

**Adult  
Congenital  
Heart   
Association**

**How to Host an ACHA  
Fundraiser**

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Dear Potential Fundraiser,

Thank you for your interest in hosting a fundraiser for the Adult Congenital Heart Association. Fundraisers planned by volunteers are a vital source of funds that help ACHA continue its mission and programs in education, advocacy, and promotion of research.

This “How To” guide is intended to provide you with information, fundraising tips and ideas, and to answer some general questions about ACHA’s volunteer fundraising program. Your fundraisers can be as simple as a bake sale or a birthday wish campaign, or more elaborate like a cocktail reception, gala or silent auction—the possibilities are endless!

If you have more questions, please feel free to contact ACHA Development Staff by phone at (888) 921-ACHA. When you are ready, fill out our online volunteer fundraising application on our website.

Thank you again for your interest and for your dedication to ACHA! We hope you find this information helpful and we look forward to working with you in making your fundraiser a success!

Sincerely,

*Your friends at ACHA*

## **Examples of Fundraisers:**

- Instead of traditional wedding favors, make a donation to ACHA, or ask your guests to make a donation to ACHA in your honor in lieu of gifts.
- Ask a local restaurant or bakery to donate proceeds from a particular menu item for a month.
- “Thons” of any sort—dance-a-thon, swim-a-thon—ask participants to collect pledges in support of their efforts.
- Look into holding an office-wide dress down day to benefit ACHA.
- Donate profits from a garage sale or community yard sale.
- Organize a car wash.
- Ask the manager at your favorite restaurant if they have an established fundraising program, or if they would be willing to co-host a fundraising event in support of ACHA (i.e. 10% of proceeds from a specific night).
- Host a bingo night.
- Hold an athletic tournament—for example, basketball or tennis.
- Coordinate Penny Wars between clubs, sororities, fraternities, sport groups or friends.
- Host a party to celebrate a special occasion and ask for donations instead of gifts.
- Get the neighborhood kids or some college friends together for a Greek Olympics tournament. Plan on a day of fun field day challenges, charge an entry fee per team, have food and beverage available for a small donation, and let the games begin!.
- Coordinate a celebrity bartender, barista, or server event at a local hotspot with a few local “celebrities” (your mayor, tv/radio personalities).
- And so many more—anything can be turned into a fundraiser. Let your imagination inspire you!

## Fundraiser in a Box:

### Letter Writing Campaign

- Even with so many fundraising options out there, the most effective method for raising funds is still good, old fashioned letter writing. Gather a mailing list of friends, family, and acquaintances with whom you would like to share your CHD story. ACHA can send you letterhead, envelopes, remittance envelopes, and brochures to be used for your own personalized letter writing campaign.

### Casual Friday at the Office

- Who doesn't love a casual day at the office? Talk with your office manager or HR department about hosting an office-wide dress down day to benefit ACHA. For a small donation, your co-workers can trade business for business casual, or business casual for just plain casual! Make sure to promote the event through emails, signage and personalized reminders or announcements at staff meetings. On your casual day collect funds from all who are dressed down. ACHA can provide templates for signage, text for email marketing, and ACHA brochures for distribution to those participating to increase awareness of congenital heart disease.

### Garage Sale

- Consider hosting a single or multi-family garage sale on a weekend to benefit ACHA. Our "Garage Sale in a Box" will include a template to be used for signage around your neighborhood, ACHA brochures to display near the "check out" table, ACHA pins for garage sale volunteers to wear, ACHA pens, and a template to be used for an 18x24 lawn sign to display during the sale. Consider using red price stickers and adding some red, black, and white balloons to make it more festive!

### Host a Party

- Gather all your friends and family together to celebrate a special occasion like a holiday, your birthday or even the anniversary of your surgery. Instead of gifts, ask your guests to bring a donation for ACHA. This is a great way to celebrate your special day while promoting the work of your favorite organization. ACHA can send you letterhead, ACHA envelopes and remittance envelopes, and assist you in designing your invitations. ACHA can also provide you with a brochures so that your guests can learn about the organization.

### Hold a Bake Sale

- Who can say no to a homemade brownie or chocolate chip cookie? Coordinate a bake sale at your school, workplace or community center to raise money for ACHA. Promote that buying your treats will benefit the organization. ACHA can provide template for signage of all sizes for your event. Deck out your tables in the colors of red, black and white and decorate your treats with hearts to celebrate ACHA!

### Neighborhood Campaign

- Spread the word of ACHA's mission and raise money for our cause by simply talking to your neighbors. Educate your neighbors and friends about the work of the organization and share how ACHA has impacted your life. Sharing your story will help to encourage them to get involved or donate to your efforts. In your personal fundraising box, we will provide ACHA brochures and fact sheets, remittance envelopes, ACHA letterhead and envelopes. We can also give you additional information and talking points about the current programs and projects going on here at ACHA.

