

Frontline Fundraising

An initiative of ROBERTA STEVENS, 2010–2011 ALA President

Toolkit

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ALA PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE: FRONTLINE FUNDRAISING

Creation of this toolkit would have not been possible without the assistance of the numerous individuals who took the time to share information and their expertise on fundraising. Thank you for your contributions to the development of the Frontline Fundraising Toolkit.

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A MESSAGE FROM 2010–2011 ALA PRESIDENT ROBERTA STEVENS



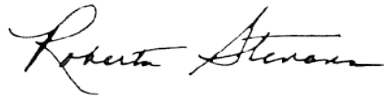
One of the great rewards of being president of the American Library Association is making an impact in an area about which you feel personally passionate. For me, advocacy and fundraising have been key concerns as we face an economy that threatens libraries and the services they provide for millions of individuals every day.

The good news is that libraries don't have to prove that they are needed. Data show that they are used now more than ever. But while library use grows exponentially, the cuts keep coming—shorter hours, shuttered branches, furloughed staff, reductions in new materials, fewer programs, and the continued struggle to ensure access to the most up-to-date technologies and electronic content. Library staff and administrators have done a good job of making less do more, but there is a point at which you can't do any more than you're doing with the resources you have.

Building support for libraries through advocacy has been a key ALA goal and a presidential initiative for me and my predecessors. As a next step in advocacy for libraries, ALA members and staff have collaborated on the development of the *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit*.

Frontline Fundraising can be used by anyone, regardless of the library's type or size, to supplement local or institutional budgets. Following the model of Frontline Advocacy developed during the presidency of Camila Alire, this toolkit helps library staff and supporters understand how annual funds, special gifts (such as memorials and tributes), major gifts and planned giving work. It provides the basics to start thinking about new ways to raise private dollars using the power of the Internet. It is a guide through the stages of donor relationships. In short, anyone who spends time with the *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit* will find something helpful for their library.

Private dollars can't solve the public funding crisis, but they can be a lifeline to libraries during this difficult time and they can allow libraries to offer services that might never have been possible with existing funding sources. I hope that you will use the *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit* and share the information it contains with your library's advocates.



WELCOME TO FRONTLINE FUNDRAISING

Getting Started in Eight Easy Steps

"I have tried raising money by asking for it, and by not asking for it. I always got more money by asking for it."

—Millard Fuller, Founder, Habitat for Humanity.

Library fundraising takes place every day and at all levels of complexity, from the smallest library's book or bake sale to the large urban library's multi-million dollar capital campaign. You can design a fundraising effort that is perfectly suited to your library, your community and the resources of each. This *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit* will help you position yourself to do just that.

The guide covers the basics of annual funds, memorials and tributes, online giving and planned giving. It will also teach you how to deepen relationships with your donors and move your donors from being one-time givers to long-term library supporters. Remember that successful fundraising isn't about money. It's about *relationships*, and wise fundraisers understand the importance of nurturing those relationships.

Regardless of what methods you use to raise funds for your library, start with these eight easy steps.

1. **Recruit help.** In small or rural libraries, most of the responsibility for leading this effort will fall on the shoulders of the library director or manager, but he or she need not embark on this alone. If you are the director or manager, find responsible, well-positioned people to assist you. You don't need a huge committee. Six to eight people who have passion (and time) for the library as well as connections to your community will be enough. Some will be members of your Friends group, your staff or your board. Others might be individuals who are well networked and positioned to be effective spokespeople to potential donors. Think broadly when putting this team together.

2. **Examine your library's community.** Work with your committee to look at your community's political, economic, social and cultural environment. What are your community's strengths? Its challenges? Its important issues? What is happening with education, business, jobs, the arts? Take time to think about and to articulate these because they will be the foundation of your library's position as it seeks private funding. Create a checklist of your community's ten most important attributes and issues.

3. **Tie your library to community issues.** If you've done a good job evaluating your community, connecting your library with its issues and values should be fairly straightforward. Take the checklist you have created and determine how the library relates to each one. Preparing children for school? Your library has story times and early literacy activities for children and families. Resources for students? Your library offers homework and research help every day. Unemployment? Your library is a major destination for job seekers who need computers to search and apply for jobs. Literacy for non-English speakers? Your library offers classes in English and materials in several languages. Got the idea? This is a good ongoing exercise whether or not your library is developing a fundraising plan.

4. **Develop your case.** People will give to you because you meet needs, not just because you have needs. What are you raising money for, and why is it important? Maybe you need funds for general operations, or maybe you want to raise dollars for a specific program or service. This is the time to take all of your analysis and state your case for support as clearly and succinctly as you can. Develop a proposal that you can submit to businesses, civic groups, and others that explains why your library is pivotal to the success of your community, why public funding is inadequate to maintain its services, and why it needs help from private sources too. Turn "problems" into fundraising opportunities!

5. **Identify potential donors.** Who is in a position to support your library? Is it local businesses? A civic or fraternal organization? A book club or garden club? Parents? Which individuals are likely in a position to write a check? Use your committee to develop this list, then determine what the best approach is for asking each one on the list. Remember that sometimes, it's not what you ask for, but **who** does the asking, so give careful thought and planning to who "makes the ask" for each potential donor you have identified.

6. **Make your fundraising visible.** Consider planning activities that call attention to your library's role in the community and its vital services. Events such as book sales, contests, read-a-thons, speaker programs, and others are all great ways to add some spin to your fundraising efforts. A word of caution here: Don't lose sight of the notion of return on investment. If you plan an activity that is labor intensive or logistically complicated, and the potential fundraising return is small, it may not be worth it. Consider your library's resources.

7. **Be realistic about the kinds of fundraising your library can succeed at.** This is not about being negative; it's about being honest. Set goals that are ambitious, but achievable in the context of your community's size, its resources, and the environment you have evaluated.

8. **Have fun with fundraising!** With careful planning, an effective and energetic team to help you, and some good old-fashioned determination, you can make your library's fundraising effort enjoyable **and** profitable.

LAYING YOUR FOUNDATION

Developing a Fundraising Plan

Start with your mission

An effective fundraising plan should lay out specific strategies that advance the mission of the organization. It should include measurable goals. Your library fundraising plan should be created in partnership with the people you've recruited to help you—your Friends group, fundraising committee/board or other key volunteers.

Identify your priorities and costs

Look at your library and its community

As your library strives to fill community needs, where are its gaps? What are its biggest aspirations? How do these priorities advance the library's mission and help it better serve its community? Can you tell the story of why each priority is important or urgent, and how it improves the lives of library users?

Look at your revenue sources

What are the resources required to reach your goals? Where do you get those resources? Funds for your library's operating budget may come from local and state government, from reallocation of resources, from fees and fines, and through debt/bonds. While these sources are important, they can no longer do it all. As a result, *fundraising*—raising private dollars—can provide other revenue streams to advance your library's mission. Remember, however, that private funds can never fully replace public dollars. As a rule, it's best to fund basic services with public funding and use private funding for service and resource enhancements.

Look at costs

How much will it take to realize and sustain each priority area through the life of the program or service? Be sure to include staffing time, marketing costs, facilities costs such as space rental, and technical costs. Will this program or service be funded through expendable designated gifts toward operating funds? Or will this be an endowment opportunity, in which only generated interest will be spent? Or both? Is this a capital project? A planned giving option?

Look at goals

In addition to aspirational priorities, do you have an annual goal of dollars to raise for operating costs? If so, you may also want to have an option for expendable donations to go toward unrestricted operating funds—such as a category “for the greatest need” or “Director’s Innovation Fund.”

Develop your rationales

There are good reasons why you have selected each of your priorities. Articulate those! Understand and be able to explain why your library should offer homework help. Who needs information literacy classes? In what areas does your collection need enhancement? Make a case for these priorities. Use the data your library collects to strengthen your case.

Identify your prospects

(Note: if you have NO prospects yet, don’t panic, you will!)

Your “prospects” are individuals and organizations that might be inclined to support your library’s services and programs. Start by asking yourself, “Did we raise any private funding during the last fiscal year?” If you did, how much did you raise? Who are your current and prospective donors (individuals, corporations, foundations, government)? Be specific. How much did they give? Is there a possibility that they can and may give more? What areas or programs would appeal to each of them? When do you need their gift (close date)?

Who will make the ask? This is a very important question because donors are much likely to give when the right person asks for a gift. The right person may be a trusted friend, colleague or an individual who has set an example with his or her own gift.

Who among your annual donors gives \$250 or \$500 dollar gifts? Who has increased his/her giving over time? Do you or any of your volunteers know these individuals?

Can you create a program such as an annual Leadership Circle to encourage \$1,000+ donations? Can you make phone calls or set up a visits to thank larger donors, and ask these donors to consider joining the Leadership Circle by giving or pledging at or above the \$1,000 level?

How can you make it easy for the donor to give? Examples include: online donations, monthly automatic payment options, and text-a-donation.

Who among your donors has significant wealth? Can Trustees or volunteers identify them? Can they set up an introductory visit to talk about the vision for your library? Are your volunteers connected to any private foundations or trusts?

See the *Sample planning grid* below for an example of how to organize your prospects.

Sample planning grid

List all solicitations except for your annual fund drive including the targeted dollar amount, gift capacity (could be from ratings or knowing the donor), purpose, and anticipated close date.

Prospect Name	Gift Amount	Gift Capacity	Purpose	Anticipated Close Date	Individual assigned
Henry	\$100	\$200	Information literacy classes	December 31	Trustee Mary
Sui	\$250	\$250	Collection endowment	Closed	Volunteer Sue
Isabelle	\$500	\$1,000	Homework assistance program	June 30	Friends member Nate
Peter	\$1,000	Unknown	Unrestricted/ Director's Innovation Fund	December	Department Head George
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	\$100,000+	\$250,000	Estate gift	June 30	Foundation Director Judith
Community Foundation	\$10,000	\$10,000	Neighborhood Special Collections	January	Local history librarian Amy

How many prospects fall into varying gift levels? How much can you expect to bring in this fiscal year? What is the gap between expected dollars raised and your goals?

Sample range of gifts table (sometimes referred to as gift pyramid)

A range of gifts table is useful in showing the number and magnitude of gifts needed to successfully complete a fundraising campaign. With an understanding of how many gifts of varying amounts are needed, you can begin to see how well your prospect base matches the needed gifts. You may discover that you are in a very good position to undertake a campaign, or you may realize that more work needs to be done to build your prospect base. One other thing—it is important to realize that three or four prospects might be needed for each gift required at a given level. So, if you need four gifts of \$5,000, you will likely have to identify 12 prospects capable of making a gift at that amount.

The table below shows how the number and size of gifts might fall for a relatively large fundraising campaign (\$250,000), but the same process can be used for a fundraising campaign of any size.

A \$250,000 campaign might look like this:

Gifts needed	Gift amount	Total	Cumulative total
1	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
2	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
4	\$10,000	\$40,000	\$140,000
10	\$5,000	\$50,000	\$190,000
12	\$2,500	\$30,000	\$220,000
25	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$245,000
many	Less than \$1,000	\$5,000	\$250,000

Cultivate and grow your donor base

Once you complete your table, you may find yourself looking at a gap between what you can raise and what you need.

One strategy for bridging that gap is to strengthen the donors you already have. What actions and activities can you deploy to expand your prospect pool and funding base? Can you go back to lapsed donors and ask them to renew? Can Trustees help to identify other high level prospects and set up introductory visits? Can librarians research past volunteers and employees and set up ways to engage them, such as an annual “meet and greet” at the library, a targeted appeal, or by setting up individual visits? Is there a special event built around a strategic priority that you can leverage to raise funds?

Finding new donors is important too. If you have no prospects, don’t despair. Think again. Maybe you have not been asking. Do you have donor appeals on all brochures and printed material, verbal appeals at all events, programs, material check-out locations, and on your website? Give prospective donors many opportunities to self-identify that they vote for the library with a donation. Remember

that most people, even those who have the ability to make large gifts, give small first-time gifts to organizations.

Use advocacy and marketing effectively

What is advocacy, and what is marketing? They are not the same, but together they provide value and enhancements.

Advocacy is the process of advancing a cause or course of action, often to affect public opinion. Let's assume you've heard that your library is about to face a devastating budget cut that will curtail hours and force the elimination of some vital services, an everyday occurrence in today's economy. Encouraging library users to call or e-mail decision makers to urge them *not* to cut the library's budget is advocacy. Writing letters to the editor of your community newspaper or asking volunteers to hand out flyers is advocacy too. People who speak out in any fashion on behalf of your library are citizens who *vote*, and their opinions matter to decision makers. They can be your library's champions—its advocates.

Marketing usually refers to the promotion of a product or service in order to influence people to buy or use it. Marketing communicates messages that influence people's behavior, not just persuading them to use your library, but to support it with their private gifts as well. Marketing lets people know that you need private funding and makes it easy for an individual or organization to give. What marketing strategies can you carry out to let prospects know about opportunities to donate to the library? Can you combine these with overall outreach and engagement strategies (e.g. of messaging: "Ways to get involved!" "Volunteer, Bring a friend, Donate!") Can you include donor and user testimonial clips repurposed in many places including the Library's website, blog, teletrons, donor web page, and on various social media?

When used together in an effective, strategic way, advocacy and marketing can influence public opinion and grow your library's donor base, along with its visibility in the community.

Measure your success

Outline your success metrics. These will tell you how well you've done, and could include:

- Target goal of dollars to be raised
 - Actual dollars raised
- Targeted percentage increases at specific giving levels
 - Actual percentage increases at specific giving levels
- Targeted number of personal visits
 - Actual number personal visits
- Anticipated number of grant applications or major gift solicitations to be sent out
 - Actual number of grant applications or major gift solicitations sent out
- Target number of donors who leapt from one giving level to the next
 - Actual number of donors who leapt from one giving level to the next
- Target increase in the number of online donors
 - Actual increase in the number of online donors

Seven tips:

1. **Ask!**
2. Use your fundraising plan as guide for action. The most important element of fundraising is to ask, and most people give **because they are asked**.
3. Keep your ask simple: "I hope you will become a Friend of the Library because they allow us to go above and beyond and bring all these important services and resources to our users, to our community."
4. Don't be afraid to ask for significant levels of support. You may be pleasantly surprised.
5. Don't be afraid to ask again. Persistence often becomes gentle persuasion.
6. Thank the donor right away and demonstrate how you use the gift over time.
7. Remember: **ask!**

Conclusion

Thinking ahead about your library's needs and determining the best strategies for meeting those needs will provide you with a roadmap to direct all kinds of library fundraising activities. And, above all, don't be shy. **Ask!**

THE ANNUAL FUND

The Cornerstone of All Fundraising

Background on the annual fund

The basis for all fundraising for libraries and every institution should be raising funds from *individuals*. Nationally, contributions from individuals constitute about 75% of all philanthropic giving in the United States. Only 25% of philanthropic giving comes from foundations and corporations. (*source: Giving USA, 2010*)

Therefore, it makes sense for libraries to focus much of their fundraising efforts on individuals within their community who are capable of making charitable contributions to the library. If a library conducts no other type of fundraising activities, an annual fund that solicits individuals in the community should be the first aspect of a fundraising program that can be implemented easily.

What is an annual fund?

An annual fund is a solicitation of individuals that asks for unrestricted support for the library and its programs. It is carried out through a combination of direct mail pieces (usually solicitation letters and, if available, brochures) and one-on-one individual solicitations between a volunteer for the library and the individual being solicited. The annual fund is typically conducted in October, November or December, when individuals are giving more consideration to year-end contributions. An annual fund solicitation will typically highlight the good works that the library or support organization (Friends or Foundation) has accomplished during the year. It will also specify that all gifts to the annual fund will be *unrestricted*, that is, eligible to support any of the library's activities.

Note: If your library has a Friends group or a Foundation, and they conduct an annual membership campaign, ask them to do that in mid-year rather than at year-end to ensure that donors are not receiving library solicitations over too short a time period.

Another note: Your annual fund doesn't have to be limited to individuals. You can include businesses in your community too. In that case, address your solicitation letter to the individual who owns or manages the business and/or who is known to one of your volunteers.

The difference between an annual fund and a membership campaign

Many Friends groups and Foundations conduct membership campaigns throughout the year. Membership contributions can be solicited from individuals anytime during the year. Most individuals think of a membership contribution as a fairly small gift; most memberships are in the \$10 to \$50 range. Most donors who give a membership contribution don't think very much about that gift constituting a charitable (tax deductible) contribution, but rather view it as a small token that provides an affiliation between the individual and the institution.

An annual fund contribution, however, is made at the end of the year and *does* feel like a tax deductible contribution to the giver because that is the time of year when people are thinking about doing just that—taking advantage of a last chance to lower their taxes. As a result, people are usually more generous with their annual fund contribution than with their membership contribution; thus, the annual fund has the potential to bring in large amounts of revenue.

Why the annual fund is “the cornerstone” of all fundraising

The annual fund carries this distinction for three reasons:

1. It keeps donors *loyal and invested* in your work by keeping them informed every year of what the organization has accomplished. In other words, the annual fund keeps your organization “front and center” and reminds donors of all the good work you do.
2. It allows for *flexibility*. Because the dollars an annual fund raises are unrestricted, those dollars can to be spent wherever they are most needed.
3. It can become an individual's *stepping stone to a higher level of giving*. From the annual fund, individuals can progress to becoming “major” gift

donors (however your library defines this) and, finally, to planned giving, leaving a gift to your library in their will or estate plan.

How to get started

If you've never done fundraising for your library and no annual fund is currently in place, you can easily begin your first annual fund with just a little bit of time and effort on the part of one or two library staff members and a few volunteers.

- **Begin with a brainstorming session.** Gather a group of library insiders like key staff, Trustees and volunteers. Ask each individual present to write down the names of five to ten individuals whom they know and are willing to send a letter to, soliciting an annual fund contribution. Ask one person to gather all the names and remove duplicates. Create a very simple database with those individuals' names and addresses. Add columns that will indicate whether or not they respond to your solicitation letter and the amount of their gift if one is given.
- **Draft a compelling one-page letter.** See "Tips for creating effective solicitation letters" below and a *sample solicitation letter at the end of this section of the toolkit.*
- **Track your donations in the database you have created.** Continue to add names and addresses to your database whenever you can. Building your database throughout the year will give you a strong start for your next annual fund campaign.
- **Thank your donors immediately.** Timeliness is so important. Send a thank you letter as soon as each gift is received. Whenever possible, make a thank you phone call too. When donors feel appreciated, they will be motivated to give again.

