



CONNECTION & ENGAGEMENT

Why Events Matter

feats.

ABOUT US

Feats is a nationally recognized event strategy, design, and production firm. We do more than create impressive events—we develop solutions to your communications and fundraising challenges. We also focus on changing perspectives, evoking emotion, and prompting action.

Our work in higher education has taken us across the country and around the world. We understand that events play a crucial role in engaging your key constituents, bringing the message of the university to life, and providing a sense of tradition, celebration, recognition, and connection.

Founded in 1985, Feats became the higher education practice of August Jackson, a leading national communications agency, in 2017.

YOUR BIGGEST QUESTIONS

inspire our best ideas...

WHY SHOULD WE

invest in events?

By highlighting important points in time, well-conceived and -produced events can foster engagement and philanthropy at key transition moments, such as campaign launches, centennial celebrations, or inaugurations. The most important goal of these events is to build excitement and momentum by telling a compelling and authentic story that redefines your institution, appealing to your key stakeholders, engaging new audiences, and inspiring confidence in your future.

An event should be part of an overall communications strategy, an ongoing dialogue—never an event just for the sake of an event.





ALL WAYS
FORWARD

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HOW DO WE

tell our story?

Each institution faces its own unique set of opportunities and challenges, so there is no single answer or cookie-cutter solution. How you tell your story depends on your institution—your audiences, your setting, your tone, and where you are in time. The event should illustrate the story of your institution's impact on the world, and involve your stakeholders—to show them how you need them to make a difference.

University of Houston: Campaign Launch

The University of Houston is a dynamic, diverse institution with bold leadership and big plans. They needed an event that could match their energy while at the same time providing a fresh platform for their people and work. By utilizing innovative and thought-provoking approaches to both design and content, we helped them tell their story in a new way that both energized and excited their audience.



University of Vermont: Campaign Launch

Inspiring remarks and important work were showcased in a rustic setting that reminded guests of their experience as students, while helping them envision the significant role the University of Vermont can play in solving the world's most pressing challenges.



Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management: Groundbreaking

Our strategy for the groundbreaking created maximum impact by unifying Kellogg's messaging and visuals. A surprise reveal of plans for the new building helped guests experience the space and generated press coverage, ensuring the delivery of key messages to target audiences and beyond.





Wellesley College: Inauguration

The inauguration of Wellesley's new president formally acknowledged a change in leadership and initiated a new chapter in the school's history. The ceremony was steeped in tradition, while subsequent events were designed to express the intersection of the past, present, and future.



Duke University: Campaign Launch and Regional Tour

For the first launch, our strategy was to create an experience that would allow the audience to connect deeply to key campaign priorities such as innovation and entrepreneurship, experiential learning, and the subject areas "blazing new paths."

Over time, Duke's messaging has evolved, and our work has progressed with it. However, the most successful elements of that first event have endured, including strong environmental messaging, distinctive ways to show gratitude toward donors and highlight the impact of their gifts, and expressions of the ideas that are moving "Duke Forward."



The format of the roadshows is a departure from the formal campaign launch. We incorporate ideas and involvement from each location to present a fresh perspective.

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"Thank you for putting on an event that will go down in Duke's history as the most incredible, amazing and spectacular campaign launch ever."

— Sarah West, Associate Vice President for Strategic Planning and the Campaign, University Development and Alumni Relations, Duke University

"You beautifully captured the essence of our community, and in doing so, created an event that will be long remembered as one of Wake Forest's greatest moments."

— President Nathan O. Hatch, Wake Forest University

"Thanks again for all you did to make last night a truly unprecedented experience for us. Unanimous "wow's" from alumni and friends, and folks can't stop talking about it."

— Sarah Schutt, Associate Vice President, Alumni Relations and Engagement, Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association, University of Wisconsin

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Prof Steve Cavell
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WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO *connect with guests?*

An event should be looked at as one of a series of points of contact with multiple audiences. Tap into memories by using your icons and branding symbols to engage guests and remind them of their personal experiences. Inspire them with your vision of what can be, so they will want others to share these experiences.

HOW SHOULD WE

design the program?

The most effective events engage and re-engage a variety of constituent groups, using speakers and multi-media to showcase your institution in ways that illuminate key messages. Cast people who can tell meaningful stories that are unique to your institution, and that will help remind guests of why they are there.

College of William & Mary: Campaign Launch

William & Mary's "For the Bold" campaign was firmly rooted in the college's heritage and traditions, but offered a new perspective. The launch event was designed to make the theme come to life, in a setting at once historic (with architectural references to the school's celebrated campus) and bold. A program that envisioned past, present, and a confident vision of the future was followed by a dramatic reveal of the interactive strolling supper space.



