

Thinking about Dean Doty's Kintera Initiative¹

Many costly USM and CoB initiatives are launched with great fanfare never to be heard about again. Probably for good reason. They were a waste of time and money. Administrators don't want to be reminded of their failures. More importantly, they don't want you to be reminded.

On those rare occasions when an initiative is successful, you can bet the administrators will be praising their accomplishments. Let's consider Dean Doty's Kintera initiative and hold our assumption in check. Dean Doty spent approximately \$35,000 to have Kintera locate rich alums—to update our list of alums he can solicit for contributions. “We expect to receive the results for the college about September 1, 2006.” (**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2006 – 2007 ACADEMIC YEAR College of Business, Next to Last Draft 9/6/06**)

A hypothesis recently put forward by *The Wall Street Journal* was that “Graduates who didn't update the school with their whereabouts are less likely to donate...” (*The Wall Street Journal*, March 2, 2007, p. A9) I would have expected Dean Doty (who gets a free copy as part of *The Wall Street Journal* Partnership program) and USM and CoB fundraisers to know the risks they were taking with taxpayer and donor money and pass on the project. But maybe, just maybe, just one time, Dean Doty will beat the odds.

Well, Dean Doty, how many rich donors has Kintera identified? How many have whipped out a checkbook and made a donation? How much were the checks? If my last copy of the USM Foundation's glossy publication, *Cornerstone*, Spring 2007, vol. 17, issue 2, is to be believed the “Development Officers” paid to raise funds for the university aren't even covering their salaries.

Dean Doty, just what has Kintera done for you? My bet is that Kintera has not done much for the rest of us.

Marc DePree

¹ “. . . At Southern Miss, if I can get the university attorney to finally sign off on the contract, we're getting ready to pay a company called Kintera, they're a subsidiary of Marts and Lundy. It's going to cost us about thirty grand to go through and do electronic screening of all our alumni because I want to know how much everybody's worth. I want to know what the structure of their assets is. It's all publicly available so that I need to know for example, I need to know who my hundred wealthiest donors are with a high propensity to give because as dean those are the people I should focus on the most . . .” D. Harold Doty, interview at University of Southern Florida,