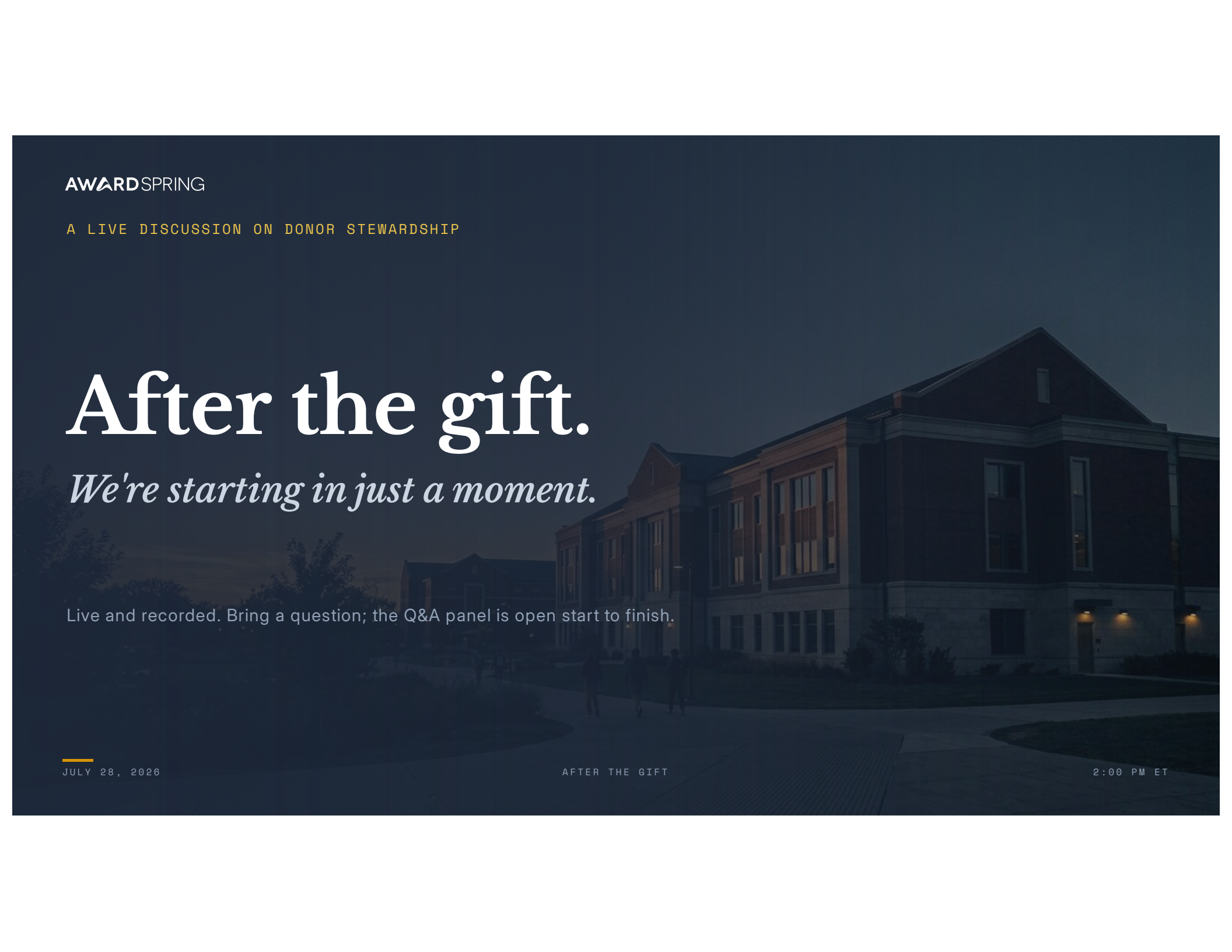




AWARDSPRING

A LIVE DISCUSSION ON DONOR STEWARDSHIP

After the gift.

We're starting in just a moment.

Live and recorded. Bring a question; the Q&A panel is open start to finish.

JULY 28, 2026

AFTER THE GIFT

2:00 PM ET

AWARDSPRING

TODAY'S SPEAKER

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Alex Stepien is the CEO of AwardSpring, and has been building leading edtech businesses for about 20 years. Alex joined AwardSpring in late 2024.



JULY 28, 2026

AFTER THE GIFT

DONOR STEWARDSHIP

Three parts, then your questions.

