The 175th Anniversary Campaign

An Interview with Natalie Kubat, Executive Director of Advancement

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This article is a transcript of the interview available on [The Antiochian Podcast](). It has been edited for clarity and brevity.



Natalie Kubat, Executive Director of Advancement

Mark Swanholm: Natalie, thanks for joining us on the Antiochian today.

Natalie Kubat: Hi, Mark. It's good to talk with you.

Mark Swanholm: Awesome. Well, you know I wanted to have you here to talk a little bit about the 175th campaign. But before we get into that I'd really like for the readers to understand you a little bit and get to know you, Natalie. Can you just give us a little bit of background on Natalie?

Natalie Kubat: Sure. Yeah, I am a Hoosier. I was born in Indiana and spent a lot of my career in Indiana. Working for some larger universities. And after my kids kind of flew the coop and my husband and I were thinking about our next move. I really had a desire to find a place where I felt like I could really make an impact. And I was looking at some smaller private liberal arts colleges and came across Antioch.

I was aware of Antioch's amazing legacy and reputation and saw that there was a position open. And so as I was going through the interview process and thinking about where I wanted to end up. I had a couple different options. And what was interesting when I came to Antioch and actually interviewed in person. I remember sitting in the conference room on the fourth floor of South Hall outside the president's office and there was this whiteboard that had the C plan on it and the progress and check marks and things had been erased and rewritten and circled and arrows and whatnot. And I remember sitting there waiting for my interview thinking "this is a team that it has a plan and they're working that plan and they're making progress and they're doing it".

That was just something that really spoke to me. And I had no idea what I was getting into when I accepted the position, but that plan is still up on our whiteboard. We're still erasing and making check marks and drawing arrows. But it's just been amazing to be a part of the Antioch community. It is changed my life in so many ways, but every day is a challenge and every day We see the progress that we're making and it's been exciting.

Mark Swanholm: That's really awesome. And, you know, we're really glad that you weren't sitting there and looking at that whiteboard and then ran away!

Natalie Kubat: No, not at all. No, I love to be a part of helping make something better than I found it. And I feel like that's what's happening at Antioch, especially within the advancement office. And working with our alumni and our donor community who really want to invest in and really truly believe in the work that we're doing. We see the evidence of our donors and the impact that they make on campus every day. And it's just it's for me, it's such a joy to help facilitate that and see those connections happen. And so it's exciting work.

Mark Swanholm: Awesome. Yeah. And I can tell you that from everything I've heard and from working with you directly, you've already made a big impact and we're definitely glad that you're here and kind of shepherding things and really helping Antioch to get to that next level.

Let's talk about your vision for the 175th campaign and where that's going and let the folks out there that care about Antioch know what this campaign's about. So it's the

175th year since the founding of Antioch. I think there's a name for that, right?

Natalie Kubat: There it is yeah the 175th anniversary of Antioch. We're calling it our demi, semi, Sepentennial That's Latin for one half of one half of 750. And it's just a kind of a cute little play on words that I fel
to watch people try and pronounce it. But
looking forward.

You know, when I started at Antioch in De
spend some time listening to people, listen
alumni, listening to our donors. They were
own experiences. And really, it was so imp
Antioch is different.

Mark Swanholm: We are not shy.

Natalie Kubat: And what makes Antioch a
And I believe in that. And I was so appreci
It was also overwhelming. Antiochians hav
you what they think you should be doing. But there were a few themes that came out of that.



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One of it was really people just having a desire to want to help Antioch in any way possible, whether that's through admissions or philanthropy or elevating our name and recognition. That was a clear and easy thing that I wanted to try and help make happen. And then people just want to know what's happening on campus and how we're progressing in terms of admissions and in advancement. And so those were the two key pieces to kind of creating this Campaign. When I learned it was going to be our 175th anniversary, I thought this is a great opportunity to really look at the past and the amazing legacy of Antioch, but also celebrate and get people looking forward at where we're headed and how committed we are to keeping this college alive. And so I really started talking with people both internally and within our alumni community about how to make that happen. And that's really how this campaign evolved.

