



## FUNDRAISING TOOLBOX

### Communications

*In today's society, it is easier than ever to communicate with one another. Using tools such as social media, we are able to communicate with hundreds of people we know with a simple status update, post or message. In light of all of our easy access social networking tools, don't underestimate the power of a good ol' fashioned phone call, hand-written letter or a face-to-face meeting.*

- **Set up a fundraising webpage** with Firstgiving.com
- **Send a personal letter** with all of the key information about your fundraising campaign included. We have included a template letter for you in your registration email confirmation. Use this or create your own. Describe GRID Alternatives, Solarthon, your goal and your motivation. Others will be inspired by the same things that inspire you. Include your Firstgiving link in the personal hand-written, typed or email letters. Don't forget to include a self-addressed stamped envelope for the hand-written letters. Consider including a photo of you or your work in action in the letter for greater impact. Send the email broadly, not just to people you think will be interested in your cause. You will be surprised at who will support your campaign. Your participation may be a way for them to give back when they just don't have the time to participate in charitable work themselves.
- **Send out a follow-up letter** or email about a month before the event and let them know how much you need to achieve your fundraising goals.
- **Post your fundraising effort and goal on your personal blog, Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, etc.** Post updates so that people can follow your progress and help you reach your goal.
- **Put your fundraising link in your email signature** with something like "Help me fundraise to learn to install solar" or "Support low-income families with solar energy- contribute to my fundraising efforts today!"
- State your fundraising goals on your voicemail box so that when people call you they are aware of your efforts.

### People

*Spend some time writing out a list of people in your networks of family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, club acquaintances, etc.... Within those categories, try to branch out by listing people who know your people. For example, maybe your cousin has a good friend that you know vicariously through your cousin. Or, you may have attended school with your boss' son or daughter. Once you have a link, you can expand your network. Never underestimate someone's willingness to contribute based on how well you know them!*

- **Ask businesses that you have been a patron over the years to sponsor you** with a cash donation or matching donation for all or part of your fundraising efforts. Try your dentist, doctor, massage therapist, mechanic, veterinarian, insurance agent, exercise instructors, etc.
- **Alternately, ask the same above sponsors to donate 5 dollars to your effort for every client that they see** over the course of a day or two.
- **Find out if your local bartender will sponsor you** by donating a portion of their tips to you one evening.
- **Ask your gym or yoga studio owner if you can leave a donation jar** at the front of the room, or if they will donate the fees for one group class to your efforts and ask them if you can give a pitch about your cause before the class begins.
- **Find out if your company can sponsor you** with a match of any or all of the donations that you raise.
- **Ask every one of your donors if their company has a matching gift program**, this is an easy way to double the donations that they give you. Many companies have a matching grant program.

- **Contact the friends you made from your college fraternity or sorority** or connect with their national association and ask them to sponsor your participation by making a donation.
- **Contact the alumni associations from your old college** and ask them to donate to you or place an ad in an alumni newsletter asking for donations.

## Places

*Your neighborhood café or place of employment are two great opportunities to start fundraising projects. Community members are likely to donate because they want to help you with your campaign and they feel good about being a part of your cause. Everybody wins!*

- Let your managers know that you are fundraising for a charitable event and **find out if the company can host a dress-down day to benefit your efforts**. Ask the company to charge (and donate to you) \$5 for each staff member who wants to wear jeans or other dress down clothing on a specific day. This is a quick and easy way to raise donations and a great way for people to be casual and comfortable at work.
- **Turn recycling into cash donations for your cause** by taking your office recycling of cans, glass and plastic bottles to the nearest recycling center. You can add to this by also collecting the recycling in your neighborhood too.
- **Set up a small display in the office lunchroom** with your efforts and have a donation jar available for “spare change” after people come back from lunch or the afternoon coffee break.
- **Host a brown bag lunch meeting** about GRID Alternatives, Solarthon and your fundraising efforts to inspire people to donate or to spread the word to their contacts to help you.
- **Bring in heaps of doughnuts to sell to your co-workers** on National Doughnut Day, June 1st.
- **Engage your co-workers in your fundraising efforts by having a fundraising competition to help you**. The person who brings in the most donations in honor of your cause can win a donated prize like movie or museum passes or dinner cooked by you!
- **Get published in your office newsletter** to tell your story and ask for donations.
- Find out from your manager or human resources department if you can **trade a vacation day or sick day for a day of pay**.
- **Place a Curse Jar in your office** and pick a word of the week that the office would like to extinguish. Have people put a dollar in the jar every time the curse word or slang is spoken.
- **Ask the owners of your favorite local restaurant, coffee shop or bar if they will donate a portion of one afternoon or evening’s proceeds to your fundraising efforts**. It could be during a Sunday morning coffee rush, one evening of dinners at a restaurant or during a happy hour at your local watering hole. Create your own marketing with unique flyers with details about the event that you can post in your neighborhood and at the location and then also invite friends, family and co-workers via Facebook and Evite to do business with the vendor that day or during specific hours that day. The result can be a win for everyone as the company will benefit by the extra business and exposure and you will boost your fundraising for the event.
- **Ask a local movie theatre or restaurant to donate gift certificates** to you and then sell or auction them off.
- **Ask a local Restaurant to help you host an event** like a wine and cheese fundraiser/ happy hour where they donate the wine and cheese or drinks. You post flyers, send emails, and invite everyone you know and their friends to participate and ask all participants for a donation to participate.

