



ROLLING HILLS

COMMUNITY CHURCH

Best Practices for Raising Funds

Support Letters We advise you to send out support letters regardless of how much you can pay with your own funds. Henri Nouwen defined fundraising as *“proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission.”* Remember:

- ◆ You are raising supporters, not just support. You are looking for a team of people to invest in what God is doing in your life and in the Kingdom, not just asking people for money. You also want a team of people praying for you as you go, and the support-raising process is perfect for building that prayer team.
- ◆ This is an opportunity to challenge other Christians to be involved around the world. Your obedience to go and support our long-term field partners in their great commission work may be what God uses to rally someone else to obedience. Pray and ask that God would use your support raising process to raise up other laborers for the harvest field (Matthew 9:38).

→ **How Many?** We recommend that you send personalized support letters to **at least 50 people** for most trips.

→ **Who?** Ask the Lord's help in coming up with your support list. Don't be shy - send letters to friends, family, extended family, coworkers, non-believers, and anyone who might want to know what you are up to and might be able to help. Your letter may be an opening for you to share the Gospel with non-believers. You will be amazed how God will raise funds for you as you let Him direct you.

→ **When?** As soon you've paid your deposit, write your letters and put them in the mail or send emails to your list of supporters. For example:

- ◆ First Contact as soon as possible
- ◆ Follow up phone call (1-2 weeks after first contact, making sure people received it, making the specific ask)
- ◆ 2nd follow up call (2-4 weeks after, minus people who have already responded)
- ◆ Send monthly updates to your supporters
- ◆ Final ask (1-2 weeks before deadline)
- ◆ Thank You/Follow-up after the trip is over

→ **How?** There are many ways to do this, but here are our suggestions:

- ◆ Consider format - discern who might receive a letter best (grandma) and who might prefer an email (coworker).

- ◆ If emailing, send individual emails. Write a personal email, or include your newsletter-style letter as an attachment. (Don't send the email to everyone at once!)
- ◆ Other Fundraising Suggestions – Below are several other ways to raise funds for a trip. *Due to the number of people involved in missions, Rolling Hills cannot host or advertise for fundraisers on campus or through the Rolling Hills website.*
 - Odd Jobs – Mow lawns, babysit, or find other creative ways to earn additional money.
 - Personal Sacrifice – Cut off the cable, bring your lunch to work, drink water instead of soft drinks. Put any money saved toward the trip.
 - Yard Sale – Ask friends and family to donate items for the sale and split the money between each participating team member.
 - Make Something – Use special talents or skills to make items for sale. Find a creative place to sell the items.
- ◆ Social media is helpful for updating supporters but is typically not very effective in fundraising. Consider making a Facebook group to add photos and share prayer requests, but remember that this shouldn't be the primary fundraising tool.
- ◆ Remember to make phone calls or face-to-face follow up! Letters and emails often go ignored or forgotten; follow-up phone calls may be the most important step in the entire process.
- ◆ Thank! Remember to put a thank you note in the mail as soon as you receive a contribution.
- ◆ Consider sending them an update letter after your trip as well, to celebrate all that God has done!

→ **Support letter writing best practices:** (*we will refer to “support letters” going forward but it applies to emails, as well as letters*)

- ◆ Write the letter yourself and have someone check it for spelling and grammar.
- ◆ Avoid a standard “form” letter if possible. The body of the letter/email can be the same for all recipients but personalize at least the name at the top and, if possible, an opening remark or closing comment for each letter/email you send.
- ◆ Limit your entire letter to no more than two pages.
- ◆ Use a type font that is easy to read (12 or 14 point) and be sure to cover the following:
 - Your call and motivation to go
 - When and where you are going (use non-specific language when visiting closed countries)
 - What you will be doing and whom you will be serving
 - What you want from those who get your letter/email:
 - Prayer - give specific ways to pray for you and those you are going to serve
 - Financial Investment – share your financial deadlines
 - Details regarding financial gifts:
 - The amount needed

- How to give online or by check (participants names should not be on any checks given)
- Tax-deductible nature of contributions
- Donations are given to fund the team, and not directly to the individual. This is part of what makes a donation “tax-deductible.” We ask that they note who requested their donation so that we can add it to your fundraising goal, but ultimately all donations are given to support the short-term team as a whole.
- Thank them for praying for and supporting you!
- *You will find sample support letters below.*

Sample Support Letter/Email

Dear _____,

I hope this letter finds you well. God has been doing an amazing work in my life lately. I've been able to share the gospel with a number of my coworkers, and I have grown so much in this process. By God's grace, He's given me a passion to go beyond my office walls to share with others as well.

This Summer I will be participating on a short term mission trip to _____ with a team from Rolling Hills Community Church. Rolling Hills is passionate about taking the gospel to the world. This year a team is going to _____ to work with _____.

The primary goal of this mission trip is to work with _____ to

_____.

The trip dates are _____ and the **total cost is** _____. Will you please prayerfully consider partnering with me? Even a small contribution would be greatly appreciated. I believe the return on our joint investment will yield eternal results! **The biggest part of my support is due by** _____. The donation will be to the church and will not be refundable, all the money will go to the trip. If you can assist me financially, you may give a tax-deductible donation in three ways:

- Give online at <https://pushpay.com/g/rollinghillspayments> Be sure to select "missions" then in memo please put _____ (trip name abr. (ex:ATL)) and _____ (my name)
- Scan the QR code below. In the memo please put _____ (trip name abr. (ex:ATL)) and _____ (my name)
- You can also mail your check to Rolling Hills Community Church, 1810 Columbia Avenue, Franklin, TN 37064. In the memo, please put Mission and _____ (trip name abr. (ex:ATL)) and _____ (my name)

For your financial privacy, the church will tell me that you have contributed, but they will not disclose the amount.

Finally, I ask for your prayers. If you will pray, then I believe God can use me in a mighty way and do "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine."

Whether through your prayers or your financial support (or both), I want to say in advance that we are so thankful for your contribution towards helping us participate in God's work in

_____.

With gratitude,

