

CAMPAIGN IDEAS



FAVORITE FUNDRAISERS

- Chili Cook-off Contest**
Have employees bring in homemade chili. Charge by the bowl and let everyone vote on their favorites.
- Waffle/Pancake Breakfast**
Sell tickets and have people sign up for their choice of pancakes or waffles. Cook breakfast in your company cafeteria. Don't forget bacon, sausage, syrup, butter etc. Each department can donate an item, and proceeds go to United Way.
- Paid Days Off**
Through human resources or similar department, employees can have their name entered into a drawing to receive whole or half days of paid time off for giving to the United Way campaign. Allow time for approval.
- Half and Half Raffle**
Employees each donate a dollar to be kept in a plastic container. Hold a drawing where the worker receives half the funds in the container and your United Way campaign receives the other half.

CAMPAIGN INCENTIVES

- Parking Spaces**
For each person who participates or gives at a certain level, their name can be put in a drawing for a prime parking space, where they can park for a week.
- Vacation Time Donation**
Company sponsors the opportunity for employees to donate unused vacation time. The dollar equivalent of the donated vacation time goes to United Way in the employee's name.
- Workplace Battle**
Have offices, departments or staff teams compete against each other to see who can have the highest participation rate or greatest donation amount raised for an incentive such as a free pizza lunch, after-work mixer, gift certificates, etc. Use the United Way campaign thermometers to judge the progress of the teams, and announce the winner at the campaign wrap-up meeting.

- Dress Down Days**
Each employee who participates or gives at a certain level is entitled to "dress down" by wearing jeans and t-shirts on the day of their choice. They can earn extra days for adding on to their donation.

GENERAL FUNDRAISERS

- Balloon or Candy Gram**
Sell and deliver candy or balloons with attached notes between employees. Employees get affirmation and the office gets decorated with colorful balloons or people get to eat candy!
- Themed Casual Days**
Sell casual day badges allowing employees to dress casually on certain days. Employees can purchase the badges for \$5 (or other amount) each. Badges could read "I Dress this Way for United Way!"
- CEO Car Wash**
Employees donate \$5 (or other amount) to have their car washed during their lunch break by their boss. Management can donate car wash supplies.
- Dollar Per Inch**
Employees pay to cut one inch off their favorite executive's tie each time they give to the community. Executives participate in an all-day competition to end the day with the shortest tie.
- Picture Match Game**
Invite employees to try their luck matching baby and/or pet pictures of management on a PowerPoint slideshow or other display. Award the staff member with the most correct answers a fun incentive (e.g. gift certificate, gift basket, "VIP" parking, etc.). Employees can be charged \$5 (or other amount) per ballot.
- Silent Auction**
Staff can bid silently on items such as longer lunch hours, "VIP" parking spots, casual days, extra vacation days, gift baskets, gift cards and other items donated by employees or by the company. (iPads are a great option!)
- Celebrity Photo Shoot**
Obtain a life-size cut out of a celebrity. Sell picture-taking opportunities for \$1 each.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS



COMMUNITY AWARENESS EVENT IDEAS

- **Agency Tours and Speakers**
Have a United Way agency ambassador speak at your kickoff events or other campaign activities. Also arrange for a tour of one of our agencies to get a look at the United Way's impact on the community.
- **Funded Partner or Affinity Group Panel Discussions**
Your Relationship Manager can help you set up a panel discussion with three or four representatives from United Way of Central Ohio's funded partners or affinity groups.
- **Lunch and Learns**
One of the best ways to raise awareness of the United Way's work within the community and how we fight poverty is by having one or a series of Lunch and Learns for staff. Lunch and Learns feature a speaker from a United Way agency talking about their work in central Ohio. They can also be continued throughout the year to keep staff engaged in the community outside of the campaign. Set one or a few up with your Relationship Manager!

ENTERTAINMENT THEME EVENT IDEAS

- **"American Idol" Contest**
Employees hold an "American Idol"-type contest, based on the hit TV show. Employees make a donation to vote for the singer or singing group of their choice. The person or group who attracts the most votes will sing a song in front of an audience.
- **Casino Night**
How can you have a successful Casino Night? Set up a few gaming tables, a bingo table, a snack table, and invite employees and their families to donate to the campaign to participate. Have local businesses donate prizes.
- **Comedy Hour**
Ask a local comedian or improv group to donate their services over the lunch hour. Or have comedians within your company get up for a show. Have employees buy tickets to attend.
- **[Company's] Funniest Office Video Contests**
Invite employees to create their own "work" home videos. Charge an entry fee at a viewing party; offer a prize.

