

# FTK<sup>®</sup> Nation, Four Diamonds' online community, inspires and engages students in the fight to conquer childhood cancer



## Four Diamonds Mini-THON<sup>®</sup> participants who engage in FTK<sup>®</sup> Nation online community see a 5.5x increase in fundraising results

Four Diamonds at Penn State Children's Hospital is leading the fight against pediatric cancer. As a year-round fundraising program, Four Diamonds Mini-THON<sup>®</sup> is an opportunity for K-12 students to get involved in philanthropy and engage their school and local community. This effort culminates with a multi-hour, fun-filled event involving games, music, dancing, activities and more!

Mini-THONs are modeled after the Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon (THON<sup>™</sup>) and have been making a difference in the lives of kids and families fighting pediatric cancer since 1993. With more than 90,000 student volunteers in over 290 schools, Mini-THONs are bringing hope to families in need and giving back by raising funds to support world-class care and life-saving cancer research.

Four Diamonds was looking for ways to better support and engage Mini-THON student volunteers and advisors and to increase fundraising beyond the reach of in-person events. Given the demographics of their student volunteers, Four Diamonds was quick to identify social sharing and peer-to-peer digital advocacy as a valuable communication channel for their programming. They evaluated Facebook groups for a free platform but realized that it did not have the engagement or analytics they needed to support their program. At an industry conference, the team attended a session about the United Nations Girl Up community, another Personify client, and looked to replicate their success within their own programming. Suzanne Graney, executive director of Four Diamonds, says "We recognized the need to better communicate with our volunteers, provide more resources and opportunities for students to grow as leaders, and to use communications tools to further drive results. We saw that Personify was doing an excellent job of making this possible for various organizations, which is when we decided to take our efforts to the next level."



**5.5x**

increase in funds raised for those participating in the FTK<sup>®</sup> Nation community

**352%**

increased impact for student volunteers involved in FTK<sup>®</sup> Nation

**\$7.2M+**

raised during the 2018-19 school year

**\$43M+**

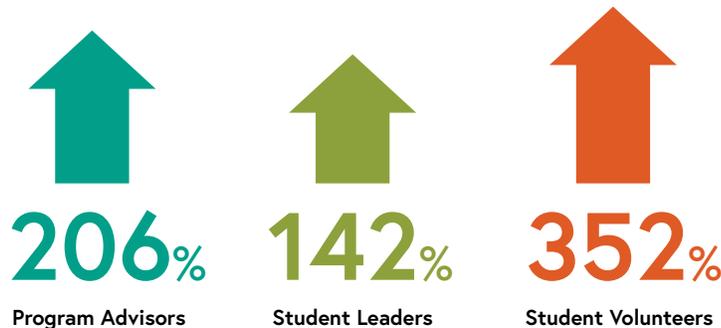
raised through Mini-THONs<sup>®</sup> for the Four Diamond mission since 1993

Four Diamonds partnered with Personify to build FTK® Nation, an online community for student fundraisers and volunteers in the Four Diamonds Mini-THON program. Now with more than 90,000 student volunteers in over 290 schools, the FTK® Nation community serves as a foundation for Mini-THON® events and provides a branded, safe experience protected by a log-in for youth that join. FTK® Nation is now an engaging space to connect with other student leaders and advisors on fundraising ideas, share best practices and collaborate.

When the FTK® Nation community launched in 2016, it was well-received by participants and garnered strong engagement that included organic discussions and a wealth of comments and posts. Of course, this was by design as the FTK® Nation community needed to be intuitive for an audience of student users who are digital natives. The team also developed multiple user experience pathways and scenarios to create a space that student leaders and advisors wanted to be a part of and continue sharing with their fellow fundraisers year-round.

Michael Ringenbach, associate director of Four Diamonds, tallied the fundraising impact of Mini-THON this past year and confirmed a 5.5x increase in donations raised from student volunteers who also joined the FTK® Nation community, compared to those who were not engaged. Michael says "This correlation we've discovered is encouraging! It proves that fundraisers who participate in community are more successful than those that don't."

