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## Optimizing Nonprofit Impact: A Comprehensive Approach to Donor Data Management

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# **OPTIMIZING NONPROFIT IMPACT: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO DONOR DATA MANAGEMENT**

by

Gracie Shippen

**Capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for graduation with**

## **University Honors**

with a major in  
Business Management

in the Department of Management

**Approved:**

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## **Abstract**

This Honors Capstone project aimed to support the Malouf Foundation's initiatives to combat sexual violence exploitation and abuse through three main components: developing a participant survey for the Smart Defense self-defense program, conducting research to identify male survivor speakers for the Malouf Summit, and implementing a comprehensive donor data management system.

The Smart Defense survey was designed through an extensive process involving meetings with instructors, stakeholder input, personal participation in the program, and multiple reviews. The resulting survey captures critical feedback from participants to guide instruction adjustments and ensure the program's continued effectiveness. To promote the inclusion of diverse perspectives, I conducted research to find recommended male survivors to speak at the 2023 Malouf Summit. This involved reviewing survivor blogs, podcasts, and articles to understand their experiences, and then evaluating and presenting top candidates aligned with the summit's goals.

Recognizing the importance of efficient donor management, a centralized data system was implemented to consolidate donor information across the foundation's various initiatives. This multi-month project aggregated data from over 52 Excel sheets, performed data cleaning and integrated the consolidated records into Bloomerang's donor management platform. This optimized system enhances donor communication, maximizes resource allocation, and increases support for survivors.

Through these three components, the project contributed to the Malouf Foundation's mission by improving the Smart Defense program's impact, amplifying survivor voices, and

streamlining fundraising capabilities – key factors in providing support, raising awareness, and effecting change in combatting sexual violence and exploitation.

## **Acknowledgments**

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# Optimizing Nonprofit Impact: A Comprehensive Approach to Donor Data Management

## Background

Established in 2017, the Malouf Foundation, an affiliated nonprofit organization of Malouf Companies, has committed itself to the crucial task of supporting survivors of sexual violence, abuse, exploitation, and human trafficking on their journey toward healing and empowerment. This nonprofit organization operates through three core initiatives: education, healing, and advocacy, each playing a vital role in combatting these pervasive issues.

Under the education initiative, the Malouf Foundation has implemented three programs aimed at raising awareness and preventing instances of trafficking and exploitation. *On Watch*, a survivor-led online education platform, empowers users to recognize, report, and prevent trafficking incidents, with the goal of increasing survivor identification rates and safeguarding vulnerable populations. Complementing this effort is the *Raise* app, designed to assist parents in navigating the complexities of technology to ensure online safety for their children. Additionally, the *Smart Defense* program provides essential self-defense training, equipping individuals with the skills to resist and escape dangerous situations, if needed. These initiatives have been widely adopted, particularly within universities across Utah, with the goal to expand throughout the United States.

Central to the Malouf Foundation's mission is its commitment to facilitating healing and restoration for survivors. Through programs such as *Rooms Restored*, the foundation creates safe and nurturing environments for children who have experienced sexual abuse by renovating and furnishing spaces to offer a fresh start for those in need. The *Juniper* program provides trauma-informed case management and therapy tailored to the individual needs of young survivors, ages

12-18, of trafficking. The *Juniper Scholarship* empowers survivors to pursue higher education by covering 100% of tuition costs at partner colleges or universities.

In partnership with the Elizabeth Smart Foundation, the Malouf Foundation launched the *We Believe You* campaign. The goal of this campaign is to amplify the voices of survivors and highlight the importance of believing victims' testimonies. This initiative creates a safe space for survivors to share their stories, advocate for change, and inspire others to stand against sexual violence and exploitation.

The Malouf Foundation's multifaceted approach to addressing sexual violence and exploitation shows its unwavering commitment to fostering awareness, education, advocacy, and healing while striving to effect lasting societal change. Through my exploration of the impact of these initiatives, it became clear that collective action is essential in combatting this steadily increasing form of unjust abuse.

