



Introduction

As you prepare to attend the Lone Star Leadership Academy, you may find that you need to raise funds to cover the program fee and possibly transportation costs to get to camp. Each year, many participants raise the funds to attend through a variety of creative ways. This guide will walk you through the most commonly used methods. The fundraising process provides you with an opportunity to develop your leadership skills before you even get to camp! You will exercise your planning, presentation, organization, and communication skills, network with a variety of people, and demonstrate your leadership abilities that led to your nomination for this experience. Let's get started!

Step 1: Determine a Fundraising Goal

The very first step is to determine how much money you'll need to raise. This means taking into account the full cost of attending the program – tuition, travel costs, and gift shop money – and then subtracting the amount that you'll contribute from your personal savings or family donations. You can use this Fundraising Planning Worksheet to determine exactly how much you'll need to raise:

Attendance Costs		Available Funds	
Program Fee:	\$ _____	Student Contribution:	\$ _____
Transportation Costs (gas, etc.)*	\$ _____	Family Contribution(s):	\$ _____
Gift shop money (\$50 maximum)*	\$ _____	Total Contributions	\$ _____
Total Costs:	\$ _____		

**Donations made to Education in Action may not be reimbursed for these expenses.*

Total Costs \$ _____ - Total Contributions \$ _____ = Fundraising Goal \$ _____

Step 2: Develop a Plan

Now that you have a starting point to work from, establish a timeline. Work backwards from the date when your program fee is due to see how much time you have to raise your funds. Also, think about how much time you have in your day or week to devote to your fundraising efforts. This may help you decide how you're going to go about meeting your goal. Your fundraising efforts may include finding sponsors, hosting an event, providing goods or services, or setting up an online donation site.

SPONSORSHIPS

Local businesses often have funds set aside for sponsorship opportunities. You can also ask individuals in your community to sponsor you in attending the Lone Star Leadership Academy. You can seek out sponsorships in person, via mail, or have people contribute online.

Education in Action suggests a three-part formula for corresponding with sponsors:

- 1. An introductory letter** - This letter introduces you, the Lone Star Leadership Academy, and your needs. It can help potential sponsors understand that this is an opportunity to help a young leader in a worthy pursuit. *See sample sponsorship request template letter (back).*
- 2. A follow-up phone call to set an appointment**
- 3. A thank you note** - *See sample thank you letter (back).*

As you seek sponsorships, keep the following in mind:

- Know what it is you are requesting. Visit www.educationinaction.org/lone-star-leadership-academy to learn about the program.
- When you communicate with potential sponsors, be direct, polite, and courteous. Remember to relax and be yourself. Don't be afraid to show your enthusiasm!
- Show potential sponsors your respect for them and the time they are allowing you by making an appointment to meet with them, at their convenience. Be punctual and do not take more time than is necessary.
- When writing to potential sponsors, double-check the spelling of their names and job titles.
- Share your fundraising goals and what you hope to gain from participation in the Lone Star Leadership Academy.

- Suggest a specific amount to each donor, but don't over-ask. Make it clear how you are personally contributing to your goal (for example: by conducting a bake sale, mowing lawns in your neighborhood, or some other fundraising activity).
- Offer to make a presentation to your sponsor(s) about the information you learn while attending the program.
- If your counselor or teacher is willing to write a letter of endorsement, include copies of it with your letter. Such letters give strength and substance to your request.
- Always send a personal thank you note after a meeting even if you do not receive a sponsorship.
- **Education in Action is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and program fee donations are tax-deductible. In order to be tax-deductible, donation checks must be made out to Education in Action. Sponsors may also make donations on your behalf online at www.educationinaction.org/sponsor-a-leader.**
- Do not be discouraged if you don't receive a sponsorship from everyone you ask. With persistence you can achieve your goal.

Potential Sponsors

This is not a comprehensive list. It is a starting point to help you think of organizations that may support your fundraising efforts.

Family, neighbors, friends	Restaurants	Daughters of the Republic of TX
Parents' or relatives' employers	Car dealers	Sons of the Republic of TX
Businesses you frequent	Law firms	American Legion Post
Doctors, dentists, veterinarians, etc.	Realty firms	Knights of Columbus
School PTA	Medical offices	Veterans of Foreign Wars
ISD's education foundation	Insurance companies	League of Women Voters
Previous teachers, counselors, principals	Banks	Business and Professional Women
Supermarkets/retail stores	Chambers of Commerce	Religious organizations
	Kiwanis, Rotary, or Lions Clubs	Local political organizations

"You will be surprised to see how many individuals and businesses are ready to help support our youth. Our son was able to get out and talk to bankers, lawyers, contractors, and club members. They were very responsive when they learned he was in a leadership program."

GIFTS FROM FRIENDS AND FAMILY

If friends or family members are looking for gift ideas for your birthday, a holiday, or just because, you may want to let them know you would appreciate a tax-deductible contribution toward your Lone Star Leadership Academy camp program fee. In order to be tax-deductible, donation checks must be made out to Education in Action. Donations may also be made online at www.educationinaction.org/sponsor-a-leader.

"Kylie raised funds by asking friends and family to donate to her camp cost in lieu of birthday gifts, holding a car wash, doing odd jobs, and babysitting."

