Virtual Thanksgiving Feast 2020 Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Campaign: Celebrating 40 Years of Advocacy

Welcome to the 2020 Virtual Thanksgiving Feast Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Campaign, an online fundraiser during the month of November to benefit RESULTS Educational Fund and celebrate our 40th anniversary!

Even as the country and the world face unprecedented new threats, you and other grassroots advocates across the country are showing what’s possible. No matter what happens in this November’s election, RESULTS advocates will be working with their members of Congress during the first 100 days of the new Congress to help set the agenda and make sure ending poverty is at the top of their to-do lists.

The Virtual Thanksgiving Feast is an opportunity to spread the word about the great work you do to end poverty, to grow your network of advocates and supporters, and to invite your friends and family to help fund the RESULTS movement and support the next chapter of our work. The funds you raise will help train and equip volunteer advocates and support the staff who provide research and expertise on our issues.

We recognize that we are in the middle of a very challenging time as we face a global pandemic and economic crisis. Many of our friends, neighbors, and family members are facing financial or medical crisis, or both, right now. We want to be sensitive to that in all our communication and asks. But we also know there are many people longing for a way to make a difference in this time of physical distancing – feeling isolated, cut off, and longing to contribute. Just like advocating, donating is a powerful way to do that from home.

As a fundraiser you will have access to a personalized fundraising website, one-on-one support from development staff, and all the materials you need to be successful: talking points, email and social media templates, and tips for success.

*Thank you for joining this campaign and for all you do to end poverty!* I look forward to working with you.

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Ready to get started? Register with the campaign.
The first step is to visit [results.salsalabs.org/vtf2020](https://results.salsalabs.org/vtf2020), the Virtual Thanksgiving Feast website, and click on the red “Register to Start Fundraising” button.

Alternatively, you can set up your own fundraiser on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/fundraisers/>.

## Why Fundraise for RESULTS?

Grassroots Fundraising efforts go towards our “unrestricted budget” – this is the most flexible funding we have and allows us to respond quickly to changing priorities and needs. Grassroots Fundraising efforts like this campaign are no small part of making this funding possible – you all help raise about 20% of these funds!

What are some examples of these costs?

* Training and resources for grassroots advocacy
* Expanding our volunteer efforts to all 50 states
* Lobbying and staff expertise from Grassroots Advocacy staff

**How can I translate these costs into fundraising asks?**

Below are a just a few examples of how to link our advocacy campaigns with fundraising asks *and are ready to cut and paste into your emails and social media posts.*

**Elections are just the beginning**

Election are just the beginning. As RESULTS advocates, we help write the rest of the story. When the new Congress gets to Washington in January 2021, we’ll be building relationships, meeting with Congressional office, and generating media to ensure that end poverty is at the top of their “to do” lists.

**Call for Urgent COVID-19 Relief**

With coronavirus or any pandemic, we know it’s the communities facing poverty and already pushed to the margins that face the greatest risks. *Viruses don’t discriminate, but people and policies too often do.*

That is why RESULTS advocates like me are continuing to push for COVID-19 relief that prioritizes people in poverty, in the United States and globally.

**GLOBAL FOCUS:** Congress must include a global response to this global pandemic in any relief packages. Projections are that global health could be set back 10-20 years and millions of children and adults could die from lack of healthcare, malnutrition, and disease without additional resources. Increasing U.S. support to existing health programs and investing in food aid and nutrition will make a difference. That’s why I’m raising my voice to call for Congressional action with a global response as soon as possible.

**U.S. FOCUS:** The COVID-19 pandemic has made America’s housing crisis far worse. This is hitting families in our communities – especially low-income Black renters, along with Indigenous families and other people of color – hard. While the national eviction moratorium helps, without funds to help renters get current on their rent, America will face a wave of evictions when the moratorium ends in January. Renters and landlords cannot wait any longer for relief. That’s why I’m raising my voice to call for Congress to pass a robust COVID-19 relief bill that includes $100 billion in emergency rental assistance as soon as possible.

**Fundraising Communications: The Mini-Guide**Use the [RESULTS EPIC model](https://results.org/resources/empower-yourself-activist-milestone-2/) to share your fundraising campaign in a video or email

1. Engage Your Audience
2. State the Problem *– make it personal – why do you care about ending poverty?*
3. Inform about the Solutions
4. Call to Action *– “Make a gift to support this work today!”*

Communications schedule: Here is a sample communications schedule for a three-week campaign:

* Day 1: Announce your fundraiser
* Day 5: Share a personal story about why RESULTS is important to you
* Day 9: Update on your progress and thank you
* Day 14: Last week to give! Share another personal story about why you advocate
* Day 17: Update on your progress and thank you
* Day 21: Final day to give!
* Day 22: Thank you and re-cap

Keep reminding people about your campaign – studies show that fundraisers who send more emails, raise more money. You can drop off those who have already given from your emails – but remember to thank them personally.

Use social media to echo your email messages – and vice versa. It will help for your friends and family to see your updates and messages on multiple platforms.

Tips for Effective Fundraising Messages:

* Be genuine and personal.
* Tell stories about advocacy. *What was it like to meet with your member of Congress? How did it feel to publish an LTE?*
* Make your donors the heroes. Remind them that they are investing to end poverty – *and that’s amazing.*
* Share the amplifying power of advocacy: $1 invested in RESULTS drives $100 to fight poverty.
* Steal RESULTS’ materials. Share posts from @RESULTSEdFund, re-Tweet @RESULTS\_Tweets, and forward emails from RESULTS with a personal message about your campaign.
* Always link to your fundraising page

Looking for more? A detailed communication schedule and sample video script, emails, posts, and tweets are in the **Virtual Thanksgiving Feast Fundraiser Communications Kit.**

# Top Fundraising Tips

1. **Personalize and update your site.**Customize your fundraising page with photos and a personal statement about why you care about ending poverty. *Studies show that peer-to-peer fundraisers who personalize and update their pages – even once – raise more money.*
2. **Be the first.**If you are able to do so, make the first gift to your campaign to encourage others to join you.
3. **Make a video.**Videos are an incredibly effective way to communicate your message. Record a brief video (30 seconds) explaining what you’re doing – “raising money for RESULTS” – and why – “to end poverty.” Share this with a link to your fundraising page.
4. **Ask past donors to give again.**The people most likely to support you are the ones who already have. Reach out to people who gave to a previous fundraiser (even if not for RESULTS) and ask them to renew. Not sure who gave last year? Contact Mea for a list of your past donors.
5. **Use reminders.**One email alone won’t get you to your goal. Send reminders with updates on your progress and ask them to help you hit the next milestone. Keep the content interesting by posting photos from advocacy meetings, a link to your published LTE, or a quick fact about our work.

**Need help? Be in touch!** We are ready to help with technology, brainstorming strategies, and any questions you may have. Contact Mea at mgeizhals@results.org or 202-783-4800 x131.