

VisionWalk Fundraising Ideas

CORPORATE INVOLVEMENT

- Ask your friends with **small businesses** if you can present VisionWalk at an employee meeting.
- **Sponsorships:** VisionWalk offers exposure for companies on our materials and at walk day for donations from \$500—\$10,000.
- **Matching gifts:** See if your company or any of your donors' companies have a matching gift program. You can double your funds quickly!



- **Corporate Volunteerism:** Walmart donates \$500 for every 5 employees who participate in the walk. Does you know of a company with a program like this?
- **Jeans Days:** Allow employees to wear jeans on Fridays for a month for \$5 or more. Already casual? Pay to wear your favorite team jersey on Friday.
- **Penny Wars:** Create a jar for each department or floor and see who can collect the most change.

DO WHAT YOU LOVE

- Whether it is bowling, wine tasting, sports pools, happy hours or crafting, you can make your hobby into a FUNdraising event!
- **Game Night:** Euchre Party, Poker Tournament or any type of game you enjoy.
- **Motorcycle/Poker Run:** Work with fellow riders and local motorcycle clubs to plan this event where riders can ride through the community with a big party at the end.



DONATE YOUR SERVICES

- Earn \$ through **odd jobs:** Paint mail boxes, mow lawns, shovel snow, or babysit in exchange for a donation.
- **Car Wash:** Partner with a store to donate the buckets, sponges and soap and hold it in their parking lot.



COMMUNITY

- Partner with **local service groups** like Lions Clubs to raise money and educate the members. Ask for donations at their events like Bingo Nights.
- Make a presentation at your **place of worship** to raise awareness, recruit teammates and collect donations.
- **Get kids involved** with friends, at school, and through sports teams.
- Paint the town yellow and blue with **posters, brochures** and **flyers** about VisionWalk.
- **Partner with doctors** to get their staff and patients to create teams. They can also be great sponsors!

B I N G O				
7	25	44	57	62
15	22	40	50	70
11	30	FREE SPACE	46	74
2	28	37	55	68
10	27	39	59	75

FOOD FOOD FOOD!



- Have a **lemonade stand** in your neighborhood. You can sell muffins and cookies, too! Make posters and flyers so everyone knows their donation is going to a good cause.

• Many **restaurants** offer a % of their sales for one night to go toward a charity (Texas Roadhouse, TGIF, Applebees, Noodles).



- Have a **cookout** with all of your friends and charge a flat rate for each meal.
- Plan a neighborhood **Ice Cream Social**.
- Hold a **bake sale** at work.
- Host a **Potluck Lunch** at work or at home. Everyone brings a dish and pays a fee to eat.

FOR SALE!



- **Community Garage Sale:** Email friends, family, and coworkers to let them know you're having a sale and you will sell their stuff. This way you get more items and more variety at your sale. You can also sell water bottles, drinks and snacks to make some extra cash.

- Sell **sponsorships on your team t-shirts**—when asking for donations, tell your donors that \$50 (or more) will get their name on your team t-shirts.
- Sell **team wristbands, hats, t-shirts, etc.**
- **POP eyes:** Recruit stores, businesses, doctor offices and your school to sell POP eyes.



OFFER INCENTIVES TO DONATE

- Offer a **raffle** ticket for every \$25 donated to your team. Prizes can include gift cards, tickets, etc.
- Hold a **raffle for prizes.** Collect gift cards, baskets, etc. and sell raffle tickets (\$20 can get you an arm's length of tickets). An extra vacation day or prime parking spot are great company prizes!



INTERNET

- Put a link to your VisionWalk fundraising page on **Facebook**.
- Put a personal video on **YouTube**. Then put a link to the video and your fundraising page in an email.
- Use your **VisionWalk website** to personalize your page, upload your address book, send emails and track your progress toward your goal.
- **Virtual Team Members.** If someone can't join you on walk day, ask them to join your team and fundraise anyway. Tell them that you will walk for them!

facebook

If you have any questions or want to talk about your fundraising ideas, please contact Steve Sroka, Events Manager at SSroka@FightBlindness.org or 847-680-0100.

