

Fundraising Ideas

Bagger for a Day

Sometimes it seems that your local grocery store can be too busy and that you always end up bagging your own groceries. This quick and easy fundraising idea lets you provide a nice service to your community and raise funds at the same time. Find a busy grocery store that is willing to help your group and pick a busy day of the week. Print off flyers that explain your group and what you are doing in the store that day. Hand out the flyers to people entering the store. Give your “baggers” a quick lesson on how to properly bag, for example heavy items on the bottom and eggs and bread on the top. Have a tip jar at each register. You may want each bagger to wear a nametag with your group’s name on it as well. Bag each person’s groceries quickly and with a smile. Offer to push their cart and help to unload them into their car. This should be done with adult supervision for safety reasons.

Bake Sale

This is an easy fundraiser to run as part of a larger event, such as a holiday craft sale, or sporting event. You will want to give a call out to all of the bakers in your group and have them make their specialty. Ask that they send a list of ingredients with their baked goods. Make sure you have an assortment of different types of desserts ranging from cookies and muffins to whole cakes and pies. You will want to package items individually (single cookies) and in larger groups (plates of cookies) so that you have something for everyone. Clearly label all items with a price and ingredients list. Clearly mark anything with nuts so you don’t have any allergic reactions. On the day of the sale, set everything up on a long table. Have a cash box and have at least twenty dollars in small bills and coins for making change. Sell bottled water and soda to wash down the yummy goodness!

Board Game Tournament

Create a fun twist on a card tournament and do something that everyone can participate in. Have a Board Game Tournament. Pick a favorite, such as Sorry, Trouble, or Monopoly. Assemble 4 person teams that will work together to accumulate points or you can allow individuals to participate. Charge an entry fee for each team, in order to earn money for your charity. Give a portion of the proceeds as the winning prize or get prizes donated from local businesses. Decide if you are going to play with a time limit for each game so that everyone has the same chance and to keep things running on a schedule. Decide on any “House” rules beforehand. Set up bleachers for the audience and consider having a 50/50 raffle or raffle for door prizes. Definitely have a concession stand with coffee, soda pop, popcorn, chips, hot dogs, and bottled water to earn extra money.

Buckets for Donations

This fundraiser is perfect to collect the change given at countless stores in your town. Gather old coffee cans and other types of containers and then punch holes in the top. Print out a cover sheet with information about your group and what you are collecting money for. Cover the cans with your cover sheet and then distribute them to local businesses willing to place them on their front counter. Approach the store manager and have a professional looking cover sheet that explains your charity and your goals of fundraising. Make sure that you dress in a professional manner. Keep the cans there as long as it is

acceptable to the business owner or for the duration of your fundraiser. Send a representative of your group once a week to empty out the cans and collect the money. Make sure you update the store manager on your group's progress and thank them for helping your group.

Chili Cook-off

Just about everyone has a secret family chili recipe. Encourage people to share theirs by having a Chili Cook-off for your next fundraiser. Charge an entry fee to all chefs and award cash prizes to the winners. Assemble local celebrities to make up your judging panel. Have different categories for people to enter i.e. best spicy chili, best vegetarian chili, best chili by a chef under the age of 16, etc. Either have everyone bring in their pre-cooked chili or provide a space for them to cook it onsite. Have the cooking be a part of the judging process by awarding points based on timing, technique, and cleanliness. People love to watch others cook so have an observation area for the audience. Have a timed cooking contest to see who can make the best chili in an hour (or a half hour for an added challenge). Sell bowls or samples of the different chilies for the audience to try and to raise extra money.

Cooking Class

You don't have to be Julia Child to put on a cooking class! And it doesn't have to be complicated French cuisine, either. If your organization has a kitchen, or if you can rent a space with one, you can hold a cooking class fundraiser. There are several ways to go about it. The class can cover the basics of cooking, a specific type of ethnic food, or how to put together a holiday meal. Your class can also focus on just one type of food, such as vegetable dishes or party appetizers, or one cooking method, like baking. Limit the number of students based on the amount of cooking space available to you, and charge a fee to participate. For a lower fee, you can also allow observers, who may not be able to actually do the cooking, but can take notes and get the recipes used in the class. Afterward, everyone can sample the goodies prepared during class. By varying the topic and cooking method, you'll never run out of possibilities for future classes.

