



led2serve[®]
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Fundraising Guide



Dear led2serve Journey Member,

Thank you for your interest in a led2serve Service Journey! As you know, led2serve offers a variety of unique opportunities for individuals and groups to serve in communities local to global. Our Journeys allow participants to visit new places, discover exciting cultures, and provide community-driven, relevant service to others. As a participant, you'll be exposed to thought-provoking topics, awe-inspiring sights, and rewarding service that has the potential to change the way you view the world. All of this sounds wonderful, but how are you going to pay for it?

There is good news. Past team members, just like you, have successfully raised enough funds to cover their program fee and even their airfare.

While the program cost may seem overwhelming at first, rest assured that many of our past team members have had the same concern and successfully funded their Journeys. Our team members come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Many of them cannot pay their expense outright, nor do they have parents or spouses who can afford to pay for them. These people do have one thing in common—a heart to serve others. We believe that with a little bit of effort, creativity, and communication, you too will successfully raise the funds needed to participate in a Service Journey. In fact, we believe that participants who spend a significant amount of time and energy preparing for their trip find the experience considerably more rewarding and are more enthusiastic during the trip.

By reaching out to those in your circle and inviting their support, you are also educating them about the issues at hand. Approach your fundraising as an educational, awareness-raising endeavor, whose success is measured not simply in dollars and cents. By educating others, you are providing a valuable service.

This document serves as a starting point as you develop your fundraising plan. The kit offers suggestions for both students and non-students and covers ideas from scholarships, to social media, to letter-writing, and everything in between. We know that you will find this guide helpful and encourage you to contact our Vanessa Puleo, at (407) 227-2695 if you have any questions.

You can do this!



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Why Pay to Serve Others?

Since you have chosen to sign up for a led2serve Journey, you see the value in serving with us. However, your friends and family may wonder why you are being asked to pay anything for your program. After all, you're serving, right? The organizations with which we serve typically don't have the capacity to recruit people, pay their living expenses, and manage the logistics of hundreds of placements annually. led2serve provides a stream of support for these organizations by recruiting teams to include people like you and asking you to pay for your living expenses, which brings income to the local economy. We also use a portion of your program fee to support the local organization. While you could travel on your own and search for an organization with which to go and serve with, led2serve offers established community partnerships where you know your contribution will make a difference. For many years, we have provided safe and secure experiences, which includes Journey Leaders to support you before, during and after your program and benefits such as health and travel insurance (for overseas programs). Your program fee allows us to provide these services which bring you peace of mind and which provide much-needed support to communities around the world.

Understanding led2serve's Program Fee

While the program fee structure varies somewhat by the type of program, led2serve takes pride in the fact that across-the-board, over 95% of fees go directly to program costs and less than 5% of fees go to overhead (not salaries). A significant portion of your fee supports the local economy where you are serving through the expenses we pay for meals, lodging, donations, and more. Specifically, program fees go toward items such as:

1. Food
2. Lodging
3. Journey Leader and/or on-site coordinator
4. Cultural and recreational activities
5. Programs that take place outside the US include:
 - a. Travel insurance (program specific)
 - b. On-site transportation
6. All fees additionally include a contribution to a community partner organization, which typically takes place through purchase of building materials or other general operating donations.
7. Exit fees (program specific)
8. Translators when needed
9. Individual Journeys have specific cost related items - see in country guide as needed.

Focus Your Fundraising

Prior to beginning your fundraising, it will be very helpful for you to create a fundraising plan. Fundraising among your friends, family, and community is not as uncomfortable as you might think! If you are confident in WHY you are asking for money, WHO you will ask, WHAT exactly the money is for, and WHEN you should get started, you will find the process less intimidating.

WHY?

Although you may have originally applied to led2serve because you wanted to explore a new country or learn about a new culture, remember that you are not fundraising for a vacation. Also remember that you are not volunteering for a temporary, aid-based project in a developing country. At led2serve, you are providing service for which the community has expressed a need. You will support an organization with which we have created a sustainable relationship.