01

Where it slips

The work after the gift, and why it falls into the cracks at most programs.

02

Three habits

A stewardship framework that holds up on a small team, with real examples.

03

The shortcut

How AwardSpring Donor Management makes the habits the default.

Open Q&A to close. Drop questions in the panel any time; we collect as we go.

JULY 28, 2026

THE PLAN

Scholarship programs are built to do two things well: bring in the gift, and award the scholarship.

The work after that happens in the cracks.

The thank-you. The impact update. The reason a donor gives again. Someone remembers to send a note. Someone means to follow up.

Where the relationship slips.



Built, staffed, and systematized.

Good intentions, spare time, and memory.

*And the donor who gave once slowly becomes the donor who **used to give**.*

WHAT WE'RE SEEING ACROSS PROGRAMS

53%

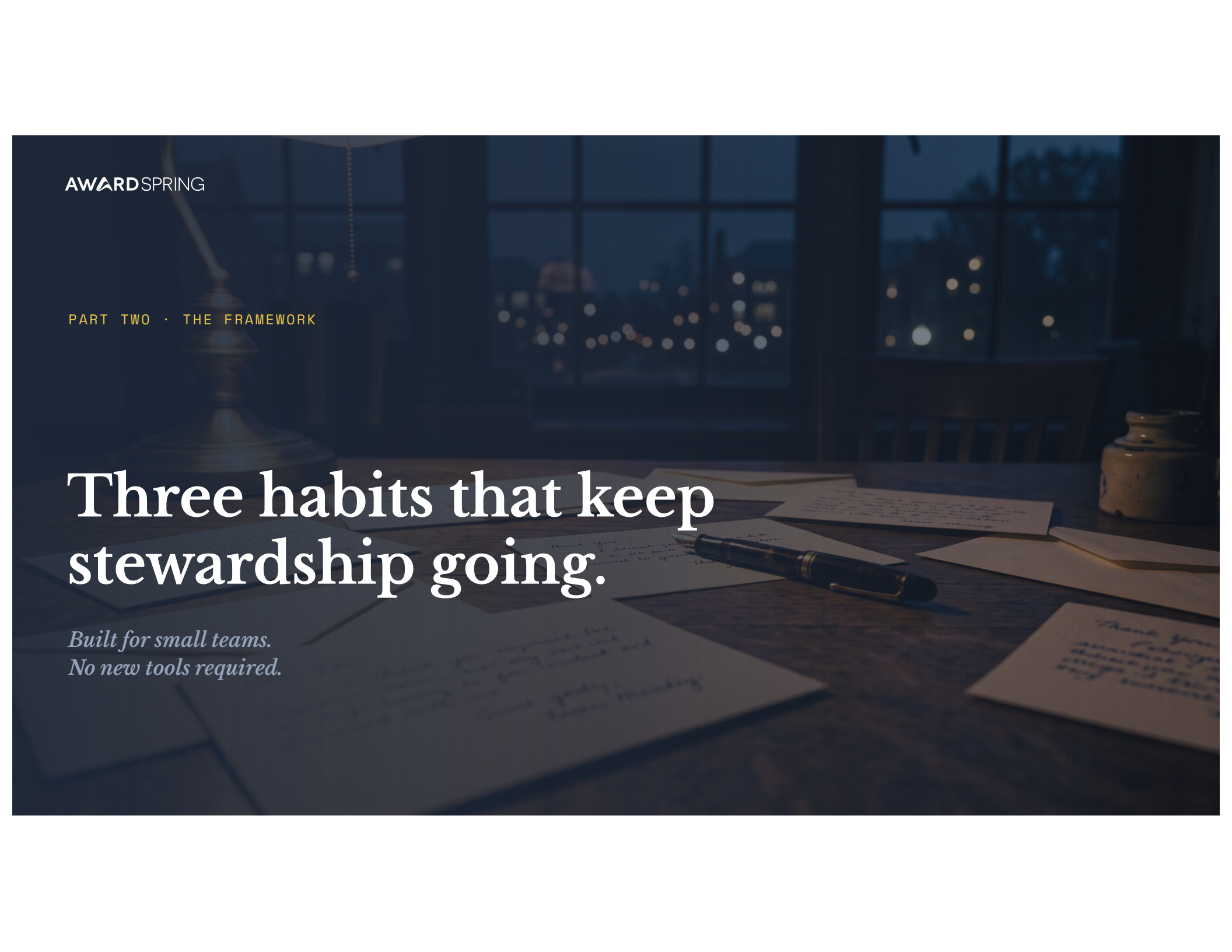
of foundations name **staff time** as their single biggest barrier to donor stewardship.

