

ONLINE FUNDRAISING
TOOLKIT




FEEDING
WESTCHESTER



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Fundraisers are a great way to support nonprofit organizations and bring in much-needed revenue to help sustain their programs, services, and offerings. In addition to raising money for a charitable cause, a successful fundraiser will also elevate public awareness of the nonprofit and its mission; build camaraderie among attendees and organizers; and, ultimately, draw in new supporters.

WHY SHOULD YOU HOST A FUNDRAISER?

You're helping more people. We purchase food in bulk, so we're able to purchase more food options at a far lower cost — just pennies on the pound!

It increases efficiency! Not only does it save you time by avoiding a trip to the grocery store, but Feeding Westchester can focus more on feeding our neighbors in need. Every donated item that comes to Feeding Westchester must be inspected for damage and dates, sorted into bins, inventoried, and stored.

It's quick and secure. Transactions can be completed in minutes and donors will receive an automatic email receipt. Funds come directly to Feeding Westchester and are not sent to a third party.

Fresh food can be purchased. Online fundraisers allow Feeding Westchester to purchase the most needed items, like dairy, meat, and produce (produce alone makes up nearly 40% of what we distribute!).

WHEN SHOULD YOU HOST A FUNDRAISER?

You can host an online fundraiser whenever you'd like, but if you need some ideas or inspiration, here are some popular times for fundraisers.

1. January for **MLK Day of Service**
2. February for **Valentine's Day, to spread the love**
3. April for **Earth Day, to raise awareness about our food rescue efforts**
4. May for **Mother's Day, in honor of your mother/wife**
5. June for **Father's Day, in honor of your father/husband**
6. July through August to **end summer hunger**
7. September in solidarity with national advocacy for **Hunger Action Month**
8. November through December for **the holiday season**
9. For your **birthday, wedding, or an important rite of passage/coming-of-age celebration, like a bar or bat mitzvah, confirmation, sweet sixteen, graduation, or in honor of someone else's!**
sweet sixteen/graduation, or in honor of someone else's!
10. On an **anniversary (work, relationship)**

WHAT KIND OF FUNDRAISER SHOULD I DO?

Whether you plan to make a difference individually or as a member of a team, through a page or an event, there's a neighbor who needs you. Your first step is figuring out if you want to do this as...

AN INDIVIDUAL ONLINE FUNDRAISER

- This is a great option if you have limited time. Simply make a page and use our email and social media templates to let your network know you're raising money.
- You can use this as a base for a "sale" too, where you would exchange an item or service for donations.

A TEAM ONLINE FUNDRAISER

- A great option if you are fundraising on behalf of your organization or company. This is a great way to build community with a little healthy competition!
- Once a fundraiser is made by the "team captain," anyone can join in. Each person will have their own unique link, but all of the donations made to any of the sub-fundraisers will add up to one total, and the "team captain" will be able to see the individual breakdown of how much was raised by each person.

A VIRTUAL EVENT

- If you want to kick your fundraiser up a notch, virtual events require less time and resources than in-person events to plan, but they can also engage many more people by not being restricted by distance.

AN IN-PERSON EVENT

- The most time-consuming option, but also an awesome way to garner attention for your fundraiser! Advertise all around town, get local vendors involved, and soon, you'll move the whole community to donate.

More fundraiser ideas can be found in our blog posts linked on page 13!

PAGE SET UP

GENERAL FUNDRAISER PAGE SET UP:

See the next section if you need to set up multiple teams fundraising toward the same goal.

1. To get started on your fundraiser page, visit:
<https://feedingwestchester.org/fundraisers>
2. Select the appropriate button:
 - a. “Personal” if you are fundraising by yourself, or with friends/family
 - b. “Corporate” if your fundraiser is on behalf of a company
 - c. “Community” if your fundraiser is on behalf of an organization, such as a place of worship, school, etc.
3. Click the first option, “Start a fundraiser.”
4. Name your fundraiser under **Display Name**. It could be your name, the name of the event, the name of your company or organization, or whatever your network will recognize.
5. Upload a photo to represent your fundraiser. Please note, that it is thumbnail size, so anything too complex will be hard to see.
 - a. For most recognizability, a picture of you will work great, or a logo if relevant!
6. Choose your fundraising goal.
 - a. See the Fundraising Levels section on page 7 if you're not sure where to start.
 - b. When selecting your goal, remember that the amount you raise multiplied by 3 is the number of meals you will provide.
7. Write a sentence describing why this fundraiser is important to you; it's only 120 characters, so make them count.
 - a. If you're not sure what to say, you can leave the default message.
8. Select an end date.
 - a. 4-6 weeks is usually the sweet spot for fundraisers, but you can also make the end date an important date (birthday, anniversary holiday, etc.), the end of a season/month, or the day of the event associated with your fundraiser.
9. Hit continue.
10. Enter your email, then check for an email from noreply@fundraiseup.org with the subject line “Fundraiser verification code”, asking you to verify your email.
11. Copy the verification code from the email and paste it into the fundraiser form. Hit continue.
12. Type in your first and last name and hit continue. Type in your address, phone number, and let us know if you are over or under 18 years old.
13. Let us know what gave you the idea to fundraise for Feeding Westchester using the drop-down options below.
14. Check the box for our agreement disclaimer.

15. When you hit “Start fundraising,” your page will activate and you will see your custom link to share with your network, as well as see options to share it to your social media accounts immediately.
16. An email will also be sent to you from noreply@fundraiseup.com with your custom link, as well as a link to your fundraiser portal (click the button “Manage my page”).
17. Any time a donation is made to your campaign, you will be notified via email from noreply@fundraiseup.com.
18. Open your fundraiser portal to check the status of your fundraiser at any time. Here you’ll find:
 - a. “Edit Fundraiser” button, for changing the message, picture, goal, end date, or name
 - b. Amount raised
 - c. Number of page views
 - d. Number of donations
 - e. Map of where your donations and page views came from
 - f. Percentage to goal
 - g. Number of days and amount left to your goal
 - h. Shareable links to social media
 - i. List of donations, sortable by most recent and the highest amount

HOW TO CREATE A BIRTHDAY/SPECIAL EVENT/ANNIVERSARY

Use this if you’re fundraising for someone or something

The process is the same, but to make your reason for fundraising clear:

1. Make the Display name “[your name]’s birthday fundraiser” or “Fundraiser in Honor of [name]” or “[Your name]’s [special event] fundraiser
2. Write the message to reflect the special reason for the page.
3. Choose a relevant photo.
4. Make the end date reflect the special date for which you’re fundraising.

HOW TO ADD TEAM MEMBERS TO YOUR FUNDRAISER

Use this if you're fundraising with a group of people, such as friends, family, classmates, colleagues, or fellow members of an organization. Each team member will have a unique donation link and trackable total, but all funds will also go toward the overall team goal. The "team captain," or person who sets up the initial fundraiser following the steps below, will be able to see the breakdown of funds raised by each team member.

1. First, set up a fundraiser using the instruction above titled, "GENERAL FUNDRAISER PAGE SET UP"
2. Once your fundraiser has been created, open your fundraiser portal link and scroll down to the last section, "Team Performance"
3. You should only see your name, with the role specified as "Admin," since you created the fundraiser.
4. Hit the blue "copy" button next to the link to the left of "Invite Members"
5. Share the invite link to your team members. This link will bring them directly to your fundraiser where they can join.
6. Whenever team members join, you will see them listed below your name under "Team Performance. You can track how much they've raised, and through how many donations.
7. If you need a team member removed from your fundraiser, or you need to switch someone else to admin, contact communications@feedingwestchester.org.

HOW TO JOIN AN EXISTING FUNDRAISING TEAM FROM AN INVITE LINK

Click on the link invite link shared by your team captain. It should open a form that says "Join this team Click continue to join [CAPTAIN NAME]'s fundraising team, [FUNDRAISER NAME]. Click continue.

