

## Partners in Giving – Special Events Best Practices

Create your own unique events, or choose from the following list:

### Well-received examples:

- Sports themed baskets
- Holiday themed items
- 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 tablecloth
- 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
- Donate your “Skills” – ask employees to donate their time or talents such as photography, carpentry, baking, sewing, cleaning, dog sitting, etc. Maybe someone will donate time to rake yards or teach a mini “online class” to benefit the campaign.

Access MobileCause Overview on our [Helpful Documents Page](#).

### Before your Special Event

The goal of Special Events is to encourage participation, promote enthusiasm, and generate campaign interest. Publicize your Special Events using a variety of methods including verbal, digital, email, bulletin boards, and signage in breakrooms and other common areas. Early planning will help you build upon previous campaign successes. To request a guest speaker from an umbrella group, please visit <https://giving.wi.gov/volunteers-chairs/request-an-event>. You may also contact Training and Outreach committee members Roxy Walker [Roxanne.walker@revenue.wi.gov](mailto:Roxanne.walker@revenue.wi.gov) and Kristi Heming [heming@chem.wisc.edu](mailto:heming@chem.wisc.edu) 608-262-6815, for assistance with virtual events. **\*Note!** Prize drawings must include ways to participate without donating, and certain business units may have restrictions on activities such as drawings and bingo. Contact DOA’s Joe Gastel [joseph.gastel@wisconsin.gov](mailto:joseph.gastel@wisconsin.gov) 608-270-2545 to ensure that your special event follows all of the appropriate gaming guidelines. Be sure to follow agency and local health recommendations when planning events.

### Weekly during the campaign

- Post and distribute results from your most recent events, including photos and event summaries.
- Stay engaged by communicating weekly reminders for future events
- To encourage ongoing participation, perhaps you might include anecdotes about the participating charities, or “dollar buy” impact statements which highlight the impact of giving, along with restating your campaign goals and progress.

### Campaign Resources & Web Tools

- Campaign website: <https://giving.wi.gov/>
- Your Loaned Executives are valuable resource who can help plan and execute events

- Get creative, build on past successes, and possibly turn your in-person event into a virtual event.
- Polls, voting on content/photos for costume contests, pet pictures, pumpkin decorating, or “Who is this?” can be done using online survey tools such as Survey Monkey. Embedded photos are allowed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>. Perhaps your business unit already has 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

Select a few special events from the following list or create your own:

**Virtual/Hybrid/Socially Distant Kick Off Event** – work with your Loaned Executive to schedule a Tabling event with an umbrella and local organizations to drive awareness of the work these organizations do and the impact of the 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, a Google Jamboard, 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.

**Lunch and Learn Events with Umbrella Organizations** – work with your Loaned Executive to schedule a lunch event with an umbrella and local organizations to drive awareness of the work these organizations do and the impact of the campaign.

**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.

**Calendar** – pick a theme and solicit nature and/or pet photos from staff. Vote on entries to determine which photos should be included or use photos/entries from other campaign events and create a calendar to sell. 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.

**Telethon** – hold a virtual or socially distant telethon with members of staff and leadership manning the phones to take calls for pledges and answer questions about the campaign. Work with your Loaned Executive to involve umbrella groups or representatives from organizations in the event.

**Trivia Contest** – stage a virtual/hybrid/socially distant Trivia event. This is an effective event for business units and agency-wide participation.

**Pet Photo Contest** – solicit photos of pets from employees and post them online for the whole agency to enjoy. Allow people to vote on the photos as a way to drive donations and present prizes to the winners. Also, you can incorporate this activity into a scavenger hunt event or a “Who’s that Pet?” to match up with their humans.

**Leadership Videos** – work with leadership in your agency to record videos about Partners in Giving, personal stories, impact of giving, campaign successes. Feature the videos as part of an event and then make the videos available online for employees. Incorporate them into a scavenger hunt event for the campaign.

**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. Bingo card options are available for use for the campaign, contact Kristi Heming at [heming@chem.wisc.edu](mailto:heming@chem.wisc.edu) for assistance with generating Bingo cards for your event.

<https://giving.wi.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/PinG-Bingo-Best-Practices.pdf>

**Team Theme Days** – develop various themes that can be 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/Socially Distant)** – 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.

**Halloween Costume Contest (Virtual/Socially Distant)** – 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?” Virtual Event** – 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.

**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.

**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 scavenger hunt using the Partners in Giving Campaign website <https://giving.wi.gov/> and/or booklet (<https://giving.wi.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-Partners-in-Giving-Booklet.pdf>) to drive participation, campaign awareness, and highlight the many options available for giving. You can also incorporate other events into a scavenger hunt such as providing clues that drive engagement with “Why do you give” posts, pet photos, costume contest, leadership videos, recorded videos provided by umbrella groups and organizations, and materials from the Kick Off or a Lunch and Learn event.

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>

**Pledge Form Drawings** – Pledge forms are available online so employees can submit the pdf to make a donation or email the form to participate without donating. Donations are not required to participate in drawings. Prior to the campaign collect prizes from local businesses and donors. Schedule one or several drawings as it fits your timeline.

**Basket / Gift Auction** – Solicit donations of gift baskets, gift cards, or themed items from individuals, teams, businesses, departments, or leadership in your agency. 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.

The value of the item(s) will determine the starting price for the auction. Take pictures and post on intranet or online auction site, display baskets in a central location, and set a timeline for the auction. All proceeds must go to Partners in Giving. More affordable baskets encourage more bidding.