Remember that a portion of your program fee is a direct contribution to the community partner you will be serving. Prior to fundraising, be sure to sit back and reflect on the importance of your service.

WHO?

What types of networks do you belong to? After looking through your address book, you are probably surprised by how large your network really is!

Besides your friends and family, who else can help you to make your service trip possible? One good exercise is to think about the people you encounter throughout your daily routine. Your gym, salon, local bank, doctor, dentist, academic department, sorority/fraternity, place of worship, employer, parents' employers, local charitable organizations, clubs, social venues, restaurants, supermarkets, and other businesses are all great places to target. Or, you can consider reflecting on your past. Perhaps you had a high school teacher who had a particular interest in the country you will be visiting or the topic you'll be studying. Don't be shy in exhausting potential resources throughout your community or in asking for support from those who have helped you to get where you are today!

WHAT?

How much does your program cost and what is the money for? As outlined on the previous page, the program fee covers most on-site expenses necessary for you to study and serve with our community partners. If you raise money in excess of your program fee (and some participants do!) we can apply the excess towards your airfare and purchase airfare on your behalf. Any funds raised in excess of program fees and airfare will be accepted as a general donation to led2serve.

WHEN?

Now! The sooner that you get started, the more people that you will be able to contact, and the more success you will have in reaching your fundraising goal. Remember, we must receive any donations you've raised by your final payment due date in order for you to be credited.

Fundraising Approaches for Everyone

Letter Writing

One of the most effective fundraising techniques is to simply ask people you know for support. Remember, your letter serves two purposes – it educates people about your project and it is a tool to raise money. It may seem awkward at first to ask your second-cousin for \$50 when you haven't talked to her in years, but even if she isn't able to help you out financially, she will appreciate the update on what you are doing. Many people will never have the opportunity or the desire to take a trip like the one you are taking, but they still may be eager to help your cause!

People will give based on capacity, interest in the project, and their relationship to you. The greater their capacity and interest, or the closer their relationship to you, the more likely they are to give. It's okay to ask different people for different amounts of money; in fact, customizing your letters and asking more from some people is usually more effective than asking everyone to give the same amount. When making your list, keep in mind that only 20-25% of people you write are likely to give, so your list may need to be longer than you first thought. Finally, prepare for some surprises. The person you thought would definitely donate may not respond; the aunt you haven't heard from in years may make a large donation.

Keep it short and simple (KISS). You may want to begin your letter with a brief description of why you chose led2serve as well as a brief description of the organization that you will work with in the host country. Feel free to send them to the website or take information from here at www.led2serve.org. You will want to describe what you'll be doing in a manner that conveys the importance of the cause, but doesn't bog the reader down with details about international development. Make sure that you stress the sustainable nature of your service to ensure donors that their money is being used in high-impact ways. Keep your letter to one page and invite people to visit your blog for more information.

Convey a sense of urgency and immediacy. They must act now! "People are struggling in Bolivia, where I will be serving with led2serve's program." This limits their time to forget about giving you a contribution. Set a deadline by which donors should make their gifts. Refer to your program payment schedule to determine when your final program payment is due and request that donors give before then.

Contextualize Giving Amounts. First, remind donors that a portion of their support will directly benefit the community in which you will be working. State your overall fundraising goal then suggest a variety of different giving amounts and show what these amounts are able to fund. This way, donors have the opportunity to choose a level of giving comfortable for them. For example, you may ask donors to contribute:

- one dollar per day that you will be serving in the host community
- one day's expenses (program fee divided by number of days)

If your birthday or the holidays are coming, ask for donations toward your program in place of traditional gifts.

Provide an educational presentation or another type of follow-up. Promising to speak to groups or to show photos when you return can be a great way to secure funding from religious organizations, civic groups, alumni associations and educational institutions. For example, as an incentive, one team member promised to send all her supporters a "newsletter" from overseas. Tangible evidence of your actions abroad helps people "see" where their dollars have gone. Other visuals, such as pictures of you in your respective country can be good reminders of how they have helped. Remember, often the prime motivation for giving is how it makes the giver feel, not how it makes the receiver feel. Hopefully, your supporters will feel good each time they look at your picture or receive an update from you.

