



Upnotch: Relationship-Driven Communities Are Redefining Alumni Engagement

Growing Demand for Measurable Engagement Is Driving Universities to Prioritize Mentorship and Professional Networking

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, July 16, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As colleges and universities face increasing pressure to demonstrate student outcomes and alumni impact, institutions are rethinking traditional engagement strategies built around events, newsletters, and fundraising campaigns.

According to community engagement platform [Upnotch](#), alumni increasingly want opportunities to build professional relationships, share their experience, and remain connected through communities that provide ongoing value. In response, universities are turning to mentorship and networking programs as a way to foster engagement while generating measurable results.

"Institutions are recognizing that engagement is no longer just about attendance or donations," said Tatia Zuloaga, CEO of Upnotch. "Alumni want meaningful ways to contribute, and students are looking for guidance, connections, and support. Mentorship creates value for both groups while strengthening the community as a whole."

One example is Metropolitan State University of Denver, where Upnotch has become a cornerstone of the first-year business student experience through the university's Career Conversation assignment.

Since launching its alumni engagement initiative with Metropolitan State University of Denver, Upnotch has seen adoption grow by 200%, reflecting a broader shift toward relationship-driven engagement across higher education.

"Upnotch has become one of the most impactful elements of our first-year business student experience. Time and again, students share that this assignment was the single most meaningful part of their freshman year," said Dr. Clay Daughtrey, Professor of Marketing at Metropolitan State University of Denver. "By engaging in guided, one-on-one conversations with professionals, students begin building their professional network early, gaining clarity, confidence, and a sense of direction at a critical transition point in their lives. Equally important, Upnotch provides a powerful and accessible way for MSU Denver Alumni to give back."

The partnership has facilitated more than 1,250 mentorship conversations between students, alumni, and professionals, demonstrating how relationship-based engagement can create value for multiple stakeholders while strengthening institutional affinity.

"We're seeing a shift from transactional engagement to relationship-driven communities," added Zuloaga. "Organizations that help members build meaningful connections are creating experiences that people want to remain part of. Those relationships ultimately drive participation, belonging, and long-term retention."

As institutions place greater emphasis on demonstrating student success, career readiness, and alumni impact, mentorship and networking are emerging as essential components of modern engagement strategies.

Curious about the health of your alumni community? Take Upnotch's [Alumni Engagement Assessment](#) to assess where your organization stands and uncover opportunities to strengthen member connection, engagement, and retention.

About Upnotch

Upnotch is a networking and mentorship platform that helps organizations increase engagement by creating the introductions, mentorships, and career-changing connections their members are actually looking for. Because the strongest communities aren't built around information, they're built around human connection.

Katie Margulies
Kamp Media Relations
+1 908-247-8678
katie@kamprelations.com

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