

Partners in Giving – Special Events

The goal of a special event is to encourage participation, promote enthusiasm, and generate interest in the campaign. For the 2020 campaign there should be no in-person events scheduled due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Event Best Practices

- Remember events are not only about fundraising, but also to drive enthusiasm and participation in the Partners in Giving campaign
- Start early and plan new events and/or themes with your team
- Build on event success from previous campaigns
- Do a variety of large and small events
- Involve leadership in your agency to approve events as some business units may have restrictions on certain activities such as bingo, drawings, etc. Remember drawings must include a way for participants to enter the drawing without donating as no contribution is required to participate.
- If you plan on scheduling an event that requires representatives from umbrella groups or charities, please contact Kristi Heming, phone 608-262-6815 or email heming@chem.wisc.edu to avoid booking conflicts

Communication Best Practices

- Publicize events, tailoring communications to your agency and/or work groups
- Use a variety of methods to announce events and send reminders to agency staff
- Email announcements
- Digital announcements and updates on agency intranet and digital bulletin boards in common areas
- Signs in common areas
- Table tents on breakroom/common area tables
- Decorate a bulletin board in common areas with campaign updates, goal thermometer, schedule of upcoming events

During the campaign

- Post and distribute results from events, include pictures and anecdotes from events
- Stay focused by sending/posting weekly reminders for upcoming events
- Include campaign goals and current progress
- Include anecdotes about participating charities or dollar buy statements to increase emotional impact
- Drive participation in the campaign with awareness, keep in mind an employee who gives throughout the year usually continues giving to future campaigns. Making sure impact statements including dollar buy information can drive campaign participation outside of special events.

Campaign Resources and Web Tools

- Campaign website: <https://giving.wi.gov/>
- Your Loaned Executives are a valuable resource and can help plan/execute events
- This year we can't have in-person events but get creative and build on past successes to update a regular event into a virtual one. Training and Outreach Committee members who can help with virtual events Roxy Walker – roxanne.walker@wisconsin.gov and Kristi Heming - heming@chem.wisc.edu
- Online Auction Tool suggestion - <https://www.32auctions.com/> which has both free and paid options
- Polls, voting on content/pictures for costume contests, pet pictures, pumpkin decorating, or "Who is this?" can be done using online survey tools such as Survey Monkey that allows embedded photos. Check with your business unit to see if you have a survey software available to easily poll your staff on contests.
- Wellness tools such as step tracking software and online free services offer options to host teams for steps and stair tracking events. Also, if your agency participates in Well Wisconsin – <https://www.wellwisconsin-staywell.com/> there are team options for monthly wellness events and steps.

Special Events – Virtual

Due to Covid-19 restrictions there will be no in-person events for the campaign in 2020. You can adapt events usually held in-person to a digital or virtual format. Feel free to reach out to the Training and Outreach committee for assistance in converting events to virtual in this year's campaign.

Challenging times call for creative solutions to drive excitement and participation in the campaign. Some past events will be difficult or impossible to hold with pandemic limitations but don't be discouraged. Adapt past successes into virtual events or experiment with new events.

Work with your Loaned Executive to develop online/virtual events or you can contact either Roxy Walker – roxanne.walker@wisconsin.gov and/or heming@chem.wisc.edu for assistance with special event planning or ideas to convert past events into virtual events for the 2020 campaign.

“Why do you give?” Online Posts – set up a place online for your employees to post stories or statements about why they give to the campaign. Similar to setting up an easel in high traffic area but online so people can participate virtually. Set up a blog on your intra-net, a shared document, or a social media page and encourage employees to share stories or statements about why they give. Consider allowing people to post anonymously as well to encourage participation by either having an option of leaving name or not in the post or designating a volunteer to collect statements via email and then posting them so anyone who prefers privacy feel comfortable.

Virtual step/stair challenge, 10K, or Walk-a-Thon – participants/team volunteer to walk a specific distance or get credit for a specific number of steps during a set timeframe. Participants are sponsored by other members of their work group or agency.

