

## Fundraising Hockey Symposium 2008

Fundraising for many people is a scary word. But, if you have a passion for what you need to raise funds for, you can share that passion with people and generate interest and support that you never knew existed. You can't assume that everyone will be as interested in your chosen charity and therefore you need to generate that enthusiasm by educating people and getting them interested. Fundraising is not an art; it is totally a numbers game. The more people you ask for help the more people will help you and your cause. The saying in a sales world is that every no gets you closer to a yes, and getting a no should not be taken personally.

Fundraising can take many forms. I have outlined a very grass roots approach below, but you also have to look for other opportunities that may present themselves within your community. eScrips is a CA organization that attaches your purchases with your grocery card or Macy's card, for example and the store will refund back to your organization a percentage of the total purchases for everyone in your organization that signs up. This is used often with churches and schools, but it is available for every non-profit organization. You can also talk with your local restaurants and see if they may donate part of their revenues for your group to your organization. Chevy's does this all the time. You work with the store management and organize a day for Underwater Hockey. Invite everyone and their mother to go to Chevy's on that designated day. If they tell the wait staff that they are supporting the Underwater Hockey organization, Chevy's donates a percentage of their receipts for your invitees to your organization.

Since Underwater Hockey is not a well known sport much less a well known charity...except to us! We have to take a very grass roots approach to raising funds and that includes asking your friends and family to help. Help is a very strong word in the English language. When you ask for help, most people feel some sort of pull to assist if they can. I have a few tips for asking for support below and then follow with a sample letter that you can use to ask for support.

## **Outline for Fundraising:**

Once you start telling others about your commitment to participate in the \_\_\_\_\_, you will be absolutely amazed by their generosity and willingness to support you in your journey.”

### **Fundraising Tips:**

1. Ask. So simple, yet so often overlooked, feared or avoided. You are not asking for yourself, you are asking for your organization to allow UWH to grow and give others the opportunity that you have had.
2. Do it now! Why wait? Less than 2 years before World's 2010. Start now.
3. Tell your story with passion and enthusiasm. Why is this important to you and why would it be important to those we are helping? Enthusiasm is infectious, plus you might even get a few additional players!
4. Expand your audience. Include everyone you know that knows how passionate you are about the sport.
5. Know your facts. What does it take to send someone to a World tournament? How much does it cost to start a new team and outfit them with gear? We can get you that info.
6. Never make the decision for a donor. Don't rule someone out because you think that they don't have anything to give—they may surprise you.
7. Ask at least one person for a \$500 donation. Challenge yourself to find at least one person amongst your group of family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances who you believe can make a contribution of \$500...again, you'll surprise yourself.
8. Ask for help! Talk to friends or families who have embarked on fundraising journeys of their own. What can you learn from them?
9. Take your donors with you on your journey. Keep your donors updated on your progress and what their money is being put toward. They like to hear how they have helped.
10. Try a little bit of everything when raising money. Fundraising parties, email campaigns, mail out letters, solicit corporate sponsorship, have a garage sale, be creative.

Thank each and every donation. When I ask for support I make sure I send a personal thank you note, and you might even consider sending them a Hockey postcard or bottle opener. You want them to remember that you appreciated their support and that will make them more open to donating again....we will always need additional support...look at the Olympic Committee!

Below is an example of a letter that you may send to your friends or family to ask for your much needed support.

Dear Friends and Family:

I am writing to you to ask for your support. As you know I have been very actively involved in a new and growing sport called Underwater Hockey. I have been playing for XX years and have had some great opportunities to develop my individual skills, learn to play with my local team and compete at an international level.

Underwater Hockey was started in 1954 and currently there are more than 25 countries playing. We hope to eventually be a sport that will be included in the Olympics, but we need help. Here in the United States we have 50 teams playing across the country and 35 of those active in tournament play. That may not seem like much, but the sport has been growing and will continue to grow as we are able to reach more and more locations.

The reason I am now asking for your support is that the US Underwater Hockey Association is working hard to grow and improve our sport. We have recently hired two people who are the US Development Directors for Hockey. With this focus on development we are looking to expand the number of teams playing here in the US, bring new players onto existing teams, expand the opportunities for the youth and college teams to compete and overall improve the country's ability to compete on the World level.

As you can imagine, this sort of effort requires a lot of time, effort and of course capital. We are creating new DVDs to help train beginners in the sport, providing starter kits for new teams, running clinics to introduce hockey and hosting regional tournaments to bring new teams into competitive play.

Underwater Hockey is one of the sports sponsored by the Underwater Society of America, USOA. USOA is a 501C organization and so your donations will be tax deductible. All I ask is if you might consider a donation to help us to continue our efforts to grow this amazing sport. No donation is too small and we will put every penny right back into the development effort.

Please take a look at our website, [usauwh.com](http://usauwh.com) to learn more about what we are doing in the development of Underwater Hockey! You can submit your donations through this page or simply send me a check to Underwater Society of America in the self addressed stamped envelope that I have provided and I will take care of the details. You will receive a receipt for your tax purposes.

Thank you for your support.