Fundraising & Philanthropy Planning Guide

1. Identify an Issue

   Identify an issue: What community issue would your group like to address? Many people identify the type of service task they would like to complete instead of doing the appropriate research to identify a community issue. For example, food insecurity would be the community issue for a service project with a local food bank. Research your community and identify a relevant cause/social issue that aligns with the mission of your organization or group. The volunteer directory on this website is a great resource as well as Trident United Way’s Go Volunteer Guide.

2. Contact the Community Partner

   Once you have decided on an organization you would like to benefit through your philanthropic efforts, contact a representative of the organization and ask them what is most needed. There’s nothing worse than hosting a charitable drive for items that are not urgently needed by a community partner. Include your chosen community partner in your process, coordinate a site visit, and consider hosting an orientation to the services of the organization to educate other members of your organization.

3. Coordinate Logistics

   The success of fundraising efforts and charitable drives is largely dependent on the strength of your event planning skills and effective marketing and recruitment efforts. Find some stakeholders beyond the reaches of your organization and pursue potential collaborators. Make sure you are not competing with other groups who are fundraising for the same cause or community partner. Request a meeting with staff in the Center for Civic Engagement to discuss planning details by emailing volunteer@cofc.edu.

4. Educate & Advocate

   Create ways of educating donors and inspiring advocacy on behalf of the social issue and community partner (i.e. create handouts with statistics, provide awareness ribbons to donors, etc.). Maintain the relationship with your community partner even after your philanthropic drive or fundraiser is complete – consider volunteering on an ongoing basis and continue to educate those around you about the social issue.