1. Enter your email, then check for an email from noreply@fundraiseup.org with the subject line "Fundraiser verification code", asking you to verify your email. If you are using Gmail, please note this email may automatically go into your "Updates" folder.
2. Copy the verification code from the email and paste it into the fundraiser form. Hit continue.
3. Type in your first and last name and hit continue.
4. You will see your custom link to share with your network, as well as see options to share it to your social media immediately.
5. An email will also be sent to you from noreply@fundraiseup.com with your custom link, as well as a link to your fundraiser portal (click the button "Manage my page").
6. Start fundraising!

HOW TO JOIN AN EXISTING FUNDRAISING TEAM FROM OUR WEBSITE

1. Visit <https://feedingwestchester.org/fundraisers/>
2. Select the appropriate button:
 - a. “Personal” if you are fundraising by yourself, or with friends/family
 - b. “Corporate” if your fundraiser is on behalf of a company
 - c. “Community” if your fundraiser is on behalf of an organization, such as a place of worship, school, etc.
3. Choose the second option, “Join a Team.”
4. Enter your email, then check for an email from noreply@fundraiseup.org with the subject line “Fundraiser verification code”, asking you to verify your email. If you are using Gmail, please note this email may automatically go into your “Updates” folder.
5. Copy the verification code from the email and paste it into the fundraiser form. Hit continue.
6. Type in your first and last name and hit continue.
7. You will see your custom link to share with your network, as well as see options to share it to your social media immediately.
8. An email will also be sent to you from noreply@fundraiseup.com with your custom link, as well as a link to your fundraiser portal (click the button “Manage my page”).
9. Start fundraising!

THROUGHOUT YOUR FUNDRAISER

You're all set up — now what? Don't worry, we've set up a ton of resources to help you get through. Visit our blogs, quick facts, and important links on page 13, and check out our social media and email templates starting on page 15 to guide you through your fundraiser!

FUNDRAISING LEVELS

Our way of showing our extreme appreciation for the time you're dedicating as a devoted advocate! These branded items are a great way of spreading the word and continuing your advocacy, even after your fundraiser.

- Level 1: \$500 - Feeding Westchester Window Cling or Bumper Sticker
- Level 2: \$1,000 - Feeding Westchester Window Cling/Bumper Sticker, T-Shirt
- Level 3: \$2,500 - Feeding Westchester Window Cling/Bumper Sticker, Crewneck
- Level 4: \$5,000 - Feeding Westchester Window Cling/Bumper Sticker, Crewneck, AND Hat

WRAPPING THINGS UP

Your fundraiser has ended and you're ready to wrap it up — nicely done! Make sure to thank your supporters and let them know how much money and how many meals they helped you raise.

If someone stumbled upon your fundraiser after it has ended and donates, don't worry! The donation will still come through to Feeding Westchester without a problem, and the total will still show on your goal meter.

AFTER YOUR FUNDRAISER

SEND US YOUR STORY!

To continue spreading your message, tell us how it went. Email us pictures, videos, sweet messages, or conversations you had with your donors (redact names unless you have permission), and most of all, tell us what inspired you in the first place and how you feel now that you've made an impact! We'd love to feature your story on our social media. If you'd like, you can even film a 60-second video explaining how you did your fundraiser — your story could be the reason someone else decides to start their own fundraiser!

You can send your story to communications@feedingwestchester.org with the subject line "Fundraiser Content."

FOLLOW UP

Let your network know what you accomplished together. Forward them our most recent **newsletter** or **report** months afterward, so they remember how lasting of an impact they made.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FAQs

Should I do a food drive or monetary fundraiser?

Both food drives and fundraisers are a huge help to our community. If you'd like to support your local food pantry, a food drive is especially helpful. To support Feeding Westchester, the largest food bank in Westchester, fundraisers are especially helpful because they allow us to use our buying power to turn every single dollar into three meals, meaning each donation goes even farther!

If you'd like, you can even combine a fundraiser and food drive; learn more about food drives by clicking [here](#).

Can I use Facebook for my fundraiser instead?