## **Significance**

The significance of the work at the Malouf Foundation cannot be overstated, particularly in light of the prevalence of sexual violence, abuse, exploitation, and trafficking in our society. According to statistics from the Elizabeth Smart Foundation and RAINN, the reality is stark: 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 20 boys fall victim to child sexual abuse, while an estimated 1 million women experience rape every year. Only 6 out of 100 sexual assaults are reported to law enforcement, highlighting the urgent need for support services for survivors, such as the Malouf Foundation. Furthermore, with 1 in 3 females expected to experience sexual violence in their lifetimes, and an American becoming a victim of sexual assault every 68 seconds, the need for comprehensive intervention and support systems is indisputable.

I was personally moved by these harrowing statistics and the urgent call to action they represent. Learning about the profound impact of sexual violence on individuals and communities, I was compelled to seek ways to contribute to the cause. Witnessing the efforts of organizations like the Malouf Foundation in providing support to survivors and advocating for systemic change reinforced my call to action in this meaningful process. Thus, I was motivated to align and merge myself in this cause and dedicate my research project to shedding light on the foundation's initiatives and their impact on survivor's lives. This project involved developing a comprehensive survey for Smart Defense, researching male survivors, and designing a donor data management system. Through these efforts, I aimed to contribute to the Malouf Foundation in supporting survivors and combatting sexual violence and exploitation.

### **My Impact**

I reached out to the Malouf Foundation in the fall of 2022 to deepen my understanding of the operations of a nonprofit organization and work with the amazing individuals who have dedicated their careers to this, as well as contribute to the issues of sexual violence and exploitation. As an eager student wanting to immerse myself in their work, I sought to uncover opportunities where my skills could be utilized to support their mission of empowering survivors and effecting positive change. Recognizing the importance of data collection, survivor engagement, and donor communication within the foundation, I was determined to leverage my skills to make an impact in these areas.

My project began by spearheading the development of a participant survey for the Smart Defense Program, a self-defense educational program. By leveraging the data collected, I could help Smart Defense refine its curriculum, ensuring it resonates with its audience and remains



responsive to evolving needs. Next, by recognizing the underrepresentation of male survivors in discussions surrounding sexual violence and exploitation, I started researching the male demographic of survivors. I was tasked with identifying and engaging male survivors to speak at the Malouf Summit and contribute to the launch of the new Smart Defense men's program. Lastly, central to my impact within the Malouf Foundation, I developed and implemented a donor data management system. Recognizing the critical role of donor communication and donation tracking in sustaining the foundation's important work, I aggregated, cleaned, designed, and implemented a comprehensive system aimed at enhancing donor engagement and increasing contributions.

In undertaking each of these initiatives, my overarching goal was to contribute to the foundation's ongoing efforts to empower survivors, foster community awareness, and effect meaningful change. Through data-driven surveys, survivor-centered research, and strategic donor engagement, I aimed to amplify the impact of the Malouf Foundation, ensuring that it continues to provide hope and support for survivors of sexual violence and exploitation.

### **Smart Defense Survey**

The Smart Defense program is an essential part of the Malouf Foundation's education initiative. It has been instrumental in empowering individuals with self-defense skills. Originally designed for women and girls, the program has recently expanded to include a new men's program to address the diverse needs of participants. Each of the instructors is trained in jiu-jitsu and leverages their skills to offer comprehensive self-defense training that is aimed at teaching participants practical skills to protect themselves in various situations. The effectiveness of the

Smart Defense program is renowned and has been widely implemented in universities and companies' employee training to empower personal safety and empowerment.

To assist in the continual improvement of the Smart Defense program, I developed a survey. Recognizing the primary importance of gathering quality feedback, the process began with a series of meetings with the Elizabeth Smart Foundation and Malouf Foundation's stakeholders. These meetings served as a foundation to provide invaluable insights into the nuances of the self-defense program, its objectives, teaching methods, and participant engagement. By engaging directly with instructors, the groundwork for the development of the survey was underway.

Building upon the insights gathered from the instructors' meetings, the next phase involved collecting feedback and data requirements from Smart Defense instructors. Through collaborative discussions and meetings, a comprehensive perspective on the program's strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement was established. These discussions were vital in shaping the framework of the survey and ensuring that it effectively captured the diverse perspectives and needs of participants. To ensure that the questions were sufficient for each program, I created one survey for the female programs and one for the male program.

