

Summer Experiences Fundraising Guide for Students

The Summer Experiences office provides scholarships based on financial need to as many qualified students as possible. Since our funding is limited, we strongly encourage students to apply early.

Each year, admitted students work with their extended families, friends, neighbors, school, church, and community organizations to fund program fees and transportation. Such efforts require effective planning, perseverance, and creativity. As an outstanding and resourceful young person you are capable of doing this work. This will be a challenging, but rewarding experience that will build your leadership skills and confidence. This guide will help you organize your efforts.

I. Build a Budget

Every fundraising effort starts with a goal. You need to clarify your costs, define your resources and set a fundraising goal.

Fundraising Goals					
Program Costs		Available Funds		Fundraising Goals	
Program Fee	\$	Your Contribution	\$	Friends and Neighbors	\$
Textbooks	\$	Family Contribution	\$	Community Organizations	\$
Transportation	\$	Summer Experiences Scholarship	\$	Local Business, Church, School	\$
Spending Money	\$	Other Scholarships	\$	Fundraising Events	\$
Total Expenses	\$	Total Available Funds	\$	Total Fundraising Goal	\$

II. Scheduling Your Payments

Program Deposit: Your nonrefundable deposit of \$500 is due May 1st.

Full Payment: The rest of your program fee, minus the \$500 deposit and scholarship award, is due June 1st. While you may make several payments, the entire program fee must be paid in full by June 1st.

III. Identifying Resources

Find an adult who can help. This could be a teacher, family member, coach, or member of the community. They can help you brainstorm ideas, connect you to people who can donate, and help you solve problems when you encounter challenges. This is important. Make a list of possible donors. Here are some ideas to get you started:

People you know well

- All family members: grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, god-parents, close family friends
- People who might give you a birthday present: ask them to help you with this instead
- Former employers, current employers, teachers, coaches, scout masters, clergy people
- People you have babysat for, medical professionals, engineering groups, environmental groups, health organizations

School-Based Contacts

- Teachers: start with a supportive teacher and ask about the protocols of raising money in your school. You don't want to irritate people by doing the wrong thing.

- Guidance counselor, Principal
- School clubs related to the theme that you will study
- PTA/PTO

Community Organizations/Businesses

- Civic groups such as Rotary, Lions Club, Kiwanis. These organizations will include many business people from your community.
- Chamber of Commerce, Banks, Women's clubs
- Community Foundations, Board of Education
- Large stores like Home Depot, Lowes, Walmart, insurance companies, car dealerships, and medical providers.
- Theme groups related to the topic/subject you are going to study, such as medical professionals, engineering groups, environmental groups, and health organizations.

IV. Writing a Funding Request

We recommend that you meet with potential sponsors in person; however, it is also important to give them a letter that includes:

- Description of the program
- Your educational goals and how this program fits with those goals
- What you are willing to share and/or give back to your school or community as a result of this experience
- Your interests, activities, accomplishments
- How much money you are trying to raise
- An amount that you are asking them to donate
- How and where they can send their contribution

Here is a sample letter:

Dear _____,

I am a student at (name of school) and have recently been accepted by Washington University in St. Louis to attend a summer program for outstanding students. I have maintained a grade point average of ____ and have been highly involved in (list activities, teams, community work).

I have enrolled in (name of courses or program), because I am passionate about _____. My hope is that this will help me explore this academic interest and help me prepare for college. Students from all over the world attend these programs, and I know that I would gain a great deal from both my studies and interactions with my peers. I am eager to participate in this life-changing experience.

My challenge is that I need to raise \$_____ to help with program costs and transportation in order to attend the program. I have raised \$_____ from my family, friends, and neighbors. I am contributing \$_____ from my savings and from part-time jobs.

I am reaching out to you to ask for help. I need to raise an additional \$_____ by _____(due date). I am hoping that you will consider helping me with a donation.

I have enclosed information about the Summer Experiences program. I will contact you next week to answer any questions and discuss the possibility of your support. If you choose to donate, you can make the check payable to *Washington University* and earmark it with my name on the memo line. I will be sending all checks together at one time to the Summer Experiences office to pay for the program.

I really appreciate your consideration. When I return from Washington University, I plan on meeting with all of my supporters to share my experiences with them.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at _____ (phone and/or email).

Sincerely,

V. Fund Raising Events

Don't try to do these alone. Involve your family and friends. They are a lot of work but have good potential gains. Here are some ideas to think about:

- Garage sale, online auctions
- Babysitting, odd jobs, or services for people in the community, neighbors
- Boutique bake sales
- Fundraising party

VI. General Reminders

- Start early; this takes time.
- Get a mentor or adult to help you.
- Reach out to people you know and organizations where you have a connection or relationship.
- Target organizations that might have an interest in the subject that you will be studying.
- Be confident. Your admission into the summer program is an honor you should be proud of. Let people know that their investment in you is an investment in your community.
- Be clear and concise.
- Keep good records of conversations and donations.
- Send thank-you notes and tell people about your progress.
- Don't get discouraged. You will have more "turn downs" than donations, but you will get there.
- After your program, send a letter to all those who helped you. Thank them for their help and tell them about your experiences in the program, such as what you learned and how the program helped you. Follow through on your offer to meet with donors.