



FROM THE **FIRE**
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOR YOUNG MEN

2021 Fundraising Toolkit

Application Deadline: May 1, 2021

Alumni Weekend Intensive Program ¹	June 25-27, 2021
8 & 9 Grade Weekend Intensive Program ²	July 9-11, 2021
10 – 12 Grade Two-Week Program	July 18-30, 2021

¹Scholars who has attended a FTF Two Weekend Program

²Scholars who have attended an 8-9 Grade Weekend Intensive Program may be eligible to attend our 10 – 12 Grade Two-Weekend Program

*Take your first steps toward an unforgettable
Summer 2021 Experience!*

Financial Aid/Scholarships: Presently From The Fire Leadership Academy (FTF) isn't providing financial assistance for our 2021 Programs. We will inform you if this changes. We strongly encourage you to use this and other fundraising toolkits to raise funds to help offset the cost of your chosen FTF program. We are pleased to provide this Fundraising Toolkit filled with tips, ideas, and resources to assist you on your fundraising journey.

About the Fundraising Toolkit: The toolkit includes starting steps, fundraising ideas, a list of potential sponsors, and a sample fundraising letter, Sponsorship Request Form and a PowerPoint template you can use to give a fundraising presentation.

Fundraising Basics

GETTING STARTED

- ✓ Find out if there are other young men in your area or your school attending FTF by connecting through FTF's social media, i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- ✓ Establish an agreement 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.

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 their level of interest and willingness to support your attendance to your program. You may be able to recruit others to attend with you or be a part of your fundraising team.

2) Your "Support Team." Make a list of family and friends whom you can ask for assistance with the program. Don't leave anyone off your list. Include your parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, 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 expand beyond your inner circle of close friends and family members. The cardinal rule of fundraising is that, *if you do not ask, you won't receive*. Who do you know? Ask anyone and everyone you know and even those you do not know to contribute to your efforts.

3) Ask for a specific amount of money. When you begin to ask for "contributions," some people may think \$10, while others may think \$100. Be clear and tell people how much you need to raise. If your program cost \$349 and you have \$100 then tell them, you need \$249 and you need 10 people to contribute \$24.90 each. Do not be afraid to let them know the total amount that you are hoping to raise. Always ask businesses and organizations for the full amount or ask them how much of the total can they contribute towards the full amount.

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

<u>PROGRAMS</u>	<u>PROGRAM DATE</u>	<u>FINAL PAYMENT DUE</u>
Alumni Weekend Intensive Program	June 25-27, 2021	June 15, 2021
8 to 9 Grade Weekend Intensive Program	July 9-11, 2021	July 1, 2021
10 to 12 Grade Two-Week Program	July 18-30, 2021	July 1, 2021

5) Make it easy for them to commit. Instead of accepting a vague promise of future payment, offer the option of taking a post-dated check and ask them to fill out a sponsorship form and then get back to them at a designated date and time. **Your information should already be on the form.**

6) Note the Tax Deduction. Tell them that FTF is a Non-Profit 501(c)3 organization and their donation is tax-deductible. Complete the “Sponsorship Request Form,” take a picture of it for your records and text it to your Sponsors. Also remind them that they will receive their receipt from FTF with the FTF Non-Profit tax I.D. number on it for their tax deduction.

7) Always follow-up. A simple phone call, text or email to your family and friends, small businesses, civic or religious groups lets them know that you really need their support. One follow-up call can be the difference between a supporter sending or not sending a check. It is OK to ask those who promise to contribute if it is OK for you to follow up with them one week before your payment deadline in your acceptance letter.

8) 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. People who contribute always appreciate some recognition and praise. Consider hosting a Zoom call/gathering before and after your FTF Program and officially recognize and thank your supporters. Writing another thank you note after you attend FTF will encourage your supporters to support you and/or other young men seeking sponsorship in the future.

Research shows that the most successful campaigns are when the donor is contacted five times.

Fundraising Ideas

CRAFTING YOUR MESSAGE

- ✓ Describe what the program is and state your reasons for attending. Explain how their donation will make an impact on your attending. 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 businesses 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.
- ✓ 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.

- 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. A sample letter as a part of this fundraising kit and is available for downloading. It would be very beneficial for you to call, text, or email potential donors and tell them to expect the letter. You should also follow-up with each person or organization to confirm they received the letter and ask if they have any questions. Remind your donor to write your name on their donation check.

- 2) **Zoom Presentations.** Set up a Zoom presentation(s) and contact as many organizations in your area as possible and ask if they can join your Zoom, Power Point presentation. Many organizations 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 Power Point presentation upon completing your FTF program. This is a great way to secure funding from religious organizations, civic groups, alumni associations, and educational institutions. Tangible evidence of your experience at FTF 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. A sample Power Point presentation is available for you to download and use. We will be scheduling a Zoom class on how to prepare and present your presentation so follow our social media pages for the date and time.

[\(20+\) From the Fire: Leadership Academy for Young Men | Facebook](#)

[From The Fire Leadership Academy For Young Men: About | LinkedIn](#)

[From The Fire \(@fromthefireleadership\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

- 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 platforms are: blogs, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. If you create a PayPal account (fees), 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.

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*Schools and School Boards*Parent's Place of Employment*Professional Organizations*Local Businesses*Local Political Organizations*Neighbors*Church Groups*Elected Officials*Law Firms*

- 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.)

Local businesses are far more likely than large corporations to contribute to your cause. The key is to make a link between the owner and you or someone close to you, i.e., “my family shops here every week.” You may want to approach the business with a letter first and then follow-up with an email, then a phone call. Service clubs such as Veterans Associations, 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 FTF (either online or mail), please make sure they include your name with the donation so that the amount will be credited to you. Make check payable to From The Fire Leadership Academy and mail to:

From The Fire Leadership Academy, 100 Campus Town Circle, Suite 103 #150, Ewing, NJ 08638.

As always, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us at From the Fire Leadership Academy for Young Men by calling (856) 356-3474 or emailing Info@FromTheFireAcademy.Org.

<https://www.FromTheFireAcademy.Org>.

Best wishes in your fundraising experience!

I look forward to seeing you at your FTF Program.

Shurman L. Riggins

Shurman L. Riggins, Executive Director
From The Fire Leadership Academy For Young Men
856-356-3474
info@fromthefireacademy.org