**Online auction tools** – (such as <https://www.32auctions.com/>) allow you to post up to 20 items for free.

If you have more than 20 items, you may choose to have several auctions.

**Book and/or Media Sale (Virtual/Socially Distant)** – at the beginning of the campaign or before begin collection donations of books and media for a sale. Schedule a sale in a central room during the campaign or post the items online for a virtual sale. Choose whether to price items individually or do tier pricing such as \$2 for hardcovers, \$1 for paperbacks, \$2 DVDs, etc. and organize the items on multiple tables to encourage browsing. Set up shifts of volunteers to take money and keep tables organized. Any leftover books and media can be donated locally after the sale. This is a great event annually at many agencies for readers to enjoy and to keep books circulating for a great cause.

**Golf Outing** - set a Challenge. Have a prize for all who participate. Try a One-Club Golf Outing with a Beat the Director Challenge. Each player contributes \$5 to get in on the action. The Director gets one shot for each four-some. Each player pays \$5 to get in on the challenge to beat the director’s one shot. Build camaraderie, have fun and benefit the campaign while you improve your golf score.

**Carnival or Game Day** – create a carnival in your work area by setting up games. Sell individual tickets or bundles so people can play throughout the day/week. Get silly prizes at a Dollar/Party store and track winners for bragging rights.

Many websites have suggestions of simple, yet fun carnival games. Some popular examples:

- • Putting Green
- • Bozo Buckets
- • Balloon Pop
- • Pick a Duck
- • Water Coin Drop
- • Bean Bag Toss
- • Spin the Wheel
- • Ring Toss

Good resources include quick internet searches for “Carnival Games” or “Games for Events” or “Free Carnival Game Ideas” and some specific websites with suggestions and instructions:

<https://www.thespruce.com/homemade-carnival-games-family-festivals-3128945>

<https://www.carnivalsavers.com/freeboothideas.html>

<https://www.pinterest.com/carnivalsavers/carnival-games/>

[https://www.momjunction.com/articles/carnival-games-for-kids\\_00376923/](https://www.momjunction.com/articles/carnival-games-for-kids_00376923/)

<https://tipjunkie.com/diy-carnival-games-for-your-next-big-bash/>

### **Special food event suggestions**

**Chili Lunch** – ask volunteers to bring in a crockpot of chili. A variety of options is best including traditional chili, spicy, vegetarian, vegan, white, turkey, etc. Ask volunteers to bring in toppings such as chopped onions, cheese, croutons, oyster crackers, and deserts. Charge \$5.00 per bowl for chili, toppings and a dessert. Sell samples of different chilis for \$1.00 each. Make it a contest and let people vote on their favorite chili with prizes to the top three.

**Cultural Potluck** – celebrate diversity and inclusion with a cultural potluck. What’s more interesting than a potluck featuring anything from Norwegian to East African cuisine? Have the people in your workplace donate items to the potluck that reflect their heritage and ethnicity. Each person could also provide a brief description of the history of the dish too for a fun, educational addition to the lunch. You will be amazed at how good the food is and how much you will learn about your coworkers. Decorate the space with flags and maps to make it more impactful.

**Dessert Auction** – ask for donations of baked goods (homemade or store bought) to sell at a silent auction. This might be especially successful for holidays so people can buy desserts to enjoy. Put the donated items on tables with an auction sheet and allow people to browse the goodies throughout the day. Distribute to the winning bidders at the end of the afternoon. Combine with a bake sale for grab and go customers.

**Salad and Dessert Bar** – serve *one* plate of salad and a dessert for \$5.00. Create a sign-up sheet so volunteers can bring in a dessert, or salad bar item (Ex. lettuce, mushrooms, tomatoes, eggs, cheese, croutons, broccoli, cauliflower, salad dressings, plates, forks, or napkins, etc.).

**Walking Tacos** – it's a portable taco! Set up taco fixings in a self-serve fashion. Give each person a small bag of corn chips to crunch up, and then fill the bag with taco fixings. Create an instant, portable taco, perfect for employees who don't have time for a traditional potluck.

**Potato Bar** – who doesn't like a hot baked potato for lunch? Toppings could include cheese, salsa, broccoli, sour cream, butter, nacho cheese, chili, bacon bits and other items. Round out this event with a cookie and soda and ask for a \$5 donation for Partners in Giving. Feel free to create a sign-up sheet so volunteers can bring in items.

**Breakfast Treats and Bake Sale** – start everyone's day off right with breakfast items and beverages. Can also be done as a cart driven around work areas with cakes, quiches, bars, cream puffs, cookies, breads, muffins, fruit, and don't forget the juice! Panera, Kwik Trip, and local bakeries will sometimes donate day old items for such events. Reach out early in the campaign to take advantage of local business donations.

**Ice Cream Social** – who doesn't love ice cream and the chance to be creative? Make-your-own-sundaes are always a hit on warm fall days. Ice cream and toppings (donated by the agency, department, division, or bureau) can be sold for a nominal price. Consider individually wrapped ice cream cups, popsicles, and/or novelties, and a lactose-free option.

**Pumpkin Baking Contest** – Create your best pumpkin dessert. Have a panel of judges (3) decide the winner in each category (bars, pies, cookies, etc.) Cut up and sell the leftovers for \$1.00 each.

**Caramel Apple Sale** - This popular event has been known sell 100 apples within a few hours. Buy large (4-inch round) apples. Coat them with caramel and then roll them in M&Ms, peanuts, Heath bits or any other topping of your choice. Sell for \$5.00 each. Feel free to create a sign-up sheet so volunteers can bring in items.