

Youth Dreams Academy (YDA) 20th Anniversary Campaign Plan Summary

Anniversary Campaign Objectives

Primary Objective

- Harness the inspirational quality of YDA's mission **to substantially increase the number of people who are soliciting** donations and **to create a system to sustain the community of supporters** by connecting them directly with YDA's work.

Other Significant Objectives

- Raise \$350,000 through private donations (primarily individual and corporate)
- Create 2-3 "signature" corporate partnerships.
- Engage alumni by creating a formal alumni association.
- Increase the number of alumni who actively participate in the life of the school and YDA, including contributing financially and volunteering.
- Highlight the visibility of YDA's program to secure further institutional support and as a model for replication in NYC and beyond.
- Strengthen ties to major institutional partners.
- Introduce a new brand and visual identify.
- Celebrate 20 years of excellent work by founders, faculty, staff and volunteers

Key Campaign Elements

Pre-campaign Activities

- Founder Retirement Party
- Award Day/Night
- Graduation
- Faculty End-of-Year Gathering
- Volunteer Appreciation Event

Anniversary Committee

- Committee charge: monitoring alignment with anniversary goals and coordinating (at a strategic level) all the anniversary and activities.

- Opportunity to continue involvement and advice from a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Leverage multiple anniversary goals throughout the activities of the campaign.

Individual Donor Cultivation

Objectives:

- Primary: Increase the number and diversity of board members actively engaged in and focused on fundraising
- Re-engage major donor prospects linked to current and former board members (8-10 per event)
- Begin cultivation of new major donor (\$5,000+) prospects (8-10 per event)
- Raise \$120,000 in unrestricted income from individuals
- Highlight YDA program work
- Involve alumni leaders in fundraising
- Recruit and train new people to become solicitors during anniversary campaign
- Open doors for new corporate relationships through individual cultivation
- Recognize role past generosity of major donors in laying basis for current success

Key Activities and Events:

- Several small gatherings, such as a house party or cocktail reception in the school library, SLC or Science Lab, hosted by one or more board members
- Train the board and other askers to increase their skill and comfort with major gift asks
- Recruit and train alumni leaders to participate in planning the event and assuring the involvement of alumni in fundraising events
- Start with modest scale events, laying the basis for when the economy may improve sufficiently to make solicitations more successful toward the culmination of the campaign at year end
- Establish a system for individual donor tracking and follow up, including reviewing and strengthening YDA's database to manage individual donor cultivation efforts
- Continue and refine the mailings through which board, staff and alumni solicit low to mid-level gifts (generally, \$20-\$500)

Alumni Campaign

Objectives

- Create a thriving alumni network that will outlast the anniversary to become an ongoing, energized, and ultimately quite powerful alumni fundraising/support network
- Increase the number of alumni leaders who actively participate in YDA life
- Successfully engage alumni in fundraising for the organization

- Raise funds from at least 200 alumni during the anniversary period
- Use exposure to alumni as a cultivation opportunity for major donors
- Highlight YDA's program work
- Celebrate 20 years of excellent work

Key Activities and Events:

The alumni campaign will be composed of the following activities:

- Formation of an Alumni Association
- Alumni-Sponsored Gatherings (reunion, possible bar/musical events)
- Social Networking Campaign
- College Day
- Career Day
- Alumni Recognition Ceremony within Award Day/Night

Visibility/Publicity Campaign

Objectives:

- Seek press coverage to reinforce existing public and private donor support.
- Expand awareness of YDA model to educational community to develop replication opportunities through policy-based events and publications.
- Secure a place for YDA in policy discussions touching on education of older students
- Deploy new brand identity.
- Develop 2-3 key messages to weave throughout the anniversary campaign, both in written (web) material and as talking points

Key Activities and Events:

- 1-2 Policy events such as a conference, policy briefing
- Obtain coverage in specialized education press
- Hire or find pro bono public relations counsel

Anniversary Gala Event

Objectives:

Primary: Direct fundraising goal TBD (need stakeholder survey as the time grows closer)

- Reach broader markets
- Increase the number of alumni leaders who actively participate and cultivate alumni leaders

- Involve alumni in fundraising and friendraising for YDA
- Increase the number of board members actively engaged in and focused on fundraising
- Increase the number of major donors – specifically, use for current and prospective donor cultivation
- Increase the number of askers
- Highlight YDA’s program work
- Celebrate 20 years of excellent work and close out a year of celebration

Key Activities and Events:

- Exact format of this event will be decided over the next 3-6 months
- Target: Different constituencies who has been involved with YDA in the past and important new prospects.
- Seek high level underwriting to allow for broad participation.