Agencies participating with Well Wisconsin have the option of setting up a team captain and inviting participants to a team for challenges. You can use existing monthly health challenges or step tracking to compete. More information can be found under the Teams link on <https://www.wellwisconsin-staywell.com/>. Other step tracking software and online wellness tools have team elements and can help track progress on challenges.

Get agency or work group volunteers to be runners/walkers, set up sponsors for each participant. Sponsors can be other members of the work group, volunteers can get their own sponsors, leadership could sponsor specific participants. Sponsors would agree to pay either a donation based on completed distance/steps/etc. or a flat donation for participating.

During the competition timeframe participants would then walk around their neighborhoods, yards, parks, and other socially distant venues. Fitness trackers could be used to track steps/distance. Encourage participants to submit selfies and pictures of their travels to share with your agency.

Virtual Bingo – create Bingo cards and “sell” for a donation, get creative and use pictures or symbols or just go classic numbers. Post bingo numbers on your agency intranet or communicate to participants over several days. Provide prizes to winners.

Scavenger Hunt – create a scavenger hunt that can be done remotely. Ask participants to find specific things in their home, yard, or neighborhood and submit pictures of them as they are “found” such as wildlife, plants/flowers, or certain types of vehicles such as delivery trucks or specific make/model/color. Create a “clue based” scavenger hunt making participants solve the clue and provide a photo as proof awarding the individual or team with the most correct answers. For example, “Underground train for hunger” would be a picture of a Subway Restaurant sign.

Good resources include quick internet searches for “Virtual Scavenger Hunt” or “Digital Scavenger Hunt” or “Nature Scavenger Hunt” “Scavenger Hunt for Adults” and some specific websites with suggestions and instructions:

<https://www.girlsguidetopm.com/scavenger-hunt-teambuilding>

<https://www.doinggoodtogether.org/bhf/nature-scavenger-hunt>

<https://www.greenmatters.com/p/nature-scavenger-hunt-ideas>

<https://www.goosechase.com/blog/planning-a-scavenger-hunt-for-adults/>

<https://www.diva-girl-parties-and-stuff.com/scavenger-hunts.html>

Team Theme Days – develop various themes that can done remotely during video calls or meetings such as “Crazy Hat Day” or “Band T-Shirt Day” to drive awareness of the campaign. Tie in with Pledge Form drawings to build participation. (Remember, donations are not required for drawings so make sure you have a participation option for those who don’t wish to donate.)

Local Restaurant/Event Auctions – buy or solicit donations of gift cards for local restaurants, theaters, sporting events and auction them off for people to use in the future.

Pumpkin Carving/Painting Contest (Virtual) – buy pumpkins or solicit donations from a local farm and sell them for \$5 each. Arrange pick up for the participants of the pumpkins and have participants decorate at home. Put pictures of all the entries on intranet, blog, etc. so employees can vote for the winners. Top three get prizes.

Halloween Costume Contest (Virtual) – solicit volunteers to dress up for Halloween and submit pictures for judging or post them online and have other staff vote on costumes. Provide prizes to the top three contestants.

Halloween (or just because) Pet Costume Contest – solicit pictures from volunteers of their pets dressed up in Halloween or silly costumes for judging or have other staff vote. Provide prizes to the winners. Local pet stores often will donate gift cards or products for charity so solicit early in the campaign for pet friendly prizes.

“Who is that?” Digital Version – solicit pictures of co-workers when they were younger and post the pictures on agency intranet, blog, etc. with a number. Sell guessing “sheets” with names for a donation (\$5.00) and the person with the most correct answers wins a prize.

“Back to Normal” Food Event – sell tickets to a food event to be held at a TBA time once social distancing and food restrictions are lifted. Get volunteers to sign up for dishes they will bring. Combine with auction for gift cards to local restaurants as food options to help keep people safe.

Special Events – Activities

Pledge Form Drawings – prior to the campaign collect prizes from local businesses and donors. Schedule weekly drawings of returned pledge forms or use the online donor list. Create an email form option for people who wish to participate in the drawings without donating.