- **Lights! Camera! Action!**
Have your campaign committee dress up as characters from a movie or TV show. Act out a plot that involves United Way or helping the community. Incorporate movie plots or famous lines into fliers and emails. Raffle off movie tickets, DVDs and movie rental gift cards.
- **Reality Show Campaign**
Get "real" with your employees and conduct your campaign with a theme centered on the reality TV shows that have taken over the world! Hold daily activities with a tie to the popular reality shows (e.g. "Top Chef" cooking contest, "Weakest Link" putt-putt challenge, "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" trivia).
- **Ticket Give-away**
Give free tickets to movies, theater productions, museums, local sporting events and other attractions for pledge incentives. Give movie passes to every employee who meets the challenge of pledging a certain dollar amount increase. In addition, enter the names of all employees who turn in a signed pledge form during the first hour following the kickoff into a special drawing. Get tickets to a fun local destination such as Zoombezi Bay or King's Island for your special drawing.
- **Tune into the Community**
Music is a great way to get everyone moving to the United Way beat. Rent or borrow a karaoke machine and hold a karaoke kickoff party. Have participants and volunteers dress up as their favorite musicians. Sell employees' old CDs or raffle off stereos, iPod Shuffles, iTunes gift cards or CDs. Hold a musical talent show complete with revamped songs with lyrics about United Way.

FESTIVAL THEME EVENT IDEAS

- **Carnival and Talent Show**
Hold a carnival and talent show to kick off your United Way campaign. As a part of the program, have executives perform songs with lyrics to fit United Way's work. Have an executive dunking booth, giving employees the chance to dunk their boss, or create a pie-in-the-face game with a similar setup. Employees can participate in traditional carnival games such as the ring/beanbag toss and ducky races. The finale

CAMPAIGN IDEAS



event is the Mr./Mrs. United Way Pageant where divisions nominate a contestant to compete in the pageant. Each pageant contestant must educate the audience about one United Way agency during the talent competition.

□ **Mardi Gras**

Everyone loves a party, so why not model your campaign after the biggest party in the world- Mardi Gras? Invite a jazz band to play at your kickoff event. Hold a parade float contest, with departments decorating shoeboxes as floats. Sell bead-o-grams (beads with thoughtful messages attached). Host a Cajun potluck as your thank-you event.

FOOD THEME EVENT IDEAS

□ **Cake Walk**

Sell tickets for \$1 each to play. Place numbered pieces of paper on the floor corresponding to the number of cakes or baked goods donated by employees. Play music like musical chairs and when music stops, draw a number from ajar. The person standing on that number wins the item of their choice.

□ **Potluck Luncheon**

Have employees bring a dish and then charge \$3-\$5 to eat lunch. You may want to set a theme such as Italian food, Mexican food, International, Vegetarian, etc. Don't forget desserts! You can also tie-in a chili-cook off and have judges identify the best, hottest and most unusual dish.

□ **Ice Cream Social**

Set up an ice cream bar with a variety of favorite toppings. Charge employees by the scoop.

□ **Lunch Box Auction**

Have employees create gourmet lunches to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Give prizes for the most creative, nutritious, elegant or humorous meals.

□ **Taste of [Company Name]**

Create a "Taste of Ohio" type event. Invite local restaurants in the area (or even your own employees) to set up their best dishes for employees to purchase and sample in order to raise funds for your campaign.

□ **Wine Tasting**

Hold a wine tasting and select five wines to be

rated. All employees and their spouses/guests in attendance are given rating sheets. Special drawings for bottles of wine or wine-themed gifts are also held for contributors to the United Way campaign throughout the week. The larger the contribution the more chances for prizes.

SPORTS THEME EVENT IDEAS

□ **Wii Tournament**

Pit employees against one another in a Wii tournament. Charge a \$5 entrance fee. Contestants can sign up for Wii sports, bowling, tennis, boxing, golf and baseball. Have employees compete against one another head to head with the winner advancing up one bracket. Winner in each event wins a prize. Observers can place \$1 bets on who will take each sport category.

□ **"Breakfast of Champions"**

Decorate with athletic gear, flags and banners. Company departments become teams, campaign progress is marked by moving teams across a playing field poster towards goal, and campaign chair or CEO "coach" gives a pep talk at a kickoff "Breakfast of Champions" where Wheaties is served.

□ **Executive Rolling Chair or Tricycle Races**

Set up a relay course for executives to go through either sitting in rolling chairs or on tricycles. Let observers "bet" on their favorite contestants.

□ **Mini-Indy 500**

Rent or borrow remote controlled cars and set up an "Indy 500" race. Use office supplies to decorate the track. Teams can be sponsored to compete. Spectators can place "bets" on the winner.

□ **Office Olympics**

Teams (by department or random) are formed throughout the office and must pay an entry fee per team. Teams participate in events over lunch or after work such as paper airplane flying, trashcan basketball, darts, relays (three-legged race, potato sack race, egg-on-a-spoon race). Give medals or small trophies to the top teams. Invite United Way speakers to talk about cultures throughout Ohio. Organize an international potluck luncheon where employees bring their favorite ethnic dishes and showcase music from around the world.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS



Playing the Field

Use baseball, basketball, football, golf or hockey themes. Create posters or other visuals to show departments advancing around bases or down the field according to their donation levels. Include sports-related competitions and prizes for participants.

Tailgate Party

Have a Monday night tailgate during football season or a Saturday afternoon tailgate for Ohio State during college football season. Each employee brings \$5 or \$10 as well as a potluck dish (hot dogs, wings, chili, etc.). A colleague can host the event in their home to be more cost-effective or you can hold the event in the company parking lot.

TRAVEL/VACATION THEME EVENT IDEAS

Be a “Lifesaver”

Have some fun, beach-style! Sand, sunglasses, beach balls and “The Beach Boys” music make your office feel like you are on the beach. Employees who donate are awarded life preserver pins to wear around the office to show that they are lifesavers within the community.

Bon Voyage!

With a traveling theme, you can host a “Bon Voyage” party as a victory celebration. Everyone who gives through United Way gets a “passport” to get into the party. Top contributors will be put into a drawing to win a prize, possibly donated from a travel agency. Alternate option: Have an agency fair with passports. If employees get a certain number of stamps in their passport, they are entered into a raffle.

Vacation at Work

Whether you transform your campaign into a Hawaiian Luau, African safari or the Australian outback, employees are sure to have a wild time. Organize a scavenger hunt or hula-hoop contest. Have a themed potluck and encourage staff to dress up (e.g. grass skirts, safari outfits).

OTHER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Round Up Fundraiser

For larger companies that have their own cafeterias or snack stores, hold a “round-up at the cafeteria cash register” fundraiser. For a day, a week or more, employees can round-up their payments with the extra change going towards your United Way campaign.

Back to School

Relive the glory years of school (without all the homework). Collect school supplies for a United Way-grantee partner. Hold a spelling bee between departments. Contestants must spell each word correctly or everyone on the team must pay. The winning team receives a prize. Email United Way pop quizzes to employees and give the winners a prize. Have employees’ kids help decorate fliers.

Balloon Popping for Prizes

Ask business partners to donate prizes. Before filling a balloon with helium, place a note inside some of the balloons with the name of a prize. In other balloons, place a note with a United Way fact. Pledge forms and other office notices can be shaped like balloons. Have employees purchase and pop balloons.

Board Game Contest

Recruit employees to play a chosen board game (e.g. Trivial Pursuit, chess, Scrabble, etc.). Create a bracket and pool around the winning team or allow employees to move/acquire a game piece for every gift.

Children’s Drawing Contest

Give employees photographs of some top executives to take home for their children under 12 to draw. Charge a ballot fee to vote for the best portraits. Display the winning portraits. Variations of this event: have children draw people helping other people; poems, collages and photos can also be submitted.

Garage Sale

Have employees donate household items, books, CDs and videos for a company- or department-wide sale with the proceeds going towards your United Way campaign.

United Way 007

Clues are given to employees in the form of riddles about United Way’s work. The department or individual who figures out all the riddles receives a prize at the end of the campaign.