Personal Fundraising Events

Guidelines & Event Suggestions for Volunteers

Personal Fundraising Events (also known as wrap-around events or third-party events) are a fun and easy way for volunteers to support the Walk. In a nutshell, these events are planned, implemented, and paid for by volunteers with the proceeds applied toward their Walk fundraising efforts. Bake sales, bowling events, poker tournaments, garage sales, car washes, and jeans days are some very common and successful examples of these events, but more time and labor intensive events such as a wine tasting, spaghetti dinner, or an in-home Dining in the Dark can be especially lucrative.

On the following pages are some successful events that have been held in the past by Foundation volunteers which might be helpful to you when planning your own Personal Fundraising Event.

Casual for a Cause

If you look forward to the weekend – start it early with a casual day!

Event description: Casual for a Cause can be a great success in office situations and can be incorporated into an existing “Casual Day” or “Jeans Day.” Participants would pay a nominal fee (ex. \$1, \$3, \$5, etc.) to participate in Casual for a Cause day. Labels with the VisionWalk logo and “Casual for a Cause” should be given out to each participant. The labels can also be printed with the name and date of the VisionWalk on them. The lead volunteer would need to collect the money each week and send it in to the FFB office.

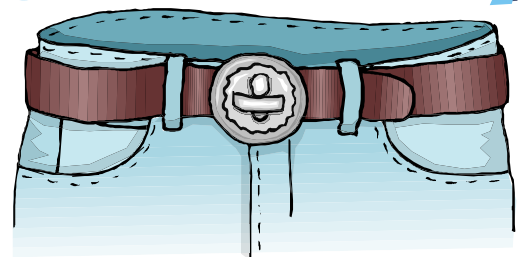
Estimated volunteer time involved: Very minimal, approximately 1 hour per week.

Potential expenses: Labels for the participants and flyers to advertise around the office.

Secrets to Success:

- Casual for a Cause has a greater impact when it is done for a few weeks in a row. Consider hosting Casual for a Cause once a week for the entire month of the VisionWalk.
- The lead volunteer should keep in mind that they may need to work with their management or Human Resources person to implement Casual for a Cause in their office.

Jeans Day



Car Wash

Perfect for sports teams and youth groups!

Event description: Offer a full-service car wash which includes exterior wash, windows cleaned, interior wiped, wheels and tires cleaned, and exterior hand-finished.

Estimated volunteer time involved: 12 hours prep time and time at the car wash.

Potential expenses: Soap, buckets, brushes, sponges, towels, hoses with spray nozzles, signs, Windex, tire cleaner.

Secrets to Success:

- Plan the date of the event at least one month or more ahead. Give your volunteers enough time so they can plan on being there.
- Sign up volunteers ahead of time and have shifts. Have as many people working as possible. The more people, the more cars that can be washed.
- Choose a location that is on a main street, easy to get to, and visible from the street. Fast-food restaurants and grocery store parking lots are usually great locations. Contact the manager at the location to set up your car wash date.
- In the parking lot where you hold your wash, set up a drive through lane. People drive their cars in a lane, pull up when it's their turn and the car is washed. They can pull over to another area for the volunteers to dry the car. This makes the process faster. Have someone directing cars where to park, and have two lanes if possible.
- Ask businesses to donate supplies or request donations from members of the group. This will allow people to help who would not otherwise be able to participate and the event makes more profit!
- Set a price! This takes the guesswork out of it for the customer. If you set a price, don't aim too high, you may still receive tips.
- Bring a tip jar and label it "tips are accepted."
- Let people know what you are raising money for. If people know the donation is for a good cause they will be encouraged to help.
- Wear your Walk t-shirt.

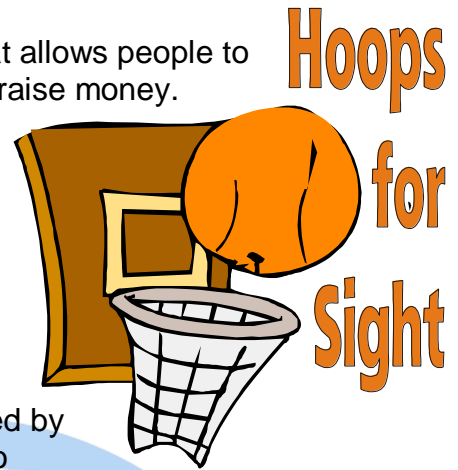
Secrets to success:

- Make sure there is an outside faucet and your hoses will reach.
- You need lots of volunteers with lots of energy to work a car wash.

