



FUNDRAISING IDEAS FOR ALTERNATIVE BREAK PROGRAMS

Already Prepared Fundraisers

Candy Sales

There are national and regional companies which already have products packaged to sell as a fundraiser. These companies have prizes and profits for the group developed into a system. Many campus groups already have some sort of pre-developed fundraiser; therefore, you may be competing with other groups as you offer similar products to the campus over and over. This might inspire product sales or it might make it more difficult.

Coupon Book Sales/Discount Cards

Similar to candy sales, there are national and regional companies that offer discounts for products, entertainment and dining. Again these companies have prizes for top salespeople and profits for the group developed into a system. Some schools have worked directly with local businesses to create their own discount cards (and build unique partnerships) that they print and sell directly to students. Having a student bookstore on the discount card can dramatically increase your sales.

Credit Card Application Booths

Credit Card companies are always in search of new consumers. Many credit card companies set up booths during various campus/community events. They also provide opportunities for student groups to garner some money from this effort through donations or sign-up fees.

Drive-in Movie Theatre

There are several campus activity groups that actually bring portable drive-in theatre equipment. You could charge a cover especially if student activities brings the group to campus.

Gourmet Coffee Sale (Even better...use fair trade coffee...see [Oxfam America](#) for more details)

Auctions

Casino Night

You can have your own casino night by allowing individuals to gamble with monopoly money they receive for paying an entrance fee at the start of the evening. The "gamblers" will use this money to purchase prizes donated by the community. You can make this exciting by mixing up how the prizes are auctioned off. ("Big prizes" or "little prizes" may come up for auction at any time).

Date Auction

Just like the old dating game. First you need several willing "dates". The dinner and movie could be donated by local businesses. The bidding could draw a bit of attention to your program through the school media as well as curious bystanders.

Get to Know You Auction

Point people developing this project should collect donated items from faculty and staff based on their perspective interests, hobbies and talents. For example, there might be a Dean who plays tennis who might donate a tennis game, or perhaps having dinner for four at the President's house, or auctioning off the first place for registration or residence hall assignments. Students are often looking to connect with the faculty and staff more at any school.

Individual Auction

This type of auction allows you to "sell" an individual for a specific purpose and amount of time. For example, someone might have to carry the books or clean the room of someone who purchased their services.

Silent Auction

A Silent Auction is where a group of individuals bid on items/prizes which have been gathered in the name of the organization and its mission. In order to be a bidder, participants will have to pay an entrance charge. The bidders acknowledge their bid through body language such as hand or head signals or through raising prepared placards. For this type of auction you will need someone to be a caller.

Student/Professor

This type of auction could allow students to bid on the services of professors or professors bid on the services of students. This can be as varied as cleaning up the office, doing yard work or helping with data entry. Again, the money is collected through the bidding process as long as individuals are willing to donate their time and effort.

Dinner & Candlelight & Music

100 Men Who Can Cook!

If you can find the men to participate, this can be a lucrative fundraiser. One alternative break program had men from the area cook a variety of dishes and sold tickets to the food festival.

Band Night/Battle of the Bands

This is another way to connect with the campus and local community through providing a musical event and charging admission to it. This gives exposure to musical talent and helps to fund the alternative break program at the same time. Keep in mind that you need a big enough space to hold the event as well as an arrangement with campus activities. One school's theme for an event such as this was "Think Globally...Jam Locally."

Open Mic Night

This is a great way to utilize the talents of your participants or the campus as a whole. Host a campus wide event on the lawn or in an auditorium where students can come and perform their specific talents.

Spoken Word

Another way to draw on the talent of your campus, is to host a spoken word night. Charge admission (and for snacks) and allow people to become immersed in verse.

Donations/In-Kind Support

Alumni Association

Often times by working with your college or university's alumni office volunteer efforts such as the alternative break program can have access to alumnus donations. Perhaps your office will allow your group to solicit alumnus directly or they may be able to include your program in their donation materials sent out to alumnus. Each school's office of Alumni Affairs have specific regulations and policies so it will be necessary to check into these procedures first.

Penny Wars

This is plain and simple collecting change donations for your alternative break program. Have participants cut water bottles in half to collect loose change. Perhaps having it site or issue related would draw out more donations from a specific portion of your campus.

Community Civic Clubs

Work with Rotary, Elks, Masons, Kiwanis, the Lions Club, etc. to see if they would be willing to give scholarships to individuals. As a way of thanking them, host an event to share pictures and stories about your experience.