Tips for creating effective solicitation letters

The solicitation letter is your library's single opportunity to make your case for support, and it's important that you do it well. Here are seven guidelines for writing effective letters:

1. **Develop a letter that is just one-page long.** Donors don't want to wade through three pages. Too many words will cause them to skim your letter and finally to put it down. Don't let that happen! Take the time to write a short letter that goes straight to the point. Use bullets to list your accomplishments. Make your ask clear and direct. See the sample solicitation letter at the end of this section of the *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit*.
2. **Whenever possible, personalize your letters.** If one of your volunteers knows the individual to whom a solicitation letter will be mailed, have that volunteer write a personal note on the letter. It can be as simple as, "Liz, I know you use the library. I hope you can help us out! (volunteer's name)," or even, "Thanks, Liz! (volunteer's name)."
3. **Include a response card and self-addressed return envelope.** You want to make giving as easy as possible for your donors. Don't make them search for paper and an envelope! The response card should be simple and clear so that anyone can fill it out in less than a minute. **See the sample response card at the end of this section of the Frontline Fundraising Toolkit.** (Note: You should not put postage on the self-addressed return envelope.)
4. **Use real stamps for your solicitation letters.** Some people won't open envelopes that are obviously part of a bulk mailing. (These have bulk mail stamps or indicia.) Take time to purchase and apply postage stamps to the envelope that holds your solicitation letter, response card and return envelope.
5. **If possible, have volunteers hand-address envelopes.** Yes, this is a little work, but research shows that hand-addressed envelopes are more likely to be opened than machine-addressed ones. Hand-addressing adds an element of personalization to your mailing.
6. **Personalize your envelope too.** People give to people. If the solicitation letter is signed by an individual who is known to the recipient, add the signer's name as part of your return address on your mailing envelope. This will increase the likelihood that the letter will be opened and read.
7. **Take personalization to the next level.** Whenever possible, when a volunteer signs a solicitation letter that is being mailed to someone they know, ask



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November 13, 2009

Dear Library Friend,

Given the many challenges we have all recently experienced, The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library is fortunate to have supporters like you. Because I know you value the Library and the services it provides to our community, please consider a year-end gift to The Friends. In these trying times, it is all about continuing, and even increasing, your support for the Library, an *essential institution* in the city of Saint Paul, and a personally important place for many who live here.

Your generous past gifts have enabled The Friends to provide the Library with funds needed for after-school programs and homework assistance for thousands of children and teens. The Friends continues strong annual support of the Summer Reading Program, children's events, adult cultural programs, and the purchase of thousands of books. Your donations allow the Library to offer computers and the Internet to patrons who would not otherwise have access. No matter what happens to the economy in the short run, the Library's long term needs remain and must be met, as its use continues to increase significantly in these difficult economic times.

Please give generously. A donation form and return envelope are enclosed for your convenience. The Friends' goal is to raise \$150,000 during the year-end campaign, which provides much-needed annual support for Friends and Library programs. Your contribution will help us maintain a world-class Library system and ensure a place that serves everyone.

Thank you for your generosity and your support.

Best Regards,

Peter D. Pearson
President

*P.S. When making a gift to The Friends in your will or trust, please use the following language:
I give to The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library, 325 Cedar Street, Suite 555, Saint Paul, MN
55101, ___ percent of my residuary estate (or, the sum of \$____, or a description of the property,
securities, etc.) for its endowment funds.*

325 Cedar Street, Suite 555 • Saint Paul, MN 55101-1055 • www.thefriends.org
(651) 222-3242 • Fax (651) 222-1988 • friends@thefriends.org

if they will make a follow-up phone call or even a personal visit to encourage a gift. This will increase the likelihood that you will receive a larger gift than you would have without the extra personal touch.

Conclusion

An annual fund is one of the **easiest** ways to incorporate private fundraising into your library's overall operations. Once an annual fund has been in place for several years, individuals will typically begin giving larger amounts as they recognize that the library is an institution which needs—and deserves—ongoing charitable contributions.

Yes! I'm pleased to support the work of The Friends.

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of:

\$1,000 \$100
 \$500 \$50
 \$250 \$25
 Other: \$ _____

Name (if): _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Please send your receipt electronically? Yes No
 Email: _____
 My check is enclosed (made payable to **FSPPFL**)
 Please charge my credit card:
 Visa MasterCard American Express Discover
 Credit card number: _____
 Expiration date: _____ CVV code: _____
 Signature: _____
 I prefer that my gift remain anonymous.

THE FRIENDS
of the **SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Please return to:
The Friends of the
Saint Paul Public Library
325 Cedar Street, Suite 555
Saint Paul, MN 55101

For more information, call 651-222-3142,
email friends@thefriends.org, or
visit www.thefriends.org

The Work Place
A wide variety of job, career and small business programs and services are available at the SPPL.

The Study Place
Homework Centers offer computers, printers, references and supplies for students of all ages.

The Reading Place
The Friends provides extensive support for children's programs at the SPPL.

The Music Place
Besides having access to a variety of DVDs and videos, the SPPL is the place to go see movies.

The Arts Place
The SPPL offers popular classes, discussion and performances by our favorite local artists.

The Research Place
The SPPL is the place to do all your research with new online tools as well as the old-fashioned way.

The Story Place
The SPPL offers more than 200 free storytimes each year at every branch in the system.

The Training Place
The SPPL offers trainings, including computer classes, GED, College Prep, ESL, and more.

Please ensure the future of the Saint Paul Public Library through a gift to The Friends today. Thank You!

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For receipt and purposes, your gift is acknowledged in the full record of the year.

MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES

Easy Ways to Support the Library While Honoring Someone Special

Regardless of the size of your library, memorials and tributes (sometimes called honoraria) should be part of your fundraising plan. Memorials are gifts made in memory of someone who has died. Tributes are gifts made to honor someone still living. They can be given on the occasion of a birthday, graduation, anniversary or other special occasion.

Thanks to the computer and Word software, you can easily design your own “memorials and tributes” brochure and feel proud to give people something that looks professional. The goal is to create a simple, yet effective, brochure that

will grab the attention of both library customers and the general public. You’ll want to use color and/or design to draw the viewer’s eye to it. You’ll



also want your library's invitation to donate in this special way to be strong, clear and appealing.

This section of the *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit* will give you some tips for creating a simply-designed "Giving to the Library" brochure that invites memorial and tribute gifts, following the example of the Pioneer Library System Foundation in Norman, Oklahoma. The brochure example included here can be adapted to your library, your needs and your budget. **(See the full-sized "Giving to the Library" brochure at the end of this section of the toolkit.)**

Even if this is your library's first foray into fundraising, and no one on your staff has skills as a graphic artist, you can still create a *great* brochure using the steps outlined below. (Note: Always consult with your library administration before writing or designing any brochures.)

Remember: "simplicity"

- **Tag line and message**—Start here with your "tag line," a title that will catch someone's eye and attention. "Giving to the Library" is the tagline on the sample brochure.

Now, what do you want to say? Keep the message simple. Your library does wonderful things with its resources, providing benefits to potentially everyone in its community. Memorial and tribute gifts allow your library staff to increase library materials, services and programs for library users and bring more people into the library. Tell the reader what your library needs, how memorial and tribute gifts will be used, and how he or she can contribute. Be sure people know that your library's staff and administration are good stewards of its resources.

- **Design**—The design should be simple too. The sample shown here is a simple three-fold brochure that uses 8 ½" x 11" paper. Text can be composed on the staff computer, using Word software. Keep it clear and straightforward. Download (or scan) photos that have been taken at your library. Need some graphics? Word software's clip art contains copyright-free photos and

graphics. Check out Wikimedia Commons too (http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page). Ideally, you will want to copy your finished brochure on a color copier. (If you can only make black and white copies, choose photos and graphics that will reproduce clearly without color.)

The photos included on the sample brochure suggest the various kinds of giving that a donor might be interested in. You can do the same by choosing photos or illustrations that suggest areas of support or types of gifts that will interest *your* donors. Many people begin their giving experience to the library by honoring a loved one's birthday or accomplishments, or by remembering the loved one's loss. Use your text and illustrations to give your brochure a focus, encouraging this simple way of giving.

- **Donation form**—Again, keep it *simple!* Your donation form should take no more than a minute or two to complete. The sample brochure contains a donation form that directs donations to specific community locations or to Adult Literacy Programs. Your library can choose whatever designations work best for you. The important thing is to make giving *simple* for the donor. Use boxes that can be checked off and blanks that can be quickly filled in.

More tips

Be sure to consider and include these things when designing the brochure:

- Design, color choices, use of photos
- Library logo, if you have one
- Welcoming, positive message to the reader that explains the library's successful work
- Clear, concise statement regarding why more funds are needed and what they will be used for
- Suggestions of reasons and occasions that are just right for memorial and tribute giving
- Library (or receiving organization, such as Friends or Foundation) address and contact information

- Name and phone number of library staff to call with questions regarding donations
- Space for the donor's name and contact information
- Space for the honoree's name for memorials and tributes (and contact information, if desired)
- Space for payment information and tax-exempt status note

A final grace note is to remember to say "thank you" to the potential donors who read your brochure. It can be as simple as adding one line at the bottom of the brochure that simply says, *"Thank you for supporting your library!"* Your statement of gratitude might be just the message that inspires someone to give.

Your library customers *do* care about their library and want to help it succeed. A simple brochure that explains memorial and tribute giving and is available at several locations in your library is a good way to begin your fundraising efforts. It's also a great reminder to your library patrons that *their support makes a difference* to the library's success and to its continued presence in the community.

Conclusion

Many small libraries find memorials and tributes to be the simplest method of soliciting private funds. They also find that, once a donor has given in this fashion, there's a good likelihood that he or she will do so again.