Hoops for Sight

If you love to shoot hoops – this event is for you!

Event description: Hoops for Sight is a fundraising event that allows people to shoot foul shots (basketball) in a competitive atmosphere to raise money. Hoops for Sight raises money in a similar way to the Walk. There is no registration fee, but participants are encouraged to fundraise and get people to sponsor them in the foul shooting contest. The contest is broken down by age groups – elementary school, middle school, high school, adult, and senior citizen. The shooter who shoots the most foul shots in 10 minutes in their age group wins a prize.



Estimated volunteer time involved: This event was sponsored by the local Lions Club. They held an informational meeting two months in advance to get the word out. They also ran an article in the local newspaper and had it listed in the calendar. They enlisted other Lions Clubs in the area to participate and a local church. The event ran from 10 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. on a Saturday and the volunteers were there about two hours in advance for set up and stayed about an hour after for clean up. They also enlisted the local Kohl's store to provide volunteers and in return received \$500.

Potential expenses: Cost to print sponsorship forms, cost to mail letters and flyers announcing the event, water and crackers or granola bars for participants, and prizes (if not donated).

Secrets to success:

- The local Lioness Club also participated by holding a bake sale and all proceeds went to the event.
- They were able to get the gym donated by the local community center and the woman in charge of the community center volunteered her time to help run the basketball contest.
- The event got a matching gift from an affected child's father's company. Encouraging matching gifts brings in extra money.

Things to keep in mind:

- Permits – you may need one depending on where the event is being held
- Volunteer needs – you need at least 10-12 volunteers the day of the event.
- Participants – the greater participation you receive, the more money you will raise. Try to advertise this event to as many organizations, businesses, and local Lions Clubs as possible.

Happy Hour

Toast a good cause!

Event description: A happy hour fundraiser can be coordinated any day of the week at your favorite hot spot from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Most bars have adopted their own format to support charity fundraisers such as these so you should talk to the bar's manager. Typical formats for happy hour events may include:

Happy Hour



- Flat cover charge or “suggested donation” of \$10 or more for two hours of reduced or free drinks. Participants receive a wristband to indicate to the bartender that they are with the happy hour party.
- Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and drink specials, with a portion or percentage of the proceeds to benefit the Foundation.
- Half price beer, wine, and liquor specials with a portion or percentage of the proceeds to benefit the Foundation.

From there, all you will need to do is set a date and spread the word! Promote the event far and wide to family, friends, co-workers, sports team members, neighbors, etc – the more the merrier! Use social networking sites like Facebook and Myspace to give your event a viral marketing boost. Free sites such as Evite also allow you to invite those in your address book, track attendee responses, and encourage others to invite their friends too.

A volunteer in Long Island named her happy hour event, Rock for Sight. Held on a Saturday evening at a local bar with live music, drinks, auction/raffle and hot pretzels, this event raised more than \$5,000. Guests who attended the event were friends of the host volunteer and Long Island Chapter members. Tickets were sold at the door for \$20 person. While drinks were not free, all money raised through that cover charge were donated to the Foundation.

Estimated volunteer time involved: 5 hours or more, depending upon how many components your event will have such as live entertainment.

Potential expenses:

- Wristbands to indicate who has paid to participate in the happy hour special
- Posters

Secrets to success:

- Promote your event through social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace.
- Take advantage of free online invitation through Evite.
- Ask your host bar to hang posters in their windows, inside the bar, and restrooms.

VisionRide

If you are a member of a local motorcycle club – this event is for you!

Event description: Motorcycle ride that takes place in conjunction with or to benefit a VisionWalk. VisionWalk Las Vegas raised \$700 with 60 riders.

Estimated volunteer time involved: 12 hours

Potential Expenses: T-shirts, bandanas, Save-the-Date postcards or flyers

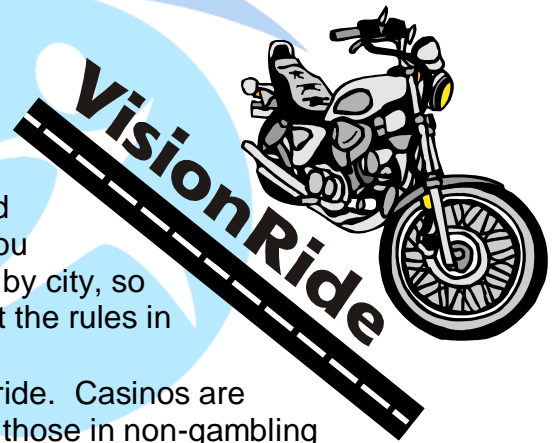
- Example: Motorcyclists have to wear their leathers to ride, but we want them to have something visual showing that they are riding for the Walk. Bandanas with the logo are great, as well as providing Team t-shirts.

