Maddie Patton - Giving Day transcript

Mon, 4/12 2:08PM • 18:27

Gavin Kelly
You're listening to Beyond 1894, a podcast dedicated to updating you on research, innovation, and campus life happening at Louisiana Tech University.

Tom Soto
Thank you for joining us today on Beyond 1894. My name is Tom Soto and I'm your host today. Today we are talking with Maddy Patton, Associate Director of Development in our University Advancement. Tell me a little bit about yourself, your background here at Tech, and what you do now.

Maddie Patton
Well, I came to Louisiana Tech in 2015 starting as a freshman student. What really drew me to Tech was my grandparents came here and so did my older brothers. I joined the Regal Blues dance team for my first two years of college and went on to be a student recruiter, orientation students, and involved in a variety of other organizations. I had the opportunity to intern for the Louisiana Tech University Foundation in March of 2017 and I have been there ever since. I graduated from Louisiana Tech with a bachelor's in Marketing and right after that I started working full time for the foundation for serving as the Coordinator of Engagement and Philanthropy and now serving as the Associate Director of Development.

Tom Soto
Awesome. Sounds like you had a very busy time as an undergraduate.

Maddie Patton
Yes, I would definitely say so. But it was so much fun.

Tom Soto
Today we're going to be talking about Giving Day, so can you tell us a little bit about what Giving Day is, when it's happening, and anything else our listeners might want to hear about?

Maddie Patton
Okay, for sure. So Giving Day is on April 20th, 2021. And it is a 24-hour period of giving. We push that on our different platforms, and it's just something to really rally all of the students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends, parents, anyone who has a relationship with Louisiana Tech, we want them to join their Tech family and give during this 24-hour event.

Tom Soto
Okay, this is our third Giving Day, correct?

Maddie Patton

Yes, this is our third Giving Day. The first two Giving Days we were faced with some unusual circumstances. In 2019, we had a tornado, as I'm sure everyone listening knows, sweep through Ruston a week before our Giving Day launched. So we definitely had to pivot and shift to get ready for that and switch our focus to really be more disaster relief and recovery. Last year, as the rest of the world, it was really COVID focused on how we could help our students who were really struggling or faculty members, anything that may be able to benefit any of our Tech family, and really push that through the Giving Day site. So this year, we have our fingers crossed that there is not going to be any catastrophe and it'll be pretty uneventful, but very exciting, so that we can continue the success and the momentum that we've had the past two years.

Tom Soto

Good. Yeah, I know the last two years have been, you know, Giving Day's been very successful and I hope that carries on into this year. Um, so tell us a little bit about what people can give to on this day.

Maddie Patton

Okay, so, basically, in short terms, Giving Day is the opportunity for you to be able to give to exactly what you want to, exactly what you love about Louisiana Tech. Our main focuses are obviously the colleges, so College of Applied and Natural Sciences, College of Business, College of Education, Engineering and Science, and Liberal Arts. We also have a large focus on University excellence, and just the overall success and well-being of the University. We do focus on athletics and our Louisiana Tech Athletic Club, as well as having specific areas for diversity and inclusion, student-led giving, and a variety of other giving opportunities.

Tom Soto

And, our listeners, our alumni or friends, they can give to any of these or all of these, I mean, it can be a single gift or they can give multiple gifts. And that's all based online. They can all do all that online.

Maddie Patton

Yes. So the Giving Day platform is an online platform. And through there you can visit the different pages and the different departments to see exactly what you would like to give to on that day. But whenever you click the big red "Give Now" button, you are actually able to click multiple designations. So you can split up your gift in as many ways as you would like. If you have an affinity with the Orientation Student Leaders, but also the College of Engineering and Science, and the Black Student Union, you can choose to give to all three of those within that one transaction.

Tom Soto

So, tell us a little bit about the challenges that people will see on the website. And the website is louisianatechgiving day.org correct?

Maddie Patton

That is correct. So within the Giving Day website, we have a variety of matches and challenges that align with the different departments that we're spotlighting. So a match or a challenge is when we have a generous donor or donors who give a larger gift that will be unlocked if we have X number of dollars

or donors give to that specific area. With that being said, our different matches and challenges that we have are, for example, the College of Applied Natural Sciences will have a challenge centered around the food pantry on campus. Our College of Business will be doing, or the College of Business, will be doing a Dean's match, where the Dean has graciously donated X amount and is rallying the College of Business alumni to give as well. For the College of Education, we will be having a match for the Psychological Services Clinic. And for the College of Engineering and Science, there will be a match for the National Society of Black Engineers. Last but not least, we'll also have a challenge for the College of Liberal Arts, that will be an aviation match for a new flight simulator. So those by no means are the only matches and challenges we have, we'll have much more than that, but that's just a spotlight on what each college is doing.

Tom Soto
Good. I know every little bit counts that we can get on Giving Day or any other time during the year. And, sometimes it may be difficult for young alumni to give. So, how do you encourage young alumni to give back to the University?

Maddie Patton
So, our young alumni can really get involved on Giving Day by becoming an ambassador for the page or making a gift, big or small. As a current young alumni, I cannot stress the importance of still giving back to Louisiana Tech, even if it is a smaller sum. One thing that we really challenge our young alumni to do is to give an amount that is equivalent to their graduation year. So I graduated from Louisiana Tech in 2019. So making a gift of $20.19 can still make a vast impact if so many of your classmates do the same. Another thing that we're doing to really try to connect with our young alumni is we are creating a competition driven by our students and our student organizations on campus, where they have the opportunity to explain what their organization does and why they may need some financial support from their alumni, from their family, friends, anyone who has a connection with those organizations. So we're really thinking that that is a great way for our young alumni to get connected with Giving Day and just connect back to the institution as a whole. So for example, I was a Regal Blue for my first two years of college, so I could give back to the Regal blues organization and give $20.19

Tom Soto
That's outstanding. Now you touched on something that I've enjoyed the past couple of years, that's being an ambassador for Giving Day. The first year we had Giving Day was pretty exciting. I was helping with the social media and I ended up staying up till midnight to see what the goal or, you know, what our final tally would be. Um, and you know, I was posting, social sharing, you know, on Facebook, Twitter, I was posting videos of me recording, you know, recording me in my house talking about the impacts of Giving Day. How does one become an ambassador?

Maddie Patton
Great question. So anyone can become an ambassador by going to louisianatechgivingday.org. There is a tab at the right top corner, where it allows you to sign up to become an ambassador. So as you've touched on and did a great job of, being an ambassador is really just signing up to be a person who is going to share the event, share the news about Giving Day, get other people excited, get your classmates excited, your colleagues, anyone who has a love of Louisiana Tech and is considered a

part of the Tech family or considers themself a part of the Tech family. So, with that being said, even if you don't have a social media account, or you don't do any form of really social networking, just giving a call to three, three of your colleagues or three of your classmates, sending them a text, sending them the link of the Giving Day page is doing something as well. We just want to get the word out as much as possible that Louisiana Tech Giving Day is on April 20, and share the excitement to all of our Tech family. So I would highly suggest becoming an ambassador. Through that website, you will also have a tool kit that will share examples of text that you can post on social media or images that you can use. And a really neat part of the ambassador platform is that you can even track how much money you're raising yourself. So, you can know that Tom, you raised X amount of dollars and got X amount of clicks to the Giving Day site. So all of that is available once you sign up to be an ambassador, and it can be a really powerful, powerful thing.

Tom Soto
Yes, um, and I believe, if I remember correctly from the last couple of years, if you're not on social media there's also a way you can email that link to, you know, your email address, to your friends, to get them to donate?