Make it easy to donate! Because you are writing letters to ask people for donations, considering including pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelopes. You will also want to include instructions on how they can donate online at www.led2serve.org under the "BE INVOLVED" tab - as well as the address for your blog.

Follow up to maximize your donations. While people may be excited about your upcoming trip, they may need a little bit more persuasion before they actually write the check. Or, they may have simply put your letter aside and intended to write a check, but were distracted by other tasks. Consider following up with an email or phone call if there is no response after several weeks. A personal email or phone call confirming that they received the letter and offering to clear up any details about the trip may be necessary in order to get some people to lend their support.

Blogs

Blogging can be a great way to communicate to your potential donors exactly what your trip is all about and how you are preparing for your departure. Not only can your blog be shared with friends and family, but the greater online community can also follow and support your endeavors.

Wordpress (www.wordpress.com) is one example of an online blogging tool that will allow you to communicate your fundraising goals creatively, but feel free to use any tool that you wish. Visit (www.wordpress.com/features/) to read about the free features that Wordpress has to offer.

To begin blogging, visit Wordpress's website and sign up for a free account. Once you have created your account, it is time to get creative! Your homepage acts as a running log of all of the posts that you have created. In comparison, Wordpress "pages" can be created for a variety of different things. Your next step is to create a "page" that describes your fundraising goal. For instance, the title "Support my Service- Learning Project or Mission Trip to Costa Rica!" helps people to find the page that describes your fundraising goals.

On this page, we recommend that you include several pictures, a “Donate” button, and your donation letter (see the appendix for instructions). Some donors also enjoy being recognized, so you may want to include a list of donors on your blog as well. Finally, you can write about your preparation, departures, and adventures in subsequent posts on your blog.

Now that you have created a blog, it is time to drive internet traffic to the blog! First of all, you will want to contact your friends and family and let them know how to access your new blog. Once your immediate network knows how to access your blog, you will want to post your blog’s web address other places, so that more people can read about and support your trip. The following social media tools are great ways to share your fundraising goals and travel experiences.

Social Media Tools

Social media is a new and exciting way to share information with your immediate acquaintances, as well as potentially millions of other internet users. Social media uses technology to send one person’s message to a large number of recipients and is increasingly becoming a social interaction and marketing tool. This fundraising guide will focus on two main social media tools: Facebook and Linked In.

Facebook

- What is it? Facebook is an online social utility that allows people to connect with current and former friends, coworkers, and family through a growing number of networks.
- How can it help me fundraise? By signing up for an account, you can create a customized profile that can give you access to a large network of potential donors. You can also add a button that allows you to take donations right through the site.
- How do I get started?
 - o Step #1 – Create a profile. Visit (<http://www.facebook.com>) to create a profile. Be sure to add any relevant information to your profile so that people know who you are.
 - o Step #2 – Professionalize and validate your fundraising by connecting to led2serve’s Facebook profile. To find us on Facebook you can either use the search function or go to our page directly (<http://www.facebook.com/led2serve>) and click on the Like button. Liking us will allow you to view our News directly on your profile’s news feed.
 - o Step #3 – Write on your friends’ walls! You can start by writing something like “I just joined a Service Mission trip with led2serve to Costa Rica ! Check out my blog and support my trip!” Be sure to give them the web address of your blog as well.
 - o Step #4 - Link the donation button for the website to YOUR Facebook page.

FOR more on social media and ideas please go to the "Resources" tab on our site and look under "fundraising".