Stony Brook University: Campaign Launch

In designing the "Far Beyond" campaign launch event, our goal was to underscore the many ways that Stony Brook had already achieved that vision, and how much farther it could go. From the opening performance, to satellite stages that made guests feel they had front row seats to students' remarkable stories of going "Far Beyond," we sought to provide guests with an experience that, like the school itself, was youthful, energetic, and full of surprises.



Wake Forest University: Campaign Launch

The "Wake Will" campaign launch was designed around hallmarks of Wake Forest's culture—warmth, history, and storytelling. A low-tech start, featuring an engaging speaker telling the Wake story, struck just the right intimate tone. Throughout the evening, speakers and audience members alike were highlighted by the black box theater setting, which reflected the spirit of community and face-to-face learning unique to Wake Forest.



HOW DO WE MAKE THE EXPERIENCE

resonate with the audience?

Make the experience meaningful by giving guests what they are looking for, whether it is an opportunity to experience history in new and exciting ways, a chance to reconnect with important cultural experiences, or a way to learn about your vision for the future and why it matters. Then, help to redefine your institution to inspire their participation, as donors, ambassadors, or volunteers.

Duke University: Campaign Launch and Regional Tour

A bar backdrop fashioned from thank-you notes from scholarship students has delighted guests from the Duke launch event to a 20-city regional tour. Often hosted by scholarship students, the “thank you bar” is a unique way to show gratitude to campaign donors.



College of William & Mary: Campaign Launch

William & Mary's campaign launch gala ended with a stirring finale: President Reveley led the audience of 600 trustees, donors and guests to the tent's “porch,” which overlooked the famous Wren Building, illuminated for the occasion. There, they were joined by hundreds of students in a traditional candle-lighting ceremony, while the choir led the entire group in the alma mater.



Wellesley College: Campaign Launch

Guests at the campaign launch were met by a gallery of historic photos—reconnecting them with their time at the college or to pivotal moments in the school's rich history. Following a program that was both rousing and elegant, the gallery was transformed with photographs and text celebrating the promise of the future.







HOW DO WE MAKE THE

experience authentic?

Find ways to break down the barrier between performers (including students and professors) and listeners by adding elements that actively engage the audience and allow them to experience your past, present and future. People don't want to just be spoken to, they want to participate. Use physical elements to deliver a real sense of your institution, bringing the university—and its impact—to life.

WHAT HAPPENS

after the event?

Planning for an event should also consider post-event follow-up—additional touchpoints designed to rekindle the event’s initial impact. These include your website, social media, and perhaps smaller events in regions where you have significant concentrations of alumni. Events can also open the door for a personal visit with an excited prospect.

SELECTED CLIENT LIST

American University

American University of Beirut

Boston University

Bucknell University

College of William & Mary

Cornell University

Duke University

Harvard Business School

Indiana University Foundation

Johns Hopkins University

Maryland Institute
College of Art

Massachusetts Institute
of Technology

New York University

Northwestern Medicine

Northwestern University

Northwestern University,
Kellogg School of Management

Ohio State University
Medical Center

Rice University

Smithsonian Institution

Stanford Medicine

Stony Brook University

University of California, Irvine

University of Chicago

University of Delaware

University of Houston

University of Kansas

University of Maryland
Medical Center

University of Rochester

University System of Maryland

University of Vermont

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Wake Forest University

Wellesley College

OUR SERVICES

Capital Campaigns

- Campaign Launches
- Campaign Tours
- Campaign Finales
- Campaign Messaging
- Warm-up Events
- Trustee Meetings

Individual School or Department Initiatives

- Leadership Transitions
- Deans' Tours
- Campaigns
- Groundbreakings
- Building Openings
- Anniversaries

Leadership Transitions

- Farewell/Retirement Events
- Presidential Inaugurations/Welcomes
- Listening Tours

Anniversary Celebrations

- Founder's Day Events
- Anniversaries
- Centennials/Bicentennials
- Tours

Ongoing Alumni Engagement

- Regional Tours
- Annual Giving Events
- Bridge Campaign Events
- Athletics Campaigns

Commencements

- Assessments
- Redesigns
- Ceremony Flow
- Logistics

Film and Video

- Creative Concept Development
- Scripting and Storyboarding
- Documentary Preparation and Planning
- Production and Post-Production Management

WHAT CAN FEATS

do for you?

featsinc.com

410.727.5575 contactus@featsinc.com

feats™

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