ONLINE DONATIONS

The Newest Way to Give

The Internet has revolutionized almost every aspect of our society. Little wonder, then, that it has revolutionized fundraising too. Why should your library consider online fundraising? Here are seven good reasons:

1. **It's immediate.** Donors can give with a few quick clicks.
2. **It's cost effective.** No printing or postage.
3. **It's timely.** You can take advantage of your library's media exposure or other promotional opportunities.
4. **It brings in new donors.** Search engines that drive users to your library's website will drive them to your donation request too.
5. **It brings in younger donors.** As a demographic, Internet users are younger than people who respond to direct mail.
6. **It brings in larger donations.** Research has shown that households with Internet connections tend to be wealthier and better educated than those without the Internet.
7. **People expect it.** We give to almost everyone else online, why not the library?

Online donations 101

In order for your library to engage in online fundraising, it must first have an online presence. As simple as this sounds, some small libraries do not have their own websites. Therefore, step one is creating online access: via a website, Facebook page, Twitter thread, library blog or wiki. Online exposure is paramount. Patrons cannot donate online unless they know where to go!

Web pages usually require some level of expertise, but website designers are not difficult to find, nor is website creation costly. Are there individuals who will create a simple website for your library at no charge? Ask around your community.

You don't need a fancy website, but you do need one that's attractive, easy to navigate and simple to update. The basics for your website should include your library's name and logo, address, hours and contact information. Include your mission statement, as well as information about your library's programs and services and how it meets community needs. Talk about what resources you must have to keep your library strong, then add a "Donate" button that will allow people to donate online. Avoid the three most common website mistakes: outdated information, difficult navigation, and boring design.

Facebook pages are free and very easy to create. Many libraries have Facebook pages. To create a Facebook page, go to www.facebook.com and sign up. After that, click on "Create a Page," then on "Local Business or Place." You will find a dropdown menu with a "Library" option you can choose. Follow instructions from there. Use your library's Facebook page to guide people to your website and from there to the "Donate" button.

Twitter (www.twitter.com) can be an adventure in online visibility for your library! Check out that website and see if you and your library supporters want to start tweeting about how great your library is—and how much it needs people's help to stay that way.

Blogging is a creative way to keep library lovers informed about what's happening at your library and to let them know how they can get involved in many ways, from volunteering to giving. Blogging is free. Check out some of the most common blogging sites to get started: Blogger (a service of Google), Posterous, LiveJournal, WordPress, Xanga, Blog.com, and Digg. Use blogs and tweets to entice people to visit your library's website.

Once someone clicks on the "Donate" button on your website, how do they actually make a donation? Most of us may have purchased items online with a credit card or a bid on eBay, and then paid via an online account. One secure option is PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com> It is a wonderful option for accepting online payments without investing in an expensive Ecommerce set up. Donations can be given anonymously and paid via a donor's own PayPal account or by credit

card. Many local schools, shelters, and churches fundraise via online utilizing this option. The librarian or other library representative would first need to set up a PayPal account for the organization and open a corporate account for the donations. In public libraries, this often must be voted on first by the Board of Trustees. The Library itself can accept PayPal donations by setting up its own account, or a separate organization like a Friends group or Foundation can also set up a PayPal account.

Other online donation sites include Razoo (<http://www.razoo.com/>) and Network for Good (<http://www1.networkforgood.org/>).

A creative librarian can also link a book wish list for the library via <https://www.amazon.com/books>. Patrons can then go to Amazon.com, order the items and have them sent directly to the library, or they can have the books sent to themselves. then donate the items in person. The library blog or PayPal page can also be linked to other local organizations and businesses: e.g. The Chamber of Commerce, Welcome Center, and City Hall. Local community organizations like schools, churches, and business might also help spread the word.

Primary and Secondary school libraries are usually part of a middle school or high school web page and thus have IT support. Public libraries are usually part of a much larger library system or consortium and must adhere to system rules and board regulations. Private libraries and academic university libraries usually can exert more control over fundraising because they are the sole resource and not part of a larger system. University libraries can often incorporate more personalized options like digital bookplates into their cataloging system: e.g. Brown University <http://library.brown.edu/bookplates/index.php>.

Strengthen your online presence with old-fashioned advocacy

Don't rely entirely on the Internet to tell people what the library does and needs. The library must have multiple means of exposure, publicized goals, and a positive attitude about change in order to be successful in fundraising. Many patrons

feel libraries are self sufficient, and they are often unaware of financial woes, furlough days, budget cuts, and reduced staff.

Becoming visible and active in your library's community is very important, and this is where good old-fashioned advocacy comes in. The librarian or library representatives (Friends, Foundation staff, volunteers, parents and library lovers) should attend school board, city hall and city council meetings. When attending those meetings, ask for support frequently, but always in a friendly way. Local community leaders often look to their own constituents first, and those constituents must keep the library on the minds of local politicians, businessmen, and administrators. Cater a breakfast in the library before the next city hall or school board meeting. Get the public officials into the library (even if it's just for the food), then market yourself, the library and its resources.

Weekly newspaper articles keep the library in the news and in the mind of the community. Publicize how valuable your library is by printing increased circulation numbers, information about classes on creating resumes, and your free after-school student activities. Make sure the local community comprehends the work and value of your library: e.g. public computer access, wireless Internet Network, free DVD, vhs, audio books, and of course print circulation.

Align your library with other organizations like Family Connection, Head Start, the local police and fire department. Start small, have a goal, and create an engaging online presence. Become involved in the community first, and then start asking for support and additional resources. Always remember to be positive and optimistic.

Conclusion

Online giving grows every year, and there's every reason to assume that growth will continue. Bring your library fundraising into the 21st century by giving your library's donors the opportunity for easy online giving. Remember all the reasons it's a good idea! Start simple and grow your online donor base.

PLANNED GIVING

Encouraging People to Leave a Legacy

Those who love libraries have the power to strengthen and protect these institutions today, tomorrow, and beyond by making a planned gift. For libraries of all sizes, planned giving is the future. It is estimated that \$20 trillion will be transferred intergenerationally between 2000 and 2020.

Planned giving doesn't have to be complicated or frightening. For small libraries and libraries without development staff or individuals knowledgeable in planned giving, there are several simple types of planned gifts that can be encouraged and promoted. The information in this section of the *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit* will focus on the three easiest planned giving options:

- Outright gifts
- Life insurance
- Retirement plans

This toolkit will provide sample language for you to use. While it doesn't cover every planned giving option or all the tax benefits, it provides definition and language that you should become familiar with. You don't have to be a planned giving expert to secure planned gifts for your library. Remember—your prospects need to work with their attorney, financial planner, accountant or other professional advisor before finalizing their gift.

What is planned giving?

Planned giving describes a wide variety of giving vehicles that allow donors to give to your library during their lifetimes and/or after their deaths, while meeting their current income needs and providing for their heirs. Planned giving is a form of charitable giving (philanthropy) that involves contributing one's assets through wills and estate plans. A planned gift is a *future* gift to a library to enhance its

mission and work. It's a lot like planting a tree today so someone can enjoy its shade tomorrow.

The typical planned gift is one that will provide charitable benefit upon the donor's death (bequest). A donor may also make a planned gift to the library while alive and receive a charitable deduction immediately, but the library will not receive any funds for its benefit until the donor passes away.

Planned gifts help organizations meet their long-term goals and help provide for responsible and effective financial management. People today are more aware of the personal benefits derived from including libraries and charities in their estate plans.

Planned gifts can allow the donor to:

- Make a personally significant gift, often larger than he or she thought possible.
- Enjoy the satisfaction of providing the means for the library to fulfill its mission.
- Save on gift and estate taxes.
- Reduce or avoid capital gains taxes.
- Pass assets on to family members at reduced tax costs.
- Increase income and effective rate of return.
- Possibly receive income for life.
- Leave a legacy without giving up assets.

Planned gifts are often called legacy gifts because so many are created to make an impact for future generations. It is surprisingly easy to arrange a planned gift. Though more sophisticated gifts will require more care, many methods are quite straightforward. The easiest way to include the library in an estate gift is through a will, also referred to as "a bequest." The two words can be used interchangeably.

Why planned giving should be a priority

Whether your development program is small, large or somewhere in between, planned giving should be a priority for a number of reasons, some of which are:

- Planned giving offers the greatest opportunity for individuals to make their largest gift to an organization, often referred to as an “ultimate gift,” it can help donors accomplish more through their giving than they may have imagined was possible. Every effort should be made to encourage and facilitate planned gifts with all of your donors.
- When a continual focus on identifying and cultivating individuals closer to your organization for the purpose of maximizing giving is in place, planned giving conversations should be a natural progression in building the relationship.
- Planned gifts are among the most cost-effective gifts which can be raised.

Who makes planned gifts?

The best planned giving prospects are those who have been loyal to the library by consistently giving on an annual basis, attending events, and volunteering. It is *not* too early to start talking about planned giving.

Planned giving is not just for the elderly! Chances are, they have already completed their wills and estate plans, and it’s hard to get added at the latter part of these individuals’ lives. Instead, think about donors in their 40s and 50s. They often are just beginning to think about estate planning.

Here are some obvious—and not so obvious—signs that a person might be a planned giving prospect. Look for these “clues” in your conversations.