LinkedIn

- *What is it?* LinkedIn is a network where over 50 million professionals exchange information, ideas and opportunities. LinkedIn is similar to Facebook but with a more professional focus.
- *How can it help me fundraise?* By creating an account, you will be able to network with a large group of qualified professionals. You can post a link to your blog on your profile as well.
- *How do I get started?*
 - o Step #1 - Create an account. Visit (www.linkedin.com) and press the "Join Today" button.
 - o Step #2 - Update your professional accomplishments. Your profile will act as your online resume in a sense, so make sure that you spend some time keeping it detailed and updated.
 - o Step #3 - Link your Blog. Press the "Profile" link on the left menu bar. Under Applications, add the WordPress Application. This will allow you to directly link your WordPress blog to your LinkedIn profile.
 - o Step #4 - Start Networking! Because LinkedIn has a professional focus, it is easy to search for former colleagues, supervisors, classmates, etc... A little bit of time and dedication may reconnect you with someone from your past who would like to support you!

Religious Centers/Service Clubs

Churches, temples, synagogues and other religious centers are more often than not interested in supporting their community members in whatever way possible. Likewise, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, and other similar service organizations are great sources for funding.

Some will make direct donations to fund your trip. These organizations receive many funding requests, so while your trip may cost several thousand dollars, we suggest requesting contributions in the range of \$100-\$500 and letting them know that you are working hard to raise additional money from other sources, too. If they cannot make a direct donation, you may want to ask if they will help you in a joint fundraising event. You can plan a new event or ask if they will dedicate a portion of the proceeds from an already-scheduled event to your cause. (See Creative Events for more information.)

Ask at your place of worship if they will mention your upcoming trip, allow you to speak during a service or other event, or include information about your trip in a bulletin or newsletter. This is a great way to educate your community and may even inspire some members to give to your cause. If you are invited to speak, be sure to clarify whether they will allow you to request donations during your talk, and how long they would like you to talk. Unless instructed otherwise, try to keep your talk to two to three minutes, especially if it is during a religious service. Bring handouts with you to give to people who express interest. You can use the sample letter in the appendix of this packet.

The Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club and other organizations often have missions that support community member service, so don't be afraid to ask them for support. The best course of action is to identify a club where you have a personal contact – perhaps a family member, neighbor or teacher belongs. Otherwise, you can contact as many clubs in your area as possible and ask to give a presentation to their club. Many clubs have breakfast, lunch, or dinner meetings which may last anywhere from one to two hours. If you are invited to speak at a club, ask them how long your talk should be. It is common for groups to request presentations of 15-20 minutes. For talks this length, be sure to include photos or videos to keep the listeners' interest.

Tips for Public Speaking:

- Before you give a talk, practice your presentation and time yourself. If your presentation is too long, make cuts. It is better to speak slowly and confidently than to rush through a presentation.
- Key points to mention include: who you are, where you are going, what you will be doing, why you are doing this trip (what difference your service will make), and how your listeners can help. This is your chance to sell your cause.
- If you can show photos or a video, this will increase the impact of your presentation. Consider pointing out your service site on a map, if it's an area people might not be familiar with.
- Remember, you are not asking for money for your vacation, you are asking for a donation to help a sustainable organization and make a difference in the world.

After your talk, write a follow up letter thanking the organization for letting you speak and reiterating your request for money. Be specific about how much money you are requesting and how it will be used. Two to three weeks after the meeting, if you have not heard from them, give them a call. Be persistent, but not pushy. When you give a post-program presentation make sure that you explain how their money helped achieve something worthwhile. If you're doing a slide-show presentation (using Power Point, for example), be sure that your last slide thanks the organization for their support.

Gift Matching Programs

Many companies have gift matching programs where they will double any funds donated by an employee. Because led2serve is a 501(c)(3) organization, we are eligible for many gift matching programs. When asking friends or family for support, ask them if their employer will make a matching donation. Usually, they simply need to request a matching gift form from their human resources department that they will complete and send with their donation. led2serve will follow through to secure the match funds. Even if the company doesn't have a formal matching program, they may be able to support you, so it is worth looking into. Match funds must be received by the final payment due date in order to be credited to your program.