To fully understand the program, I enrolled in an online version of the program, Smart Defense +. This immersive online experience provided firsthand exposure to the program content, training, and instructor interactions. By actively participating in the program, I gained a deeper understanding of participant experiences and challenges to further assist in the survey development process. Subsequent meetings with Smart Defense instructors were held to solicit feedback on survey design and content. These discussions allowed the instructors to identify the

key areas that need to be addressed in the survey and ensure alignment with program objectives and participant needs.

With all the insight gathered from meetings and personal program engagement, a detailed list of survey questions was formulated. This compilation went through several reviews and adjustments prior to the development of a final product. Eventually, the survey was sent to the Smart Defense team for approval of question wording and content. The review process ensured that the survey effectively captured the desired feedback and insights necessary for program improvement.

Upon final approval of the survey design and content, the survey was converted into a Microsoft Forms format for easy access. After the survey was finalized and approved, it was seamlessly integrated into the participant portal for easy data collection to certify a streamlined and efficient feedback channel for ongoing program evaluation and improvement efforts.

## **Survivor Research**

The Malouf Summit is a pivotal gathering at Salt Lake City's capital building, uniting influential panelists to address the prevalence of child sexual exploitation and underscore the urgency of making a meaningful impact in combatting this critical issue. Since its initiation in 2021, the summit included notable speakers and panelists such as; John Walsh, the host and creator of "America's Most Wanted"; Julie Whitehead, victim of sexual abuse and author of the best-selling novel "Shadowed"; Lieutenant Governor Diedre M. Henderson, the lieutenant governor of Utah; and Elizabeth Smart, a kidnap victim at 24 years old who turned her experience into helping others with the Elizabeth Smart Foundation. Their collective expertise,

experience, and dedication have significantly contributed to the advancing impact of the Malouf Summit's goals and impact.

In preparation for the 2023 Malouf Summit, I conducted a comprehensive research process to identify and select male survivor speakers who would contribute valuable perspectives and insights to the discussion. My approach encompassed several key steps aimed at engaging stakeholders, conducting thorough online research, and presenting findings and recommendations. The process commenced with stakeholder engagement, wherein discussions were conducted with Malouf Foundation and Malouf Summit stakeholders to gather their preferences and expectations regarding male survivor topics. This collaborative meeting served as a guiding framework to ensure that my research was aligned with the summit's goals and stakeholder interests. Through open communication and active participation, stakeholders provided valuable insights that allowed me to start my research.

A thorough online research process began, which encompassed an extensive web search of recent articles on male survivors. Additionally, survivor blogs written by male survivors were utilized to understand firsthand narratives and experiences, providing knowledge into the challenges and resilience of survivors. This approach facilitated a deeper understanding of survivor perspectives and amplified their voices within my research process. Additionally, I dedicated time to listening to survivor podcasts to help me gather insights directly from male survivors. Engaging with survivor narratives in various forms helped me make more informed decisions during the speaker candidate selection process.

Following the compilation of findings and insights, a careful selection process was completed to identify the top six male survivor speaker candidates. The candidates were chosen based on the relevance of their experiences and narratives, as well as their potential to

meaningfully contribute to the discussion. Each candidate was thoroughly evaluated and considered to ensure the election of speakers would bring diverse perspectives to fully enrich the Malouf Summit. I then presented the selected candidates to the stakeholders, which involved showcasing insights, recommendations, and contact information, and ensuring helpful collaboration in the decision-making process. Stakeholders were provided with profiles of each candidate to highlight their unique stories, contributions, and relevance to the summit objectives.

Finally, the top one to two speakers were chosen based on their alignment with the summit's goals and stakeholder interests. This provided speakers who would elevate the summit's topics and advance its mission of addressing child sexual exploitation. Through this research process, the Malouf Foundation acquired male survivor voices and perspectives, fostering a wide view and understanding of the issue and guiding impactful conversations at the summit.

