



## FUNDRAISING TIPS

### **FINDING SPONSORS AND PARTNERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

**National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day** provides a great opportunity for you to build relationships with organizations that are connected to the Black community, or that can provide funding, in-kind donations or venue locations.

### **BEFORE YOU BEGIN:**

- Determine **who you want to approach** for funding/sponsorship/partnering. Here are some examples:
  - Friends of your organization.
  - Like minded organizations – those serving other local social and health care needs of Blacks in your area.
  - Advertisers in the community – particularly billboard companies and other metropolitan transit advertising agencies.
  - Businesses with an established presence in the Black community (*e.g. grocery stores, banks and other financial institutions, restaurants, etc.*).
  - Community organizations (*e.g. churches, fraternal organizations, chambers of commerce, etc.*).
  - Individuals with influence in the community.
  - Media (*e.g. television stations, newspapers, and radio stations*).
- Determine **who from your organization will make initial contact**. If someone has a good contact at a specific business, you may want that person to be the one to do the asking. Create a table/spreadsheet outlining your target contact list and who will be responsible for making contact with each person/organization on the list.
- Establish **levels of sponsorship** including in-kind gifts. Below are a few ways that individuals/businesses can show their support for your event.
  - **Monetary donations.** Be sure to itemize what is needed and what various levels of donations will “buy”. You might consider having a Name Sponsor who contributes a specific percentage of the total cost (*e.g. 50%*) and whose name, logo and other identifiers are used on signs, hand-outs, etc. The Name Sponsor should be publicly thanked for their support of your event(s)/activity(ies).

- **In kind gifts.** Grocery stores may donate food and drinks for your event. A movie theater may donate free movie passes to use as an attendance incentive. Be creative in brainstorming the various products and/or services that would be useful and consider those stores as well.
- **Volunteers.** Businesses may encourage their staff to sign up to volunteer for your event(s)/activity(ies), to pass out flyers door-to-door or assist in other ways. Be willing to allow others to help you leading up to, and on the day of the event(s)/activity(ies).
- **Publicity support.** Churches, sororities, fraternities and others may include information about your event(s) in their member newsletter. Local barbers or beauty shops might hand out flyers or display posters in their shops.
- **Media partners.** You might ask non-competitive media – (e.g. a radio station, a television station and a newspaper) – to be media partners and work with you to publicize your event(s)/activity(ies) regularly in the week leading up to February 7. You can list your “media partners” on promotional materials.
- Determine **levels of recognition** for sponsors. What do the sponsors get in return? Do they get their name on posters or signs at your event(s)? Do you mention them in your interviews with local media? Make sure that the return investment for the sponsor fits the donation.

## HOW TO ASK:

Once you know **who you want to approach** for sponsorship/funding/partnering, here is how to proceed:

- **Explain the need.** You need compelling information that shows the potential sponsor or partner why it is important for them to get involved. Prepare information that can be sent or left behind, including fact sheets about HIV/AIDS rates locally, regionally, and nationally, newspaper articles that illustrate the impact of HIV/AIDS in your area, and the press materials you plan to use in your campaign. Some health departments are able to provide HIV/AIDS data and statistics zip code by zip code.
- **Allow time for a reply.** It may take weeks, if not months; for an organization to be able to make a decision about donating. Give them as much time as possible to reply. However, be sure to follow up with them periodically to make sure you are still being considered for a donation.
- **Schedule a face-to-face meeting.** Find out who you should talk with about sponsorship and schedule a meeting with them. Be armed with information including fact sheets about HIV/AIDS rates and press materials whenever you meet with a potential sponsor. Also, be sure to take a formal invitation letter addressed to the individual with whom you are meeting. Do your research about any support they have provided in the past to your organization, community, or HIV/AIDS overall.

- **Be punctual & Dress to impress.** Once you have set up and confirmed a meeting, be sure to show up on time and wearing clothing that compliments the environment you are entering. When in doubt, dress suits for women and business casual for men is appropriate.
- Or, **mail a personalized letter with your factual information.** In-person meetings are far more preferable, but if this is not possible, find out who you should send information to regarding sponsorship and mail them a personalized letter. Always follow-up with a telephone call and try to schedule a meeting to determine if a donation is feasible and to discuss next steps.
- **Keep a record.** Make sure that you keep correspondence with organizations on file. This will make it easier for you to approach them in the future. It also helps you track each and every contribution/donation solicited and received.
- **Send a thank-you note.** In addition to thanking your sponsors and partners, let them know the impact NBHAAD had in your community, as well as nationwide. Let them know how many people participated and share success stories that affirm the importance of the event. You will have to gauge your relationship with the sponsor to determine if you should also include pictures in your correspondence. Then, put their names on your list to call next year. A thank you card *with a personal note* written inside along with your business card will go a long way in helping them to remember you, just in case you need their support next year.

Special Note: **Please don't hesitate to contact Healthy Black Communities, Inc. to provide a second eye or give constructive feedback on ideas you may have regarding fundraising. P: 877-384-5964, ext. 120 | E: [info@blackaidsday.org](mailto:info@blackaidsday.org)**