Creative Events

In addition to conducting a letter-writing campaign, approaching local organizations, or using blogs and social media, you can host a creative, fun event. Just make sure that the potential donations outweigh the costs of hosting the event. If you are connected with a local service organization, religious organization, or other group that holds regular fundraising events, you may ask if your program can be beneficiary of one of those events.

The best events involve a team of planners. Identify a few people who can be on your team: friends, family members, sorority sisters/ fraternity brothers, or others. Be sure to clearly identify who is responsible for what and check in regularly.

Event Planning Tips:

- Set a fundraising goal.
- Who do you want to reach with your event? (fellow students, the community, etc)
- What type of event is best in that situation? (pancake breakfast, raffle/drawing, yard sale, etc)
- How many people will you invite? (not everyone will attend so always invite more than you need)

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- What type of event is best in that situation? (pancake breakfast, raffle/drawing, yard sale, etc)
- How many people will you invite? (not everyone will attend so always invite more than you need)
- How will you raise money? (charge a per-person fee, sell tickets for a drawing, solicit donations/tips, etc)
- How much are you likely to raise from each person who attends?
- Estimate your expenses.
- If the expenses exceed your estimated income, try to cut expenses. If you cannot, consider a different event or strategy.
- Make a timeline and checklist for your event and divide responsibilities among team members.

- How will you raise money? (charge a per-person fee, sell tickets for a drawing, solicit donations/tips, etc)

Some event ideas include:

- **Host a Meal.** Decide on a public or private venue, such as a church, community center, or someone's home. Set your menu. Consider serving foods that are local to the region where you'll be volunteering, or another type of low-cost meal. Popular inexpensive fundraisers include spaghetti dinners, pancake breakfasts, and cookie/cupcake parties. Set a suggested contribution amount for the meal, making sure that you will more than cover your expenses. When you invite your guests, clearly advertise that the proceeds will support your volunteer service. Make a short, upbeat presentation at the event.

- **Yard/ Craft Sale.** Ask friends and neighbors to donate items for the sale and clearly advertise that the proceeds go to support your trip. You may invite buyers to decide how much to "donate" for each item, since it is for a charitable cause. You may be surprised by people's generosity.

- **Hold a Coin Drive** This can take place in your school, place of worship, office or any place where lots of people would see the display. Use a coffee can or an empty jar and re-label it with some fun and interesting facts about your trip. Include a flier to explain why you are raising funds.

- **Movie Night.** Hold a movie night at school, a community center, or your home with family and friends and charge admission to view the film. Consider showing a movie about issues related to the country to which you will be traveling. Give a two-minute introduction before the film, explaining your trip. Offer a few closing comments and consider passing a bucket for additional contributions.

- **Fair Trade Coffee Sales.** Sell fair-trade coffee and a portion of the sales can go to your cause. Grounds For Change (<http://www.groundsforchange.com>) is an example of a company that offers this type of fundraising. We suggest you take orders and collect donations from individuals before ordering from the company. This way, you will not end up with unsold merchandise.

- **Scavenger Hunt/ Road Rally.** Scavenger Hunts are a fun way to get a large number of people interested in your trip! Have people form into groups of three or four, present them with a list of things to find, and give prizes to the first few teams to finish! Visit this site: (<http://www.fundraiserinsight.org/articles/scavenger-hunt-fundraising.html>) for more details on how to run this type of event. Here is a great example of the rules for a scavenger hunt: (http://www.zontaclubwashingtonpa.org/files/Road_Rally_Info_Registration_2_2009.pdf)

When planning an event, think about what types of resources are available to you through your network. Maybe you know a musician, photographer, DJ or artist that would like to host an event or entertain at your event. Perhaps you have connections at a restaurant, bar, or store that can help you to plan an exciting fundraiser. Both of you will benefit: you will have a great venue for your event, and the business will make additional money from the patrons that your event will attract. Just remember, don't be shy about asking for support because you'll never know who is willing to help if you don't ask.