Frequent Flyer Miles

If your alternative break program flies to some of its sites; consider working with local airlines to have individuals and businesses donate extra frequent flyer miles to your participants. Some programs have been successful in skipping this step...getting airlines to donate tickets directly!

Individual Donation Slips

This type of fundraiser requires participants to be responsible for sending out brochures explaining the program with donation slips to friends and family.

Letters to Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff members are more often quite willing to donate their time and money to student groups on campus; especially when they are affecting the community. Target the faculty and staff with letters detailing your program and allowing them to donate based on a variety of options such as site, issue and possibly even student. Definitely take the time to check with your school to review any regulations there may be concerning this type of fundraising effort.

Places of Worship

Many times they are willing to help an individual to participate in such a trip. Also contact local entities, as they might also be willing to help.

Student Government/Student Affairs

Being able to make a proposal for funding from the Student Affairs or Student Government Association of your campus can be a very important element of funding for your alternative break program. Sometimes being listed as a registered student organization will allow your program to apply for funding through these avenues.

Donate A Dinner

This fundraiser is a great way to raise awareness of your program in addition to generating a lot of money very quickly (most schools have earned thousands of dollars through this fundraiser). Partner with your campus food service to enable students to donate unused meals from their weekly meal plans. Your organization would then receive a certain amount of cash (generally around \$3 or \$4) for every meal that is donated. Get a

bunch of folks from your program to solicit meals from other students...and it's even more effective when you ask them to donate meals for a week in which they're normally out of town anyway (the week of Thanksgiving or Spring Break for instance).

Food

Bagel & Coffee Morning

Have a campus/community breakfast where local businesses can donate the coffee and bagels or the alternative break program can purchase them for a minimal price. Host this breakfast for a small charge or donation. This event can also be site specific or issue related.

Cookbooks

Create a cookbook from ASB participants and family recipes. You could also include recipes specific to the region or community your alternative break program will be working in. Charge a small amount to cover the development of the book as well as to provide profit for the ASB budget.

Donut Sale

This is a great, quick way to make money on your campus as people stumble to class in the early morning. You can either develop a deal with the local donut shop or buy the donuts and sell them on campus.

Fasting

At some schools it is possible to donate the money which would pay for your meals in your meal plan to a specific cause or group. Check with your meal plan office to see how you can develop a partnership.

Hunger Banquet

This is a fundraising event in which a large portion of the campus can take part as well as provide some hands-on educational information. Individuals pay a certain amount of money and then are assigned a country status such as "developed" or "underdeveloped nations." Students eat according to the status they have been assigned. For example, a representative of an underdeveloped nation might eat rice while a representative of a developed nation might eat steak. Oxfam has specific information on how to organize a hunger banquet. .

Luau

A thematic event in which you can invite a large part of the campus and charge admission for the tropical atmosphere and food.

Roast a Pig

Have a pig roast over an open fire. Charge a specific amount of money to the campus community or ask for a donation.

Spaghetti Dinner

Plan for a big dinner inviting large portions of the campus and community. Charge an admission or donation price. This can be a very profitable event due to the inexpensive preparation cost.

Late Night Snack

Offer grilled cheese sandwiches outside of the residence halls as people are coming back from their evening activities. This is an inexpensive way to get people to donate when they are hungry and tired after a late night out.

Games of Chance

Raffles

A raffle is a very basic fundraising technique that relies on selling tickets with the chance of winning a prize or series of prizes. Local businesses or community members can donate the prizes or the prize itself may be sharing in the cash pot created by the raffle tickets. A twist on this idea is to have participants sell a mandatory amount of tickets. Make sure to check with your school before beginning a raffle project.

Grants

Contact the Airlines

To see if they would be willing to give you a discount for flying as a group. Many airlines would like to build a partnership with a program that agrees to send all of their international trips through their airline year after year.

Letters to Locals

Addressing local community businesses and companies is a powerful way to garner direct monetary and in-kind support. An effort such as this may require some training in developing letters of inquiry. An important element to include in letters to businesses is

that the donation is tax deductible. In addition, make sure that you can provide them with a receipt for that donation. A twist on this idea is to allow businesses to adopt-a-site or issue for their donation.

Adopt-A-Breaker

Many schools have been successful in adapting the "Letters to Locals" idea to friends and family as well. Basically, you have participants write to friends, family, and anyone else that they know, asking them to "adopt" them or other students during their alternative break. Send a card or flyer detailing the projects that their breaker will be involved with and promise to have the breaker send a card or letter from the site during their experience. Adopted breakers should also give some sort of presentation after their alternative break experience. You can also offer options for people to donate directly to a site or to the program as a whole.

Training to Write Letters

Enlisting the help of others on your campus and community to help train your executive board or participants in writing grants is a necessary element of your fundraising program. Writing grants and letters of inquiry have been successful for alternative break programs in the past. Sometimes it just takes some encouragement and training for individuals to ask for bigger sums of money or in-kind donations.

Holiday

Valentine's Day

Holidays are always great times to have fundraisers around. For example, during Valentine's Day work a deal with the local florist to sell flowers for campus members to send to other campus members. Remember that you will need someone to pick up the flowers, staff the booth where people write their messages, and people to deliver the flowers.

Student Care Packages

Especially during the first week of classes or during major exam periods, some programs have been successful in sending care packages including candy and other treats to students. They send letters to the parents of the students, especially freshman, who purchase the care packages as a surprise gift for their child. You can make the care packages yourself or work directly with national companies that already have this fundraising program setup for you.

Partnerships

Bookstore Sponsorship

Work with your local college bookstore or bookstores to have a day or series of days in which your alternative break program can receive a percentage of profits from sales. It is a great way to get your friends and fellow campus members to buy books on a specific day.

Business Partnership

A great way to partner is with local businesses and companies through in-kind support or percentage of profit donation. For example, have a popular local hang-out donate a percentage of their cover charge on a certain day that will be donated to the alternative break program. Another example might be to have a percentage of certain products or a day's sales of a grocery store go to the program. They might also be able to donate food for your trip or help support the purchase of your program t-shirts.

Partner with Another Grant Recipient

Oftentimes, there are opportunities to develop a grant partnership with other groups on campus which may be involved with your alternative break program's social issues. Always take note of what groups on your campus may have similar missions and goals so as to be aware of a possible sharing of resources.

T-Shirt Business Partner

Develop a partnership with local businesses to sponsor your t-shirts for some publicity on the shirt itself or in some other aspect of your alternative break program. It is a great way to give visual recognition to businesses working for the community. In addition, if your college or university's student identification can be used as a campus charge card you might persuade more students to invest initially.

Self Sacrifice

Laundry

Charge to wash student's laundry. Make sure you have enough participants and initial money to buy supplies.

Plasma Donation

Enough said...

Psychology experiments

Check with your school's psychology department about possible opportunities.

Sports Related

Charity Sporting Events

Connect with the campus by providing a sporting tournament where you charge admission for participants. You could also work the concession stands for the event.

Shoot the Hoops Tournament

This is a great way to use your school's sporting program to earn some money for your alternative break program. Individuals can pay an entrance fee to have some sort of shooting contest during the half or end of a game.

Running Events

Appeal to the local running enthusiasts on your campus and in your community to be a part of a sponsorship race for your program. A unique twist might have the finish line be the campus sporting facility at the end or beginning of a game. It is always a motivator to have thousands of people screaming and yelling for you.

Tried and True

Bake Sale

The basic all-purpose fundraiser! First, you need to acquire baked goods through either participant cooks or local businesses or campus food services. Then you need to have booths in well-traveled areas of the campus. One suggestion that was offered was to have donations instead of prices because people are likely to donate more than pay a specific price for an item.

Car Wash

This dependable event places a bunch of people together to wash cars by hand. You could charge a specific amount or ask for donations. It is important to have this type of event in a well trafficked part of your community or campus. Sometimes local businesses will let you use their water sources.

Garage Sale/Rummage Sale

Have participants dig into their dorm rooms or ask their family members to donate for the sale. This is also a great way to get faculty and staff involved with the program as they

donate for the sale. It will be necessary to have the event in a well traveled area and have the appropriate amount of volunteers to staff the sale.

Miscellaneous

Accounting & Taxes

Perhaps you can draw on the expertise of the participants in your program or appeal to your school's business department in general. You can have students with accounting and tax skills provide consultation for Federal and State taxes to the campus and community at a minimal charge.

"A" Thons

Hold events in which people pledge a certain amount of money for a specific cause or individual involved with the cause. Some examples include a Bowl "a" thon or a Walk "a" thon.

Business Inventory

Local businesses and companies will have times during the year in which they will need help with their inventory. This is a great way for a group to make some money in a short amount of time. There might also be departments or stores that are part of your campus which might provide this opportunity as well.

Campus Recycling

Another way to get involved on the campus is through the recycling program in existence or developing a program from scratch. It would probably require some part-time volunteers for part or all of the year to clean out bins and take the recyclables to the local recycling plant. Because it might be a way to earn money throughout the year, this type of fundraiser could sustain efforts for pre and post break as well as the next year's program. It is also a tremendous possibility to partner with other groups on campus or in the community.

Carnival/Opportunity Fair

Develop and plan a carnival which can be thematic, issue related or just a carnival with clowns, face painting, games etc... This is also something you can do in partnership with a local community agency. You can charge an entrance fee for the event.

Local Events

This is a great way to use the community around you as well as your campus. Sometimes theme parks, concessions and clean-up opportunities are offered to the community in

exchange for donation or payment. Check with local sporting facilities, theme parks and your own campus sporting program.

Dunking Booth/Photo Booth

You can rent these types of facilities or perhaps even have them donated for use. Your alternative break program can collect the money or a percentage of the money based on the relationship developed with the rental company.

Face Painting

You can do this at carnivals or before sporting events to add to the spirit of sports fans. Charging a minimal fee and enlisting the talent of program participants is a must for this type of fundraiser.

Greek Week

This might be another way to enlist help from the Greek community on your campus. During Greek Week, have party proceeds or a portion of those proceeds go to funding the alternative break program. This might also be a way to develop a new partnership or recruit from a segment of the campus you might not have already drawn from.

Green - Up Day

This is a day where ASB participants can work for the campus to clean up yards, mow, rake and clean up trash for donations. This can be a campus-wide event in which the donations benefit the ASB Program. It might also be a great way to partner with environmental groups on campus or in the community.

Jail and Bail

This event requires setting up a "jail cell" somewhere on your campus. The next step will be having campus members pay money to have people "arrested" and put in jail. Volunteer police will then take the suspect individual into custody. The "prisoner" then must come up with a pre-determined amount of bail money by using a telephone and the phone book. There are a number of twists you can put on this idea, however, one of the key facets to the success of this event is publicity.

Kiss the "animal"

This is a great way for students to donate money towards your alternative break program in the name of their favorite faculty or staff member. The individual with the most donations gets to kiss the "animal" whether it's a pig, horse or the school mascot.

Mocktail Party

This can be a great way to connect with a discussion concerning the alcohol policy of your alternative break program as well as partner with your campus peer educators or BACCHUS representatives. At a mocktail party, people get a chance to mix and partake of non-alcoholic beverages. This alternative party is a great way to bring in money as if people were paying for drinks. It is necessary to reserve space for this event, acquire the materials for the mocktails including glasses and utensils.

Money Tree

This is where a "tree" is set up in a well-trafficked part of the campus. A table is set up next to the tree where people can donate \$1 to place a "homemade buck" on the tree. As the tree becomes more decorated people will be able to see an actual goal and be more motivated to donate money.

Non-Events

A non-event is just what it suggests: an event which will not happen. The first step is to print a fancy invitation about a formal black-tie event. After describing the fancy non-event then you can ask for a donation based on what individuals would have to do to get ready for the event. For example, attendees would have to buy a dress or rent a tux, get a haircut etc... Therefore, through making a donation they only have to pay a portion of what they would originally have to do in order to attend.

Paper Airplane Contest

A one time campus event where ASB participants and others from the campus create paper airplanes. Before the event, ASB Participants collect pledges for their favorite paper airplane. You can have winners in different categories such as design, distance, and style in flight. You can charge an entry fee or have donations to support each participant.

Parking Cars for Events

Perhaps your campus or the community host events in which cars need to be parked or where they need "staff" to usher vehicles into appropriate parking spots. Participants will earn money usually in an hourly or daily manner. Students can donate the money individually or the host of the event can make a payment to the alternative break program as a whole.

Shave your Head

Definitely a fundraiser for the willing and able. This type of activity requires people with hair, a lot of hair, or people that feel strongly about their hair. Then it takes your ultimate persuasion skills as an alternative breaker to convince individuals to shave their head in public. Campus members make donations for the "potential head shavers" in a competitive manner. If you can get some professors involved, it might be a way to really

dig into the deepest depths of some college student and other faculty and staff member's pocket. The representative with the most donations must follow through with shaving his or her head in a public forum.

Twister Tournament

This is basically a twister tournament in which teams post an entrance fee to see who can survive the tournament the longest. You definitely need a lot of twister games or a very talented art department. The materials for this can be created by the alternative break program at minimal cost. The winner of the tournament might get a portion of the total money pot or some other specifically designated prize.

Tuck-Ins

A tuck-in is where campus members can donate or pay money to have Fraternity, Sorority or alternative break participants tuck them in and maybe even read them a bedtime story.

Car Show

This is a great way to connect with not only your campus but also the surrounding communities. Charging admission, hosting concessions and providing parking can be one way to fundraise for this sort of idea.