Maddie Patton
Yes, that's exactly it. So like I said, you'll have an ambassador platform, whenever you sign up, that will show your clicks and the amount of money that you've raised and all of that stuff. But, you'll also have a personalized URL. So using that URL, you can email it to your friends, text it to them, whatever the case may be, just to spread awareness.

Tom Soto
I'm going to tell our listeners real quick, they're probably hearing a little bit of squealing in the background. As you all know, there's a lot of construction going on on campus. And so, we apologize for that, um,

Maddie Patton
But construction means improvement?

Tom Soto
That's right. And the campus has definitely changed in the last 20 years. I started at Louisiana Tech in 97 as a student, and ever since I graduated, I have been working on campus. So it's definitely changed and when I see friends, you know, classmates come to town, and they check out campus for the first time and 10, 15, 20 years, they talk about, you know, all the improvements and how great Campus looks. So, is there any way like if, if our listeners, our alumni cannot give on Giving Day, maybe they're going to be out of town or maybe they're at a conference, they're in a zoom meeting or whatever- is there a way for them to still make an impact on Giving Day?

Maddie Patton
Absolutely. So there are a few different options that you can choose to fulfill if you would like to support Louisiana Tech, especially on Giving Day, even if it's not on the actual day. So the first one of those is still by going to visit right now louisianatechgivingday.org. At the top of the page, you'll see a banner

that'll say "Make Your Gift in Advance". If you go through that URL, then you can make a gift and we will count it on Louisiana Tech's Diving Day, we'll add that to our total. Because, you want to support within that day, you just may not have the means to do so. You may be in a different country, or, you never know what the case may be. Or you're just ready to make your gift right now. Another option that you can do is, on Giving Day, you can always call. If you're not comfortable with giving a gift online, you can call the Louisiana Tech University Foundation. Our phone number is (318)-255-7950. When you call that number, you'll get connected with one of our staff members and we will help you either give the gift over the phone, or we will send you our address to mail in a chat. And if you would like to mail in your gift, then within the notes section, just put that you would like it to go towards the Giving Day total.

Tom Soto
So if they have any questions, once again, they can contact the Alumni Association or the Foundation at (318)-255-7950.

Maddie Patton
Or you can even shoot me an email. My email is: maddie@latechalumni.org

Tom Soto
Is there anything else that our listeners may need to know prior to Giving Day? Or, I don't know...

Maddie Patton
I guess I would also add that you should check with your employer to see if you are eligible for gift matching, or if your employer does gift matching. What that is, is if you make a gift, then your employer may be able to match that gift and just increase your donation that you would give to Louisiana Tech. Another thing is just to remember that a gift, any gift that you make, can count as a tax deduction. And I think that that really covers the logistics of the day. Remembering that you can give to as many areas that you want and every support and every dollar counts and we are just so excited for April 20th!

Tom Soto
All right everyone. Just remember, mark your calendars for April 20th and visit lousianatechgiving day.org. I want to thank Maddie for coming in today and talking with us.

Maddie Patton
Well thank you Tom, I appreciate it.

Tom Soto
And thank you, listeners. Please be sure to subscribe to us on Apple podcasts, Google podcasts, and Spotify.

Commercial
I'm Freshmen Communication Major Kelsey Horath of Winnsboro, with a word of opportunity for all of our Louisiana Tech family and friends. I'm in school now, so I don't have the opportunity to do this yet, but you do. For as little as $50 a year, you can become a member of the Louisiana Tech Alumni Association. Through the Alumni Association, you stay connected with our University and with alumni

and friends from all over the country and world. You can also stay connected with other graduates in your area through one of Tech's local alumni chapters, receive Tech's quarterly newsletter "The Tenant", and enjoy the 1894 University Magazine. Stay involved. You don't have to be a Tech grad to join. Faculty, staff, and parents are all part of the Tech family and encouraged to join the Alumni Association. It keeps us closer to each other and to our University. For more information, visit latechalumni.org or call 318-255-7950. Go Dogs and Ever Loyal Be.

Gavin Kelly
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