Mark Swanholm: Well, it makes a lot of sense. And I think the fact that we're both looking back at all the great things that Antioch has achieved over the 175 years since

the founding, plus, looking forward - some might call it the journey, some might call it the Antioch Adventure - but it definitely continues today. It's super important to shore that up.

Natalie, I know you're putting together this kind of broad-based program, but what are the overall goals of the 175th campaign?



Natalie Kubat: In my world in advancement, there's always going to be a philanthropic goal. So of course, we do have a fundraising goal. Our fundraising goal is to raise $17.5 million. But I wanted this campaign to be more than that.

We all know that enrollment is something we need to be focused on and something we are focused on. And we have so many people that want to help in that regard. So we also have an enrollment goal of getting to 175 enrolled students by fall of 2026. This is

ambitious. We know that this has, to be a goal to increase our student body. We're hoping that through this campaign and a collective efforts of our Antioch community that we can get there. We'll see. It's going to take everybody helping in this regard. And we have very specific ways that people can help and I'm excited to share that on this campaign.

And then our third goal is really the heart of what Antioch is, which is our co-op and our work program. So we want to celebrate and kind of grow our co-op experiences with earning or achieving, 1,750 co-op placements since reopening, as well as celebrating our new federal work college status, which now allows students to work on campus for kind of a grant towards their tuition, but then also they can work for their own and earn their own hourly income. And so we are hoping to celebrate 75,000 work hours since becoming a federal work college. And really that goes back to the heart of Antioch and the Arthur Morgan era and the creation of the co-op program, which is over 100 years old. It's just is such a big part of what makes Antioch the college that it is today.

Mark Swanholm: That's totally the case for sure. And three very ambitious goals great great to set those out. And I think that broadening that from just the fundraising goal is brilliant because that really speaks to the Antiochian community Getting involved, getting engaged on things. Clearly worrying about helping with admissions and what they can do there and then you know. Understanding of how they can support that goal on the hours for co-op and work also. Super important.

Before we go on to other things, I know they're When we launched the campaign back on March 11th. There was already progress towards the goal on the fundraising side. Can you share with us where we are at on that particular goal, Natalie?

Natalie Kubat: Yeah, yeah. So in a fundraising campaign world, we like to do what's called a silent phase where we're really solidifying some major support from Some key individuals to kind of help us kickstart and launch our efforts. And so we've already been working on that silent phase, had been working on that silent phase.

So that when we launched on March 11th, people could see the progress that we were making. And so As of March 11th, we were at about 7 million in support. That includes gift commitments and planned gifts that were documented during our silent phase.

But also we had just completed a pretty significant challenge to some of our major gift donors where we were able to raise about $2 million in cash as well. And that was really exciting. And it is just a great demonstration of the belief that a lot of our donors have in Antioch. And we're happy to be able to have that investment to help as we continue the campaign and get to that $17.5 million.

Mark Swanholm: That's awesome. Yeah, it does show that there's great progress, good commitment from everybody, and it's really exciting to see that kind of off the mark number come out for Antioch Well, a lot of institutions that might sound like a small number. It's a significant impact to the college and

Where things are and a significant bet for the future from those folks that are willing to do that donation. You know, kind of getting back to the overall other goals, though, I know they're ambitious. We want to get those enrollment numbers and the hours for co-op up. I believe you've got a kind of a unique way that you want to help engage the alumni community and track and understand how people are engaging from the alumni community and others, friends of the college, in the campaign. I think it's victory points that we're talking about. So can you talk a little bit about the victory point system, Natalie?

Natalie Kubat: Yeah,, this has been the fun part of planning this campaign - really identifying opportunities for how our community can get engaged and help us towards reaching those three big goals that we have. So many people have come to me and said, what can I do besides make a gift? And there are so many things out there that people can do. And so we wanted to come up with a collective, organized way of doing so. So we've identified different actions that people can engage in that will earn them their own victory points. And our goal is for everybody to make a commitment in earning 175 victory points personally to help reach those overall goals that we have.

When we talk about victory points, we're talking about things like, of course, making a gift, but dropping off admissions materials to a high school or bringing a prospective student or donor to an Antioch event. Wearing an Antioch sweatshirt and posting about it on social media to kind of help elevate our name. Helping connect us with potential co-op employers. Hosting a co-op student who might be in your community

and they're away from campus and off experiencing an amazing professional opportunity.

So there's so many different ways that people can choose to try and earn their 175 points. We want to make it fun. We want to make it unique and just a way to really help the campus and see tangible ways that they can do so.

Mark Swanholm: Yeah, I think it's a really great idea because not everyone wants to go out and earn victory points for the sake of earning victory points, but it's a reminder of the the things that actually make an impact, right? How are we growing the reach of Antioch, how we get in front of more people - it's going to take all of us to participate and do those things to achieve those goals. I think it's a great way of reminding folks of how to get out there, what they can do, and just keep them trying new things over the course of the campaign. So I really love that idea, Natalie, bringing that in. I know that victory points aren't the only way that folks can participate, though. There's going to be a component where you're going to be on the road bringing the campaign to various cities and some other events.

Natalie Kubat: Yes.

Mark Swanholm: Why don't you take a few minutes and talk about some of that?

Natalie Kubat: Yeah, so we often have events on campus and have done some travel around the country visiting our alumni and donor communities. But we wanted to use the campaign as an opportunity to really celebrate the 175 years that Antioch has been here. And so we have organized some "Antioch on the road events" where we're bringing Antioch to you. We are visiting some places where people have been asking us to come. "We want to see you." "We want you to come and talk to us and tell us what's going on." "I can't make it to campus."

But we can come there and we can visit people and celebrate Antioch, and we're excited to do so. So we've got a few dates already scheduled and we're in the process of scheduling more. It is on our website. People can visit the campaign website to find out where we'll be. We're headed to New York City. We're headed to Los Angeles, Seattle, maybe Austin to visit you, Mark.

We'll see. North Carolina. Yeah, we would love to. And so we have some resources set aside for these events and to help celebrate it. But also if there's a community that wants us to come and someone's willing to help host it…

Mark Swanholm: I'm happy to host if you guys come on down.

Natalie Kubat: We'll be there! I keep saying if you invite us and you want us there, let me know. So if you don't see your community on the website or on our list, let's have a conversation about it and see if it makes sense for us to do that because we really want to celebrate Antioch. When I'm out traveling and I wear my Antioch shirt, people stop me all the time and want to ask about Antioch and how it's going and what's happening on campus. And we love that and we want to elevate that as much as possible.

Mark Swanholm: Yeah, that's great to get those conversations started. And I know there's also a conversation recently in the Antioch Alumni Board about reaching out to folks in various cities where there are high concentrations of Antiochians to see if they want to raise their hand and get you to come to their community. So I think there's going to be some outreach on that as well.

Lots going on. Really appreciate you taking time today to talk to us about this, It's super exciting. I think people are going to see a lot of things happening in the very short term since the campaign has kicked off a couple of weeks ago. Amazing to get the involvement up and going.

For folks that are reading this, you can go to the Antiochian and there'll be information about the victory points. There'll be information about those “Antioch on the Road” events as well. And then, as Natalie mentioned, there'll be some links to the campaign website so you can go see that information directly. Natalie, thanks for taking time. Great to have you on the inaugural podcast for the Antiochian. And happy that you're kicking off this campaign. I think it's going to be great.

Natalie Kubat: We're so excited and ready for everybody to help join together as we celebrate Antioch. So thank you for the opportunity, Mark.

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