



STUDENT FUNDRAISING GUIDE

Strong leaders embody a few character traits that set them apart from everybody else. Initiative, determination, and courage—these are just three, but they are the most important qualities a leader draws upon when it comes to fundraising. To nurture your growth as a leader, HOBY encourages you to put those skills to practice and finance your participation in one or more of HOBY's programs.

Note: Since fundraising for a leadership training course in the United States differs greatly from seeking funds overseas, this guide focuses on fundraising for U.S. residents only.

To raise money for your HOBY experience consider any of the following approaches described below:

- I. Request sponsorship from friends and family**
 - II. Request sponsorship from community restaurants and corner stores**
 - III. Request sponsorship from community and religious groups**
 - IV. Request support from large companies and corporations**
 - V. Approach foundations in the business of awarding grants to students**
 - VI. Develop a community fundraising event or activity**
 - VII. Create employment for yourself**
- I. Request sponsorship from friends and family.**
The first and perhaps easiest way to raise money is from friends and family.
- 1) Tell them all, particularly the adults, about the HOBY program, what you expect to gain, and why it is important. If you make a convincing case, you may find that you do not have to pursue funds any further, one or more people who care about you may agree to support your leadership endeavors.
 - 2) Ask your parents to match every dollar of your allowance that you save instead of spend.
 - 3) Offer to do additional chores around the house in exchange for pay. Take it a step further and make the same offer to neighbors and relatives. Mow some lawns, walk some dogs, etc.
 - 4) Ask your parents to work with their employer and colleagues to sponsor your leadership development.
- II. Request sponsorship from community restaurants and corner stores.**
Your local diner, family restaurant, and corner store probably know you and your family pretty well. If you are from a small town, this may be particularly true, thus when you ask them to put a jar on the countertop to collect money for your leadership education, they may not hesitate to assist. They may also allow you to post a sign on the wall or bulletin board, or perhaps they will offer to match whatever you raise

from other fundraising efforts. In fact, the store or restaurant may simply provide the entire sponsorship needed for your HOBY experience.

III. Request sponsorship from community and religious groups.

Community and religious groups often have funds to sponsor youth in the area of leadership and community service. Just a few of the groups you may want to investigate might be your local Optimist Club, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Rotary, or the Masons. Churches, temples, mosques...they too want to see their youth evolve into leaders and will often raise money within their congregations to show their support. Also, check with the Chamber of Commerce for organizations, businesses, and institutions in your area that may be of assistance. Your local PTA, PTO, or other school booster associations may be able to give you assistance or additional contacts as well.

IV. Request support from large companies and corporations.

Large corporations located in your state might entertain a formal request from a 10th grader for financial support to attend a leadership conference. If you live in Michigan, try Ford, General Motors, or Kellogg; in Ohio you might approach Proctor & Gamble; in California contact Google, Yahoo!, or Apple; New Jersey youth should try Johnson & Johnson; Georgia's home to Coca Cola; Texas is home to Frito-Lay; and with a little internet surfing, you will find many corporations in various states that are possibilities. Also look into getting an airline to donate a plane ticket if air travel is required.

To proceed with this option, here are a few tips:

- 1) Surf the web.
 - i. Find out which corporations are near you
 - ii. When you find a company, locate the contact information for the Charitable Giving department (the name may vary from company to company).
- 2) Write a one-page business letter.
 - i. Do not exceed one-page as the executives reading these letters get several similar requests a day. Divide the letter into three to five paragraphs, the first making a direct statement identifying the intent of the letter and the final expressing your gratitude and mentioning your contact information and a date/time at which you will call to follow-up. The paragraphs in between can be more information on the program for which you are seeking money.
 - ii. Make sure to include the exact dollar amount you are seeking. In one sentence, describe what that money covers (program fees, transportation, room and board, meals, etc.). You may want to ask for money for transportation as that amount is not accounted for in HOBY program fees.
 - iii. Do not forget to add your contact information at the top of the letter.
 - iv. Spell check when you are done and have an adult proofread before faxing or mailing.
- 3) Always follow-up with a telephone call to check on receipt of your letter. After you have received confirmation, wait a day or two and call again and ask to meet with the person to whom you are writing. It may take a few phone calls to get an appointment or even a phone interview. When and if you do meet, take some materials about the program from the website www.hoby.org and be ready to impress them.