Dog Wash

Everyone wants their dog to be clean, but not everyone has the ability to give their dog a bath at home, and groomers can be expensive. Your group can offer a low-cost dog wash for the furry, four-footed members of the community! The best option is to find a facility that has enough space, and hot water, but that can be difficult. If you decide to hold it outside, be sure to do it on a very warm day so the dogs won't be too uncomfortable in the cold water. Remember that their body temperature is naturally higher than ours, so if the water's cold to you, it's really cold to them! You can buy dog shampoo in bulk at a discount store or club store. You don't really need tubs; just a few hoses will do. But make sure the dogs have a non-slippery surface to stand on while you're washing them, and have their owners stay close by to keep the dogs calm. The number one rule should be, any dog not being bathed must be on a leash. With so many dogs in one place, everyone's safety is the priority. Keep a few water bowls on hand for the dogs while they wait their turn. You can even sell refreshments for the dog lovers to enjoy while they wait for their dogs to be bathed, and include some treats or biscuits for the dogs. Ask group members to donate old towels to dry the dogs off after their baths. No one will want their car to smell like wet dog!

Drive-in Movie

Drive-in movie theaters were a popular American staple during the 1950s and 1960s. Most of today's generation has never even heard of one, so recreate the fun for your next fundraiser. You may not be able

to have an exact replica, but there are many ways to go about getting the feel of a drive-in movie. One option would be to find a large building with a smooth surface that you can project a movie on. If you wanted to be really elaborate, rent a local radio frequency to broadcast the soundtrack on so people could listen in their car. A simpler way would be to have your "drive-in" movie inside of a gymnasium or cafeteria. Project the movie onto a screen and let everyone set up lawn chairs or blankets to watch. Charge an entry fee and have a concession stand to raise money. Have a countdown until the movie starts so everyone knows how long they have to buy snacks. You may be able to find the corny dancing snack movie that used to play at the drive-in. This will be a fun one for everyone.

Face Painting

Children love to have their face painted. This is a popular activity at carnivals and fairs. Set up a face painting booth at your next craft show or fair. Enlist the help of some talented artists from your group to help paint faces. Have a practice session before hand so that you will know what you are doing. Face painting kits can be bought online and at some party supply stores. Shop around for the best deal. You will want to have seats, water for cleaning brushes, wet wipes, face paints and examples of face painting that the kids can choose from. You could charge as little as a dollar for simple art work or up to five dollars or more for elaborate ones. As your young customers walk around they will drive more customers to you. Offer instant photos of the face painting for a dollar more, so they have a lasting memory. This will be a fun fundraiser for everyone.

Garage Sale / Yard Sale

Who doesn't have stuff floating around in their attic, basement, or spare room that just isn't used or needed anymore? Clear out the clutter and help your cause at the same time. Ask your organization's members, and the community, to get involved and donate their unwanted items to a group garage or yard sale. Find a venue such as a school sports field or a church yard large enough for several tables while leaving room for browsing. Get volunteers and item donors to help mark everything with price tags before the sale begins. You can even offer simple concessions like hot dogs and sodas for hungry shoppers, and earn a little extra cash. Have a backup location ready in case bad weather puts a damper on the outdoor event. Most schools and some churches have auditoriums that can accommodate events like this.

Miniature Golf Marathon

Get out your putters and little mini pencils, it is Miniature Golf time. This is a fun fundraiser that will have you honing your putting skills around water, sand traps, and rocks. It is appropriate for all ages and groups. Find a local miniature golf course that is willing to donate their facility for the day. You may want to find a course that is lit up at night if you decide on having a 24-hour marathon. Set a rain date in case of inclement weather. Have a 12 or 24 hour marathon. Most people could probably play for 12 hours with breaks for eating and using the restroom. If doing a 24 hour event, you may want to separate teams into 4, 8, or 12 hour shifts. Have your group members seek sponsors willing to donate money in exchange for them playing golf. Find local restaurants that will bring in food and drinks for your group to eat. Everyone will need to be well hydrated and eating regularly to maintain strength. Contact your local media; they may want to cover your story which could increase your donations. Split your group into 4 person teams, observe all rules of the game and have fun.

Pancake Breakfast

This is one of the most common fundraisers because it's easy and inexpensive to plan, and who doesn't like pancakes? You'll find everything you need to make the pancakes at the grocery store, or in large quantities at a club store. Don't forget the syrup! You can even offer a couple of flavored syrups, like blueberry, if you want to make it more fun and tasty. You'll also need a couple of large electric griddles and a place to plug them in. This fundraiser is best held somewhere that offers places to sit and eat, like a cafeteria. Check with your local schools to see if you can host your pancake breakfast at one of them. You can charge either by the pancake, or by the plate with a set number of pancakes served. This kind of fundraiser is great for Sundays, and makes a great church fundraiser. If you can hold it at your church, everyone can come by and have a warm breakfast after services.