- No children or close relatives
- Children are doing extremely well in their chosen careers, and prospect doesn’t have to worry about providing for them
- Widow/widower having outlived a spouse
- Single females over 65

- Person's annual income would not make a large gift possible now, but perhaps a planned gift would.
- Some of the donor's/donors' assets have greatly appreciated, and donor/donors don't want to pay the capital gains
- Person has some assets that may bring some heavy taxation
- Advisor mentioned getting assets out of the estate
- Person heard that some charities are able to accept gift of property and other items
- Person heard that there are ways to make a gift and continue to receive an income
- Person heard about planned giving to other charities & wants to know how that might be beneficial to the library
- Person read about planned giving, but feels it is way over his or her head—and that it only pertains to people with lots of wealth

Implementing a basic planned giving program

Once you've decided to implement a planned giving program for your library, here are eight ways to promote it:

1. Clearly articulate your mission, main functions of your organization, and identify ways large and small gifts could impact your work.
2. Educate your board and staff about planned giving opportunities and the importance to the Library.
3. Develop or purchase informational materials for mailings to prospective donors.
4. Let supporters know about planned giving opportunities through your newsletter.
5. Create a web page for planned giving opportunities.
6. Promote the concept of planned giving by using brochures, bookmarks, advertisements, articles and programs.
7. Prepare a response card.

8. Attend seminars, workshops or classes sponsored by other institutions to learn more about planned giving.

Types of planned gifts

Planned gifts can come in many forms. Some require little work on the part of the Library other than letting the donor of the options of planned gifts and how to phrase the bequest in their will or to designate the Library as the beneficiary.

Outright gifts

Charitable bequests are gifts of any property (real or cash) made by naming our library as a beneficiary in a person's will. This is a simple method and the number one way of making a planned gift by donors. The donor can also bequeath a particular asset or a percentage of their estate rather than a dollar amount. This is the easiest way for libraries to work with planned gifts.

Each year thousands of individuals exercise the privilege of determining the final distribution of their estates. Bequests can take various forms: a general bequest, a residuary bequest, a percentage bequest, or a restricted bequest.

- **A general bequest** is one of the most popular ways to make a charitable gift by will. The donor simply leaves a specific dollar amount to the library.
- **A residuary bequest** is given to the library after all (or a portion) of an estate owner's property after all debts, taxes, expenses and other bequests have been paid.
- **A percentage bequest** is expressed as a percentage of the estate or of the residuary estate.
- **A restricted bequest** restricts the bequest for a specific purpose. This can include setting up an endowment. This type of bequest should be made in the broadest terms possible consistent with the donors wishes. This guards against the possibility of the purpose of the gift becoming obsolete (such as the elimination of a specific collection, program, department, etc.).

Donors will work with their attorney and/or financial advisor to determine the amount to leave your library in their will. Your job is to work with the donor to explain your areas of need so the donor's desires are met. It is helpful to advise the donor to be as broad as possible in making his or her bequest.

Be honest and let your donor know that the library's world is one of changing technology, emerging customer needs, and ever-expanding formats. It's hard to predict what your library will be like years from now when you receive the bequest. For example, if you have a donor that is interested in supporting your music collection, advise the donor to word the bequest "for the purchase of music materials and resources," versus a specific format.

In many cases, we don't know that someone has left a bequest to the library in their will. We find out after they have passed away. Libraries need to identify donors, customers, and patrons who have the capacity and inclination to leave a bequest—and to work with them while they are alive.

You will need to provide the correct wording to your donor or their attorney as to where to leave the gift; name of a specific program, etc. For example, do you receive gifts in the name of your library? Its board? Your library Foundation? Your Friends group? Or do you have another charitable organization? You will also need to provide your federal tax I.D. number.

Life Insurance

Life insurance gifts can include whole life, universal, and other forms of life insurance policies. Donors can contribute all or part of a policy to your library when you are named as a beneficiary. The donor retains ownership of the policy and has access to the policy's cash value. Since the donor retains ownership, no charitable income tax deduction is allowed upon making the library the beneficiary. Once the donor passes away and the proceeds are paid to the library, the donor's estate will be allowed a charitable estate-tax deduction. Donors need to work with their insurance provider to designate your library as the beneficiary.

Retirement plans

Retirement plans are another easy way for the donor to make a gift to your library. Retirement plan benefits represent a major portion of the average person's estate. Through the retirement plan provider, a donor can designate your library as a full or partial beneficiary. Again, the donor can name a specific amount or percentage. This gift can be designated when the fund is first established or changed at a later date. The plan administrator will provide a change of beneficiary form upon request. Giving in this way can help maximize tax savings.

Making the ask

What's the number one reason why people donate to charity? ***Because they were asked!*** (Remember the quote from Millard Fuller at the beginning of this *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit*?)

Planned gifts do not happen overnight. The average time from inception to maturity for a planned gift is 7 to 10 years. At the very minimum, you should start talking to library supporters about leaving a bequest because, if you don't, another organization most likely *will!* Start with bequests because they are the simplest kind of planned gift. As you have more time to develop the relationship with your potential planned giver, you can talk about more sophisticated planned giving vehicles.

Here are some conversation starters:

- Your annual gifts make such a difference to the library, have you considered leaving a planned gift to the library?
- Would you consider including the library in your estate plans?
- After you've taken care of your family, would you consider leaving the library in your will?
- Are we already in your estate plans?

Once you have started the conversation, you can follow up with a one-on-one meeting to discuss specifics and donor desires. Be sure to remind listeners that

they will need to consult with their attorney or financial advisor to determine the best kind of planned gift. Direct them to your library's website for more details.

Elevator pitches

An "elevator pitch" is a conversation starter, not an entire sales pitch. It is concise, compelling and told in terms that anyone should understand. (It's called an elevator pitch because it only takes as long as an elevator ride.) The language is informal and to-the-point. You need to have an elevator pitch ready when it comes to your planned giving program. Here are a few examples:

- **Bequests:**

"Your support of the library could be as easy as a simple designation in your will. It won't affect your cash flow during your lifetime and can be revoked or amended if your situation changes."

- **Life Insurance policies:**

"Did you realize that you can make a gift to the library by assigning the library as a beneficiary to your policy?"

- **Retirement Plans:**

"Retirement funds can be heavily taxed if passed on to your heirs. They're tax free if given to the library."

Marketing your planned giving program

"If a tree falls in the forest, and no one is there to hear it..." You know the rest. The most important thing about marketing your planned giving program is to be consistent and diligent about *getting the word out*.

You should plan to include something about planned giving in your library's marketing materials. It could be an article or notice in each of your library or Friends newsletters, a link for information on your library's website, a brochure, a program series within the library, etc. Start out simple by promoting bequests to the Library.

Newsletter articles and notices

Begin an awareness campaign about planned giving in your library's newsletter. A small ad, a brief article or a boxed notice are ways to communicate about the options of charitable bequests with supporters in your newsletter or in other communications. These communication methods are easy ways to bring this opportunity to the attention of potential donors on a regular basis. Articles don't have to be long or detailed; just plant the seed to open up further discussion.

Begin your article or notice with a tag line, a title that is intended to catch a reader's eye and attention. Here are a few examples:

- Have you considered leaving a gift to the library in your will?
- Leave a legacy at the library.
- Use the present to invest in the library's future.

Here are several sample articles/notices:

- *"Tomorrow's results are created by today's dreamers. Many people dream of a way to help the library grow in the future. Some find that a good way to accomplish that is to designate [name of library or other receiving organization] as the beneficiary of all or part of your retirement plan or life insurance policy. Learning more about this support option happens when you call [fill in the contact person's name and phone number]."*
- *"In recent years, donors have informed us of their intention to include a gift to [name of library or other receiving organization] in their wills. These gifts provide an estate tax deduction and have a tremendous impact on our ability to [state purpose]. If you would like information on how to include [name of library or other receiving organization] in your will or estate plan, please contact us. [name, address, phone]"*
- *"Libraries matter! While an overwhelming number of people believe library services should be a top priority, many are unaware of the financial difficulties facing American libraries. An easy way for anyone to provide support is through a gift provision included in a will. The wording of "to*

the [name of library or other receiving organization]" will provide such a gift. Directing your support to any of the library's highest priorities --- (1) XXXXX, (2) XXXXX, or (3) XXXXXX -- would be appreciated. To learn more about the smart choices you can make, call [fill in the contact person's name and phone number]."

- "There is yet another way for you to express your commitment to the goals of [name of library] through a planned gift to [name of library or other receiving organization]. Once you have provided for loved ones in your will, you may want to include a gift of money, stock or property to the library. Your gift will be a lasting tribute to your concern for the [mission], while guaranteeing the library's long-term future. For further information on how to include [name of library or other receiving organization] in your charitable giving plans, please contact [name,address, phone]."

Web site

Create a simple web page (or pages) outlining the type of gifts you accept, how to give and who to contact. Link this web page to your library's website. Include donor stories and testimonials, if possible, and talk about the impact planned gifts have made—and can continue to make—to the library. You'll want the web page(s) to motivate your prospects to make a planned gift, or at least learn more about planned giving.

Your planned giving web page(s) should be designed for maximum ease of navigation. If it's not clear and easy, your prospective planned giver may give up.

Simple mail campaign to invite planned gifts

One way to get the ball rolling with planned giving is to initiate a direct mail campaign that invites prospects (primarily current library supporters) to consider a planned gift. Put together a simple planned giving mailing. Consider including:

- Personalized letter
Send a personalized one-page letter telling prospects about the library's bequest program. Let them know the important role bequests have played

in your library's history and encourage them to visit your planned giving website (if you have one) or contact a specific person (provide name and contact information) to learn more. (See "Tips for Creating Effective Solicitation Letters" in *The Annual Fund: The Cornerstone of All Fundraising* in this toolkit.)

- Response card and return envelope

Include a postcard-sized response card and a self-addressed envelope (no stamp) that can be mailed back to the library. Provide space for the respondent's name, address, phone, e-mail and other contact information. Be sure to address the return envelope to the attention of a designated individual to ensure confidentiality.

