Fundraising Guide for Summer Pre-College Participants

Congratulations on the opportunity to attend a Pre-College Program at the University of Mississippi! Financial aid for our programs is limited, and we understand that many participants need additional support in raising the funds necessary to experience life at Ole Miss this summer. Earning and raising the money for tuition is a leadership development opportunity and the traits and characteristics for running a fundraising campaign are valuable life skills.

Setting goals, identifying audiences, developing messages, creating and executing a plan and building relationships are all skills that will help you throughout your life. Many of the participants who attend our programs will invest their time to raise enough funds for tuition. Fundraising is all about being resourceful.

This guide has been prepared to help you develop leadership skills, raise the necessary funds to attend the program of your choice and ultimately lead to a greater sense of satisfaction and accomplishment in the end. Don't forget that planning ahead and starting early are your keys to success!

Have fun and good luck!

The University of Mississippi Pre-College Programs Staff

An Overview of Fundraising

1. Set a budget goal.
2. Identify resources and potential sponsors.
3. Make a plan.
4. Execute the plan.
5. Say "thank you."

Budget

Start by establishing the gap between what you have and what you need in order to attend the program.

- What is the total cost to attend the program?
- Do you have any scholarships already through the program if you have applied for financial aid?
- How much money can you provide yourself toward the cost (savings, income from jobs, family contribution)?
- How much cost remains? This is the amount you need to raise.

Sample budget worksheet:

Fundraising for Summer Pre-College	
Expenses	
Tuition Cost	
Textbooks, if any	
Travel expenses	
Housing	
Meal Plan	
Spending money (for extra food, souvenirs)	
Additional fees	
Bonus weekend trip (for Summer College participants)	
Total Costs	
Funds	
Scholarships	
Personal funds	
Total Funds Available	
Amount to Fundraise	**< Total Costs – Total Funds Available = Amount to Fundraise>**

Identifying Resources

Step One: 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. It is important to have a trustworthy adult assist you in this process.

Step Two: Make a list of all possible donors. Please read below for some ideas.

People you know well:

• All family members (grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, god-parents, close family friends)

• People who might give you a birthday and/or holiday present (ask them to help you with this instead)

• Former employers, current employers, teachers, coaches, scout masters, clergy members

• People you have babysat for, medical professionals, engineering groups, environmental groups, health organizations

School Based Contacts

• School clubs related to the topic that you will study

• PTA/PTO

Community Organizations/Businesses

• Civic groups such as Rotary, Lions Club, Woodsmen, and Kiwanis (these organizations will include many business people from your community)

• Chamber of Commerce

• Community Foundations

• Large stores (ex. Home Depot, Lowes, Wal-Mart, insurance companies, car dealerships, medical providers, etc.)

• Theme groups related to the topic/subject you are going to study (ex. medical professionals, engineering groups, environmental groups, health organizations, theatre groups, etc.)

• Banks

• Board of Education

• Women's clubs

• Successful businesses in your community

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:

- A 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/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 (freshman/sophomore/junior/senior) at (name of high school) and I have recently been accepted by the University of Mississippi to attend the _____ for outstanding high school students. I have maintained a grade point average of _____ and have been highly involved in (list activities, teams, community work). I have enrolled in a course, (name of course), because I am passionate about _____.

I am hoping that this program will help me _____ and help me prepare for college. I know that I would gain a great deal from both my studies and interactions with my peers. I am so eager to participate in this life changing experience. My challenge is that I need to raise $_____ to help with program costs, and $_____ for 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 _____ Pre-College 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 University of Mississippi and include my full name on the memo line. I will be sending all checks together at one time to the University of Mississippi's Pre-College Programs Office to pay for the program.

I greatly appreciate your consideration. When I return from Ole Miss, 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, _____

Online Crowdsourcing

Seeking out donations via online funding websites is becoming a popular and viable option for students of all ages who hope to fund their educational endeavors. Here are some tips to remember when creating your online crowdsourcing campaign:

Use a site which allows you flexibility. We suggest using a fundraising site that does not require you to set up rewards to those who make donations, allows withdrawals at any time, and allows you to keep whatever money is raised, even if the goal is not ultimately met.

• Always choose the "personal campaign" option. If you categorize your fundraiser as "charity" or "nonprofit", your funds will be sent directly to University of Mississippi as a general donation and will not be applied to your student account. **Do not list your fundraiser as "charity."**

• Be clear in your online fundraiser description about what the dollar amounts are and what the money is going towards.

• Read through the crowdsourcing website's FAQ carefully. Be aware of fees that are charged for online transactions, how long withdrawals take to be processed, and which types of currencies are supported.

• Choose an early end-date for the fundraiser. If your deadline to make your full program payment to Ole Miss is, for example, April 28th, your online fundraiser should end well before that date (ex. April 10th). You must allow time for funds to be transferred to you from the funding website, and for you to submit the payment to Ole Miss on time.

• Promote your online fundraiser via social media, email, and word-of-mouth. Include the information and link to your online fundraiser in your written funding requests, and when you speak to organizations and friends/family about supporting you.

Additional Tips: Fundraising Events

Do not 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

General Reminders

• Start early, this takes time.

• Find 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 to 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 may 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.