## **Donor Data Management Program**

### Significance and Reasoning

The implementation of a robust donor data management program within the Malouf Foundation carries profound significance in maximizing resources for survivors, boosting donations, and driving increased support for survivors of sexual violence and exploitation across all demographics. By centralizing and organizing donor information, this program not only streamlines donation tracking and communication but also amplifies the foundation's capacity to effectively allocate resources where they are most needed.

One of the most impactful objectives of a donor data management program is to maximize resources for survivors. Through comprehensive tracking and analysis of donor

contributions, the foundation can optimize resource allocation, ensuring that funds are directed towards initiatives and programs that have the most impact. This strategic approach enhances the foundation's ability to provide critical support services to survivors, empowering them on their journey to healing and recovery.

Furthermore, a donor data management program plays a pivotal role in boosting donations and raising awareness of sexual violence and exploitation. By maintaining accurate, clean, and up-to-date donor contact information, the foundation can develop meaningful relationships with its supporters. This will foster ongoing engagement and solicit continued contributions to the organization. Additionally, the program can utilize targeted outreach efforts to effectively communicate its mission and initiatives to a broader audience, thereby raising awareness of the prevalence of sexual violence and exploitation, while raising support for survivors. The implementation of a centralized donor data management program drives increased support for survivors of all demographics. By consolidating donor information and tracking contributions across the various initiatives of the Malouf Foundation, it ensures an equitable distribution of resources and support services to all survivors, irrespective of age or gender. This inclusive approach highlights the foundation's commitment to addressing the diverse needs of survivors and fosters a supportive and inclusive community with the goal of combating sexual violence, abuse, and exploitation.

The need for the donor data management program became apparent when I encountered disorganization and inefficiencies in the foundation's existing donor tracking system. With donor information scattered across disparate Excel sheets on different computers, critical data was at risk of being lost or overlooked. This could hinder the foundation's ability to effectively harness donor support and allocate resources. Recognizing the imperative need to fix this inconsistency, I

decided to base my project on developing a comprehensive plan to fully develop a donor data management program. This program lays the foundation for a more streamlined and efficient approach to donor tracking and communication.

## **Objectives and Methods**

The initiation of the donor data management program for the Malouf Foundation marked a significant endeavor due to the need to centralize donor information from the diverse array of nonprofit initiatives associated with the foundation. This multifaceted project began with a series of strategic engagements with directors from the eight nonprofit initiatives, including On Watch, Juniper Scholarship, Smart Defense, Raise, Juniper, Rooms Restored, We Believe You, and the Elizabeth Smart Foundation. These meetings served as important steps to provide invaluable insights into the unique data management needs and challenges faced by each initiative.

The first phase involved meticulous and time-consuming collection and aggregation of donor data from various sources, including over 52 Excel sheets and imports from existing online platforms like GiveButter. GiveButter was a donor management program previously used by the Malouf Foundation that didn't fulfill their data management needs. This data collection process was complex, emphasizing careful attention to detail to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the information collected. Following data collection and aggregation, a rigorous cleaning and verification process ensued. The process aimed to eliminate duplicates, remove errors, verify data validity, and fill in missing pieces of data through validation protocols.

Once the data was cleaned, I developed a sheet titled the "Import Plan", which was created to hold and manage the organized donor information. This mass sheet served as a holding spot for the data, which I then reorganized by event, campaign, program, or source platform to

facilitate ease of access, retrieval, management, and future import of the aggregated data. I then initiated collaborative discussions with the directors of each initiative and program to identify the most suitable data management program for the foundation's needs. After careful consideration and evaluation, Bloomerang emerged as the optimal choice, offering robust functionality best suited for the foundation's data requirements.

After choosing the program, the data was restructured to align with the format necessary for seamless import into Bloomerang, without losing any data and maintaining data integrity. This process involved precise attention to data formatting, field mapping, and compatibility checks to ensure a smooth transition and integration into Bloomerang. Following the successful data import, enhancements were made to the program to further optimize donor management processes. These enhancements included the incorporation of personalized email functionalities, advanced search mechanisms, and customized reporting capabilities. The enhancements enabled the foundation to engage donors more effectively and drive impactful philanthropic initiatives.