Sample response card and wording:

I/we have included the [name of library or other receiving organization] in our will or trust.

I/we am(are) interested in including the [name of library or other receiving organization] in our will or trust.

Please send me/us information on leaving a gift in my/our will or trust to [name of library or other receiving organization].

- Follow-up

Two or three weeks later, follow up with either:

Follow-up letter, postcard or phone call from

"If you have already included the library in your estate plan, please let us know. If you haven't, it isn't too late." is clear, simple language. Sadly, too often we learn about a gift after the generous donor has passed away and it's too late to say 'thank you.'"

Follow-up letter from someone who has already created a bequest

People give to people. When asking a prospect to consider a gift, including a letter from a person who has already made a gift sets a strong example. This letter might say something like, *"I didn't think*

about a bequest either, until someone asked me to consider it. Now I feel so good about helping the library this way." If the person signing this letter is well-known to the recipients, that can strengthen persuasion.

Documentation when someone says "yes"

When a donor decides to include your library in his or her estate plan, it's a cause for celebration! They've just made a decision to give a meaningful and long-lasting gift of support.

Regardless of the kind of planned gift an individual wishes to make, it is important to have the donor's wishes documented *in writing*. The best way to document the gift is by sending the donor a letter. See the ***Planned Giving Documentation Letter Template*** at the end of this section.

In the case of a bequest, try to get a copy of the will for your files. With other planned gifts get a copy of the retirement plans, beneficiary forms, etc. The document can be placed in the file for future reference. You want to make sure that you have as many details as possible to execute the gift properly once it is received.

Then, smile. You can feel *good* knowing that you've helped provide for your library's future in this important and meaningful way.

Conclusion

Like all other areas of development, success in planned giving requires the ability to develop meaningful relationships with your library's users and current donors. Understanding your donors' motivations and objectives, which is accomplished primarily through personal contacts and steady relationship building, is far more important than understanding the technical nuances of planned giving. Begin to develop relationships with your top prospects, learn the gift planning basics, and recognize that most planned gifts require the efforts of a team of individuals who understand their roles and those of the other parties involved. Success will follow.

Resources

ALA's development office: development@ala.org

To find out about including ALA in your estate plans:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/dev/plannedgiving/index.cfm>

<http://www.plannedgiving.com>

National Committee in Planned Giving: <http://www.pppnet.org/>

American Council on Gift Annuities: <http://www.acga-web.org/whoare.html>

The Planned Giving Design Center:

<http://www.pgdc.com/host/planned-giving-design-center-llc/overview>

Association of Fundraising Professionals: <http://www.afpnet.org/>

To view some planned giving websites: <http://www.virtualgiving.com/sites>

Various state Planned Giving Roundtables

Check out the development web pages of your local university or college

Sources for marketing materials:

- Pentera <http://www.pentera.com/>
- Stelter <http://www.stelter.com/site/index.jsp>
- Sinclair, Townes & Co. <http://sinclairtownes.com/>

PLANNED GIVING DOCUMENTATION LETTER TEMPLATE

(Your library or receiving organization's letterhead)

Dear XXX:

Thank you for your interest in including [name of library or other receiving organization] in your will. We are so pleased that you believe in our mission and want to help us to ensure a strong financial future.

Our legal name is [name of library or other receiving organization]. It is important that you and/or your attorney have our tax-exempt number for your records. That number is [xxxxxxx].

It would be helpful for the Library to have a copy of your will once it is finalized (or at least the section pertaining to us), and the name and number of your attorney if you are using one to prepare your will. This information would naturally be kept in confidence.

Thank you once again for your interest in and support of [name of library or other receiving organization]. If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

[Signature and title of library or receiving organization's designated individual]

Disclaimer: We strongly urge prospective donors to consult with their attorney, financial advisor, estate planning professional, accountant or other appropriate professional before making any material decisions based on information we provide through this toolkit, printed materials or other sources.

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Acknowledgement and Stewardship

First, some definitions

Acknowledgement is something done or given in recognition of something received. Acknowledging gifts in a personal and timely fashion provides an important opportunity to build or enhance the connections between your library and its donors. From connections, come relationships. Any gift—regardless of the amount—says that the donor values what the library has to offer. The simplest form of acknowledgement is a thank-you letter, letting the donor know that he or she is likewise valued. The letter also serves a second purpose, and that is to provide documentation for tax purposes.

A gift to your library can also be a way for a donor to say, “I want to be more involved.” Use this opportunity of saying “thank you” to deepen your donor’s connection to the library. Inform donors about what is happening at your library by including a newsletter or events calendar with your thank-you letter, and add them to your event and newsletter mailing lists.

Stewardship refers to the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care. In fundraising, it describes how an organization relates to donors after they have made their first gift. Besides a thank-you letter, there are a variety of additional activities that help strengthen the connection between donor and library. Often, donors are the most invested and most interested supporters—and can be one of the greatest advocates for your library in the community.

Acknowledgement

Once a gift is received, start the acknowledgement and stewardship process with a thank-you letter. Consider the following steps to help streamline the thank-you letter writing process:

- Compose a simple template for your acknowledgement letter. Contents should include: the donor's name, amount given, date received and, if applicable, language showing how their contribution is designated. The overriding message of your letter should be that this gift is *greatly appreciated!* See the sample acknowledgement letter at the end of this section. (If you are tracking donations in a spreadsheet, this letter can be automatically populated using Word's mail merge function.)
- The letter should also state 501(c)(3) status(if applicable)/ tax deductibility status of your library. It should also state that no goods or services were provided in exchange for the gift.
- Acknowledgement letters should be hand-signed by the manager of the fundraising campaign, if possible, although electronic copies of signatures are acceptable. Depending on the gift amount, and especially for major gifts or significant planned gifts, a high-level staff member (the leader of your Friends group or Foundation, for example) should sign the letter. If a donation was directly solicited by an individual, his or her signature (and/or a one-sentence personal note) is preferable.
- Acknowledgement should be sent within 1-3 days of receiving the contribution. The sooner an acknowledgement is sent out, the more appreciated your donor will feel.

Contributions to the library typically arrive in connection with an annual membership drive or annual fund campaign. For most donors, these may represent his or her first gift to your library. First gifts create a connection between the donor and the library, and it is possible for small but regular annual gifts to develop into larger and more significant major gifts as the donor's relationship with the library deepens. As a rule, any large contributions your library receives will come from a donor whose initial gift came through an annual giving drive.

Above all, let the donor know that you *appreciate* their support. Let them know what the library is doing for the community on a regular basis, and tell them how their contribution plays a role in making the library better for everyone. In time,

you will see small annual donors become more engaged library advocates and eventually more invested supporters.

Acknowledging your annual fund donors

One strategy to highlight your annual fund donors is to recognize their giving based on their level of contribution. For example, if donors give over a specified amount, their names could be listed in a certain spot on your website. This can also be done in print on the library premises and should include either the campaign year, or a date range i.e. *“We are grateful to the following supporters for their Annual Fund contributions made between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010.”*

A sample of donor levels is as follows:

Friend: \$25

Supporter: \$50

Advocate: \$100

Champion: \$250

Patron: \$500

Benefactor: \$1,000 and up

When using donor levels, it is important to recognize contributors at their appropriate level in your thank-you letter.

Consider using donor levels to highlight to your supporters how their gift at this specific amount is impacting your library. Describing how certain gifts help in the day-to-day operation of the library will bring the impact of gifts to life:

- *“A gift of \$25 can be used to help us repair five broken books.”*
- *“A gift of \$100 can help us cover the cost for one reading group of kindergarteners.”*

SAMPLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTER

Add library logo here

November 15, 2010

Mr. John Smith **Find out how your donor likes to be addressed.**

1537 Paper Street

Cleveland, OH

Dear Mr. Smith,

Thank you for making a charitable contribution to the Louisburg Library. Your gift of \$250.00, received on 10/16/2010, will be used to support the Louisburg Library 2010 Annual Fund. With this contribution, we are pleased to recognize you as a Champion level supporter.

Founded in 1943, the Louisburg Library has been serving Stevens County for over 65 years. Libraries have ever growing impact in their communities as a source of information access, employment searches, and activity centers. Your contribution to our Annual Fund helps us apply your gift where it is needed the most. Contributions to the Annual Fund help us further our collections materials, increase afterschool programs, update computers/furniture, maintain the library, and much more.

Thank you again for your generous contribution to the Louisburg Library. Supporters like you help us bring much needed library services to our community.

With appreciation,

Add signature here

Michael Rowengartner

Director

The Louisburg Library is a not-for-profit institution, classified as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions may be deductible to the extent permitted by applicable laws. Please consult your attorney or tax advisor for details. Our federal tax identification number is 12-3456789.

Specify that the contribution was a tax deductible gift. Generally, language like "tax deductible to the extent permitted by law" or "no goods or services were provided in exchange for this gift" suffices.

If the donor receives a significant thank-you gift in return, the monetary value of the thank-you gift needs to be stated as it may impact the total amount that can be deducted.

Add address block here

Key information to include: gift amount, date received, and gift designation by the donor.

Explain how this gift is helping the library.

Acknowledging your major donors

How you define a “major donor” is up to you. For some libraries or library organizations, a major donor may be someone who gives \$500 annually or as a one-time gift. For others, it may be \$1,000, or \$10,000. In some organizations, a major donor is someone who ranks in the top 10% of gifts received. A major gift is recognizable because it is so much larger than the donor’s standard gift, sometimes 10 or 20 times larger.

