Fundraising Timeline

Within 2 Weeks of Registering:

Familiarize: Within your first week of signing up for the Tunnel to Towers 5K Run & Walk take the time learn about the Foundations programs. These programs honor our first responders and military personnel who make extraordinary sacrifices in the line of duty, including the *Smart Home Program*. Visit our website at http://tunnel2towers.org/ for all of the latest news and updates.

Customize: Update your CrowdRise page to include your reasons for participating. People are more likely to support your efforts if they can see the passion you have for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

Evaluate: Take some time to evaluate your personal network and determine who the potential donors are. You may find it helpful to break your list into separate groups. Friends, family, co-workers, and local businesses are often the most eager groups to support your efforts.

Develop: Begin to develop your fundraising plan. Consider making a self-donation. This shows potential donors you are passionate about the cause. Set a realistic goal based on your potential donors. Targets can always be increased once the initial number has been achieved!

Recruit: Reach out to family, friends and co-workers to join your team! Explain why this event means so much to you and encourage them to join your efforts.

Reach out: Once you have started to develop your strategy for reaching your goal, begin asking for donations. The sooner you get started, the more likely you will be to reach your target. Vary your approach based on your audience. Emails, phone calls, social media, and in person asks are the best way to start spreading the word. Start with those who are most likely to support you. Consider adding your personal CrowdRise link to the signature line of your emails.

Within 3 Weeks of Registering:

Spread the word: Focus on sharing your story with a new person each day. Stress the significance of the event to you. Make that personal connection with your network. Reach out via phone, email, and letters to your second degree connections. Spread beyond family and close friends with your story

Follow-up: Do not be discouraged if people do not donate right away. Keep tabs on who you have contacted and be sure to follow-up with progress updates and requests for support.

Get Creative: Consider new approaches to hitting your target. Host fundraising events, dinner parties, or a happy hour. Think outside the box and reach out to businesses/establishments that can assist you planning an event.

Within 1 Month of Registering:

Status Updates: Leverage all of your social media accounts to update your network on your progress. Don't just make the update about your financial progress. Share insight into your training and any other potential events that are in the works.

Maintain Momentum: Continue to reach out personally to your network. Explain what your main reasons for signing up and fundraising were. People will support your passion! Don't forget to continue to follow-up with those in the network who you have reached out to, but have yet to donate.

Matching Gifts: Investigate who in your network and extended network work for companies that match donations. Be strategic in your outreach and target those who will receive matching donations. Follow-up with donors to make sure they submit the required forms with their employer. Click here to see if a donation is eligible for a match.

Thanking Your Donors: Do not forget to personally thank your network. A thoughtful note can go a long way, especially if you plan to fundraise again in the future. Visit our YouTube page at https://www.youtube.com/user/TunnelToTowers and feel free to share videos of our home dedications or events. Let people know what their donation meant to you and show them the programs that are being supported by their generous donations!

Within Two Months of Registering:

Continue to Update on Your Progress: Share your CrowdRise link on social media and let everyone in your network know how you are progressing. Be creative and try to find new ways to share your message. Let everyone know how much their support is essential to your success!

Eyes on the Prize: Keep track of your goal and develop a strategy that will get you there. Whether you focus on how many personal outreaches to make each day or a daily donation target, remain focused on your goal and make that push!

Encourage Competition: If you have successfully recruited friends and family to your team, encourage some friendly competition among your team. See who can get the most donations or recruit the most team members for that given week. Do whatever it takes to keep everyone focused and engaged.

Final Week:

Final Push: Prepare your final message. Ask those in your network to share your message to people within their own network too. Have a sense of urgency in your message now that the event is only days away!

Race Week: Consider daily social media updates. These can include personal stories about prior race day experiences, stories about who you are running in honor of, and/or more progress updates. Have a "Throwback Thursday" post featuring prior race photos. Change your Facebook picture to feature a loved one whose legacy you are honoring at the event or a team picture from the prior year! Let everyone in your network feel your enthusiasm for the upcoming event!

Post-race:

Celebrate Your Accomplishments: Did you reach or exceed your goal? Did you reach a fundraising incentive that you were aiming for? Let your network know how you did. Do not forget to share information on the programs that were supported by their donations. Even if you missed your target, be proud of each dollar raised in support of our first responders and military heroes!

Update Your Network: Share your race day experience. Let everyone know what things you experienced and what the day meant to you. Don't forget to remind them, there is still time to donate after the race!

Thanking Your Network: Now is the time to send personal thank you notes. Try to make each thank you as personal as possible. Consider taking the extra step of having your own thank you cards created online and printed out for your donors. Share a team photo if you ran with a group. Make sure you let them know how great the day was and of all your fundraising success!