This meticulous and time-consuming data process spanned approximately four to five months. I was ultimately able to create and establish a robust donor data management system designed to elevate the efficiency and efficacy of the foundation's philanthropic endeavors. By centralizing and optimizing donor information, the foundation can maximize its resources, boost donations, and drive increased support for survivors of sexual violence and exploitation. This fully embodies its commitment to effecting positive change and fostering a safer, more equitable society.



## **Statistics**

As shown in graph 1.1, following the implementation of the donor data management program, a comprehensive analysis of the end-of-year donation statistics for the Malouf Foundation spanning from 2020 to 2023 reveals noteworthy trends and insights. The data portrays a fluctuating trajectory in the end-of-year donations, with distinct variation observed across the four-year period. Notably, the graph showcases a peak in end-of-year donations in 2021, followed by a gradual decline in subsequent years, with 2023 marking the lowest recorded donations among the analyzed years.

The significant drop in end-of-year donations for 2023 stands out as a focal point of the analysis, encouraging a closer look at underlying factors contributing to this decline. Upon looking at the events and occurrences leading up to 2023 it becomes evident that the consequences of insufficient donor data management during the merger with other programs and the launch of new initiatives in 2022 played a pivotal in causing the decline. The lack of an organized and centralized system for donor data management during this period resulted in inefficiencies in donor engagement, communication, and stewardship, ultimately impacting donation levels and overall fundraising outcomes.

This decline showcases the critical importance of implementing a comprehensive donor data management program within the Malouf Foundation. By centralizing and optimizing donor information, the program serves as a fundamental asset in fostering sustained success and impact for the foundation's philanthropic endeavors. Furthermore, the decline in end-of-year donations for 2023 serves as compelling evidence of the indispensable role donor data management plays in navigating organizational transitions. The program can ensure continuity and resilience in fundraising efforts for future acquisitions and company growth. By addressing the challenges

highlighted by the end-of-year decline in 2023, the foundation can leverage insights from the analysis to inform future strategic decision-making and use of the donor data management program. In essence, the fluctuating end-of-year donation statistics underscore the impact of effective donor data management on the success and sustainability of the Malouf Foundation's mission.

Graph 1.2 provides a comparative analysis of January to March donation statistics from 2022 to 2024, offering insights into the tangible impact of the donor data management program on the Malouf Foundation's donation totals. The data reveals a significant trend, with donations amounting to \$420,000 in 2022, declining to \$85,000 in 2023, and subsequently rebounding to \$15,000 in 2024. The fluctuations highlight the dynamic nature of the foundation's fundraising efforts and underscore the pivotal role of effective donor data management in shaping donation outcomes.

In 2022, the Malouf Foundation forged a partnership with the Elizabeth Smart Foundation to initiate a series of impactful and ambitious new initiatives aimed at combatting sexual violence and exploitation. However, amidst the acquisition and expansion of activities, the foundation encountered challenges in tracking donations and maintaining donor personal profiles. The influx of donations and the complexities associated with managing multiple initiatives negatively impacted existing data management issues, leading to inconsistencies and inefficiencies in donation tracking and stewardship. To address these challenges, I created and launched a comprehensive donor data management program in January 2023, with the help of the directors and other stakeholders at the foundation. This new program marked a pivotal turning point in the foundation's approach to donor engagement and fundraising, with a renewed focus on centralizing and optimizing donor information to enhance transparency, efficiency, and

accountability. The implementation of this program will and has already shown evidence of improved donation management practices, empowering the foundation to gain deeper insights into donor behavior, preferences, and donation patterns.

The positive impact of the donor data management program became evident in the subsequent years, particularly in 2024, where donation totals increased to \$150,000 during the January to March period. This significant increase reflects the tangible benefits of the program, including streamlined donation tracking, enhanced donor communication, and more targeted fundraising efforts. By leveraging the insights gleaned from donor data, the foundation has already been able to tailor its outreach strategies, cultivate stronger donor relationships, and drive increased support for its mission-driven initiatives. In conclusion, the implementation of the donor data management program has played an important role in restoring and updating the foundation's fundraising efforts and fostering improved outcomes. By addressing the challenges associated with donation tracking and management, the data program has laid the groundwork for sustained success and impact, ensuring that the Malouf Foundation can continue to advance its missions and initiatives with effectiveness.