The earlier the pledge or email form is submitted the more chances to win! Pledge forms are available online this year so employees can submit the pdf to make a donation or email to designated staff to participate without donating. Make sure you provide a way for participants to enter the drawing without donating as no contribution is required to participate.

Basket / Gift Auction – solicit donations of completed gift baskets, gifts, or themed items from individuals, teams, departments, or leadership in your agency. Determine the value of the donations/basket to determine starting prices for the auction. Take pictures and post on intranet or online auction site, display baskets in a central location, set a timeline for the auction, and all proceeds go to benefit Partners in Giving.

Try to keep value of baskets reasonable, WI sports team themed baskets usually sell well, advertise as potential holiday gifts, smaller baskets with more variety tend to sell better. Be creative, items should be new or gently used.

Successful themes and examples:

- Coffee: Coffee beans, flavored syrups, mugs, French Press, biscotti
- Chocolate: Variety of truffles or chocolates, chocolate themed items such as tea towels, mugs, magnets
- Italian Feast: Olive Oil, spice mixes, kitchen tools, checkered table cloth
- Spa: Variety of bath products, eye mask, spa socks, cotton gloves, lotion, gift cards for services
- Game Night: Board games, microwave popcorn, cards/card games like Uno
- Movie Night: DVDs or Blu-ray movies, popcorn, movie tickets or theater gift cards

Post auctions on your intra-net or internal agency blog if resources are available. Otherwise, online auction tools are available at low cost. A successful tool used in the campaign is <https://www.32auctions.com/> which allows you to post up to 20 items for free. You can solicit donors to pay for the service for larger auctions or do multiple auctions throughout the campaign to reduce costs. If you have many different donations for auction you can always do shorter auctions using a theme and group like items into separate auctions.

“Who is that?” – solicit pictures of co-workers when they were younger and post the pictures digitally on agency intranet, blog, etc. with a number. Sell guessing “sheets” with names for a donation (\$5.00) and the person with the most correct answers wins a prize.

Donate your “Skills” – ask employees to donate their time and skills and sell or auction off. Some people are good at photography, carpentry, baking, sewing, cleaning, dog sitting, and all kinds of other things. Ask employees to donate their talents to be auctioned off to benefit Partners in Giving. Plan a way for the skills to be delivered virtually such as using Skype, TEAMS, etc. or delivered in a socially distant way. Maybe someone will donate time to rake yards, or teach a mini “online class” to benefit the campaign.

Pumpkin Carving/Painting Contest – Buy pumpkins or solicit donations from a local farm and sell them for \$5 each or allow people to provide their own pumpkins to decorate at home. If you are selling pumpkins work with your agency/business unit to arrange safe, socially distant pick up of the pumpkins and have participants decorate at home. Put pictures of all the entries on intranet, blog, etc. so employees can vote for the winners. Top three get prizes.

Turn the Radio On! – Your favorite radio station may be willing to contribute prizes such as lunches, pizza, beverages, flowers, event tickets to help promote your campaign. Get the word out and let listeners in Dane County know that the state, university, and UW Health employees are involved in the Partners in Giving Campaign. In past years, WOLX (94.9 FM) and WMMM (105.5 FM) have participated by donating prizes to silent auctions.

Special Events – Food Events

Due to restrictions for this year’s campaign we cannot hold in-person events but you can capitalize on previous event successes in digital or virtual ways.

“Back to Normal” Food Event – sell tickets to a food event to be held at a TBA time once social distancing and food restrictions are lifted. Get volunteers to sign up for dishes they will bring. Combine with auction for gift cards to local restaurants as food options to help keep people safe.

Cookbook Sale – solicit recipes from previous food events such as Chili Cookoff, Bake Sales, Cultural Potluck, and others. Compile recipes submitted by staff and publish your own Cookbook to sell for the campaign. To add to the fun, you can have people vote on their favorite recipes and award the winners with prizes. Drive excitement using agency favorites. You can publish as a PDF and distribute digitally to lower cost to produce or work with local printers and resources to print physical copies to send to purchasers.