You can, but using our platform has a LOT of perks, for everyone! That includes an automatic donation receipt directly from our organization, the possibility for us to thank donors directly, leaderboards to see how your fundraiser is performing against others, automatic email reminders throughout your campaign, and more!

If you do decide to do a Facebook fundraiser, please let us know by emailing communications@feedingwestchester.org.

Who can I contact for technical or creative help with my fundraiser?

Contact our Marketing & Communications team at Feeding Westchester at communications@feedingwestchester.org.

For how long should I host my fundraiser?

Four to six weeks is usually the sweet spot — it gives enough time for your network to consider their options, but not too much that they forget or keep pushing it off. A deadline gives a sense of urgency, a timeline to base planning on, and a tangible finish line. You could also choose your timeline based on the specific fundraiser — maybe it happens during the winter season because you're knitting winter caps, or maybe the end date is a week before Thanksgiving because you want to make sure families have food on their tables for the holidays. The end date could also be an important date to you or the day of an event.

Can I donate with cash or a check?

Yes! If you'd like to contribute to a fundraiser with cash or a check, please be sure to note the name of the specific fundraiser on your check, or include a note.

Will companies match donations?

Many companies are willing to match their employee's generosity! You can check if your company matches directly in the donation checkout or by clicking [here](#).

Are there any suggestions on how I can promote my drive?

Of course! The additional resources section starting on page 11 has several tools and information for you to use.

Will I get a receipt for my donation?

Absolutely! Any donations made online automatically receive an email receipt and confirmation. For donations made via check or cash that are over \$25, you will receive a mailed receipt via mail. All donations are tax-deductible.

Can I fundraise on a team, on behalf of my company or organization?

Yes, and it's a great tool for some friendly competition for a good cause! See page 7 for instructions on how to create a team fundraiser. It's always a great idea to encourage people to share. All donations will roll up to the same goal, but the team captain will also be able to see how much each team member raised toward the total.

If your company/organization needs more personalization beyond this for teams, please contact Feeding Westchester's Marketing & Communications team at communications@feedingwestchester.org.

BLOGS: TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- [Tips for Marketing and Hosting a Successful Food Bank Fundraiser](#)
- [9 Effective Nonprofit Fundraising Ideas](#)

FEEDING WESTCHESTER QUICK FACTS

Quick Facts

- Our mission is to nourish our neighbors in the fight against hunger.
- We provided food to an average of 200,000 neighbor visits every month in 2022, which may include multiple visits from the same individual.
- In 2022 we delivered more than 19 million pounds of food, equivalent to 16 million meals.
- We work alongside more than 300 partners and programs, such as soup kitchens, food pantries, schools, shelters, residential programs, and direct distributions.
- Nearly 40% of the food we distribute is fresh produce. This percentage has stayed consistent no matter the quantity of food we distribute.
- As a 4-star Charity Navigator organization, we are committed to creating a community where all people have access to the food they need today, and the fundamental resources to build a better tomorrow.
 - Charity Navigator is one of the top two independent nonprofit organizations that evaluates charitable organizations based in the United States. GuideStar is the other organization and we have a Gold Seal of Transparency.

Important Links

- [Annual Report](#)
- [Strategic Plan](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Community Needs Assessment](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA CENTER

Use your social media platforms to spread the word about your fundraising efforts. Share the importance of alleviating hunger and encourage your followers to donate to your campaign by posting the link to your fundraiser. Don't forget to tag @FeedingWestchester, and use #FeedingWestchester.

FEEDING WESTCHESTER ASSETS

A picture's worth a thousand words - use [these pictures](#) to share with your network to give them a visual of what they're supporting! You can use these to post on social media, too!

SAMPLE GENERAL POSTS:

I'm helping provide meals for our neighbors in need by supporting @FeedingWestchester.

Will you help me fight hunger by raising **[insert fundraising goal]**? Make a difference by donating, so families have food for today and hope for tomorrow. **[insert fundraising link]**

Together we are Feeding Westchester.