## **Results**

The creation of the donor data management program marked a significant milestone for the Malouf Foundation. Bloomerang is a comprehensive platform designed to streamline nonprofit operations and enhance donor engagement. It serves as a trusted web-based solution, offering a variety of features tailored to the specific needs of nonprofits. This includes the ability to import and track the results from critical operational processes, such as fundraising, volunteer management, payments, and email communications. The simple interface and useful features

made it an invaluable tool for managing the foundation's donor data effectively. Throughout the project, I input a total of \$1,125,811 in donations into Bloomerang, suggesting substantial support for the foundation's mission. Additionally, I managed over 8,500 donors within the platform, providing the foundation with comprehensive insights into donor behavior, preferences, and engagement patterns.

One of the key advantages of the donor data management program in Bloomerang is its sustainability and ease of use. The program is seamlessly integrated into the foundation's existing infrastructure, serving as a usable platform for all donor-related activities. Whether it is online interactions, customer or donor information inputted through online websites, or donations made through various channels, Bloomerang ensures that all of the data is captured and allocated into the correct categories as soon as the interaction is made. Some of the customized categories include events, online donations, and campaigns, to facilitate efficient data organization and analysis. Moreover, the program's sustainability is through its adaptability and flexibility. As the Malouf Foundation continues to evolve and expand its initiatives, Bloomerang provides the scalability and versatility needed to accommodate growth. Simple adjustments, such as demographic updates or modifications to data fields, can be easily implemented through the settings interface. This ensures that the program remains aligned with the foundation's evolving needs and objectives.

The integration of the donor data management program into Bloomerang represents a significant step toward improved donor relationships and donations for the Malouf Foundation in its mission to combat sexual violence and exploitation. By leveraging the data program's robust capabilities, the foundation has enhanced its ability to track donations, engage donors, and drive impact. With its sustainability, adaptability, and user-friendly interface, Bloomerang serves as a

helpful tool for advancing the foundation's philanthropic efforts and fostering positive change in the community.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the donor data management program implemented for the Malouf Foundation stands as a cornerstone of support for survivors of sexual violence, assault, and human trafficking. By empowering survivors and ensuring lasting support for their future, the program is a tool for positive change. Through accurate donation tracking and donor management, the project optimizes resources, enhances community engagement, and provides crucial support to those in need. This innovative donor-tracking approach underscores the vital role of donor data management in driving philanthropic impact and aiding survivors, supporting the foundation's mission to create a safer and more equitable society.

## **Lessons Learned**

My journey into the environment of nonprofit work and advocacy for survivors of sexual violence and assault has been deeply personal, shaped by the experiences of women close to me who have endured such traumatic ordeals. Witnessing their courage and resilience in the face of adversity ignited in me a deep desire to contribute to the fight against sexual violence and assault and create meaningful change in any way I can. As I embarked on my Honors capstone project, including conducting survivor research, developing a Smart Defense survey, and implementing a donor data management program, I found myself immersed in a world where every action had the potential to make a difference in people's lives.

One of the most profound lessons that I learned from this experience was gaining insight into how nonprofit organizations function and operate. Working alongside a dedicated team of directors within the Malouf Foundation provided me with invaluable and lasting exposure to the multifaceted operations and decision-making processes inherent in nonprofit management. From strategic planning sessions to collaborative project execution, I witnessed firsthand the passion and commitment required to drive impactful initiatives forward.

In the realm of data management, I learned and improved my ability to clean and interpret data for practical and applicable use. Through attention to detail and lengthy, rigorous validation processes, I learned how to transform raw data into actionable insights that could inform strategic decision-making and drive organizational effectiveness. Additionally, the importance and necessity of feedback became abundantly clear. By soliciting input from various stakeholders and sources, I was able to refine and enhance project outcomes, ensuring alignment with organizational objectives and stakeholder needs.

