



2017 Fundraising Q&A Call

Summary

03.15.17

We invited our past top fundraisers to lead a conference call to offer their tips and tricks to successful fundraising campaigns. We had vet riders and new riders chime in with questions. Here were some of the highlights from this workshop.

Call Leaders—Veteran Riders: Adrienne Rubin, Raquel Olivo, Sabrina Davis, Oren Noah, Dwight and Maria Powery & Darren Gonser

Q&A Session

Rider: I just emailed my fundraising letter to my donors and I haven't gotten much response? Is this normal? What strategies assist to get more responses from my donors?

- Persistence is crucial to success. Asking your donors multiple times may be necessary. Unless a donor declines to donate, ask, again.
- Following up is key—everyone leads a busy life and they need to be reminded.
- Asking in a variety of modes can be helpful, such as Facebook, email, and mailing letters.
- If you are doing a mailer, Adrienne recommends including a self-addressed envelope with a stamp this makes it very easy for a donor to pop a check in and mail it! Make it as easy as possible.
- Personalize your communication with donors. Specifically address a donor in a letter vs. To Whom It May Concern.
- As the ride comes closer, most donors are more eager to donate. Sending out your correspondence now is great to get the word out about the ride and the cause. However, your donors might be more willing to contribute as the tour dates approach. Powery's noted that they get 90% of the fundraising completed in the last month of the ride. It is never too late to start your fundraising.

Rider: How do I keep my donors donating year after year? Do you notice donor fatigue after sometime?

- Group consensus felt like they have not seen too much of this, but timing is important.
- If you ride year to year, time your ASK so it provides a break until the next ride.
- Raquel is starting a video series to keep her donors privy to her training and "journey" up until the next ride, she won't do a formal ask until later in the year. This keeps her donors engaged. [Click link to view her video.](#)



- Recognition and appreciation for your donors is **KEY**. Adrienne always writes hand written thank you notes to each donor. Powery's indicated Facebook and other social media is a very easy way to make a big deal about your donors instantly.
- For high level donor's a strategy can be to send them something personal (token of appreciation).
- Kintera allows you to pull a past donor list so you can reach out to them, again. Also, it's great to pull this list for doing end of the ride thank you notes.

Rider: I live in a small town and don't know many people. How do I increase my donor list?

- Kyle provided lots of tips here—first, tell everyone what you are doing (CCC, fundraising, benefiting arthritis)! Make sure everyone knows about it—friends, family, colleagues, your boss, Facebook, acquaintances, etc. This will make it easier to ASK and it will also expand your contacts and possible donors.
- Think outside direct family and closest friends. To help start your list, it can be helpful to ask yourself questions like these: What do you do outside of work? Clubs, church, hobbies, groups, volunteering, schools, etc. You know more people than you think.
- Don't be afraid to ask—the worst is that someone will say no, but more often they will say, "YES!"
- Darren says don't apologize for asking. This cause is important and the dollars raised are going to many great programs, services, research, and advocacy.
- The more you share about the mission, the more your donors will feel good about donating and desire to donate again and again!

Rider: What are some new ways to raise funds?

- Powery's pass out a bookmark and personal business cards to friends and family. Oren loves to keep these on hand to give out to fellow cyclists on his training rides.
- Riding in someone's honor—i.e. honoree, can make your fundraising efforts more personal and "tug at the heart strings" of your donors. It can also make it easier to ask for donations.
- Kyle noted that it makes it easier to ask donors if you embrace the concept that you are asking for money for a really great cause to help so many people.
- Familiarizing yourself with key arthritis facts can help to make your conversations and letters more compelling. Facts can be found at arthritis.org/facts.
- Raquel indicated that she created art work to auction on Instagram. Her donors commented back and forth amounts that they would pay for the piece and then donate directly to her fundraising site. Once the donation came through, she mailed them the art.
- LIVE Social media is a great tool, according to Sabrina Davis. She uses Facebook LIVE and Snap Chat to foster relationships with donors that she knows directly and has gotten to know through social media. She shares her story and updates (training/health, etc.) on her social media and always attaches her link to her messages.
- If you have done your mailer or letter, try to remind your donors with another form of contact. Send a postcard with a photo of you on it to your donors with your fundraising page link asking "Have you donated, yet?"—Adrienne Rubin
- "I offer my services as a cycling "domestique" to my bike club. For a "sizable" donation (which is usually \$50-100), I will allow my donor to ride on my wheel all day. They get to dictate the pace and I will drag them up to the lead group, if asked. I'll take on all the headwinds and provide pacing and pushes on climbs. I'll even fix their flats." – Oren Noah

Rider: Recommitment is generally a month before the ride, but I know I have until almost November to continue fundraising. How can I boost my fundraising dollars on and post tour?

- Many riders garner donor support on the ride by using social media to post updates on tour. Some even email their donors while on tour not only to thank them, but also to share more information about the mission. Sometimes riders have had donors donate, again, this way, too!

Rider: Crowd raising sites—Has anyone had success with these?

- Group consensus was that they do not use these. The Kintera site serves as a great place to collect donations and push out fundraising emails. Crowd raising site, although can target a broader network of people, charge a fee to use their sites.
- If thinking about using a crowdfunding site, check with the AF staff for details.

Rider: How do matching gifts work? How do you get your donors to follow through with matching gifts?

- Many companies have matching gift programs where the company matches a proportion of the employee's donation. i.e. Employee donates \$100 and the company directly matches = \$200 in total donation to the charity.
- Each company is different and the process to apply for matching gifts differs depending on the company.
- If an employee has a matching gift program, they can ask their HR department the process for applying. Generally, it is done through a website portal.
- Once the application is submitted, the company will reach out to the Arthritis Foundation to confirm the donation. Then the company will cut a check for the matching gift amount and mail it to the Arthritis Foundation.
- Matching gifts can take between 4 weeks to 6 months to get to our office. Fear not, if we know a matching gift is coming in, the AF staff, in most cases, will count it towards your fundraising minimum.
- If you are aware of a matching gift that the Arthritis Foundation should be looking out for, please alert the Arthritis Foundation staff and we will keep an eye out for the check and follow up, if needed.
- If a donor has indicated they have a matching gift, but it has not been confirmed on your fundraising site, the best thing to do it to follow up with them and ask if they need any assistance. The more you help a donor out, the more likely you are to get the matching funds.