



# How Murray State Racers Stayed on Track to Deliver a Winning Centennial

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# How Murray State Racers Stayed on Track to Deliver a Winning Centennial

The Anniversary Forum – November 2023



**MURRAY STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

1922



2022

*100 Years*

# About Murray State University

- Established in 1922
- Regional public university in southwestern Kentucky
- Enrollment at 9,500 students
- 148 academic programs within six colleges and schools – undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, certificate and online programs
- 99% of our students receive some type of financial aid; 52% of our students graduate with no known debt
- Nationally ranked as a “Best Bang for the Buck” by Washington Monthly, “Top College” by Wall Street Journal, “Best Colleges” by Money Magazine - #1 regional public in Kentucky





## Centennial Celebration Planning Team

- President of the University
- Executive Secretary of the Board of Regents
- University Advancement Director Team (Development, Branding, Marketing and Communications, Alumni Relations)
- Director of Governmental and External Relations
- University Libraries – Dean and other Designated Staff
- Director of Donor Engagement and Communications (Development)
- Development Coordinator (Development – Special Events)





# “CENTENNIALIZE” Everything!

All Events, All Projects, All Communication for ALL Constituents

With special consideration to...

- Award recipients and other honors
- Traditions – get them ready to showcase
- Collect and communicate stories – many and often



# Engage your Community

## *What's happening in your community?*

- City and County Celebrations
- Local school or other organizational milestones
- Annual festivals or community traditions
- Engage community leaders in your events and activities
- Look for and seek out collaborations and partnerships!



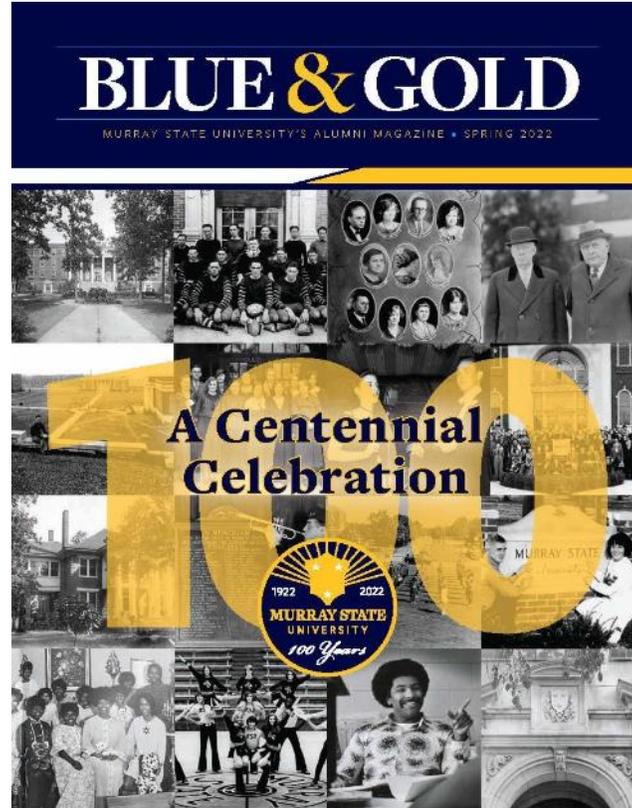
# Financial Resources: Cultivation and Management

- Identify sources of funding and timing (multiple fiscal years?)
  - Internal partners and collaborations
  - External partners and collaborations
  - Sponsorships
  - Product revenue
  - Budget allocation
- Prioritize what you have to meet your goals
- Delegate a financial manager





