

Developing an Individual Donor Plan

San José Public Library's Partners in Reading Program

The current economic situation in which most adult literacy programs find themselves is challenging at best. Many do not have fund development programs in place and could benefit from information about this option and the potential revenue that could be generated. San José Public Library's Partners in Reading (PAR) program embarked on a project to explore ways to increase fund development options for PAR through the design of a plan to create a three-year individual donor campaign. The project is targeted entirely to an adult literacy program and provides unique insights as a result.

Essential to the project was the selection of a consultant with expertise in fund development and proven skills in creating a successful individual donor campaign. It took time to identify the consultant with this knowledge and the strategies to cultivate, solicit, retain and grow individual donors. PAR also wanted someone who would understand the position of adult literacy. Jill Winkelstein Lopez, Fundraising Consultant, was invaluable in creating the plan's process and content.

Many of the ideas presented suggest ways to create the basic infrastructure that will support an individual donor program. Consider these aspects: access to a growing database and analysis of information; better use of tools to enable an easy donation process; creation of a fund development committee of volunteers or board members who will ask for and grow funding; and the use of engaging communication strategies and clear messaging. Some programs may have these components in place while others need to establish some or all of this foundation to effectively implement a donor campaign.

In addition to creating the internal support for funding, there is an emphasis on enhancing existing relationships and building on those of the program. Relationships are central to an individual donor program while employing effective strategies for soliciting and cultivating new donors, and retaining existing ones.

The process of developing the project and the deliverables is documented in the attachment ***Roadmap for Creating a Fund Development Plan***. Guidelines for the content of the plan, areas on which to focus and messaging tools are presented in two key documents: 1) ***Individual Donor Plan for San Jose Public Library's Partners in Reading Program*** and, 2) ***Messaging and Communication Strategies in Support of PAR's Individual Donor Plan***. Also included are supporting documents such as the scope of work, donor survey, communication tools and other resources. The information presented is based on the needs and analysis of PAR; however the process, content and resources are applicable to other programs that are interested in enhancing their individual donor base. Sample messaging tools such as post cards and information sheets are included, as is a remit envelope. Templates for these tools and printer specifications are included for replication by other programs.

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