[Insert beyond hunger call to action from page 19] **[special interest topic]** is only one of the many negative impacts that hunger has on our community.

Can you help me raise **[goal]** to provide **[goal multiplied by 3]** meals to our neighbors in need?

Together we are Feeding Westchester.

We are almost there!

Just **[insert amount to the goal]** needed to reach my goal of **[goal multiplied by 3]** meals provided to our hungry neighbors in Westchester.

Please consider helping us reach this goal by **[fundraiser end date]** **[optional: insert specific reason you chose that end date if you have one, i.e. back to school, holiday, etc.]**.

Together we are Feeding Westchester.

EMAIL TEMPLATES

Feel free to use these customizable templates to spread the word about your fundraising efforts. Make sure you update them with specific details on your fundraiser.

- The more you keep your fundraiser top of mind, the more likely you are to get responses.
- Mention the end date and what percent of your goal is left in each email
- Personalize these as much as you'd like so they sound like you.

SAMPLE GENERAL POSTS

For donation requests to friends, family, and colleagues

Dear Friends and Family **[or Name of Individual, Group, or Company]**,

This year **[for my birthday/special event fundraiser, if applicable]**, I would like to raise awareness about hunger in Westchester County, and funds to provide food – and hope – for our neighbors. I am committing to raise funds and awareness for hunger because of **[your answer here]**. The money we raise will go to Feeding Westchester to provide meals to our neighbors in need.

I am asking for your support to help those in need. My personal goal is to raise **[insert amount here]** by **[end date (highly suggested)]**. Please help me reach my goal by contributing now. You can visit my fundraising page at **[insert link]** to make a secure gift online. I invite you to join me in making a difference directly within the Westchester community.

Please also feel free to forward this message to your own friends and family to help spread the word.

Thank you in advance for your generous support and advocacy.

Together we are Feeding Westchester.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

SAMPLE DONATION PERSONAL THANK YOU

Hi **[Donor Name!]**

I just saw your donation to my online fundraiser and wanted to reach out with a huge THANK YOU! I am so thrilled and honored that you joined my efforts to fight hunger in Westchester. This is a cause very close to my heart, and it means the world to me to know that you are by my side, reaching out a helping hand to our neighbors in need.

I am so grateful to have a **[your relationship to the person]** like you, who shares my passion for making a difference. Your gift alone will provide **[donation amount times 3]** meals to our neighbors in need.

Thank you for your generosity.

Gratefully,

[Your Name]

SAMPLE GOAL INCREASE EMAIL

For a goal reached before the end date

Dear “Friends and Family,” **[name], [group], [company]** team,

I can’t believe it! Together, we ALREADY reached my **[insert goal amount]** goal, providing **[amount raised times 3]** meals to our neighbors in need in Westchester... and with **[number of days left until end date]** to spare! I’m so humbled to see what can be accomplished when a community stands together to fight for a common cause.

With the **[number of days left until end date]** days left, I decided I’m raising the goal. My new goal is **[new goal amount]**!

With the outpouring of generosity I’ve already seen, I believe we can reach this new goal to provide **[amount goal increased by times 3]** more meals to our neighbors in need.

Together we’ve already made a huge impact on our community... and I believe that together, we can help even more people than we initially planned.

Together we are Feeding Westchester.

Gratefully,

[Your Name]

SAMPLE REMINDER EMAIL

Use as a donation reminder if goal not yet met.

Dear Friends and Family **[or Name of Individual, Group, or Company]**,

Just **[number of days]** days left in my fundraiser for Feeding Westchester. Can you help us raise **[amount needed to reach goal]** more to reach my goal of **[goal amount times 3]** meals provided to our hungry neighbors in Westchester?

Gratefully,

[Your Name]

SAMPLE FUNDRAISER DEADLINE EXTENSION EMAIL

Use if goal not yet reached and you are extending fundraiser end date.

Dear **["Friends and Family," [name], [group], [company]** team,

We're SO close! As a final push, I am extending my campaign **[X]** more days so we can reach our goal. Together, I know we can reach **[x]**.

