

# Wayland Academy

It was mid-March when Wayland Academy realized their beloved annual gala would no longer be held in person. The team worked quickly to pivot their 44th annual gala — their most significant fundraising event of the year — ONLINE!

## ONLINE FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

SILENT AUCTION | DONATION APPEAL | VIDEO

## WHAT MADE THIS EVENT UNIQUE?

Wayland Academy relies on face-to-face interaction to drive fundraising at their annual gala. After pivoting to virtual, the team tapped into the power of video to add personalization to the event and expand their reach.

Videos were made for to introduce the event, promote popular auction items, dive into why their donation appeal is important, and make a final toast at the end of the night.

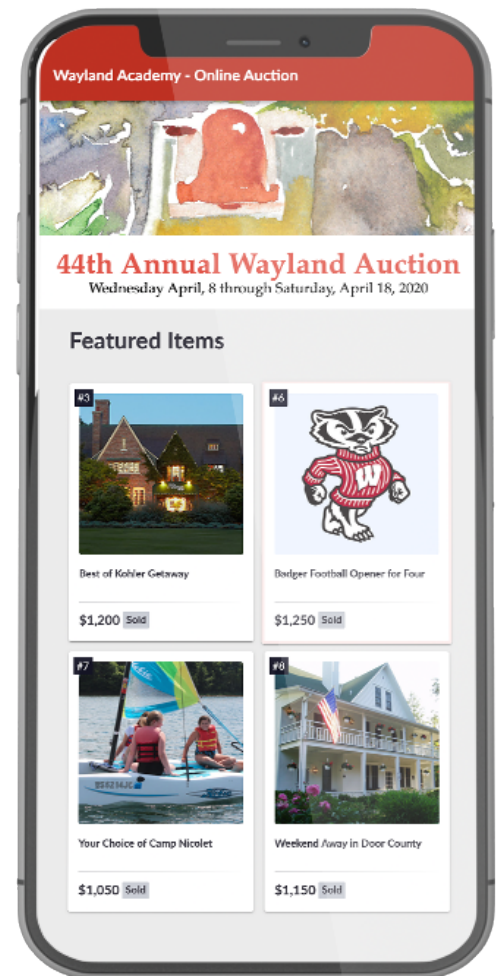
Wayland Academy's Director of Annual Funds also created a successful social influencer strategy. She shared videos, created memes, and prepared other communication that influencers could use on their social platforms. This made it easy for the influencers to promote the event and gave them more time to put their creative spin on things!

## VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

- Used videos to promote online auction items.
- Held a donation appeal for items on school's wish list.
- Tapped into the school's social media influencers.
- Used e-mail and direct mail to promote donation appeal.
- Promoted auction item videos on social media.
- Brought humor and FUN to the event.

## BEST PRACTICES/LESSONS LEARNED

- ✓ Show your supporters why your cause matters & how their funds will be used.
- ✓ In this virtual world, make your online event personal with video.
- ✓ You don't have to get fancy with video. Used the camera on iPhones.
- ✓ Strive for things to look nice and polished, not professionally produced.
- ✓ Start as early as you can so that you have more time to get creative.
- ✓ Make it easy for your social influencers by preparing content for them.



## RESULTS

**1211** bids  
**509** supporters  
 Average of **10.26 bids per item**  
 Raised **207%** of silent auction value

**Total of \$94,456 in proceeds!**

## IN THEIR WORDS

"Wayland has been hosting its spring gala and auction for 43 years. It's a huge tradition and a lot of face-to-face interaction. With OneCause, making the switch to virtual was easy. We hope to have the event in-person next year, but we can't wait to incorporate everything we learned this year with online giving. It expanded our reach, and our fundraising really benefited from that."

*Emily Schroeder Orvik, Director Of Communications at Wayland Academy*