The most impactful realization from this experience was the profound impact of sexual violence and sexual assault on individuals and communities alike. Through survivor research and engagement with the Malouf Foundation's advocacy initiatives, I gained a deeper understanding of the negative consequences of these devastating crimes and scenarios that people experience. Witnessing the resilience of survivors demonstrated the critical importance of providing them with the necessary support and resources to heal and reclaim their lives. In navigating the complexities of survivor care and support, I gained a newfound appreciation for the pivotal role of nonprofits in addressing social issues and fostering community well-being. The Malouf Foundation, along with countless other nonprofits, serves as a beacon of hope and support for survivors, offering a lifeline to those in need and advocating for systemic change. Through their

tireless efforts, these organizations play a vital role in creating safer, more inclusive communities and promoting healing and resilience among survivors.

My experience through the Honors Program and my education at Utah State University has been instrumental in shaping my professional endeavors. It has provided me with a robust foundation upon which to build my capstone project. Courses in data analysis equipped me with the necessary background skills to navigate the complexities of data cleaning and aggregation, allowing me to effectively manage and interpret the vast amounts of information integral to my project. Similarly, my studies in accounting and finance prepared me with a helpful understanding of financial documents, enabling me to analyze donation data and track financial trends within the Malouf Foundation. Moreover, my leadership experiences, both within and outside of the classroom, provided me with project management and effective communication skills, empowering me to effectively collaborate with stakeholders and drive meaningful change. Throughout my academic journey, the unwavering support of my honors mentor, the business school professors, and the Honors Program staff has been a constant source of guidance and encouragement, helping me stay focused and motivated during challenging times. As I reflect on my education and experiences at Utah State University, I am deeply grateful for the invaluable knowledge and skills that I have acquired, and for the opportunity to apply them in a real-world situation through my capstone project. It is through this interdisciplinary approach to learning that I have been able to leverage the business concepts and principles that I learned to make a tangible impact in addressing critical social issues. My education has not only prepared me for success in my future endeavors but has also instilled in me a sense of purpose and responsibility to effect positive change.

In conclusion, the profound impact of the Malouf Foundation's initiatives in combatting sexual violence, exploitation, and human trafficking cannot be overstated. Through a multifaceted approach including education, healing, and advocacy programs, the foundation has made significant strides in raising awareness, empowering survivors, and fostering systemic change. The development of the Smart Defense survey, male survivor research for the Malouf Summit, and the implementation of a comprehensive donor data management program have proven instrumental in amplifying the foundation's impact. The Smart Defense survey provides invaluable feedback to enhance the program's effectiveness. The survivor research ensures that diverse voices and perspectives are represented, promoting inclusivity, and understanding. The donor data management program optimizes resource allocation, boosts donations, and drives increased support for survivors across all demographics. These endeavors collectively reflect the foundation's commitment to creating a safer, more equitable society. As society confronts the issues of sexual violence and exploitation, the Malouf Foundation stands as a beacon of hope, empowering survivors on their journey toward healing and fostering a future where such injustices are abolished. Through continued dedication, collaboration, and data-driven initiatives, the Malouf Foundation's impact will inspire collective action and transformative change.



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## **Reflection**

My Honors Capstone project with the Malouf Foundation was an experience that brought together the culmination of my undergraduate education. By facing real-world challenges, applying interdisciplinary knowledge, and forming meaningful mentorships and relationships, this experience represented the culmination of my academic journey. Through completing this capstone project, I was able to use learnings from across my business management curriculum in operations, data analysis, accounting, finance, and leadership. More than just applying theories in the classroom setting, I had the opportunity to experience the dynamic nature of nonprofit operations first-hand. From conducting stakeholder meetings and creating surveys, data mining, and analysis, to strategic planning and implementation, this project tapped into my full range of academic learning. It challenged me to think critically about complex issues surrounding sexual violence and exploitation, while also developing practical solutions for these issues.

The capstone added substantial skills and experiences to my overall education and career in ways that went beyond the classroom. It exposed me to the inner workings of the nonprofit sector and social impact work. By engaging with leaders truly passionate about combatting sexual violence and supporting survivors, I gained an invaluable perspective on turning ideas into action. This experience verified and motivated my drive to apply business acumen toward addressing societal challenges. This is a goal I aim to pursue through future education programs and a career.