# Prepare to Run your Race!



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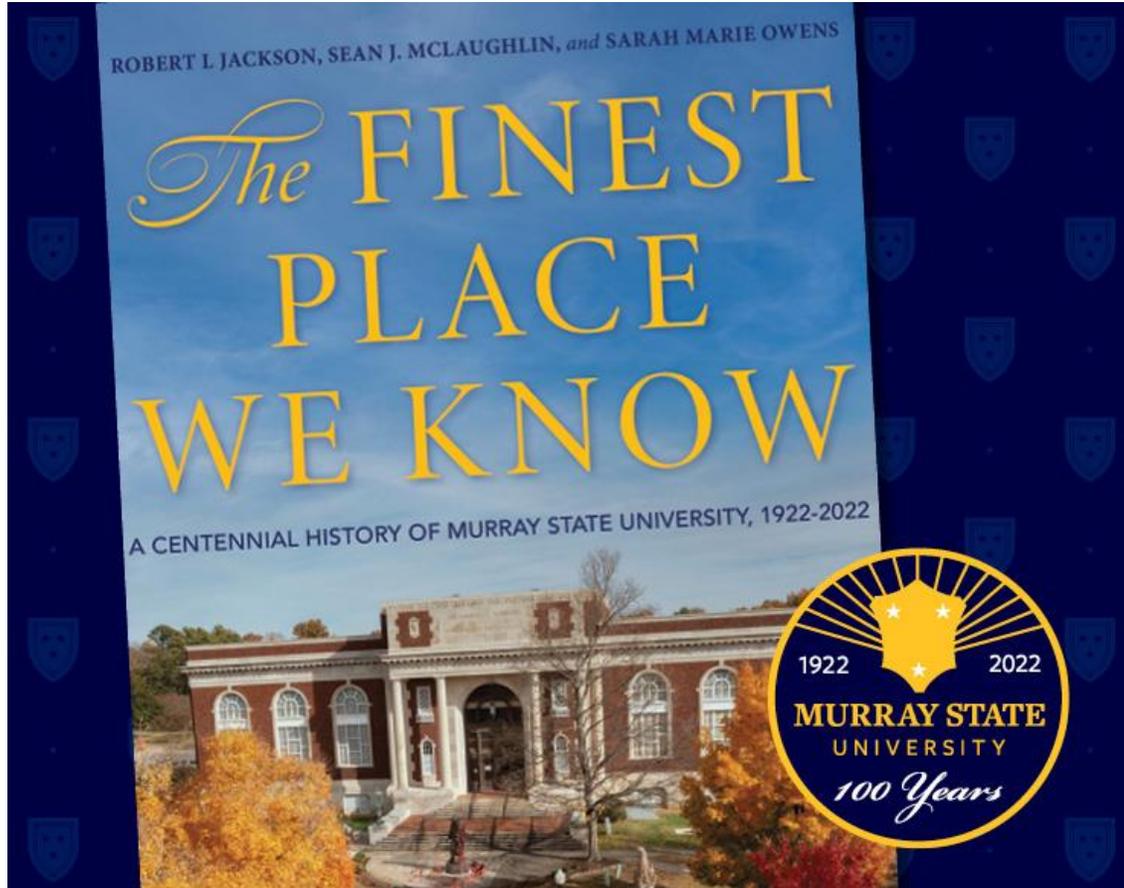
## Communication and Promotion Deliverables



- Logo development and brand toolkit
- Website
- Social media design, plan and schedule
- Collectibles, gifts and commemorative items for sale
- Overall communications strategy and plan to reach ALL constituents where they are...



# One Special “Thing”...



- Commemorative coffee table book
- 2.5 year project
- Authored by our President and faculty from University Libraries (special collections)
- “Book Committee” – 2 of them!
- Special collaborative brain-storming session well in advance of our Centennial – we used the information to spotlight our history during the celebration year
- Helped us to make sure we did not leave out stories or special people!



# One Special “Historical Event”...



- Centennial Exhibit and historical timeline on our University Libraries website
- 1.5 year project
- Led by University Libraries (special collections)
- Launched an oral history project - podcast
- Significant student involvement
- Retired faculty members did the presentations on opening night
- Helped us to make sure we did not leave out stories or special people!



# ***One Special “Celebration Event”...***

- Centennial Gala
- “Stunning”
- Led by University Advancement
- \$22 dinner – affordable for all - sponsors
- Cap off a historic homecoming weekend...





# Allow Yourself Some Flexibility...

WAIT! Could we also do this??

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**BE BOLD**  
*Forever Blue & Gold*  
The Murray State University  
CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN

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# Deliver “The Moment” for All Constituents!



Highlight every area possible!



Celebrate and have fun!



Be prepared to identify benchmarks of success and measure the outcomes of your plan!



# *Reflecting on our Centennial Celebration*

- Engagement – new opportunities and new audiences
- Largest homecoming crowd ever; set a football attendance record and a record single-event attendance (Gala)
- Book sales exceeded our expectations...proceeds benefitting our Pogue Library
- Word of mouth and social media had tremendous impact in moving our constituents to action – attending events, giving, engaging in new and different ways
- Record fundraising results – continuing today!
- Near record enrollment this fall!
- Renewed sense of institutional pride!

\*Note – occurrence does not indicate causation



# Any Questions?

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