PRELIMINARY ANNIVERSARY MILESTONES CALENDAR

April

Anniversary Planning Committee Meeting

May

Founder Retirement Party

June

Award Day/Night Alumni Recognition

Formation of Anniversary Committee

Faculty Event

September

Formation of Alumni Association

Recruitment of initial Alumni Leadership Council members

October

Official Anniversary Kick-Off event

Founders Celebration

Board-sponsored donor cultivation event

College Day

November

- Older Student Policy Event
- Board-sponsored cultivation event

December

- Alumni Reunion
- Mail appeal to board, staff, alumni contacts

January

- Board-sponsored cultivation event

February

- Career Day
- Policy Event

March

- Board-sponsored cultivation event

April

- Alumni fun event
- Mail appeal
- Faculty event

June

- Awards Day/Night

October

- 20th Anniversary Culminating Celebration Event

November

- Mail appeal to board, staff, alumni contacts

December

- Culmination of Alumni Campaign – Celebration event (if not done at gala in October)

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

Visibility and communications activities, such as newsletters, e-updates, etc. should be programmed regularly throughout the anniversary period

Major Donor Cultivation should be done on a monthly basis – i.e. at least 3-4 major donor contacts should be done by board and senior staff every month

ADDENDUM II: Detailed Campaign Objectives

Fundraising Objectives

Expand the circle of individual donors, with an emphasis on those who can make major gifts.

- Identify 10 new major (\$5,000+) donors
- Upgrade donations from 15% of existing donors with a goal of raising at least \$65,000
- Increase the amount of money raised by the end of the anniversary period overall from individuals by 10% over that which was raised during the comparable period prior to the campaign.
- Create the structure and begin solicitation for an alumni giving program which attracts at least 200 graduates as donors and/or solicitors.

Create 2-3 new formal partnerships with corporations [network through the YDA bd]

- Raise \$40,000 from new corporate sources.
- Establish an ongoing relationship which brings in non-cash resources including volunteers and in-kind goods and services.

*[Possible strategies: consider a special event for fundraising
Use internship creation as a door opener with corporations
Hold a series of cocktail parties for donor cultivation
Recruit some celebrity sponsors]*

Promotion/Public Relations Objectives

Obtain general and specialized press coverage in order to:

- Validate the YDA model in the eyes of current and potential funders and the educational policymakers who will chart YDA's future in terms of investing public money and extending the model.
- Reach educators, in NYC and beyond, who are an audience for replication
- Heighten awareness of YDA in NYC ethnic communities to boost recruitment

Create a strategic communications plan

Establish a new visual identity

- Refresh publicity and outreach materials
- Incorporate student art

*[Possible strategies: Create a visitor log within the school to capture names for follow-up.
Use video more widely
Create a Facebook presence
Publicize internships for mutual benefit with corp. supporters
Target large utility companies
Run a series of policy gatherings at the school with celebrity MCs]*

Build the infrastructure—through email, website, social networks and otherwise – to communicate on a regular, targeted and appropriate basis with each of the academy's constituencies.

Reach out to engage neighborhood institutions

- Local businesses
- Hospitals

- Universities
- Community board members

[Possible Strategies: Consider engaging a PR firm

International Day to reach elected officials—add a cultural event to broaden appeal and reach of the day

Involve more people in Student Thanksgiving—supporters join students

Create an exhibition of student work

Use Award Day/Night to fit in people for whom there is no room at graduation]

Program Objectives

Recruit and involve alumni in existing programs

- *Alumni career Day/Night for students (cross-cutting careers)*

Speak with a strong voice to get the YDA solution/needs messages out

Remain attractive as a preferred partner to other organizations/institutions

Recruitment and Enlistment Objectives

Alumni

Elected officials

NY Jr. League

Recognition Objectives

Founders

Major funders

Highly successful alumni

Unsung heroes: volunteers, tutors

- *Use June volunteer recognition event*

Organizational partners

Faculty & staff

- *June faculty event*