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# Communications Campaign Highlights Pitt's Contributions to Region

By Adam Reger

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"Pitt Making a Difference" is the theme of a new six-month communications campaign that will emphasize the many ways in which the University of Pittsburgh has a positive impact on the City of Pittsburgh and the region. The campaign debuted Jan. 8 with the posting of three billboards and the unveiling of a website ([www.difference.pitt.edu](http://www.difference.pitt.edu)). Over the course of the next six months, Pitt will post a variety of billboards in different locations throughout the City of Pittsburgh, focused on higher-traffic areas such as Bigelow Boulevard and the Boulevard of the Allies. The billboards will be supported by social media, the website, newspaper ads, and a print brochure.

The billboards' purpose is to highlight Pitt's contributions to the greater community, said Senior Vice Chancellor Kathy Humphrey.

The billboards will act as headlines for the campaign, giving short, impactful statements about Pitt's contributions. Social media (#pittdifference) will be used to drive traffic to the website, which provides more detailed information about the many ways in which Pitt contributes to the community. The brochure will be used to reinforce the messages with key government and opinion leader audiences.

"This campaign is about making sure that everyone in Pittsburgh has a better understanding of who we are," Humphrey said.

The idea for the campaign originated with Humphrey driving through Pittsburgh and observing billboards promoting Pitt's football program.

"I thought to myself, 'We are so much more than this,'" Humphrey said. "That is an important part of who we are, but we are so much more than that. We want people in Pittsburgh to engage with us on a deeper level."

The billboards and the overall campaign are part of a broader push to inform people about the University of Pittsburgh, not only locally, but nationally and internationally, Humphrey said.

"We have some of the best professors, researchers, staff, and students in the world here," Humphrey said. "How do we tell that story and how do people learn about us? That's what this campaign is about."

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She noted that she sometimes hears Pitt referred to as a “best-kept secret” in education, and said, “We don’t want to be a secret. We have to help people understand who we are and what we do.”

Day 5: [Learning to Remember](#)  
Day 6: [The Mountaintop](#)  
Day 7: [Slavery and Beyond](#)  
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The billboards will reflect Pitt’s three main objectives: education, research, and service. Each billboard will carry a brief message about one of these three areas, along with the photo of an individual faculty or staff member, or student, as an example of the people involved in each endeavor. The first three billboards address Pitt’s impact in volunteerism, research, and start-up companies.

“Volunteerism includes not only direct volunteer efforts but initiatives like the Matilda H. Theiss Child Development Center or the School of Dental Medicine, which directly impact the community in a way that would not exist without the University,” said Ken Service, vice chancellor for communications. The Theiss Child Development Center provides early-childhood development and mental health care services, while Pitt’s School of Dental Medicine offers lower-cost dental care to the public.

“Research addresses not only the dollars brought into the local economy, but also the benefits that accrue from the research, and the start-up company message addresses a different way in which Pitt’s research moves out of the laboratory to benefit the community,” Service said.

Humphrey added that the audience for the Pittsburgh campaign is not just those outside the University, but Pitt employees as well. Many employees don’t know the full scope of Pitt’s contributions, she said.

“This campaign gives us an additional avenue to instill more Pitt pride,” Humphrey said. “I want everyone who works and learns here to know that Pitt is truly an amazing place.”

The community impact campaign is just one aspect of a broader initiative to spread the word about the University, Humphrey said. She noted Pitt’s ongoing electronic advertising campaign in several airports nationwide, aimed at increasing admissions and highlighting the expertise at Pitt. At present, these include Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C., Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey, and Pittsburgh International Airport, with plans to expand to airports in Chicago and New York.



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