Rake It Up

It seems like all the leaves fall from the trees at once in the fall. It can be a time consuming task, but a great fundraiser for your group. Create a flyer that explains your group, what you are raising money for, and talks about your Rake It Up day. Distribute them door to door in your neighborhoods. Be careful not to place them in mailboxes, as this is against federal law. Let people know you will be in their neighborhood, rakes in hand, to clean up their yard for a donation. Pick a weekend, as more people will be home. Bring rakes and yard waste disposal bags. Make sure to check with your local municipality for requirements. Knock on doors and see who wants their yards cleaned up. Remember to be courteous. Find out where they want the yard waste put, as you may not be able to just leave it at the curb. Leave a handwritten thank you note to show your appreciation.

Scrapbook Crop

Scrapbooking is a very popular and profitable hobby. It is gaining a larger and larger following, with scrapbook stores popping up everywhere. This fundraiser will encourage people to get their pictures out of the shoebox and into albums for people to enjoy. A scrapbook crop is simply a term for a group of people coming together to work on their pictures scrapbooking and share equipment and ideas. Schedule your "crop" for a Saturday or Sunday or for a Friday night. A cafeteria would be the perfect location for this type of event. Sell tickets that will entitle each scrapbooker to a flat workspace, about 4' by 2½' is a good size, and lunch. There are a few direct marketing scrapbooking companies, such as Creative Memories or Stampin' Up, which may have consultants in your area. Contact them to see if they would like to offer their expertise and products for sale at the "crop". They may be willing to donate a portion of their proceeds from sales to your group. Alternatively, see if a local scrapbook store will let you use their "crop" area for your event. Your participants would have access to their tools and be able to buy all the supplies they need. Bring in pizza and soda for lunch for everyone to enjoy.

Waiting for Dollars

Find a local restaurant that is willing to host your waiting for dollars event. They will appreciate the extra business it will bring them and you will have a good time raising money. Your group will take over waiting tables and bussing dirty dishes, in exchange for tips for your group. You will probably want some experienced wait staff on hand to help guide your group. Most patrons, hearing their tip money will be going for a good cause will probably be generous giving more than the customary fifteen to twenty percent. Pick a restaurant that is popular so that you can ensure a large turnout. Advertise locally what your group will be doing and when. The restaurant may want to donate \$1 for every meal ordered from this menu. Remember to be polite, fast, and accurate. Try not to break any plates!

These are some of the successful fundraising activities that can benefit the DSAM:

- Jeans Day: Pay \$5 to wear jeans to work
- Recycle Cans: Keep an extra trashcan in the break room for cans only
- Concession Stands at Little League games
- Loose Change: Put containers out at retail businesses for loose change
- Jail and Bail: Arrest locals who have taa raise money before they get "paroled"
- CEO/Costume Pictures: Charge \$5 to have a picture made with the CEO
- Monkey on Your Back: Pay fee to have someone wear a stuffed monkey around
- Softball Tournament: Charge an entry fee for each team
- Baskets (Theme) Auction: Put together theme baskets to be auctioned off
- Dunk Tank: Get local celebrities to be dunked
- Parents Night Out/Christmas Shopping for Parents: Charge parents for babysitting
- Pampered Chef Party, Tupperware, or Partylight: Donate a portion of the sales
- Curse Buckets/Swear Jars: Must pay a fine for each curse word spoken at work
- Office Easter Egg Hunt: Charge to hunt eggs at work...look for the prize egg
- Car Wash
- Letter Writing: Write letters to everyone on your Christmas card list
- Book Sale: Have a used book sale at work
- Silent Auction: Have a silent bake auction for a sweet fundraiser
- Talent Show: Charge admission for a "No Talent Show"
- Crafts Auction: Make and sell all kinds of crafts
- Yard Sales: Have a community wide sale
- Window Washing: Wash car windows at the bank drive through
- Pamper Yourself Night: Slumber party for women only! Charge \$10 to attend
- House Cleaning: Clean houses for donations
- Taking Care of Pets: Charge to take care of someone's pet while they are away
- Hang People's Christmas Lights: Charge for hanging them and taking down
- Gift Wrapping: Set up a Christmas package wrapping station at a mall for donations
- Personal Shopper: Charge to do shopping/errands for someone
- Take Pictures with Santa: Take donations for pictures with Santa
- Skate-A-Thon: Host a special night at a skating rink
- Face Painting: Charge for face painting at a community event
- Chili Cook off: Charge entry fee and for samples
- Hula Hoop Contest: Great for kids AND adults! See who can go the longest
- Ice Cream Social: Charge admission to sample this sweet treat
- Lemonade Stand: Set one up on a hot summer day!
- Candy Gumball Machine: Put this in your office for everyone to purchase
- Most beautiful baby contest: Vote with money donations for the cutest baby
- Dance Contest: Charge an entry fee to participate