Building a positive mentorship relationship was central to my capstone journey. I was incredibly fortunate to work alongside Aniko Mahan, who originally offered me the position to help at the foundation, and Kristyn Allred, who provided me guidance every step of the way. They were more than just supervisors of my tasks, they served as mentors who enriched my

learning experience and personal growth. Through their leadership and experiences, they imparted lessons about perseverance, compassion, and the power of group action to drive change. My relationship with Kristyn Allred extends far beyond this single project- it cultivated a deeper understanding of how to be an effective leader and a champion for social good. It inspired me to pursue a graduate degree.

In the realm of research, this capstone helped me explore new depths that were critical for success in this project. Underlying each component of the capstone was a long process of data collection, cleaning, analysis, and insight generation. From designing participant surveys and identifying speakers to online research, to intensive data management implementation, attention to detail and methodology was crucial. This first-hand exposure to qualitative and quantitative research strengthened essential skills that will remain valuable as I pursue future opportunities.

Critical thinking about my specific areas of business management and operations was continuously utilized throughout the capstone. Evaluating nuances of Malouf Foundation initiatives and developing strategic, data-driven recommendations required cognitive skills. Having to assess complex challenges from multiple perspectives, and then developing actionable solutions demanded reasoning and judgment that simply cannot be taught in a classroom. This capacity for critical analysis within my discipline area is a vital competency that I will continue to develop. While the capstone was centered on my business management major, it engaged multiple disciplines such as sociology, psychology, public policy, and law – all of which were intertwined with my core business concentrations for a truly interdisciplinary endeavor. Understanding the social dynamics and realities surrounding sexual violence encouraged me to draw from various academic spheres. This use of various business disciplines expanded my

intellectual horizons and reinforced the importance of taking a multidisciplinary approach to addressing intricate societal issues.

Most significantly, the capstone experience immersed me in my local and global community. At the local level, I had the privilege of working with an organization that was creating change in my own town. Interacting with Utah citizens, learning the nuances of our community's needs, and actively supporting an entity producing tangible local impact was an influential lesson in being an engaged citizen. More broadly though, my eyes were opened to the universal human issue of sexual violence and exploitation that transcends borders. Understanding this widespread challenge highlighted how we all have a shared responsibility as global citizens to protect human rights and dignity. Embedded within the rewarding components of this capstone were challenges that tested my perseverance. The data cleaning and management processes were intensive and filled with obstacles that I needed to overcome. Prioritizing and managing multiple projects pushed me to enhance my time management abilities. There were also personal and emotional challenges as I tried to distance myself from the social issues tied to the trauma of survivors. I grew immensely in resilience, societal understanding, and a sense of perspective.

After reflecting on this experience, I have some advice for Honors students and their efforts to complete an Honors Capstone project. Firstly, seek out mentors and advocates who will enrich your journey. A beneficial mentor will prove to be a catalyst for growth. Secondly, seek out opportunities to apply knowledge across disciplines, this will improve the ability to synthesize varied perspectives. Finally, take on challenges with an open mind. Being adaptable and solution-oriented in the face of obstacles will serve you well.

Ultimately, my Honors Capstone elevated my educational experience by allowing me to create a positive impact while achieving multifaceted goals. My project was the embodiment of taking classroom knowledge and putting it into practice to benefit the greater good. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and know that the outcomes will continue propelling me forward in both skill and purpose. This Honors Capstone project provided me with an influential experience to kickstart a lifelong pursuit of growth in service in both my career and my daily life.

998 words

## **Professional Author Bio**

Gracie Shippen attended Utah State University from 2020-2024 studying business management with an emphasis in operations and supply chain management at the Huntsman School of Business. She served as the 2023-24 Business Council President for the Huntsman School of Business, the outreach director on the Women in Business Association Leadership Board, a student representative on the Utah State University Student Hearing Board, and the events director on the 2022-23 Business Council. Gracie received an undergraduate research transcript designation with her Honors Capstone project. She is attending Utah Valley University in the fall of 2024 in its MBA program. Following her MBA program, she plans to work as a project manager for a federal government agency.