This is not a caring problem. It is a capacity problem.

4 in 5

first-time donors never give again across the sector, most often because no one showed them what their gift did.

The full 2026 benchmark data drops in our September 15 webinar.



AWARDSPRING

PART TWO • THE FRAMEWORK

Three habits that keep stewardship going.

*Built for small teams.
No new tools required.*

HABIT 01

Know your system of record for donors.

- A donor's gifts, contacts, and history live in one place, so no one has to reassemble the story before they can act.
- Scattered notes are how the thank-you dies. By the time the story is pieced together, the moment has passed.
- The habit: one home for donor truth, and every touch gets logged there. No side spreadsheets, no exceptions.

19% of programs run with zero coordination between Financial Aid and Advancement. No shared data, no shared record. (2026 benchmark)

If it isn't on the record, it didn't happen.

Every data type has a system of record.

The source of truth. When two systems disagree, the system of record is the one that is right.

01

The scholarship

Awards, recipients, student thank-yous.
Source of truth: your scholarship platform.

02

The fund

Balance, contributions, distributions. Source
of truth: fund accounting and management.

03

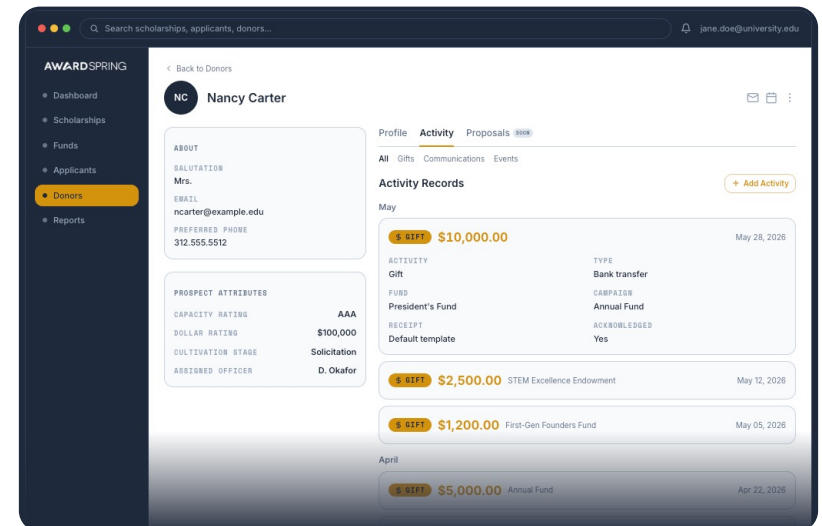
The donor relationship

Gifts, touches, communications, history.
Source of truth: your donor CRM.

One source of truth per data type.

Pick your source of truth.

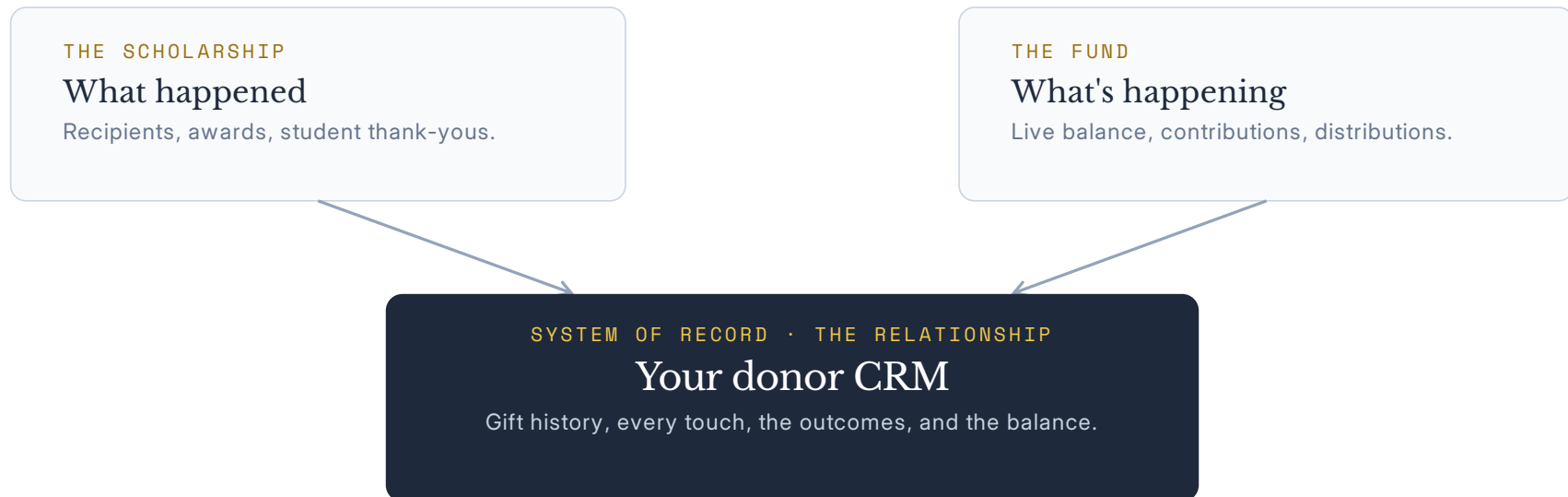
- Choose the one place donor history lives. Any system counts; choosing is the habit.
- Move the last 90 days of touches into it, gifts, notes, and emails, in one sitting.
- Make the rule together, out loud: if it isn't on the record, it didn't happen.



What one home for donor truth looks like: the donor record.

Boring is what survives busy seasons.

The donor record takes from both.



Keep your tools. Connect their truths.

Make the next touch automatic.

- Most stewardship ships once a year: one packet, everything at once, weeks of assembly. The other eleven months go quiet.
- The habit is a lifecycle instead. A handful of dates, set in advance, wired to the scholarship year, and touches go out as things happen.
- Keep the bundled drop if you love it. But the work spreads across the year, and the donor hears from you while the story is fresh.

56% of financial aid staff are likely to leave within a year. What lives in one person's memory leaves with them. (CUPA-HR, 2024)

A cadence is a promise the calendar keeps for you.

Set the dates in January.

- The cycle opens January 1. That day, the year's stewardship dates go on the calendar. Every fund, same anchors.
- Each date is wired to something the program already does: dollars moving, the luncheon, the next cycle forming.
- When a date fires, the record already has the who and the how much. The touch is a note, not a project.

Set them the day the cycle opens, not the week you remember.

THE IDEAL PATH

At disbursement

Thank-yous go out as the dollars do.

Before the luncheon

Meet-the-student, while the seats fill.

Before scholarship season

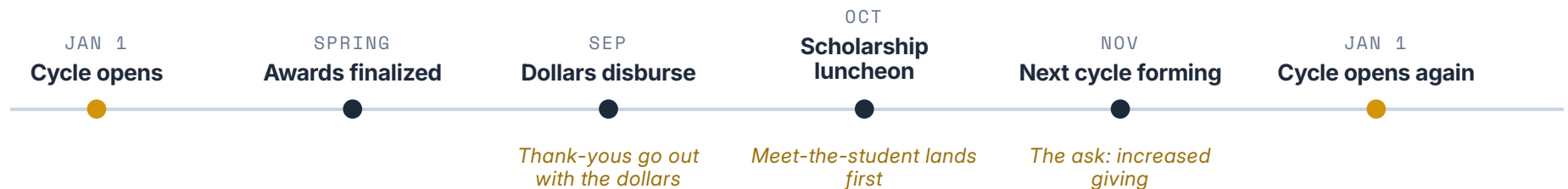
The November ask: grow the fund for January 1.

Start with the calendar you have.



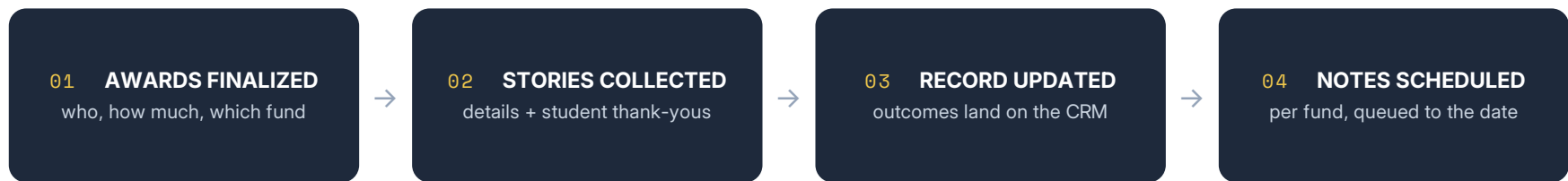
Four dates every program already keeps.