Whatever the amount, major donors are your library’s most generous and most connected supporters. They may not be the most vocal supporters, but they are the most invested in your success. Just like annual donors, major gift donors want to know how their gift is being used and how it is helping you provide more and better library services in your community. Major gift donors are especially worth including in all communications about what goes on at your library (unless they specifically indicate that they do not wish to receive these materials).

Think of major donors not as your richest friends—but as your *best friends*. Your best friends are there when you need them the most, and they want to celebrate your successes as well. Your best friends are there for you again and again; and often, major donors give major gifts repeatedly to their favorite organizations. They trust that you are a good steward of their money by using it in the best way possible to enhance the mission of the library.

Special acknowledgement for major donors is an important step to ensure that their elevated level of support is duly recognized.

- Acknowledgement letters should be signed by a high-ranking official within your library, its board, Friends group or Foundation. These letters should be personalized versions of your generic acknowledgement letter, and they should include how the contribution will impact the library. If the contribution is designated for a specific project, include information and updates on the project.

- Tokens of appreciation such as lapel pins or ribbons that denote their status help both to show special recognition, and give major donors immediate recognition at events. It is important to note that the value of the appreciation gift should truly be minimal. Anything above token value may impact the total amount the donor is able to claim as a tax deductible contribution. However, inexpensive gifts of significant emotional or sentimental value may be cherished more than an engraved crystal or plaque of appreciation that is presented to the donor.
- A special thank-you event for major donors, such as a luncheon, can be an easy and effective way of both expressing thanks *and* deepening the relationship between major donors and the library. Plan a simple luncheon with a speaker, such as a local author, and invite your major donors to be your guest. The message of the event should be simple: We appreciate you.
- Naming opportunities are another way to acknowledge donors who have contributed either an undesignated major gift, or a major gift in connection with a specific project. This includes new additions such as reading rooms, renovations, special collections or wings. This is a permanent form of recognition. For any naming opportunity, it is important to spell out under what circumstances the naming opportunity may be taken away. (For example, 50 years ago, construction of a new wing was underwritten by one generous donor. Now the wing requires extensive remodeling, and new donor has stepped up to cover the cost. It needs to be clearly spelled out in advance if it is permissible for the new donor to now assume naming rights.)

Acknowledging your planned givers

Donors who leave a bequest to your library fall under the category of “planned givers” or “legacy givers.” These members are leaving a legacy of support for your library and should be acknowledged in a similar manner as major donors, even if the gift could potentially be a revocable gift. Planned giving donors are a very special group of donors. They quite literally want to make sure that you have their support even when they aren’t around any more. The emotional connection and belief in their library is very deep with individuals who leave their library in

their will. Thanking them and recognizing them is usually most effective when your appreciation of their support happens on a truly *personal* level. In many ways, finding out that a donor has put your library in their will is not the last step of the process—but rather the first.

The following are some suggested activities for these legacy donors, but the more you can personalize it to them and their personal situation and lifestyle, the better.

- Create a special “circle” or “society” for your planned givers. Call it the Legacy Circle, or something else that conveys long-term giving.
- A plaque listing planned giving members can be placed in the library and also on your website. This is a permanent acknowledgement since their donation is a lasting legacy.
- Recognize planned giving donors in your annual report to continually show their high level of commitment to supporting your library.
- Supply tokens of appreciation as outlined above for major donors. For example, the Friends group of one library that was undergoing an extensive renovation saved the building’s marble that would otherwise end up being discarded. The marble was fashioned into bookends that were given to those leaving legacy gifts.

Stewardship

Cultivating lasting relationships is an important aspect of fundraising. Showing appreciation for past contributions and staying in contact with donors for future donations greatly increases the chances of continued giving—and giving at a higher level. Major donors and planned giving donors are an important source of financial support for your library, but also a key source of advocacy, community awareness and involvement. Your library’s ongoing relationship with them is vitally important. How can you foster this relationship?

- Stay connected with these donors on a regular basis by sending them your library's regular communication, as well as holiday cards and special communications as occasions arise.
- Invite them to special events that your library is hosting.
- Recognize these individuals at those events or host an event in their honor.
- If your library has a special event planned, include them in a "Major Donors" section or table to underscore their importance, and encourage them to wear a token of appreciation such as a ribbon or lapel pin to show off their status.
- Follow-up phone calls from high ranking officials within your library, such as a Director, Trustee or head of your Friends or Foundation should always accompany a major gift. Stewarding gifts in this manner may even lead to more such gifts in the future.
- Send correspondence showing results from their contribution. This could be a letter outlining stories from individuals impacted directly by a donation, or an occasional phone call to report on the impact of their donation.

Miscellaneous matters to consider

- To make sure that these supporters don't "fall through the cracks" when staff changes or is pressed for time, it can be very beneficial to have a specific process for acknowledgement and stewardship in writing, standardized and saved as a file that can be reviewed at any time. This will include procedures and amounts for becoming a major donor or planned giving member, as well as how each gift is to be recognized.
- Some people truly want their privacy, and donors should have the ability to make donations anonymously. They will still receive an acknowledgement response letter noting their contribution for tax deduction purposes, but all other display of their gift should go under the tag "Anonymous." This also applies to major donors and planned giving members.
- Keep a record of how people would like to be addressed, i.e. "Mr. John Smith, Esq." vs. "John Smith" vs. "Jane and John Smith and Family."

Conclusion

Many people involved with fundraising find that asking for a gift “is the hardest part.” (It may be hard at first, but it will get easier the more you do it.) On the other hand, thanking someone for their support can be one of the most *rewarding* moments in fundraising, both for you as well as for the donor. Proper recognition of someone’s gift can be a deeply moving experience for everyone. A gift is the result of an individual’s strong belief in all the good things the library has to offer. Thanking a donor completes that circle and lets them know how much they and their gift in turn mean to you and to the library community.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH DONORS

Identification, Cultivation, Solicitation and Stewardship

There is a term in the fundraising world that describes the process by which donors and organizations deepen their relationship. The term is “donor moves management.” It is the process of guiding potential donors through the stages of identification and cultivation, to solicitation of a gift, and finally to donor stewardship. Depending on the ask amount and method of asking, the cultivation process can require varying degrees of time commitment and involvement.

Donor moves management also refers to the process of moving donors from giving small contributions to making increasingly larger (and eventually major) gifts to your library. This is an overall strategic process where annual giving, major giving and donor recognition activities come together.

Getting started

The key to successful donor management is record keeping. There are countless donor management systems on the market, ranging in price from free to tens of thousands of dollars. Whether or not a dedicated, computerized donor database is a worthwhile investment will largely depend on the size of your donor pool, long-term goals, and the number of library staff dedicated to fundraising.

If you are just starting to fundraise and your pool of current donors is still manageable (for example, under 1,000 names), it’s quite possible to use a spreadsheet or the library’s existing accounting software to manage gifts. To capture other important information about significant donors, even well-established fundraising offices can still utilize paper archives.

The data you want to capture at a minimum are:

- Donor name and address.

- Date, amount and designation (how the money is to be used) of any gift received.
- For pledges: amount of payments, how many payments, and expected payment dates.
- Do not contact, do not solicit, do not email/mail/call requests that you must honor.

The following additional information will help significantly improve any future interaction with the donor:

- Brief record of any meetings or conversations with the donor or prospect where they indicate any likes or dislikes about what your library has to offer (keep the tone of notes like these neutral and objective). Any information like this can be a building block for a future significant request for support. It also keeps staff and volunteers from repeatedly approaching the donor about support for an early childhood reading program when they have already made it known that their interest lies with technology and free internet access for the public.
- Record of any involvement of the donor with your library: Are they volunteering? Are they invited to special library events? Do they (or does someone they know well) serve in a leadership role at the library?
- Record of any request for a significant gift, even if the request did not lead to a donation.
- Information related to any potential estate gifts from the donor to your library, and how those funds are to be used when eventually received.

The reasons for keeping this type of information about your donors are:

- Staff turnover—You want to be able to continue the relationship with the donor even if the primary contact person on your staff decides to leave the library.
- Financial/legal—If you are accepting donations for a certain program, you need to be able to demonstrate that the funds were spent as intended by the donor.

Building support from the ground up

This *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit* contains a section titled “The Annual Fund: The Cornerstone of All Fundraising.” It provides lots of helpful information about annual funds, but here are a few solid, quick ideas on the subject.

If your library has an annual drive for support, consider segmenting your donor list into: 1) individuals who have not yet given, 2) individuals who give occasionally (but not every year), and 3) people who give regularly. Some fundraising professionals advise requesting a specific gift amount in your letter.

To encourage increased annual support, consider establishing “giving clubs” with set donation amounts that have corresponding recognition and benefits. Giving club levels for your library could be: \$10-25, \$25-50, \$50-100, \$100-250, \$250-500, \$500-1,000.

- For non-donors, invite them to give at the lowest giving level or a set minimum amount rather than just asking for “support.”
- For occasional donors, ask them to give at or near their previous highest giving level, or nearest giving club level.
- For regular donors, ask them to give at the next highest giving club level. Make a case how and why the increased support will help your library.

The goal is to encourage sporadic donors to become regular donors, and for regular donors to consider giving at a higher level than before. This means asking for a gift in a way that is tailored to the donor and takes into consideration how much and how frequently they have given before. You must also keep your donors informed when you are *not* asking for their support by sharing how contributions are making an impact:

- Tailor your thank-you letters to reflect how a donor’s gift to a specific program is helping that program be more impactful.
- Use your website or newsletter to describe what the library has been able to accomplish thanks to the support of its generous supporters.

