

From the Fire: Leadership Academy for Young Men Fundraising Toolkit



Plan now to take your first steps toward an unforgettable experience this summer!

About the Fundraising Toolkit:

The At The Well Ninth Grade Weekend Intensive provides limited financial assistance to a select number of participants. Each year, the financial need exceeds the amount of funds available. We strongly encourage applicants to consider raising funds that will help to offset their program cost. We are pleased to provide a Fundraising Toolkit that will offer tips, ideas, and resources to assist you in your search for funding.

The toolkit includes starting steps, fundraising ideas, a list of potential sponsors, and a sample fundraising letter.

GETTING STARTED

* Find out if there are other girls in your area or your school who will also be attending ATW by connecting through ATW's social media, i.e. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

* Establish if you will be able to work together in your fundraising efforts. Select an amount as your fundraising goal.

* Create a working timeline for your fundraising based on the payment deadlines for your session.

Fundraising Basics

1) Identify your support system. Some people will be extremely supportive and share your enthusiasm and excitement. Talking to people and listening to their reactions will help you gauge the level of interest and support they will have for your endeavor. You may be able to recruit others to be a part of your fundraising "team."

2) Your "Support Team." Start by making a list of family and friends whom you can ask for assistance with the program. Don't leave anyone off. Include your parents, grandparents, extended family, neighbors, church members and local businesses. You never know who might be willing to help you achieve your goal. The more contributions, the better, so consider expanding beyond your inner circle of close friends and immediate family members. The cardinal rule of fundraising is that, if you don't ask, you won't receive. Who do you know? Ask anyone and everyone you know and even those you don't know to contribute to your cause.

3) Ask for a specific amount of money. When you begin to ask for "contribution," some people may think ten dollars, while others may think in the hundreds. Be clear and tell people how much you want. Don't be afraid to let them know the total amount that you are hoping to raise.

4) Convey a sense of urgency. Mention the payment deadline specified in your acceptance letter. This limits potential supporters' time to forget about giving you a contribution.

5) Make commitment convenient. Instead of accepting a vague promise of future payment, offer the option of taking a post-dated check or ask them to fill out a sponsorship form and then get back to them at a designated time.

6) Note the Tax Deduction. Explain that donation money going towards the program fee is tax-deductible as ATW is a 501 (c)(3) organization. Your supporters can receive a receipt from ATW for their contribution.

7) **Always follow-up.** Getting on the phone or meeting face to face with small businesses, civic or religious groups, or your friends and relatives lets them know that you really need their support. One follow-up call can make the difference between a supporter sending a check or never getting around to it.

8) **Remember to say “Thank You.”** Send a thank you note to your potential supporters, thanking them for their time and consideration, whether they sponsor you or not. Many people who contribute money would very much appreciate some recognition and praise. Consider hosting a small gathering before you leave to publicly recognize and thank your supporters. Writing another thank you note after you attend ATW may encourage your supporters to support you and/or other girls seeking sponsorship in the future.

Research has shown that the most successful letter campaigns are ones in which the donor has been contacted five times.

Fundraising Ideas

1) Letter Campaign. A letter-writing campaign is one of the simplest and most effective fundraising methods you can use. Donations toward the program fee are U.S. tax-deductible for your donor. You will find a sample letter as a part of this fundraising kit. It would be very beneficial for you to call, email, or visit potential donors and tell them to expect the letter. You should also follow-up with each person to confirm they received the letter, and ask if they have any questions. Give clear instructions in your letter for the donor to write your name on their donation.

Crafting Your Message

- Describe what the program is and state your reasons for attending ATW. Explain how the donation will make an impact. Remember, you are not asking for money for a vacation. You are asking for a donation to help you make a difference in your community and the world.
- You may need multiple forms of your message for different types of interactions with potential supporters. It may be helpful to have a verbal message that you can convey in 30 seconds, a written letter and a 5-10 minute multi-media presentation that you could use for clubs or civic organizations.
- Practice presenting your message (written or verbal) with trusted family members, friends or a teacher. Ask for feedback and suggestions on how it might be improved.
- Provide numerous methods/pathways for supporters to respond. Some people may not be able to supply you with funds, but may have another way that they can contribute to your goal (Ride to/from the airport, being a part of your fundraising team, etc.)
- Close your message with a call to action. What would you like your supporters to do immediately? It may be writing a check, filling out a sponsorship form or making an appointment for a presentation or scheduling a follow-up meeting.