One year, on the ideal path.



The program keeps these dates anyway. Stewardship rides along.

Before the dollars move.



SEP · DISBURSEMENT FIRES

Thank-yous go out as the dollars do. Nothing is missing.

The thank-you is assembled long before it is due.

HABIT 03

Reach donors by what they care about.

- Donors do not fund your program. They fund nursing students, first-gen students, the fund with their mother's name on it.
- One email to everyone is stewardship in bulk, and it reads that way on the receiving end.
- Segment by the fund or cause a donor supports and the update nearly writes itself: it is news about the thing they already love.

46% of programs report back to all of their scholarship donors. 24% report to none. (2026 benchmark)

Relevance is the cheapest personalization there is.

HABIT 03 • WHAT TO DO

Split the list once.

- Segment one level deep, by fund or cause. No personas, no scoring. Just who gave to what.
- Send one segmented update: the nursing donors get the nursing story, the memorial fund hears about the student it carried.
- Compare opens and replies against your last everyone-email. That comparison is your whole business case.

Send the nursing donors the nursing story.

TRY THIS WEEK

One list, one split, one send.

Pick your biggest fund. Write its donors one update about their fund. Watch what comes back.

The pre-luncheon send, three ways.

THE NURSING DONORS

Meet Jordan, second-year nursing, carried by your fund.

A MEMORIAL FAMILY

This is the student the Carter Fund carried this year.

THE GENERAL FUND

Three of the 214 students your giving reached this spring.

Same date, same record, different story.

The whole framework, on one slide.

01

Know your system of record for donors

One home for donor truth. Every touch gets
logged there.

02

Make the next touch automatic

A lifecycle of dates, set in advance.
Touches go out as things happen.

03

Reach donors by what they care about

Segment by fund and cause. Send news
about what they love.

Screenshot this one.

In AwardSpring, the habits are the default.

01

The donor record.

Gifts, funds, contacts, and history on one screen, connected to the awards they made possible.

02

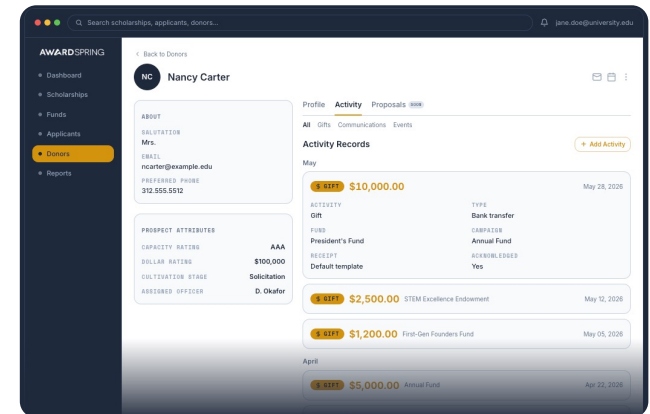
Built-in outreach.

Thank-yous and impact updates on a cadence, straight from the record.

03

Segmentation off the record.

Audiences built from the funds donors actually support. The nursing donors get the nursing story.



The donor record, in Donor Management.

The habits work anywhere. The platform just removes the willpower.

Everything today, on one platform.

The habits live in Donor Management, one of four products on the **Fund Platform**.
One record underneath all of them.

Scholarship
Management

LIVE

Donor
Management

LIVE

Donor
Experience

COMING SOON

Fund
Management

COMING SOON

SpringIQ · the AI layer running across every product

Fund Platform · one record, every dollar connected

Before you go.

SEP 15 · SAVE THE DATE

The benchmark, revealed.

The full 2026 Donor Stewardship Benchmark data, the numbers behind today's 53%. Your invite lands in the replay email.

ANYTIME · 30 MINUTES

See the habits run themselves.

A walkthrough of AwardSpring Donor Management on your program's shape, not a canned pitch. awardspring.com/demo

The replay and slides hit your inbox within 24 hours, including the framework slide.

Questions?

Open Q&A. The awkward ones are the good ones.

Stewardship isn't a grand gesture. It's a habit.

JULY 28, 2026

AFTER THE GIFT

LIVE Q&A



Thank you for spending this time on your donors.

The gift was the beginning.

Replay and slides within 24 hours · awardspring.com/demo