Please consider donating so we can, as a team, provide **[x]** number of meals to our neighbors in need. Together, we can make a real difference. Together we are Feeding Westchester.

Gratefully,

[Your Name]

SAMPLE END OF FUNDRAISER GROUP THANK YOU EMAIL

For end of your fundraiser

Wow! I am so excited to share we reached **[insert percentage of goal reached]** % of my **[insert goal amount]** fundraising goal. With the **[total amount raised]**, we have provided **[total amount times 3]** meals to our neighbors in need. Together, we put fresh produce, dairy products, meat, grains, and more on the tables of children, seniors, and families across Westchester. This is no small feat, and we couldn't have done it without YOU.

Thank you for answering the call to stand up and fight for our neighbors in need. The **[insert number of meals]** meals we will provide will end up on the tables of families who live in our towns and perhaps even on our streets. You are providing nutrition, stability, and most of all — hope.

To learn more about the work you are supporting here in our county, visit feedingwestchester.org and follow them on social media with the buttons at the bottom of their website.

Thank you again, from the bottom of my heart. I'm so proud of what we accomplished here for our community.

Gratefully,

[Your Name]

BEYOND HUNGER - CALLS TO ACTION

Sustainability

In fiscal year 2022, with the help of 80 partners, Feeding Westchester recovered 4.4 million pounds of good food that otherwise would have been thrown into landfills, including 2.4 million pounds from 46 retail partners. Instead of being wasted and contributing to emissions, it went back where it belonged: on the dinner tables of our hungry neighbors. Hunger and sustainability are intricately linked, and Feeding Westchester is committed to both.

Links:

- [Feeding Westchester Tackles Food Waste with Recovery Initiative](#)
- [6 Surprising Food Waste Facts](#)
- [8 Food Storage Tips to Make Your Groceries Last Longer](#)
- [How to Reduce Food Waste at Home](#)

Health/Nutrition

With the high costs of health insurance and medication, families struggling to make ends meet may have to choose between medical care and healthy food. Nearly forty percent of the food we distribute is fresh produce. Feeding Westchester is committed to providing nutritious, well-rounded meals to our neighbors so that food is not an impossible choice.

Programs related to health and nutrition include Nutrition education, Fresh Markets, Mobile Food Pantries, and RX Pantries in partnership with health clinics and hospitals.

Links:

- [6 Ways to Cut That Outrageous Grocery Bill](#)
- [4 Amazing Benefits to Eating Seasonal Produce](#)
- [Tips for Keeping Your Heart Healthy](#)

Children

For children, being hungry means less brainpower for learning, less energy for playing, and less being able to simply be a kid. In the summers especially, families who rely on the free or reduced-price meal programs at school often do not have the means to fill the meal gap.

Feeding Westchester is committed to making sure no child is hungry, all year round.

Links:

- [Feeding Westchester Addresses Childhood Hunger with Preparations to Meet Summer Demand](#)
- [5 Facts About Hungry Children in America](#)

Socio-economics

In Westchester County, a family of four with two kids in child care needs to make \$99,000 just to cover the necessities (2020). This is called the ALICE threshold (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and it is nearly \$75,000 more than the federal poverty line for a family of four, which is \$27,750. Two in five households in Westchester County are living at risk of hunger. Feeding Westchester is committed to making sure hard-working families have access to food so they can focus on all the other big expenses, like rent, commuting, childcare, medicine, etc.

Links:

- [ALICE in Westchester: A Financial Hardship Study](#)
- [United Way: Making Tough Choices Simulator](#)

Seniors

Many retirees on a fixed income are no longer making enough to comfortably cover bills, medical expenses, and housing — let alone nutritious food. Beyond cost, even getting to the store is not an easy option for those with medical issues or disabilities. Feeding Westchester is committed to ensuring equal access to food — one of our most basic needs — by bringing food to senior centers and directly to the homes of those in need.

Links:

- [The State of Senior Hunger in America](#)

Feeding Westchester extends a heartfelt thank you to our incredible fundraisers for their unwavering support in the fight against hunger!