

MID-FEBRUARY 2007

Raising Funds in Rural Communities

on-the-go!
e-TA

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A service of the Corporation for National and Community Service - Resource and Fund Development Initiative

Dear Colleagues in Rural Communities,

Fundraising in rural communities is exactly the same as fundraising in other areas ... only tailored to a different environment.

In this issue of On-the-Go eTA, you will review how four field-tested fundraising principles work in rural communities:

- Communicate Your Program Impact
- Diversify Your Funding Streams
- Apply a Full Range of Fundraising Methods
- Create a Fundraising Action Plan

If you are having trouble reading this issue, click on the link at the top of this page to download a printable edition.

Do you have questions about branding and its relationship to your nonprofit initiative? Any other needs? Contact us through LEADline@CampaignConsultation.com. Access previous issues of On-the-Go eTA by clicking on the title at the right.

Principle #1: Communicate Your Program Impact

Develop a Case for Support

This is a 5 – 9 page document (see Resources Now! National Institute) that expresses why your organization needs and deserves your support. The case forms the basis for every method of fundraising – i.e., special event, letterwriting, making telephone calls, face-to-face asking, proposals, etc. Whether your community is rural or urban, funders want to know how your current and proposed strategies have made measurable impact in resolving community challenges and problems.

Build Awareness

IN THIS ISSUE:

click on titles below to read full articles

[Communicate Your Impact](#)

[Diversify Your Funding Streams](#)

[Apply a Full Range of Fundraising Methods](#)

[Create a Fundraising Action Plan](#)

[Resources](#)

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You can often get good press coverage for your programs in rural communities. Local media are often most willing to feature your stories in local publications, radio and television. Include copies of your publication in grocery stores or gas stations where visitors may stop and shop. Capture the interest of potential donors who reside part-time or formerly resided/worked in the local community through consistent news bulletins, etc.

TOP ▲

Principle #2: Diversify Your Funding Streams

Rural communities tend to rely heavily on government and foundation support. While these are good sources for start-up support, they are not reliable in the long-term. Build enduring support by diversifying and broadening your base of support using the following six sources:

Funding Stream	How it works in Rural Communities
<p>1. Individuals</p>	<p>Nationally, individuals give over 83% of all charity. Individual donors provide a dependable annual stream of support based on the quality of your cultivation and resulting relationships. Although the population count may be less than some communities, consider ways to pool individual resources and leverage more support by tapping into giving circles, micro-endowment techniques, etc. Include everybody as your individual base of prospect support – former residents, business executives, government bureaucrats; part-time residents, tourists, vacationers, etc.</p>
<p>2. Small Business</p>	<p>Local businesses depend upon the health of the community for their survival. Make your case for why there is a strong cost/benefit relationship between your program and the corner store. Also, many small businesses in rural communities are subsidiaries of larger corporations that offer additional avenues of funding. Businesses, such as Wal-Mart, fund locally and can also offer additional pathways to raising</p>

“We cannot adopt the way of living that was satisfactory a hundred years ago. The world in which we live has changed, and we must change with it.”

Felix Adler, founder of The Society for Ethical Culture

	more funds – on premise resource development activity – i.e., disaster fundraising appeal tables, employee volunteers, etc.
3. Foundations	There are often family foundations housed within rural communities. Other foundations have made it a priority to fund rural development programs. Click here to download a list of foundations focusing on rural interests.
4. Government	Local governments provide additional streams of support through offices of tourism, recreation, the arts, public education and other departments. This funding stream provides financial support, free space, program volunteers, etc.
5. Federated Organizations	A federated organization raises funds under an umbrella to distribute to other nonprofits. The United Way is one of a number of federated organizations that have pooled their resources for fundraising and distribution of gifts. Federated organizations exist in rural areas as independent organizations or as affiliates of larger organizations.
6. Civic Organizations and Clubs	Community clubs are interested in the quality of life in their local areas. Grange, Lion's, Elks, Rotary, Kiwanis, American Legion, giving circles, women's groups, churches and synagogues, local arts associations and service groups among others all have an interest in building a better community in rural areas.

TOP ▲

Principle 3: Apply a Full Range of Fundraising Methods

[Click here](#) for a companion chart explaining how a nice mix of fundraising techniques can be perfected for use in rural communities. Remember, cultivate prospects and donors as an ongoing part of your everyday routine. Keep

Share Square

Facts for your fundraising volunteers to know

Since much of the money in rural communities is in family farms, grocery stores and small businesses – ask local lawyers, bankers, accountants, real estate agents and insurance brokers who know where the money is – to serve as volunteer leaders and advisors to your program. As a result of including members of these professions on your fundraising advisory boards you will quietly gain more access to local wealth.

TOP ▲

people informed about the impact your program and their support is making. Demonstrate your interest in them and their wellbeing – as you would any friend – send articles of mutual interest, birthday greetings, etc.

TOP ▲

Principle #4: Create a Fundraising Action Plan

Things take longer in rural areas so you need to allow a longer time for completion of any solicitation effort. A fundraising action plan requires you to set down the tasks you need to complete and a deadline for completion. A fundraising action plan is:

- A planning document to help you and volunteer leaders coordinate a variety of activities
- A visual aid to explain the continuum of activities that are necessary to identify and convert prospects into donors
- A tool for sequencing time-intensive activities across the calendar year
- A device to remind fundraising volunteers about the number of “touch points” they have or could have with donor prospects
- A way to assign to different individuals responsibility for separate tasks associated with the fundraising program
- A reminder of goals and deadlines

[Click here to download a sample fundraising action plan and a blank form for your use.](#)

TOP ▲

Let us know

Do you have questions about branding your program?