V. Approach foundations in the business of awarding grants to students.

There are foundations that dedicate themselves to granting money to organizations and individuals making a request. Obtaining funds from such foundations can be difficult for an individual and highly competitive for an organization, nonetheless it is an option. Some foundations include Rockefeller, Ford, Hilton, Bill & Melinda Gates, the Community Foundation, the California Endowment, Soros, Ciscos, and Fannie Mae. Keep in mind that not all foundations provide funds for individuals or youth leadership development, thus you will have to investigate their giving guidelines. Such foundations require the professional business letter approach as mentioned in section IV. Key words to use in your internet search are: SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, FOUNDATIONS, ENDOWMENTS, and names of foundations like those mentioned above.

VI. Develop a community fundraising event or activity.

One of the most entertaining ways to raise money for your HOBY experience is to create projects for which you sell something - a service or product.

- 1) You can coordinate a garage sale with your friends and family, with all or most of the sales going to sponsor your involvement in one of HOBY's leadership programs. Community members can donate something of value for you to sell, letting you keep all or most of the profit. They can also set up next to you and sell several of their own items giving you a portion of the profits simply for coordinating the event.
- 2) Another option is to create a running/walking/biking marathon for yourself, asking people to make a donation for every mile you complete. If you are someone with a great deal of stamina, perhaps you might ask for \$1 to \$5 per mile, and if you do not think you can go the distance suggest \$5 to \$10 per mile.
- 3) If you have access to desirable merchandise that you can purchase for wholesale or at a discount, or make yourself, try starting your own mini business and sell to the public for a profit. Just make sure you do not purchase too much and that the merchandise is indeed a popular consumer item. *HOBY advises to consult with your parents before making a purchase.*

VII. Create employment for yourself.

Become a babysitter, or assist your neighbor with carpentry, woodwork, gardening, house cleaning, window washing, car washing, etc. Make a flyer and offer your new service to your neighbors, family, and family friends, and *if your parents approve* – maybe the corner store will let you put up a flyer with the announcement.

Finally, a few tips to help you in your above fundraising efforts:

- 1) **Do your research.** People will ask you questions about the program for which you are seeking money. They will want to know details, your motivation, your goals, etc. Additionally, research the groups, organizations, foundations, etc. that you are seeking – it impresses them when they see you are familiar with their work.
- 2) **Work with someone to write a professional letter.** A potential donor will be impressed to read a grammatically correct, concise, and coherent letter written by a 10th grader. Always reread your letter before mailing it and even step away from it for an hour to a day and read again, therefore catching all possible errors. It's best to have some else review the letter before finalizing it as well.
- 3) **Follow-up your letters with calls.** Sometimes it will be hard to get the appropriate person on the phone, *especially if you are seeking the attention of a top-ranking*

individual, thus always be polite, yet persistent, and never display agitation. It's best to have a copy of the letter you sent them by your side for quick reference and some information about HOBY (the program and organization's history).

- 4) **ALWAYS write a thank you letter** to anyone you contacted for money, even if you do not receive funds. A thank you letter demonstrates your gratitude, thoughtfulness, politeness, and it leaves everything on a positive note, thus opening the door for future support.
- 5) **If you meet with a donor, wear professional attire.** A suit is not necessary, but a nice shirt and slacks for the boys, and a conservative blouse and skirt/pants or dress for the girls, make a great first impression. Take with you the letter, information on the HOBY program and the organization's history, and a short biography on yourself that you can leave with them.