Fundraising Approaches for Students

Scholarships for Students Seeking Academic Credit (visit the link on our site under scholarships for students)

Inquire at your home institution if scholarships are available for your service experience. Some institutions will award scholarships for programs that enrich a student's learning experience, regardless if that experience is credit bearing. Here are a few other sources for scholarships:

- Fund for International Service Learning is a non-profit group that provides scholarships to students participating in international service learning programs. Currently, they offer two \$500 scholarships per year, one for summer programs and one for spring programs.

- Glimpse is a nonprofit website, supported in part by the National Geographic Society that shares the experiences of young Americans abroad. Glimpse provides financial and professional editorial support to help students learn the craft of storytelling, with the larger goal of using stories to inspire others to care about the world. Glimpse will be selecting 10 Correspondents for Spring 2010, who will receive a \$600 stipend, guaranteed publication on Glimpse.org, professional training and support, and possible publication in National Geographic platforms. To apply, visit (<http://glimpse.org/correspondents>). This is a chance for students who are going abroad next semester to get their stories published -- and to get paid for them.

- InternationalStudent.com is pleased to present the Fourth Annual InternationalStudent.com Travel Video Contest. Grand Prize this year is \$3,500 and there will be other great prizes, like an iPod Touch and a video camera. Since you're considering studying abroad, this is a great opportunity to tell your story and have a shot at the prize. For more information and to enter, go to: (<http://www.InternationalStudent.com/contest/>).

- Vira I. Heinz Program for Women in Global Leadership is a \$5,000 scholarship available for women in their sophomore year with a 3.0 GPA and is available for students attending Pittsburgh area universities. For more information go to <http://www.abroad.pitt.edu/viraheinz>.

- The Benjamin Gilman Scholarship is available to applicants receiving need-based assistance from the Federal Government, of an amount up to \$5,000: (www.iie.org/gilman/)

- Jack Wilson Fund Scholarship - This opportunity is for Graduate Students doing research in international contexts. Applicants must have completed at least three years of undergraduate work or be enrolled in a graduate program at one of the following: Carlow University, Chatham



University, Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, Point Park University, Robert Morris University, St. Vincent College, University of Akron or the University of Pittsburgh. The scholarship was created to provide financial assistance for innovative, international opportunities that foster an appreciation of and better understanding among different cultures. Priority is given to ideas that promote peace and community development. For more information, contact Deborah Turner from The Pittsburgh Foundation at turnerd@pghfdn.org. Download an application form at: (<http://www.pittsburghfoundation.org/Images/JackWilsonApplication4.pdf>).

Thanking Your Contributors

We recommend following up and thanking each of your contributors after they have donated funds toward your Service Journey. led2serve will send thank you letters to your donors, which serve as receipts for tax purposes. However, the most powerful thank you letter will be the one you send personally. Consider writing a handwritten letter in order to keep the communication personal and sincere. Engage your donors throughout your trip, whether through personal communications or through your blog, in order to keep them interested in and excited about your experience. When you return, consider offering an educational presentation to summarize your experience and reinforce the positive impact that your donors' money is making in the community in which you served.

Important led2serve Fundraising Guidelines

led2serve is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to led2serve are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

In order for donations to be tax-deductible, they must be payable directly to led2serve. If you like, you can collect checks from individuals and groups and mail them to led2serve in one bundle. That way you will know up front who has donated, and we will know to credit you with all of those donations. Please be sure to instruct your supporters to make the checks payable to "led2serve." We are unable to provide receipts for any checks made out to you as an individual.

If donors make a contribution directly to led2serve, either by mailing a check to us or by donating on our website, please ask them to note that the donation was "suggested by [your name]," so we can add it to your fundraising total. led2serve will provide you with regular reports on your fundraising, with information on who has given and how much, so that you can thank your donors personally.

led2serve must receive all donations by the date your final payment is due in order to credit the amount towards your program fee. Unfortunately, we cannot credit you for donations received after your payment due

date. Any donations received after your final payment is due will be accepted as general donations to led2serve

You will have expenses beyond the program fee.