## Events

*Events can be a lot of fun to host and can also be very beneficial to your campaign. They allow you to be creative, host a get together and are a great way build GRID awareness and meet donors.*

- **Start a unique contest** with friends and see who can raise the most for your cause like who can build the best sand castle, who can create the most innovative duct tape or recycled materials sculpture, balance the greatest number of kitchen utensils on their nose, or who can make the best apple pie- charge an entry fee for the event, and then split the winnings so that half of the money is going to the contest winner and the other half to your fundraising effort.
- Similar to contests, you can also **host a sporting event of sorts**. You can organize a neighborhood basketball game, cricket game, horseshoe game, card game, bowling night or other. Have the participants

pay a fee to participate, and then split the winnings between the contest winners and your fundraising effort.

- **Host a holiday themed party** at your house and ask everyone who attends to pitch in \$10-20. Get the food and drinks donated, keep it simple with snacks and drinks or have a BYOB fundraiser. This is a fun way for you to bring friends together to support you!
- **Host a movie night** at your house for a fee and then charge for themed baked goods (like cupcakes, cookies or other items with themed decorations or other treats). See holidays listed below for party or event theme ideas.
- **Ask for donations instead of birthday presents** or anniversary presents. Request donations as part of a Summer Solstice or Earthday donation drive for the event.

***Holidays before Solarthon 2011:***

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October
St. Patrick's Day (3/17)	Easter (4/24)	Cinco De Mayo (5/5)	National Doughnut Day (6/1)	Independence Day (7/4)	Friendship Day (8/7)	Labor Day (9/5)	Columbus Day (10/10)
Spring Equinox (3/20)	Tax Day (4/15)	Mother's Day (5/9)	Father's Day (6/20)	Parent's Day (7/24)		Patriots Day Grandparent's Day (9/11)	National Boss' Day (10/16)
Cesar Chavez Day (3/31)	Earth Day (4/22)	Memorial Day (5/31)	Summer Solstice (6/21)			International Day of Peace (9/21)	Mother-In-Law Day (10/23)
	Arbor Day (4/30)					First Day of Autumn (9/23)	Halloween (10/31)

**Sell Yourself!**

*Think of ways in which you can earn some cash using the resources around you. If you have special baking, knitting, or handyman skills, you may be able to make money from offering your services or selling your goods.*

- **Make a batch of your favorite baked goods and sell them** on a weekly basis at your office. Make a poster or send out an office email about your goodies and then see your fundraising dollars go up!
- **Plan ahead for Mothers Day with a flower sale** and sell flowers at your office a few days before the day. You may be able to get a discount from a local or wholesale flower vendor and then sell the flowers at cost.
- **Do some spring cleaning for yourself and encourage friends to do so.** Then host a garage sale for yourself and with friends. You can either have all of the money go towards your efforts or take half of the earnings from every item sold so half the cash goes to the item supplier and the other half goes to your fundraising efforts.
- **Organize a car wash at your local gas station.** Ask them to donate use of their space to wash cars. Bring all your own supplies like sponges, towels and soap, then charge car owners to wash there car. Get your friends involved or ask friends who want to help but can't donate to help you with the car washes.
- **Offer and charge for unique services** such as: lawn-mowing for your neighbors, babysitting, designated driving, house or pet sitting, dog-walking, or offer to fix something at a neighbors house or do work such as rake leaves, clean gutters, clean windows, etc.
- **Host a used book sale** by having you and your friends gather old books and sell them to used book stores for fundraising profits.