

Alabama 4-H 101 – Information for Staff and Volunteers

# **Some Basics** **Of** **4-H Fund Raising**

## **Why raise money?**

Fund raising is an increasingly important tool through which 4-H staff, youth and volunteers can obtain the resources we need to carry out our mission. We do this by presenting others with the opportunity for ownership and partnership in our organization. Successful, long-term fund raising is based on building relationships and friendships with donors and potential donors. Planning and executing a successful fund-raising campaign is not a task for one person alone; to be done effectively, it must involve staff, community leaders, volunteers, and—most importantly--the young people themselves. Philanthropy is much more than financial support. 4-H will never be able to reach its potential in your community without the ongoing involvement of committed volunteers at all levels. These individuals, who willingly donate their time, make philanthropy a personal act of kindness and caring. Volunteers have skills, connections, and resources which are key to our success as an organization.

## **No Apologies**

4-H delivers life-changing programs each year to hundreds of young people. The impact of our programs could be measured in the numbers of kids; however, the most meaningful impact of 4-H is the individual lives which it touches. That is why we ask for the support of individuals and businesses.

### COMPONENTS OF FUND RAISING

#### **Making the Case for Support**

Why should anyone support 4-H in your community? Answering that question is the first step in fund raising. Look at our mission and objectives. Consider the number of volunteers and the value of the time which they give. Think about what services are provided and how those services are delivered. Consider how effectively you use the limited resources which you have. Review the history of 4-H in your community and how you are adapting to meet the changing needs of young people.

Unite all of that information into effective and persuasive statements that “tell the 4-H story”: through brochures, appeal letters, press releases, newspaper articles, presentations to community organizations, and one-on-one conversations for building relationships and soliciting funds.

#### **Developing Your Program Budget**

Your program budget should be prepared with input from staff and from your program committee, if you have one. It should include both “needed” and “dream” categories. The budget must be developed prior to recruiting members of your volunteer committee for fund development.

### **Organizing a Fund Development Committee**

Make a list of prospective fund development committee members, based on their connection to 4-H, their interest in 4-H, and their ability to contribute.

#### **Some points to consider:**

- People give to other people, not to programs.
- People who are capable and willing to serve don't magically appear—they must be asked.
- Before contacting someone to serve on the committee, be prepared to state the needs persuasively of young people in your community and the needs of 4-H, as well as being able to state exactly what will be expected of committee members.
- Review your list of prospective committee members, their connection to 4-H, their interest in 4-H, and their ability to contribute. Identify the top candidate and call upon him or her lead the recruitment effort.
- Let the first recruits assist in recruiting other members.
- The people who can assist the most are BUSY people. Be organized to make their jobs easy and not waste their time.
- Set an organizational meeting date and time after checking with key committee members to make sure they can attend.

### **Committee Responsibilities**

It is vital to communicate expectations to committee members. People will be frustrated, feel unimportant and lose interest if they are asked to serve and do not receive the necessary guidance to do so effectively. Clearly and accurately communicate what will be expected of committee members: their time commitment, use of their special skills, and their role in soliciting donors.

#### **RAISING MONEY FROM BUSINESSES**

Writing letters to corporate officials seeking sponsorship/funds for county 4-H programs:

1. Phone first. Find out specifically who to ask and whether he or she can make the type of contribution you are seeking. Check your local library; ask if it has grant information or if it or some nearby library is a local Foundation Center repository. You can look up which corporations give to what.
2. Can you get the letter signed by a VIP: mayor, school principal, local TV news anchor/print news editor, or Chamber of Commerce person?
3. Ask the Chamber of Commerce president for suggestions—who to ask and how to ask.
4. Be straightforward and to the point—the point being why the READER wants to give (doing good, good public relations., turning around troubled youth, community recognition, etc.).
5. For help on drafting a letter, check with the state 4-H development office.