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

While this idea works for individuals, this is also a great way for a group of students from the same area to raise funds together. The student(s) provides goods or services in exchange for funds while getting involved in the community. You might consider holding a carwash, bake sale, pancake breakfast, talent show, or yard sale. An added benefit of fundraising events is that they help bring attention to your cause, which may result in even more donations. Publicize your event as much as possible, making sure to note the reason for your fundraiser, and set reasonable price points.

"The kids raised funds by organizing a snack bar after school for a week. Together they planned, asked the principal for permission, worked out all of the details, and manned the booth without much help from the parents. It was a great experience for the kids."

CROWDFUNDING

Crowdfunding websites such as gofundme.com, firstgiving.com, plumfund.com, and youcaring.com can be useful tools for getting the word out about your fundraising efforts.

"I told my daughter she could attend the camp if she raised at least half the money herself. I helped her put together a simple GoFundMe campaign and video to send to family members. We raised about \$600."

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SCHOLARSHIPS

Visit www.educationinaction.org/financial-aid/scholarships for more information on these and other scholarship opportunities:

Texas Association for Gifted and Talented (TAGT)

TAGT offers merit-based summer enrichment scholarships of up to \$1,000 to students currently participating in a gifted program.

Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) Youth Foundation Road Scholarships

SYTA Youth Foundation offers scholarships of up to \$1,000 for individual students or \$5,000 for groups of students for educational travel. All Road Scholarship applications must be submitted by an educator or designated school official.

\$100 Scholarship for Students who qualify for Free or Reduced-Price Meals at School

Education in Action offers a limited number of \$100 scholarships on a first come, first served basis for students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

VARIABLE TUITION

Variable Tuition is a need-based assistance program that helps make Lone Star Leadership Academy summer camps affordable for qualified students who might not otherwise be able to participate. A limited number of spaces on select camp weeks in July may be available for Variable Tuition applicants. For information, and to apply, visit educationinaction.org/variable-tuition.

Step 3: Follow Up

When you return home from the Lone Star Leadership Academy, make sure to reconnect with your sponsors and donors to thank them for their generosity. Write a sincere thank you note to let them know how much you appreciate their help. Put together a presentation you can send or e-mail including what you learned, photos, and how the experience affected you and your goals for the future. The people who helped you achieve your goal will be interested to hear about your experience.

A Final Note

Whatever you choose to do, success begins with you. Let your excitement about the program shine through and emphasize what you will gain from attending. Those who know you best will be most receptive to rewarding your educational success and helping you achieve your dreams. We wish you the best of luck in meeting your fundraising challenge. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need advice.

To see more than 100 Lone Star Leadership Academy fundraising success stories, visit www.educationinaction.org/fundraising-success-stories.

SAMPLE SPONSOR DONATION REQUEST LETTER

Sponsor's First and Last Name
Sponsor's Title
Sponsor's Business/Organization
Sponsor's Address

Dear Mr./Ms. Sponsor's Last Name,

My name is _____ and I am in the _____ grade at _____ (school). I am very active in school and community activities including _____. My overall grade average is _____. I have the opportunity to take part in the Lone Star Leadership Academy, an academic leadership summer program for outstanding Texas 3rd-8th graders.

As a participant in this weeklong experience, I will join a delegation of other distinguished students and travel to the ____ (Dallas/Fort Worth, Austin/San Antonio, or Houston/Galveston) area for a week of learning, leadership development, and visits to unique and historically significant Texas destinations. Each day I will explore notable Texas sites, learn about unique careers from professionals at sites visited, and develop my leadership abilities with Texas educators. In addition, I will gain self-confidence and independence and develop new friendships with other high-achieving students from across the state.

In order to participate in the Lone Star Leadership Academy, I need to raise a program fee of \$_____. This cost includes five nights lodging, all meals during the program, entrance fees, charter bus transportation during the program, one educator for every ten students, and all curriculum materials. I am asking you and others representing community organizations to help me with a donation of \$_____. Because Education in Action is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, your donation is tax-deductible and donation checks must be made out to Education in Action. Donations may also be made on my behalf online at www.educationinaction.org/sponsor-a-leader.

Participation in the Lone Star Leadership Academy is an invaluable experience as I will develop my leadership skills to become a more educated and involved citizen. I will gratefully share with your organization the knowledge I gain by making a presentation about my experience. I will represent our community with dignity and make your organization proud. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me. I would also be happy to meet with you at your convenience. Thank you in advance for any help you might be able to offer.

To learn more about the Lone Star Leadership Academy visit www.educationinaction.org/lone-star-leadership-academy. You may also contact Education in Action directly at 817-562-4957. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Your Signature
Your First and Last Name
Contact Phone Number
Address

SAMPLE SPONSOR THANK YOU LETTER

Sponsor's First and Last Name
Sponsor's Title
Sponsor's Business/Organization
Sponsor's Address

Dear Mr./Ms. Sponsor's Last Name,

Thank you for your generous support in sponsoring me and making it possible for me to attend the Lone Star Leadership Academy. Upon my return, I would be honored to give your organization a presentation on what I learned from this tremendous educational experience. Thank you again for what I am sure will be a life-changing experience.

Sincerely,
Your Signature
Your First and Last Name
Contact Phone Number
Address