Secrets to success:

- Get in touch with other local motorcycle clubs. You can do this by visiting a local motorcycle dealership. Ask them to map the route. Everyone should already be individually insured and as long as there are less than 100 riders you don't need to contact the police. This can vary by city, so be sure to speak to your local shop and find out the rules in your area before proceeding.
- Consider having a Poker Run instead of just a ride. Casinos are great for this, but any venue can participate for those in non-gambling environments.

Things to keep in mind:

- Separate registration and parking (or just section off a part of the lot) from the main VisionWalk registration will be needed.
- 4 volunteers are needed at motorcycle registration
 1. Money collector
 2. T-shirt (or gift) distributor
 3. Waiver enforcer/collector
 4. Traffic director (bikes park in separate area)



Dining in the Dark ... at Home

Experience an unforgettable dining event in the comfort of your own home!

Event description: Host a dark dining dinner party in the comfort of your own home by blacking out windows and doors and eating dinner in the dark. In addition to giving your guests a peek into the unfamiliar world of blindness, you can raise funds to support your VisionWalk team.

Estimated volunteer time involved: 8-12 hours leading up to the day of the dinner to recruit guests and plan logistics, and four hours the day of the event.

Potential expenses: black out paper (packaging paper), dark drapes, blinding/sleeping masks, table clothes, food, and beverages.

Secrets to Success:

- Plan the date of the dinner three to six weeks prior to the Walk. It will be a great opportunity to bump up your fundraising total and inspire your guests to join your team as well as fundraise.
- Invite 10-25 guests (as many as you can accommodate) through paper invitations and/or a fun Evite. You should invite family members, colleagues, neighbors, and friends who would be interested in supporting your efforts and joining your team.
- You will want to monitor your Evite responses and call all potential guests to recruit them to join you. This is an awesome experience and we want as many people there as your house will hold.
- Ask every guest to donate \$20-\$100 to the dinner.
- Plan a meal that is full of different textures and tastes. And remember, lots of people will eat with their fingers so it is helpful to have food people can pick up. The menu may include a first course of salad; main entrée of chicken or beef tips, green beans or peas, risotto or pasta; and dessert.
- You don't need a fancy décor. Instead, you should try to black-out any windows with dark drapes or packaging paper. If you can't make the room dark (test it in advance), you can buy cheap sleeping masks at your local drug store for guests to wear and turn lights out in the room. This will reduce outside light and strengthen the impact of the evening.
- You can either serve the entire meal or just the main course of the evening in complete darkness. We recommend eating in the dark for 20-30 minutes.
- After dinner, encourage guests to share their experience with each other. It should be a very rich discussion.
- Don't forget to ask all your guests to join your VisionWalk team or make an additional donation before they leave at the end of the night.
- Enjoy!

We've outlined some events that have worked with a lot of success across the country. Please see the tips (below) for event success.

- Raffles are complicated – Don't do it!
 - Mailing raffle tickets, checks for purchase of raffle tickets, etc. is illegal
 - Winners may need to receive a W-2G (gaming winnings) from FFB
 - Many jurisdictions require a raffle permit and post raffle reporting
 - Believe it or not, 50/50 raffles often aren't legal

- Sweepstakes are a great alternative, but still tricky
 - No purchase necessary, each state has different rules
 - If you are in Florida, Rhode Island or New York, check with your attorney general
 - Winners may need to receive a W-2G (gaming winnings) from FFB

- Be aware of personal liability you may be taking on
 - Best not to have beer, wine or liquor available
 - Sometime fun is risky, like moon bounces

- If donors at your event want a tax deduction, we need to know if they got something in return
 - Auction item, dinner, etc.
 - Check must be made out to FFB; On-line credit card processing required

- Suggested wording for your activity
 - "Proceeds to be used to support Jane's Participation in the Foundation Fighting Blindness' VisionWalk"