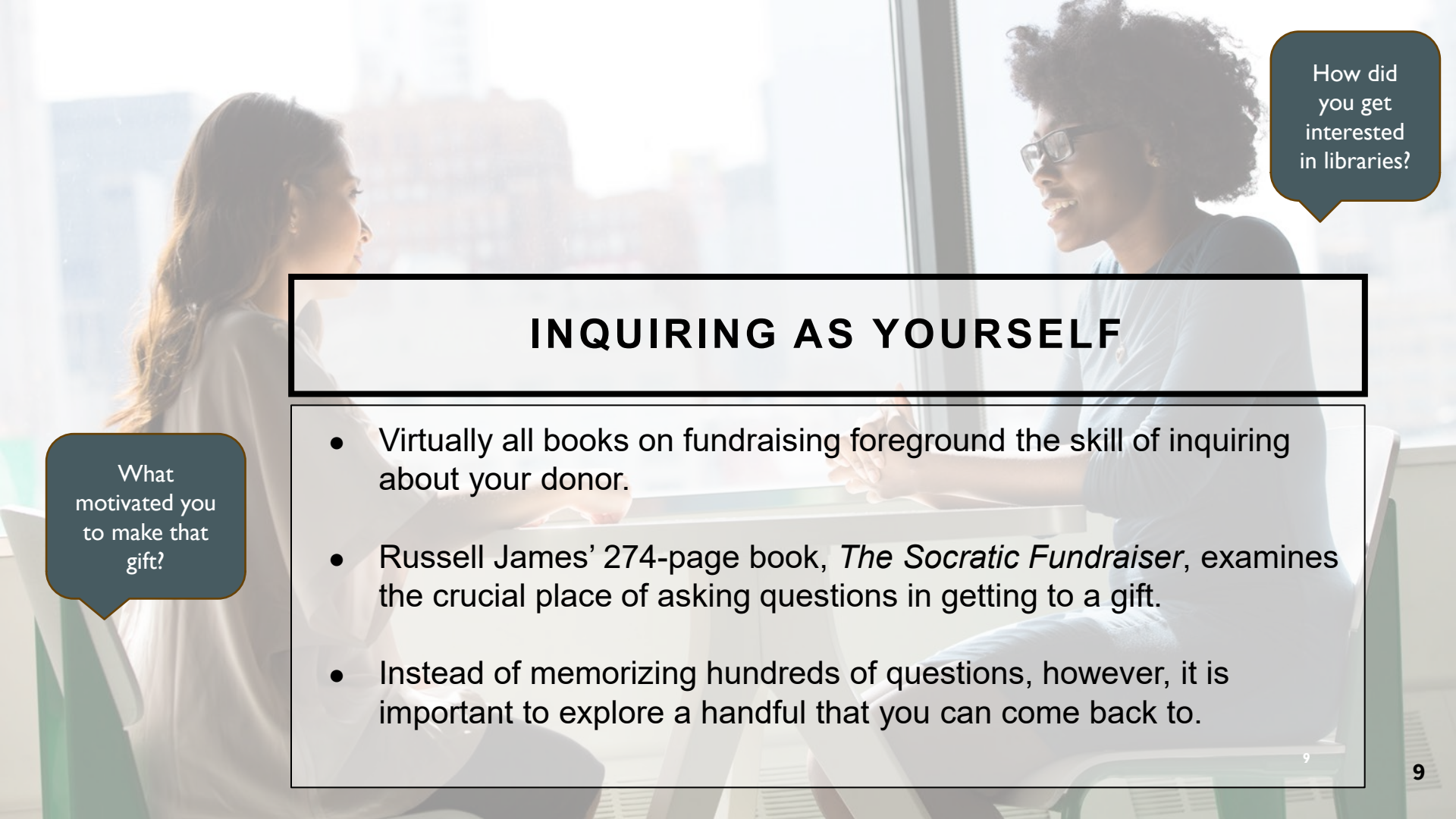
Are you from  
this area or  
farther away?  
(Depending on  
the answer,  
you may be  
able to find  
out more  
about their  
hometown.)

That talk really  
inspired me  
because it  
reminded  
about the  
importance of  
libraries. Did  
you enjoy the  
presentation,  
too?

## ICEBREAKING AS YOURSELF

- Negotiation researchers have shown that small talk builds cooperation and trust
- Small talk helps you gain insights, share information, and find commonalities and connections
- What to talk about? Adriene & Kenna's recommendation: the LITE approach (**L**ight-hearted in tone, **I**nclusive subject matter, **T**opical approach, **E**ngaging follow-up)
- Case story: UMD Libraries





How did you get interested in libraries?

## INQUIRING AS YOURSELF

What motivated you to make that gift?

- Virtually all books on fundraising foreground the skill of inquiring about your donor.
- Russell James' 274-page book, *The Socratic Fundraiser*, examines the crucial place of asking questions in getting to a gift.
- Instead of memorizing hundreds of questions, however, it is important to explore a handful that you can come back to.

## INSPIRING AUTHENTICALLY

- Inspiring: as the facilitator of philanthropy, how you find the words and phrases that match your donor's motivations and interests
- Identity congruency/social norms messaging
  - “the Dean asked me to talk about this program”
  - “Several of your classmates are supporting x”
- Hero's journey messaging
  - “You are the one person with the interest and ability to launch this program”
  - “Your gift would encourage others to follow”

## KEY WORDS/PHRASES THAT HAVE RESULTED IN COMMITMENTS FOR UMD LIBRARIES

- “Your gift will support underrepresented students while decolonizing academic librarianship”
- “...define a new era for Maryland Libraries”
- “Your partnership will help train the next generation of librarians and uphold a profession that is needed now more than ever”
- “I believe so deeply in this undertaking that I am pledging \$x from Libraries resources to co-launch the initiative”

# WORKSHOP: PRACTICE THE ICE-BREAK / INQUIRE / INSPIRE MODEL

## EXERCISE 1: ICE-BREAK

Engage with a colleague sitting near you, take turns being the donor, and use the LITE approach to start a conversation.

(LITE = Light-hearted in tone, Inclusive subject matter, Topical approach, Engaging follow-up)

## OUTCOMES

- Identify a few of your donor's key characteristics, interests, and/or commonalities
- Reflect on the ways that positionality may be affecting this experience

## TIME

- 8 minutes to converse
- 2 minutes to reflect and take notes on your own



# WORKSHOP: PRACTICE THE ICE-BREAK / INQUIRE / INSPIRE MODEL

## EXERCISE 2 – INQUIRE

Continue to use what you have learned to engage in deeper conversation, taking turns at being the donor.

Test out a few conversational questions to elicit information about the colleague's philanthropic motivations and interests.

## OUTCOMES

- Learn more about your donor
- Gain deeper insights about your donor's values and motivations

## TIME

- 2 minutes to form a few questions
- 8 minutes to use inquiry with your colleague

# WORKSHOP: PRACTICE THE ICE-BREAK / INQUIRE / INSPIRE MODEL

## EXERCISE 3 – INSPIRE

Continue taking turns at role playing.

As the fundraiser, leverage your positionality, strengths, and what you have learned to share ideas that will connect with your donor.

As the donor, ask questions in return that will help the fundraiser shape the conversation.

## OUTCOMES

- Test ideas that will connect with your donor's interests and values.
- Use words to inspire, e.g., promote the *cause!*
- Adjust ideas based on conversational cues, body language, etc.

## TIME

- 2 minutes to form a few ideas
- 8 minutes to test the ideas on your colleague



**INFORMAL REPORTING OUT / Q&A**

**THANK YOU!**

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## REFERENCES AND CREDITS

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