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FUNDRAISING FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

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KLA Class of '90

Fundraising is a difficult but rewarding art. Fundraising for Community Development Projects is rewarding because the results are going to benefit the community in which you live for future generations.

I became involved with fundraising because of the need to generate funds to help defray the cost of another White Paper project, the County Wide Drug Attitudes and Usage Survey done by Jack Staley, Tony Cirello, and Dan Kramer. We felt the survey would be a strong tool in helping determine how the generation now in the middle and high schools of the county felt about drugs and drug usage. This information would give an indication of how and when to educate our youth in drug prevention, provide a measuring stick to compare with other parts of the nation, and the end result being to help create a more drug free county, which in turn would create more productive citizens and a workforce for which is an integral part of our county.

Listed below are the various ways in which I have helped to raise funds for this very important community development project. They are as follows:

Definition: Define what the fundraiser is for. Will it benefit the community, and in what way. Many fundraisers are constantly being held in the community, some for very broad general support of special interest groups, others deal with very specific issues. To precisely pinpoint the goals is of great benefit to help you gain support through financial resources.

Set your monetary goal: How much is this project going to cost? How much money should be sought?

Who should contribute: How far are you going to reach in the county? And who should you seek the funds from? Should it be corporations or individuals? To answer these questions you have to consider the result of the development project. Will it be individuals, special interest groups, small businesses, corporations, or even city/county government that will derive the greatest benefit. Those who receive the most benefit should be the ones you seek funds from.

I chose in this particular situation that the corporations, and the city would be the beneficiaries as they are the largest employers. Drug usage among employees contribute to absenteeism, job related injuries, poor production, and higher costs for both the manufacturers and the consumer. In the city's case, poor productivity means less work being accomplished for each tax dollar, which comes out of the tax paying public's pocket.

Choosing corporations from which to seek funds from require a little more homework, finding the right individual within the corporation directly responsible in these areas. For the Drug Attitudes Survey I felt it was the Personnel Managers and the Human Resource Directors who would benefit most, and sought approval from them.

Plan your presentation: Detail the purpose of the fundraiser, what funds will be used for, how the community will benefit, and most importantly, how will the contributor benefit. A contributor will find this most rewarding. We all want to make our jobs easier, and to help people in any way we can. This is our human nature.

The next steps are sometimes the hardest... asking for money. It becomes easier if you have a set program, have planned the presentation, and the format in which you will present it. I felt that personal contact was most important. We were seeking basically a small amount, with a set figure to cover the costs of this particular project. Having a definite goal being set, I would be able to cease contacting contributors when we attained it. I did not want to end up with more contributions than we would actually need.

Telephone Solicitation: This method should be used with individuals you know, and who know you, and that you feel comfortable with. Identify yourself with the organization seeking funds. You are not just an individual, but have backing of many people and an organization behind you. This will create a more influential image.

Be brief and to the point. These individuals are working and are generally involved in other projects. Don't waste their time! Make your presentation, ask for their donation, and get a commitment. You can follow up by mail thanking them for their commitment and in what manner they may make the funds available to you at a later time. It is most important to follow up with this Thank you, as it reaffirms their commitment, and provides hard copy evidence of that commitment.

Personal Presentation: This method is a little more involved, and is used for those individuals you have never met, do not know well, or are a little in awe of.

I called to set up an appointment, again identified myself with KLA, and asked if they were familiar with KLA. If not I used a brief presentation of the purpose of KLA and then spoke of my desire to talk with them concerning a community development project that we were engaged in. I then asked for an appointment to come speak with them further. § :

Once the appointment was set, it was very important to be prompt and be professional in image. I would introduce myself and then again identified with KLA. Being a part of Warsaw would generally lead to normal chitchat of what is happening in town, which would lead to a more relaxed atmosphere, and would provide the opening to launch into topics of various White Papers, then into my presentation of the Drug Attitudes Survey.

Again, the planned presentation would keep the request short and concise. My constant goal was to get the individual excited about the project so that they would want to contribute without asking for the funds. If no emotion would arise, I would have to ask them if they could help financially.

As with the phone presentation, I always followed up with a letter of gratitude, and the manner in which I wished to receive payment. This was also a good time to let the contributor know of how I intended to promote their contribution, be it through advertising, newspaper mediums, or any other resources.

It is always important to follow through, as contributions can sometimes become lost in the shuffle. It does take perseverance to actually receive the funds, especially when you deal with large corporations or small governments.

I personally had a great deal of help from fellow KLA members, I appreciated that help greatly. I did discover the far ranging influence that KLA has in the county and discovered KLA alumni in many different sectors of the community.

The one item I did find through this project, was that once involved in a project like this, I ended up with many favors to be returned. I do this willingly, as I, like all the contributors I became involved with, like to help other people. To help someone else makes us all feel good. Through the corporations, individuals always wanted to help, even if they could not do so financially due to budgetary reasons. They provided me with leads on who else to contact, and were always cordial. It made me proud to be a part of this community.

Bruce A. Woodward

Following is the list of contributors to the Drug Usage Attitude Survey done as a Class of '90 White Paper Project by Jack Staley, Tony Cirello, and Dan Kramer. Their contribution is greatly appreciated in making Kosciusko County become a greater place to live:

R.R. Donnelley & Sons, Co.
P.O. Box 837
Warsaw, IN 46580

City of Warsaw
300 E. Market St.
Warsaw, IN 46580

Bertsch Vending Co., Inc.
P.O. Box 815
Warsaw, IN 46580

Biomet, Inc.
P.O. Box 587
Warsaw, IN 46580

United Telephone Co.
P.O. Box 391
Warsaw, IN 46580

Lake City Bank
113 E. Market St.
Warsaw, IN 46580

Kosciusko Board of REALTORS
c/o Pat Lucas
525 E. Center St.
Warsaw, IN 46580

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