Contact us at LEADline@CampaignConsultation.com (LEADline is a service of Campaign Consultation, Inc., a national provider of training and technical assistance for the Corporation for National and Community Service.) We would be happy to answer questions or to give you more support.

Thank you for your interest in On-The-Go eTA. We encourage you to send this and other issues of OTC

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TOP ▲

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Details from above:

Principle 3: Apply a Full Range of Fundraising Methods. (cont.)

Fundraising Method	How it works in Rural Communities
<p>1. Personal or Face-to-Face</p>	<p>Relationships in rural areas are often more complicated and people know more about each other than in urban areas. This can be both a benefit and a challenge. Volunteers may be reluctant to ask for a gift from someone with whom they must deal on many different levels, especially if they think they may be asking for multiple gifts for multiple causes. However, this method is still the most effective everywhere.</p>
<p>2. Special Events</p>	<p>Coming together around food and family activities is a way of life in rural communities. Special events to raise funds in rural areas are often the primary social activities in these communities. Often these events bring in people from outside the community. Planning a fundraising event in the summer when the population will be swelled by tourists and vacationers is good planning, whereas this would not be the case in urban centers. In some rural communities, a local fundraising event is the attraction that brings people to the community. Consider unique elements found in your community alone – crop festivals such as fruit, flowers, pumpkins, etc.</p>
<p>3. Letter Writing</p>	<p>Personalized individual letter writing campaigns (direct mail appeals) have an opportunity to work better in more closely knit, rural communities. A personal note on every appeal letter written by advisory board members and other volunteers will greatly increase your rate of return on a mailing.</p>
<p>4. Phone + Email</p>	<p>Raising funds by phone is a good follow-up to a letter writing initiative in any community environment. Calling donors by telephone makes perfect sense in a rural environment due to topographical expansiveness, where it is often not possible to get to see everyone you want to solicit personally. As in any location, the highest solicitation response rate will come from pairing callers and donors with strong relationships. Also, add an email follow-up to the mix if service is available in your community.</p>
	<p>Seek local foundations and business support when there is interest in your program subject. Also, seek input from these funding prospects, since many grantors are open to advising a</p>

5. Grant Proposals	funding prospects, since many grantors are open to advising a program in their proposal preparation. Also there are national foundations that focus on rural interests. Click here to download a list.
6. Web-based or electronic	Although some communities have no (or limited) access to the internet, where possible connect with stakeholders through your organization website featuring program news bulletins, links to information resources, contact information, etc.
7. Bequests and Planned Gifts	As in most communities, the realization that donors can leave charitable bequests at the end of their lifetime to your charitable initiative takes time and education. Your organization/program must build trust and demonstrate the capacity to be good stewards of donors' final displays of commitment. You can build on the practicality of expansive geographic homesteaders who understand as well as anyone "that you can't take it with you," so you may as well leave it with a community of people with whom you currently live fulltime, live with intermittently, and or used to live with whom you have fond memories.
8. Tribute Fund	Gifts made in "honor of" or in "memory of" friends and loved ones are not going to support your entire annual budget. However, they are an excellent way to gently promote gifts to your initiative in a way that says "we are open to the business of charity". Feature Tribute Fund donor listings in news bulletins, newsletters, community newspapers, etc.

TOP ▲

Resources

National ASK (Awareness, Skills, Knowledge) to Sustain Institute, sponsored by Corporation for National and Community Service, provided by Campaign Consultation, Inc. 1998, 2002

Resources Now! National Institute, sponsored by Corporation for National and Community Service, provided by Campaign Consultation, Inc. 2006.

Klein, Kim. *Fundraising for Social Change*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA 2001.

TOP ▲

Learning Products and Services

LEADline:

(Learning Experiences At a Distance) LEADline is designed to give information fast. Have a resource & fund development question? Use LEADline and within 24 hours you will receive response and advice from a fundraising professional.

Contact us

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GIZMOs:

(Giving Information for Zooming Money Objectives) Gizmos are resource and fund development tools for

you and your volunteers. They are tangible products in packets, pocket brochures, CD-Roms, games, etc. They feature a myriad of fundraising topics such as **The Power of Direct Mail**, an interactive cd-rom and detailed companion booklet on developing your direct mail program.

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For more information:

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The Chronicle of Philanthropy:

Everyone who comes to a Resources Now! National Institute gets a free subscription to the Chronicle for a year. Participants in CNCS Campaign Consultation workshops receive the latest issue free of charge plus a \$20 discount on one year's subscription.

Workshops/Clinics:

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), through its T/TA service provider Campaign Consultation, Inc., offers a three-hour clinic for those interested in mastering key skills need to write for individual donors.

Online Courses/Webinars:

Web course delivery of topics pertinent to resource development such as — **Build Fundraising Volunteer Champions** and **Cause Related Marketing and Corporate Partnerships**.

Available through the Resource Center, [Click Here](#)

TOP ▲

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TOP ▲

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- [November 2006 *Finding the Right Foundation*](#)
- [October 2006 *Corporate Partners*](#)
- [Mid-September 2006 *Direct Mail*](#)

- [September 2006 Fundraising Events](#)
- [Mid-August 2006 Volunteer Fundraisers](#)
- [August 2006 Reach Out and Touch Communication](#)
- [Mid-July 2006 Disaster Fundraising](#)
- [July 2006 Ask Major Donors](#)
- [Mid-June 2006 Plan Your Fundraising Year](#)
- [June 2006 Individual Donors](#)

TOP▲