- Provide information about community needs and how library programs can help address those needs. Describe how a gift of \$100, \$500, or \$1,000 would help you provide better service to your patrons.

Help your donors think about outcomes, not amounts

Donors are willing to give more if they feel that their donation has a greater impact and that their money is helping make a difference. Whether you are asking for a small or large contribution, you need to make a case why your library is the *best place* to give a gift. Help your supporters think about how far their dollars go and what their gifts actually do. If you can share your story and your successes with your audience, you will help turn unmotivated, occasional givers into engaged, regular donors.

Working your way up to major gifts

The best prospects for potential major gift are donors to your library's annual fund drive. Start by reviewing the list of your regular donors. Anyone who has given regularly for at least five to ten years, and at a consistent level, is a prospect for a major gift.

What is a major gift? A major gift for these supporters would be a gift approximately ten times their average annual fund gift. For example, if a donor has given \$100 every year for the last ten years, a request for a \$1,000 contribution may be appropriate. To encourage a gift that is significantly higher than their usual donation amount, it's important to explain to your donor:

- Why you are asking
- Why now
- How the increased gift will help your library

Just as the annual fund can be used to help move donors from lower giving levels to major giving levels, major giving and consistent annual giving be used to help identify potential planned giving donors.

Four steps to major gift fundraising

1. Identification

During the donor identification stage, try to determine who has the ability and the potential to make a more substantial gift to your library. As you are looking at your list of potential donors, approach each name with the following questions in mind:

- **How connected are they to your library?** Are they a library card holder? Are they involved in the library in a capacity beyond just checking out books for themselves? Do they volunteer? Do they volunteer in a leadership role?
- **Do they have a desire to give?** Have they made any contributions to the library before? Do they respond with some regularity to your annual membership drive? Have they expressed their thoughts about an area of library that they would like to see improved? Do your funding needs overlap with their interests?
- **Do they have the capacity to give?** This can be tricky—and this part of the process is often “more art than science.” Talk to volunteers who might know this donor on a personal level. Do they work or are they retired? Do they have children in college or about to enter college? Have they made significant contributions to other community organizations?

You can only approach a major gift if these elements are in place.

2. Cultivation

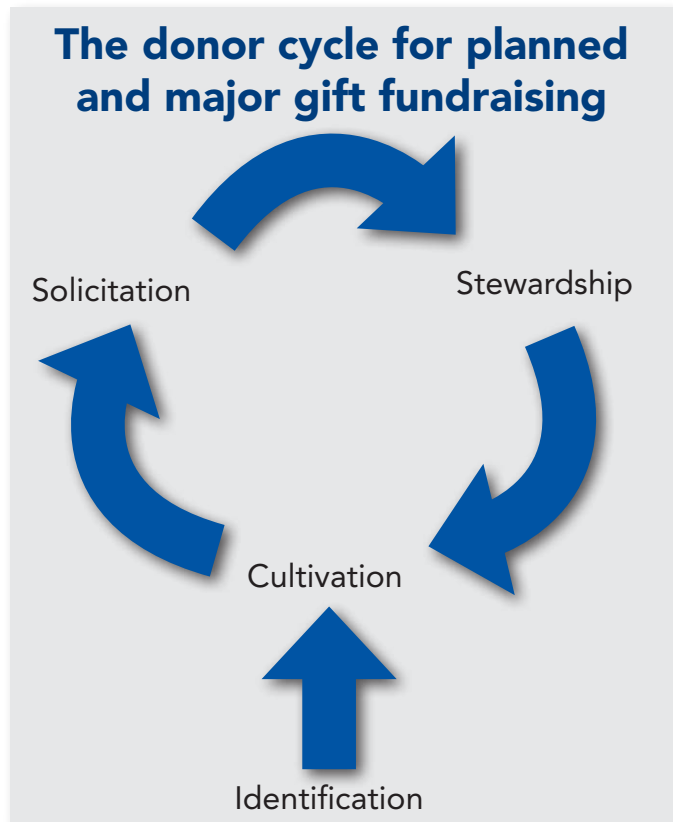
Once you have a manageable list of prospects, you can begin the cultivation process. At this stage, you are not concerned about asking for money. Your goal is to involve your prospects more closely with your library. Invite them to events, have them volunteer (if this is of interest to them), but most importantly *talk with them* to find out what the library means to them.

Which aspect of your library do they value most? How does the library impact their lives and those of their families? If there are ongoing projects your library is involved in that may be of interest to your donor, let him or her know about them. For example, your donor may be a first generation American, and your library may be known for having one of the best reading programs in the county for non-English speakers. If your prospect shows interest, be certain to provide him or her with follow-up information, including brochures, newspaper articles, etc. Keep a record of these activities and the information you share with each major gift prospect.

3. Solicitation

At this point, you will have identified some individuals who are interested and involved in your library, and who also have a capability to make a more significant donation. You will have spent time with several prospects (probably more with some, less with others), and you should have a good sense from a handful of them that they share your excitement about what your library has to offer. You will have talked with them about one or more specific programs that are running at your library, and they will have shared their interests and opinions with you. Presumably, you will have diligently recorded these insights in your donor records.

Now is the time to move these individuals from the group of prospects who are “to be cultivated” to the group that is “ready to be asked for a gift.” Ask them for a date and time to visit them at their home or their place of business. Know *what* you are asking for (which program, and how their gift will help make the program bet-



ter), and *how much* you are asking for. *With major gifts, always ask for a specific amount.*

4. Stewardship

Congratulations! You have just secured a major gift for your library. You have taken your donors from the identification stage through the cultivation process to a successful solicitation. This is the point at which your generous contributor must be appropriately thanked for her or his support.

Remember the definition of stewardship in the previous section of this toolkit? It is the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care. In fundraising, it describes how an organization relates to donors *after* they have made their first gift. Effective stewardship involves thanking people appropriately, recognizing them and developing vehicles through which their relationship with your library can be deepened. The result of a deeper relationship can be a deeper level of giving. In an ideal world, stewardship inspires annual givers to become major givers, and major givers to become planned givers.

Developing Planned Gifts

Planned giving requires, as the name says, a lot of planning—and a lot of thought—both for the donor as well as for your library staff.

An annual gift can be the result of an inspired fundraising letter, and a spur of the moment response by the donor. These gifts are meaningful, but they are typically funded from a donor's disposable income. These gifts usually represent money donors won't miss at the end of the month. Major gifts require a good deal of understanding by the donor how your library operates and how the funds will be used. They require extensive and ongoing dialogue, usually with the donor and their spouse. Eventually, the donor takes a leap of faith, and commits to a significant investment in your cause.

Planned giving is the next step. There are a number of different giving vehicles for planned gifts, but the most common one is a will or a bequest. The donor

commits to give a share of their estate to your library. Many forms of planned gifts can be changed or revoked by the donor. Often, planned gifts are the largest gifts your library may receive, but they also take the longest to realize. Read more about planned giving in the section of this *Frontline Fundraising Toolkit* called “Planned Giving: Encouraging People to Leave a Legacy.”

You can identify planned giving prospects from the same donor pools as your annual fund and major gift donors. The same donor development cycle used for major gifts also applies to planned giving: identification, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship. Unlike major gifts, here the cultivation process may take longer and may involve the donor’s extended family.

Stewardship of planned givers is an ongoing process long before the gift is received. It is often ongoing after the gift is received as well, because information about the impact of the estate gift will be shared with surviving family members. Because planned gifts can take so many years to materialize, it is extremely critical that any information about the gift and the donor’s intention is properly documented. You will find information about documenting planned givers’ intentions in the “Planned Giving: Encouraging People to Leave a Legacy” section of this toolkit.

When the funds come to your library, you should know exactly how the funds are to be spent. If the gift was unexpected (and many are), and the circumstances have changed so drastically that fulfilling the donor’s intent becomes questionable (for example the gift was meant to go to a specific branch library, and that branch was just recently closed or will be closed in the very near future), the funds may need to be returned to the donor’s estate, and/or surviving family members may need to be consulted as to how the funds could be redirected. To avoid these situations and to help secure the gift, it is important to maintain an open dialogue with the donor, and keep them involved and informed with your library as time goes by.

Moving forward

Sometimes, there is discussion that donors should not be asked again for another gift because “they already gave,” or because “we cannot keep going back to the same people.” It is important for the success of your donor relations and your library to change those views.

People will give because they want to help. They will give because they were asked. They will give to make a difference. Once they make that gift, they want to know how their funds are used and who is benefitting from them. By asking a second time, you give your donor the opportunity to help you again and have an even greater positive impact.

The same notion applies to your major gift donors as well. ***Your major gift donors are the most likely individuals to make another major gift to your library at some point in the future, and are the most likely prospects for a planned gift to your library.*** Naturally, you cannot ask for a large gift from an individual every single year, but major donors and planned giving donors are very committed to see you succeed. They want to know that their investment in your library is having the impact you told them it would. If they feel good about how their money is being used (or will be used) and how it is helping your community, they may be inclined to add to their gift, or find another program at your library that they want to support in a similar meaningful way. After you have done your part in sharing with your donor how their current gift is being used (stewardship), it is time to move them back to the cultivation stage. The illustration of the donor cycle above shows this process clearly.

Conclusion

Working with major gift and planned giving prospects will often connect you with some of the most engaged and passionate supporters of your library. They may expect more, but they are also willing to invest more—of themselves, their time, and their treasure. Hearing from a friend of the library how much the library means to them, can be an incredibly rewarding and inspiring moment.

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