

# Education Grants

## Alert

The Weekly Report on Funding Opportunities for K-12 Programs

Vol. 18, No. 28  
July 31, 2008

### Build relationships, not lists and increase donations

Fundraising is not just about asking for money in a bi-annual mailing; it's about getting people invested in something that they truly care about and value. If you build relationships with people, you can cultivate life-long philanthropy, keeping donors thoroughly invested in your organization's cause.

"Fundraisers need to get away from the tin cup-begging model," said Terrie Temkin, author, consultant and founding partner of CoreStrategies for Nonprofits, Inc.

If you are looking for ways to enhance the relationships you have with your donors, you need to learn more about Temkin's approach to fund development.

First, she suggests you get to know your organization. The people who are actually out there fundraising need to understand what they are talking about, said Temkin. "If you are going to friends and colleagues to ask for money to support your program, then you must know enough to talk intelligently when your intelligent friends ask you about your cause," she said. An easy way to do this is to cultivate your elevator speech, but in an elevated way. Don't just say, "I work for the American Cancer Society," say, "I work for a seven-year-old boy with no hair." If people find value in the work you are doing, this gives them a chance to put their money where their mouth is.

Always remember to ask for advice from family and friends, Temkin said. Ask them what they think about a certain program and how it can be improved, then take their advice and put it into action. That way, "they have a vested interest because they see their advice being taken, and are more willing to give money," she said.

Once they are invested, build relationships for the long-term. "Fundraising is not a one time thing," said Temkin. Recognize donations to your school district by having a board mem-

ber send a thank-you card and if it is a large gift, have that board member drop the receipt off in person. It is also important to acknowledge and thank donors between asks. Don't wait until the yearly fundraiser to tell them you appreciate them, she said. Call and give them an update or cut out an article exemplifying your school's good work, write a personal note on it and drop it in the mail.

Temkin said there will always be an [innate] reluctance to ask for money, so why do it, if you don't have to? Instead, give without asking. Try throwing a social evening to inform potential donors about your cause. Let them know that you won't be asking for money. You'll see that people will come to you offering to donate without you ever having to ask, she said.

Finally, Temkin said to be positive. Don't go around asking for money by telling people "woe is me." Tell people the things that your program is accomplishing, the things that are making change happen. If a program in your school has received national recognition, then tell people about it. "People want to be winners," she said. "If they see a positive difference, they want to be a part of it."

To contact Terrie Temkin, visit [www.CoreStrategies4Nonprofits.com](http://www.CoreStrategies4Nonprofits.com) □