2) Presentations. One course of action is to contact as many clubs in your area as possible and ask if you can give a presentation. Many clubs have breakfast, lunch or dinner meetings where you can ask to speak for 15-20 minutes to present your request and explain what you will be doing. You can also promise a presentation upon your return. Offering to give a slideshow presentation upon your return is a great way to secure funding from religious organizations, civic groups, alumni associations, and educational institutions. Tangible evidence of your experience at ATW helps people understand and appreciate how their money has been put to good use. Pictures are especially good reminders of how donors' contributions have made an impact.

3) Use Social Media. There are many free tools which enable you to easily set up pages for the purpose of keeping your sponsors abreast of your fundraising progress. Include the links in your letters, and keep the pages updated. Some excellent social media websites to use include: www.blogger.com, www.tumblr.com, www.twitter.com, and www.facebook.com. If you create a PayPal account, you may be able to link it to your social media accounts. This allows you to promote your cause, fundraise, and maintain contacts all in one. Helpful websites that can be of assistance in your fundraising efforts include: www.paypal.com, www.gofundme.com, www.chipin.com, and www.challengemenow.com. Don't hesitate to use more conventional forms of media like local newspapers or church bulletins. Spread your message through every available vehicle!

4) Events. When planning an event, be sure the expected amount of income is worth the amount of time and money put into the event. Find creative ways to get goods or entertainment donated for your event. Do you know someone who is a great baker, an artist, or a published writer? Ask them if they might donate their creations to you so that you may allocate the sale towards your program cost.

Other Ideas:

Raffles, Bake Sales ETC.

Use Multiple Fundraising Ideas. Do not be discouraged if you don't reach your fundraising goal using one of these ideas. It may take multiple efforts to reach your goal. Keep a positive attitude, keep trying and you will succeed!

Potential Sponsors

Parent-Teacher Associations

Parent's Place of Employment

Local Businesses

Neighbors

Elected Officials

Schools and School Boards

Professional Organizations

Local Political Organizations

Church Groups

Law Firms

Local businesses are far more likely than large corporations to make a contribution to your cause. The key is to make a link between the owner and you or someone close to you. You may want to approach the business with a letter first and then follow-up with a phone call. Service clubs such as Rotary and Kiwanis, fraternal organizations, and religious groups are excellent sources for fundraising. Utilize your connections!

Important Notes:

If donors plan to send their donation directly to ATW (either online or off), please make sure they include your name with the donation so that the amount will be attributed to you.

Important Dates:

Online Application Due Date: March 31, 2018

As always, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us at From the Fire: Leadership Academy for Young Men by calling (646) 592-1488 or emailing fromthefire@atthewellconferences.org. Best wishes in your fundraising experience!

www.atthewellconferences.org

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear (Insert Name Here),

I have recently been accepted to join an amazing group of young women and future leaders in the At The Well Ninth Grade Weekend Intensive, which will take place August 3-5, 2018 at Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.

During this three-day residential program, I will meet other young women from all over the world and together we will prepare to become leaders in our personal lives, communities and future professions. We will develop our leadership skills, build self-confidence and strengthen our commitment to make a difference in our communities.

In order to participate in this unique experience, I am working to raise [\$ Insert Total Fundraising Goal Amount], which will cover travel, meals and accommodations during the program, and all costs of workshops, excursions and activities.

When I heard about this program, I was most excited by [Insert why you applied].

I would be extremely grateful if you were willing to help me fulfill my dream of attending the 2018 At The Well Ninth Grade Weekend Intensive by [Insert what you would like them to do here].

[Insert any other special directions here.]

For more information about ATW please visit their website: <http://atthewellconferences.org>. ATW is a 501(c)3 organization and your donation is tax-deductible. You can go to their website, click the “donate” button and make a donation on behalf of my name in the comments section. Checks can be made payable to At the Well Conferences, Inc. and mailed to At the Well Conferences, Inc., 394 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York NY 10013. Please list my name in the memo section. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

[Your Name Here]