FIRST® Fundraising Toolkit

Section 2 – Community Analysis

This section focuses on helping teams work through a community analysis to gain a better understanding of their local community and the opportunities available to the team. Doing a community analysis allows a team to tap into their community network, find support for their program, discover potential Sponsors, and develop local partnerships.

Once the team identifies a group of potential Sponsors or partnerships, it is important to clearly organize company information in a database to ensure the team is contacting, following up with, and thanking their local partners.

Goals of a Community Analysis:

- Gain a better understanding of the local community.
- Increase the reach of the team.
- Discover organizations the team can connect with.
- Identify and maintain a database of potential Sponsors & partnerships.

Starting a Community Analysis:

- Inner-Team Networking
  - Hold a team meeting with Mentors/Parents/Students to create a list of:
    - Potential Sponsors team members have connections to;
    - Events in the community the team can get involved with;
    - Fundraising opportunities for the team;
    - Community focused foundations the team could contact.

- Community History
  - Learn about the history of the city and how it was founded.
  - Discover the key businesses and companies found in the local area.
  - Look for the top employers or largest organizations that are in the area.

- Recommendations from Current Sponsors
  - Touch base with team Sponsors to find other potential companies to contact.
  - See if the contact at your company will help make an introduction to other businesses.

- Discovering Local Businesses
  - Chamber of Commerce;
  - Lion's or Rotary Clubs;
  - Searching for engineering or manufacturing companies.

Building a Database of Partnerships:

Keeping a database of the companies and organizations the team is reaching out to keeps the team fundraising effort organized and prevents the team from contacting an organization twice. Using the database to track which organizations have been contacted and if any follow up is needed, helps prevent the team from missing a potential sponsorship because they did not follow up with the organization.

A basic Database of Partnerships can include the following information:

- Company Name
- Status (potential Sponsor, former Sponsor, current Sponsor, STEM event partner, etc…)
- Partnership Information (If they donated to the team; if they don't want to Sponsor; events the team worked on with them, etc.)
- Company Information
  - website
  - address
  - phone
  - type of business
- Company Point of Contact Information
  - name
  - title
  - phone
  - email
- First and Second Contact by Team
  - date
  - method of contact (phone, email, voicemail, in-person)
  - team rep
  - notes about contact
  - follow-up date
- Team Thank You Information
  - first team thank you
  - invitation to closest event
  - invitation to team banquet
- Additional Notes

A template of a Database of Partnerships can be found in the following Google Doc Spreadsheet. Teams can use the example database as a guide or tool, and may add or subtract the parts necessary to manage their own database. This template is not all encompassing, but is meant to provide teams with a starting point to create a Sponsor database.

A webinar focused on giving an overview of a community analysis featuring the experiences of three *FIRST* teams from rural, urban and suburban areas when creating a community analysis can be found in Section 2 of the *FIRST* Fundraising Toolkit.