### Fundraise with your favorite professional sports team!

- Did you know that many professional sports teams offer fundraising options for fans to support their favorite charities? Coordinating a fundraising game night with your home team is a fun and exciting way to spread awareness and raise money in your community for ACHA! Each professional sports team is different, but we can help guide you through the process. We will provide you information on the options for your specific team and will connect you with the proper representative for that team. We can help you design flyers or invitations, send email marketing to our members in your area, and provide brochures to distribute at the game.

## 10 Steps to a Successful Fundraiser:

1. **Form a Planning Committee:** A successful fundraiser is always supported by an effective planning committee of enthusiastic and dedicated individuals with a diverse set of skills. It is ideal to have a committee with multiple members so tasks can be delegated with ease, and individuals can collaborate on some of the more time-consuming tasks.
2. **Define Your Fundraiser:** Decide what type of fundraiser you want to have and what you hope to accomplish. Then start thinking about themes, venues, food and beverages, prizes and programming. Your fundraiser should be a manageable size that captures the interest, talents, goals and time availability of your group and the community. Your fundraiser should complement the mission and image of ACHA.
3. **Identify Your Audience:** Think about who is most likely to support the type of fundraiser you have chosen and how you will market your fundraiser to this population.
4. **Submit an Application:** Once you know what type of fundraiser you would like to organize, it is important to submit an ACHA Fundraiser Application. Once the form has been submitted, and all your paperwork is in order, you can expect to receive a response within 2-3 business days.
5. **Set a Budget and Goal:** It is important to begin by establishing your financial goals. Keep them realistic and attainable, especially in the first year. ACHA is incredibly grateful to receive any amount raised through a community fundraiser.
6. **Schedule the Fundraiser Appropriately:** Schedule your fundraiser for a time, date, and location that is appropriate for your target audience and venue. Please remember to consult community calendars, as well as the ACHA events page to avoid competing activities in your region on your chosen date.
7. **Budget:** Identify possible sources of income and anticipated expenses. Make a list of necessary items and begin brainstorming ways to obtain those items through in-kind donations or deeply discounted pricing. For a larger scale fundraiser, you may want to identify sponsorship opportunities, which will help to cover the fundraiser's associated costs. This will also ensure a larger profit from the fundraiser.
8. **Community Outreach:** Connect with your community by seeking in-kind goods and services from local vendors for your fundraiser. This could include donations of food, venue, entertainment, auction items, etc.
9. **Develop a Timeline:** Follow a timeline to know when important tasks are due and which committee member is responsible. This will help keep your fundraiser and your committee on schedule.
10. **Spread the Word:** Your plan for promoting and publicizing your fundraiser will be critical in reaching your target audience and goals. Send invitations and emails to your friends and family and ask them to help by telling their circle of friends. If appropriate, use social media tools like Facebook and Twitter to assist in promoting your fundraiser.

## Application/Approval Process:

An ACHA Fundraising Application must be completed and submitted to our office at least 6 weeks prior to your proposed date. All applications will be reviewed by the development staff for its appropriateness and benefit to ACHA. You can find our application online by visiting ACHA's Volunteer Fundraising page [here](#).

We ask that you allow 2-3 business days for your application to be reviewed by our development staff. Once a decision is reached, we will contact you directly. Approval will be granted on a per fundraiser basis and applicants must reapply annually for repeating fundraisers.

ACHA reserves the right to deny any application for an activity that does not complement the mission of ACHA.

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### How can ACHA help with your fundraiser?

- Offer advice and expertise on fundraising.
- Provide a letter of authorization to validate the authenticity of the fundraiser and its organizers.
- Provide permission to use ACHA's logo upon fundraiser approval.
- Provide a sample sponsor solicitation package.
- Provide options for collecting credit card payments and online ticket sales.
- Assist in promoting your fundraiser through a combination of 2 e-blasts, 2 social media posts, and listings on the Events page of the ACHA website (if appropriate).
- Provide limited materials including banners, brochures, educational fact sheets, and miscellaneous marketing pieces.
- Assist in designating your contribution to a specific ACHA fund or program.
- Provide IRS-compliant tax receipts to donors who make their checks payable to "Adult Congenital Heart Association" or "ACHA."

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### Things that ACHA cannot do in support of your efforts:

- Be financially responsible for any costs or expense associated with community fundraising.
  - Open or manage bank accounts for community fundraisers.
  - Advance any funds or pay expenses in anticipation of funds raised from a community fundraiser.
  - Be responsible for selling tickets to your fundraiser.
  - Provide on-site staff or volunteers for your fundraising events.
  - Share our mailing lists, including donors, physicians, employees, volunteers, or vendors.
  - Provide insurance coverage to any party or participant.
  - Guarantee attendance of staff, Board of Directors, Medical Advisory Board members, Heart to Heart Ambassadors, etc.
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*Have more questions? Contact ACHA Development Staff at (215) 849-1260.*