

Are You Ready for Some Year-End Fundraising?

Almost 50% of all gifts made in a year come in during the last six weeks of the year, with nearly a third of all gifts being made in December!

The end of the calendar year is a call-to-action to start engaging your chapter brothers in making gifts to your house corporation. And, with COVID-19 impacting the operation of most house corporations, this year is the perfect time to implement year-end fundraising.

What can you do in the remaining months of 2020 to raise funds? Below are some recommendations:

1. Identify your funding needs and cost estimates for each. (For example additional cleaning services for COVID, bolstering your cash reserve, upgrades to HVAC, security, or sprinkler systems. Identifying the projects that are most needed helps your fundraising effort – people are more likely to give to specific projects, with a specific price tag.)
2. Create a year-end fundraising committee (10 -12 members?) by identifying a core group of brothers that will help with cultivation and solicitation. Importantly, to serve on this committee, these brothers must first make their contributions before asking others to give.
3. Work with this committee to identify a list of 25 – 35 top prospects that can be asked for an annual gift of \$1,000 or more. This top prospect list starts with the names of those brothers that have given before at or close to this level.
4. Members of the committee begin cultivation and solicitation of the top prospect list. Face-to-face visits always work best, but with the current environment, we are finding fundraising success using video conferencing services such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
5. After your top 25 – 35 prospects have been contacted, send a communication to all graduates (e-blast is the most cost-effective method) that details the year-end fundraising push, and highlights the amount already committed to the effort.

6. Schedule a virtual meeting/event and invite all graduates to attend for an update about the chapter and an appeal as to why their support is so important, especially this year.
7. Don't forget to say thank you to your graduates when they make a gift!

This approach should become part of an annual fundraising program for your chapter, and grows with time as we all begin to revisit (hopefully soon!) campuses for reunions, Pig Dinners, homecoming, and football games.

The bottom line is that people are still giving this year and we should not assume someone will say no to making a gift. Ask and let them make the decision!

For more information on year-end fundraising for your house corporation, please reach out to the team at Columns Fundraising.

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