



Student's Guide to Community Fundraising

I. INTRODUCTION

This fundraising guide is designed to help you determine how you will pay for the *LeadAmerica* Conference and your transportation to and from your selected location. By following this step-by-step process, you'll know exactly how much you need, how much you already have, and how much you need to raise. We'll give you ideas on how to raise money and help get you started.

II. DETERMINE HOW MUCH YOU NEED

First, you'll need to figure out how much money you'll need for the Conference, your transportation, and any spending money. The following worksheet will help you.

Worksheet of Costs

Conference Tuition	\$ _____
Transportation Costs	+ _____
Spending Money	+ _____
Total Amount Needed	= _____

Next, identify what resources you already have. Your parents or other family members may help to pay for the Conference, or you may have saved some money already. Once you determine the total amount of money you have available to you, subtract it from the total amount needed, and you'll determine the amount you'll have to raise.

Total Amount Needed	\$ _____
Amount You Have Available	- _____
Amount You Have to Raise	= _____

III. IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SPONSORS

Your next step is to identify potential sponsors who may assist you in reaching your goal of attending *LeadAmerica*.

Start by brainstorming all the possible people and organizations that might have money available to support your attendance at the Conference. Make a list of every idea you have, and ask your parents for their ideas too.

There are many organizations that are often very helpful in providing funds to young people for special conferences such as this one. Contact your local Chamber of Commerce for a list of all the businesses and organizations in your area. Check to see if there are local chapters of the Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Lion's Club and other such organizations in your area. Have your parents find out whether their employer may offer financial assistance. And don't forget to ask your teachers, guidance counselor and other adults you know if they have any ideas for potential sponsors.

The list below will help you get started. There are likely many more possibilities than those listed here, but this will give you some ideas.

Potential Sponsors

Civic Organizations		Local Businesses
Rotary Club	Kiwanis Club	Law Firms
American Legion	Knights of Columbus	Restaurants
Elks Club	Jaycees	Local Newspapers
Lion's Club	Church, Temple, etc	Banks/Brokerage
Masonic Lodge	Youth Organizations	Clothing Stores
Men's Clubs	Chamber of Commerce	Grocery Stores
Women's Auxiliary	Schools	Accounting Firms
		Doctors/Dentists

Once you've done all your brainstorming, narrow down your list to your best possibilities. These will be the people and organizations that you'll personally contact.

IV. DETERMINE HOW MUCH YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

Think about how you can financially contribute to your trip to the Conference. Whatever the amount, the money you save to help pay for the Conference will get you that much closer! Here are some ideas on how you can earn & save money to use toward your tuition.

Baby Sitting	Tutoring	Sell Flowers
Yard Work	Candy/Cookie Sale	Part Time Job
Run Errands	Bake Sale	

V. YOUR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

First you'll need to design a fundraising packet for your potential sponsors. This can simply include a letter, a biographical sketch, and some information about *LeadAmerica*. We've provided you with a sample letter that you can use as-is or adapt to your personal style. Your biographical sketch should be a one-page overview that describes you – including your education (where you go to school, GPA, etc), your community involvement, your extracurricular activities and your goals. Don't be shy – this is your time to present yourself in your best light! Also include a self-addressed return envelope so that if the recipient makes a donation, s/he can mail it directly to you. (It's best if you have checks sent to you so that you can keep track of how much you receive and ensure that your payment reaches the *LeadAmerica* by the stated due date.)

You can attach these materials together or present them in a pocket folder.

Once you have your letters addressed to the appropriate person at each organization you plan to target and your fundraising packets assembled, you're ready to go!

Call each of your potential sponsors and request a brief meeting. If you secure an appointment, bring your fundraising packet along with you, and use it to guide your discussion.

If you're not able to make an appointment with a potential sponsor, mail the fundraising packet.

Importantly, keep a list of all the people that you contacted, their phone number and address, and the date you spoke with them or mailed your fundraising packet. This will help you with the next step – follow-up.

VI. FOLLOW-UP

About a week after you mail your fundraising packets, contact each potential sponsor by phone. Either speak with the contact personally or leave a detailed message. Be respectful of the person's time, but be sure that you explain your reason for calling, why attending the Conference is so important to you and your future, and how they can help by sponsoring you.

No matter what response you receive, always send a thank-you note – either for the contribution or for just speaking with you.

For those people and organizations that do sponsor you, be sure to write to them after you return from *LeadAmerica*. Tell them about your experience and how grateful you are for their assistance in getting you there. They'll be happy to hear from you and to know that their contribution made a difference in your life.

Important note: Fundraising checks intended to be processed for overpayment will be accepted no later than 30 days after the start of your conference. Fundraising checks received after that date will be returned to you.

SAMPLE FUNDRAISING LETTER

Mr. John Doe
Chairman
ABC Corporation
123 Main Street
Anytown, VA 00000

Dear Mr. Doe:

I am currently a <senior> at <Anytown High School> here in <Anytown>. I am writing to ask for your support to enable me to attend *LeadAmerica*. I was selected based on my academic record, extracurricular activities and community involvement. I plan to attend the *LeadAmerica* on <Topic/Law & Justice>

LeadAmerica is an invitational leadership conference for our world's most promising and outstanding middle and high school students. Top students from across the United States and internationally are selected to participate. It is a life changing experience that will help me develop important leadership skills that will assist me in high school, college and beyond.

Through briefings and discussions with national and international leaders in the field we are studying I will have the opportunity to learn first-hand about the complexities of decision making in chosen field or profession. Last year's students met with an incredible group of global leaders in law, medicine, business and politics including: President George W. Bush, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, CENTCOM Commander General Tommy Franks, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, Senator Hillary Clinton and Senator Elizabeth Dole, to name just a few. Through realistic, hands on simulations, I will also have the unique opportunity to learn and develop core leadership skills such as team building, public speaking and conflict resolution.

I have enclosed a short biography that will tell you a little bit more about me, the things I've done in my life so far and the goals I hope to accomplish. I have also enclosed information about *LeadAmerica*. I encourage you to visit their website at www.lead-america.org where you can get complete information about the organization. More than 400 Senators, Representatives and Ambassadors currently serve on *LeadAmerica's* Honorary Board of Advisors and support their mission.

My total cost to attend the Conference will be \$_____. The contribution from my parents, combined with funds I have already raised equals \$_____. But I still need \$_____ in order to attend the Conference. It is my hope that ABC Corporation will assist me with costs.

I would greatly appreciate your financial support in whatever amount you can contribute. If you are able to help sponsor my participation in the Conference, please make a check payable to **LeadAmerica**, and indicate my name on the memo line. I have enclosed an envelope so that you can return the check to me. I will include it with the rest of my tuition.

I would be glad to speak with you to discuss my request. Please feel free to call me at <phone #/789.555.1234>. If you have questions regarding *LeadAmerica*, you may call them directly at 866.FYI.LEAD (866.394.5323).

Thank you for taking the time to consider my request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith