

AHP Southeast News for April 2011

Spotlight on Best Practices: Spartanburg Regional Foundation's 2010 Employee Campaign

Each year, the Spartanburg Regional Foundation conducts an employee campaign to engage the 5,700 Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System employees in giving back to hospital programs and projects. In 2010, the Foundation had its best year yet, with over 30 percent of its employees participating to help the Foundation achieve the \$1 million mark for the first time. This article provides some insights into the specifics of the campaign in hopes that it can help other health care development offices better connect with their employee donors.

Kicking-Off the Campaign

It has been the Foundation's practice to conduct its campaign for a six-week period, typically from early October through the mid-November. Foundation staff kicks off the campaign in the hospital cafeteria with a fun event that includes games and prizes. This year's theme was modeled after the game show "Minute to Win It."

Foundation Employee Campaign Coordinator Shelly Sinclair consistently does a great job arranging presentations to over 120 employee groups, usually by department. The four-person development staff, comprised of three development officers and an executive director, divides up presentation responsibilities. Each of the presentations usually lasts 15 to 20 minutes and includes a short video, which highlights both the project the Foundation is focusing on and past projects funded by the campaign that have added value to the hospital's health care system. The presentations also feature a review of the five donor levels from which employees can choose and the incentives that are associated with each giving level. Giving levels are broken down as follows:

- Level 1: one time gift of at least \$40
- Level 2: one hour of pay per pay period
- Level 3: two hours of pay per pay period
- Level 4: a gift of \$1,250 (Society of 1921 Foundation Giving Level)
- Level 5: a \$10,000 pledge over an eight-year period (Chairman's Circle Foundation Giving Level)

The 2010 incentives included a ballpoint pen, water bottle, t-shirt, stadium seat, tickets to the Foundation's annual gala and dinner with the hospital CEO. The Foundation also has partnered with local YMCAs to offer significant discounts on membership. In addition, employees received recognition in print materials and names were listed on an employee donor board located in the main lobby of the hospital.

Taking the Plunge

Another method of giving the hospital system uses is to allow employees to donate their current and future Paid Time Off (PTO) to the campaign. This arrangement requires foundation staff to work closely with the payroll section to ensure timely entries into the payroll system, which are reflected on the employee's paycheck. Payroll deductions also are accepted as donations.

At the end of the campaign—usually in early December—the Foundation celebrates the success of the campaign with a highly visible event for employees. Among other activities, there's a drawing in which every employee that has donated at Level 2 or above is entered and several prizes, both donated and purchased, are given away, including tickets to events, premier employee parking spots, gift certificates and even exotic trips.

This year the Foundation went a step further and asked Spartanburg Regional CEO Ingo Angermeier to

issue a challenge to employees to help the Foundation reach its goal of \$1 million dollars. If the million dollar challenge was met, Angermeier agreed to a “Polar Bear Plunge;” a jump into one of the exterior fountains during midwinter. Sure enough, the million dollar goal was met and the CEO jumped into the fountain of the Gibbs Cancer Center on one of the coldest evenings of the year, with hospital employees looking on and cheering. He was joined in his plunge by a local weatherman who broadcasted the event on live TV during the local weather report.

Lessons Learned

Among the most important lessons that the Foundation has learned are that incentives work, the message is most effective when presented in person to as many employees as possible and that employee job satisfaction has a direct correlation to giving. In addition, the development staff has learned the importance of having the entire foundation team on board for the campaign. From entering gifts into the database on a timely basis to helping with campaign presentations when needed, an employee giving campaign works best when it is a team effort.

This article was shared so that AHP members can gain some useful tips to help engage their health care organization employees in giving back. We want to know what you think! Please share your comments with Spartanburg Regional Foundation Development Officer Shelly Sinclair at SSinclair@srhs.com. Thank you.