These may include airfare, vaccinations, and spending money. If you raise money in excess of your program fee (and some participants do!) we can apply the excess towards your airfare and purchase airfare on your behalf. Any funds contributed by donors in excess of program fees and airfare will be accepted as a general donation. led2serve cannot pay expenses such as vaccinations, reimburse you for airfare already purchased, nor provide you with any spending money from funds contributed to the organization. If you need help with expenses such as vaccinations and spending money, please ask people to make a gift directly to you.

Important Information about Tax-Deductibility

The money you spend for your volunteer program or course may be tax-deductible. Your payment goes toward your meals, lodging, transportation, support and coordination while you are serving to further led2serve's mission to connect people across cultures through service. All components of your program participation are related to led2serve's mission and thus are not provided in return for your contribution. If you incurred travel costs to participate in this program, and the program was the main purpose for your travel costs, you may also be able to deduct those expenses. We suggest you consult with your tax advisor or with Internal Revenue Service Publication Number 526.

Furthermore, if you are participating in a service-learning course for college credit, your tuition expenses may be deductible as a qualified education expense.

led2serve will supply you with their tax ID, which should be shared with your accountant or tax advisor.

The above is presented for informational purposes only and should not be construed as financial or tax advice. Consult with your accountant or tax advisor for professional advice.

Appendix

Donate on the led2serve webpage

In order to allow donors to use credit cards, streamline donation processing and ensure that donations are tax-deductible, send your donors directly to the led2serve website and instruct them to click the BE INVOLVED tab or the Donate button on the side of each of the pages. If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact us!

[DONATE to ta team member link](#)

[FACEBOOK](#)

www.led2serve.org

Go to your specific week and page to link to your website!!!!

Visit the site for ideas.

Visit the site for forms on how to obtain your passport.

Visit the site for FAQ!



Sample Donation Letter (Costa Rica)

Dear FirstName LastName,

I am writing to share with you exciting news about something wonderful that I am planning. I have recently been asked to participate in an international service mission trip with led2serve, a global service organization. In a few short months, I will be traveling to San Carlos, Costa Rica to serve in several local village communities directly. This organization promotes sustainable community development through connecting direct with communities and working together to fit the needs of their people. This is not a vacation, but an opportunity to empower and contribute to an amazing program in this local community using led2serve's long-term network.

I am very excited about this opportunity to both learn and serve for a week this summer. But getting there won't be easy, as the cost of serving internationally is significant: the placement, lodging, organization contribution, airfare, serving projects and transportation is approximately \$2000.00 dollars. I am trying to meet this expense through [jobs/ additional fundraising events/ etc], but I also need your help. Your generous contribution gives direct support to led2serve by providing them with a committed, enthusiastic, and hard-working serving heart (i.e. me!) Will you consider a donation of the following:

 \$[cost], a dollar for each day I will be serving

 \$[cost], to cover the cost of an entire day's service

I've started documenting my mission trip in an online journal, also known as a blog, so that my supporters can read about my preparation, journey, and experience while I am in Costa Rica. To read my blog, please visit the website, [website address]. If you choose to lend your support to this cause, you will be pleased to know that all donations that are made directly to led2serve are 100% tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please consider an online donation at the website of www.led2serve.org. You can go to the "be involved" table and select the "donate to a Journey Member." Or make any checks payable to: led2serve and include my name in the memo area so that you can receive a letter acknowledging your contribution as tax deductible, and that the funds will be directed toward my project. Mail checks to led2serve, 100 Claflin Avenue, BOX 34, Salina, Kansas. 67401

Your support and encouragement, whether through financial means or otherwise, is so appreciated. Please feel free to get in touch with me if you have any questions, ideas, or if you know of anyone else who might be interested in supporting this project. Thank you for helping to make this extraordinary experience possible. I look forward to sharing it with you when I return.

Thank you and best regards,
[Your Name]