**Fundraising for Mini-THON® volunteers engaged in the FTK® Nation community compared to those not involved in the community portal:**



*Total Impact = Sum of Donations Received + Sum of Online Donations Given*

The impact of the FTK® Nation community has been significant in driving fundraising efforts for Four Diamonds Mini-THONs, and as a result, they have also increased the number of participants who take advantage of the community because of its benefits to volunteers.

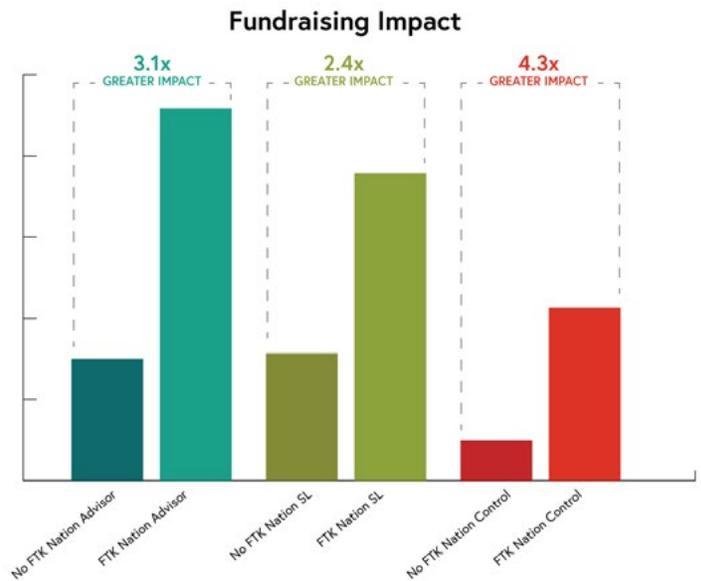
*The FTK Nation community has amplified our fundraising efforts and become a destination for engagement in the Mini-THON® program year-round. Our fundraisers rave about the connections and friendships they make through the community and this program that extend well beyond the 24-hour event.*

**MICHAEL RINGENBACH**  
MPH | Associate Director  
Four Diamonds

Four Diamonds has leveraged this information to continue fostering a digital-centric culture with their outreach efforts, adding a virtual fundraising hub within the community in 2020 to offer resources, support and opportunities for engagement in the wake of social distancing efforts across the country. The Personify professional services team works with Four Diamonds on additional engagement and incentive efforts, including gamification and badging to keep volunteers returning, keeping the community as a vibrant destination that underpins the Mini-THON® program's success. "The FTK Nation community is a powerful example of how participants with passion can change the world for the better," said Fawn Faletogo, Personify Community consultant, "I am proud to support the Penn State Health Team on this program."

### About Four Diamonds at Penn State Children's Hospital

Four Diamonds' mission is to conquer childhood cancer by assisting children fighting cancer at Penn State Children's Hospital and their families through superior care, comprehensive support and innovative research. Since its creation in 1972, Four Diamonds has helped more than 4,000 children and families in addition to funding innovative research projects that are searching for deeper understanding of why and how childhood cancer happens and new ways it can be treated. We won't stop until we conquer childhood cancer.



### About Personify Community

Community is where common interest meets meaningful conversation, sparking connections across your organization. Personify Community brings these experiences to life online, creating rich digital spaces for supporters, members, volunteers, and other constituents to collaborate and belong. Our platform provides the extensive collaboration, communication and sharing capabilities to create an environment and experience tailored to your members and needs.

- Optimize constituent and member acquisition with SEO best practices built into your online community.
- Crowdsource from enthusiasts and accelerate your feedback loop with user-generated content to enrich member experiences.
- Gain insights into satisfaction, programming and best practices for advancing your mission.

Build vibrant spaces to spark conversations and make meaningful connections.



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