

## **Chapter and Council Fundraising**

Fundraising is one of the core functions of both chapters and councils. Volunteer leaders are finding it more important than ever to raise funds for work on their home waters. TU staff is trying to meet this demand for funding by providing increased fundraising support and funding alternatives for the entire organization's important work. TU also has development professionals who, on a very limited basis, can assist chapters in identifying local grants.

### **Banquets**

Many chapters and councils raise money by hosting a fundraising banquet or special event. These events usually involve an auction and/or raffle of fishing tackle and other products. Holding a banquet or special event is one way your chapter can recruit new members, receive recognition for its work, and raise money for its operations. TU provides a list of resources to help chapters purchase auction/raffle items at discounted prices. Items from this list are available for order online in [the Fundraising Program](#) at any time of year.

### **Raffles**

It's important to remember raffles can raise important legal issues. Councils and chapters need to be aware of those issues to avoid legal problems. Always check with your state's secretary of state and attorney general to make sure the raffle that your chapter is planning complies with your state's laws and with any applicable local laws. Moreover, do not sell raffle tickets to someone outside of your state either through the mail or over the Internet. Doing so may violate federal law and the laws of some states. It is better to take the time to check your state's law before conducting a raffle than to run into problems later.

### **Embrace-a-Stream**

[Embrace-A-Stream \(EAS\)](#) is the flagship grant program for funding TU's grassroots conservation efforts. Since its inception in 1975, EAS has funded over 980 individual projects for a total of more than \$4 million in direct cash grants. Local TU chapters and councils contributed an additional \$13 million in cash and in-kind services to EAS funded projects for a total investment of more than \$17 million. In 2011, EAS funded 25 projects in 15 states, with an average grant award of \$5,000. Chapters and councils are asked to submit proposals for conservation projects that best dress the needs of native and wild trout following TU's protect, reconnect, restore and sustain conservation model.

### **Institutional Grants**

Applying for corporate, foundation, and government grants requires developing a good project and budget; identifying funders whose missions are consistent with your project; and preparing a grant application. Most corporations and foundations can provide you with written materials describing their philanthropic mission, grant making history, and grant application criteria and procedures. It is essential to review this information and, in many cases, submit a letter of inquiry to determine if your project is a good fit with the funder's priorities. It is generally not a good idea to submit a formal grant proposal without contacting the funder beforehand. If you are targeting any national funders, please first contact TU national's development department in order to avoid duplicate or competing grant requests.

### **Chapter/ Council Donations**

Local organizations often will support TU projects and activities that take place in their communities. Chapters might try approaching banks, civic organizations like the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, teacher's associations, and community foundations. When researching large national companies, identify those that have operating divisions in your community and approach the local divisions. Many organizations also will provide donations of goods and services including equipment for stream restoration projects, paper and printing for chapter newsletters, computer equipment, technical and legal expertise, and advertising. When approaching local organizations, emphasize the broader benefits of your project, including, greater public involvement, outreach to schoolchildren, and economic benefits. Chapters and councils might also propose ways for involving employees and members of community organizations in the project.

The largest source of charitable giving in the United States, private individuals, is not tapped to its fullest potential. Personal appeals are often the best way to solicit funds from an individual. An appeal might

take the form of a letter, a personal meeting, or a formal presentation. TU volunteers should be able to answer the following questions before soliciting potential donors:

- What is the individual's specific interest in TU?
- Does the prospective donor contribute to any other causes?
- Who should approach the prospect for a gift and how much should be requested?

When recognizing your donors—whether they are individuals or institutions—tailor the acknowledgment to the donor. Some funders may request anonymity; others will want to be recognized publicly. Always send a written thank-you letter promptly and be sure to get permission before making any formal announcements. Remember to keep precise financial records and honor grant reporting requirements.

### **Membership Rebate Programs**

TU's rebate programs coincide with our fiscal year, which runs October 1 through September 30. Both new member rebates and year end rebates are issued once a year around January/February. Funds are delivered via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to chapter and council bank accounts. If your chapter or council bank routing information is not on file with TU, please contact Volunteer Operations staff. If a chapter doesn't have EFT information on file with TU, Volunteer Operations staff will try and contact chapter leaders to get this information for a two week period of time. After that point, the rebate will be sent to the chapter's council.

New Member Rebate: issued via EFT to a chapter's bank account

Year End Rebate: issued via EFT to a council's bank account

Rebates are paid out only to chapters and councils that have filed their annual financials. The deadline for filing is November 15 each year. It is up to the council to disseminate year end rebate to their local chapters, if the council so chooses.

The New Member Rebate is given to chapters who recruit new members via [www.tu.org/intro](http://www.tu.org/intro) or the Chapter Add Spreadsheet. This is how TU knows a member was actively recruited by a chapter. To receive proper credit for this rebate, the new member must select your chapter when joining online at [www.tu.org/intro](http://www.tu.org/intro), or your chapter's 3-digit chapter # must be written on the Chapter Add Spreadsheet. This rebate is not for lapsed or expired members who rejoin/renew to TU.

If a new member joins at \$17.50 introductory rate, the chapter receives \$15 for new member rebate. If a new member joins at a higher membership level, the higher the New Member Rebate. For example, the Family/Contributor level of \$50 will give back at \$20 rebate to the chapter. A Sponsor level of \$100 will give back \$30 to the chapter.

| <u>Member Type</u> | <u>Dues Level</u> | <u>Rebate Level</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Special Intro      | \$17.50           | \$15                |
| Family             | \$55              | \$20                |
| Sponsor            | \$100             | \$30                |
| Conservator        | \$250             | \$50                |
| OGB                | \$295             | \$50                |
| Life               | \$1,200           | \$150               |
| Family Life        | \$1,300           | \$160               |

The Year End Rebate was designed to help councils and chapter pay for the costs of servicing their members with quality, local communications. TU provides this annual rebate to councils based on total active membership at the end of TU's fiscal year, contingent on the council and all its active chapters filing the annual financial report by November 15th.

TU defines active members as those dues paying members that have an expiration date of October 1 or later of that particular year. Trial members do not count as active. And rebates are not paid out for Stream Explorer (youth) members. When the rebates have been calculated (after the close of the fiscal year,) the council chair will receive a spreadsheet showing the break-down of membership by chapter. Each active

council will receive \$2.50 per active member. In many cases, councils segment this rebate into \$1.50 per member for the council and \$1.00 per member for the chapter that serves that member. It is up to the council to determine what works best for each state.