

## **Sample Fund Raising letter #1**

This is a letter written by a District officer and distributed to District Toastmasters. The concept of “sponsoring a member” is a neat approach and one that most people can readily understand. Its like being a foster parent, or supporting a child in an impoverished country. The letter can be accompanied by a photo of prison members and a commitment to have a letter of thanks written by the sponsored member. If possible, send the donor a photo of the sponsored person with a thank you letter written by the sponsored individual. For confidentiality purposes, it should be clear to the donor that the letter will be forwarded by you and not sent directly by the inmate.

Toastmasters,

Help Division D expand Toastmasters in the correctional facilities in the southern portion of District 25. Gatesville (near Waco) has 7 units. There is one club in one unit. Help Division D establish clubs in the other units to help those who cannot attend outside clubs become better leaders and communicators so they may become productive members of society.

Those participating in the toastmasters club in correctional facilities have no money. The facility will allow a club to meet, but provides no financial support. Ask your friends or family or any organization to which you belong to sponsor a member/members.

Reach into your heart and sponsor a member, or two, or several. Send any amount you desire. Those toastmasters will be forever in your debt.

Thank you.

## Sample Fund Raising letter #2

This letter to friends was written by a Taking Flight Advisory Director to help start a club. Friends and relatives are a good source for donations – but often we don't want to put them on the spot and avoid asking for their help. Picture your donation request in a positive light. Think in terms of giving people an opportunity to do what they want to do.

Americans are a generous people and genuinely want to help others. For most, its not a matter of whether or not to donate money, its more a matter of which charity to support and how much to give. You can tell them how prison Toastmasters helps build stronger families, how it helps an inmate turn from being a social pariah to being a social contributor, how it costs \$50 to sponsor a prison member but \$17,000 to re-imprison someone who has turned back to crime, tell them how 100% of the donations will be spent on education and training, tell them how you are involved, tell them ...

Dear Friends,

I'm writing to ask for your help to make a special project come to fruition.

Taking Flight is a non-profit organization that introduces, organizes, and supports Toastmasters Club in minimum, medium, and maximum security prisons. This provides a very effective training to help inmates build confidence and improve their communication skills. We have witnessed them turn their lives around by securing jobs and more easily integrate into the community with these new skills.

We have been asked to help start a club in a Gatesville prison (just outside of Temple, TX). Gatesville is a prison for young women. The longest term served in Gatesville is about 3-4 years. I'm sure you can see where this kind of communication skills training will be especially invaluable for these young women. There are already many inmates who have registered to join the club. However, we need funding to cover the costs and supplies.

I would like to ask for your help in making this possible. Your tax deductible donation will be greatly appreciated. Please make your check payable to "Toastmasters" and send it in my care to:

Thank you in advance for your willingness to make a positive difference in the lives of these young women! It means so much to them that people care about what happens to them and whose generosity will bring about a more productive and brighter future.

Sincerely,

### **Sample Fund Raising letter #3**

The following letter is typical of the standard annual Taking Flight fund raising letter. Usually the contain some news on program status, some information on plans, and a request for help. A copy of an inmate's speech is usually included with the letter.

Dear Supporter of Taking Flight - Prison Toastmasters,

During 2003, we continued our involvement with the club at Gist jail. We graduated 80 members and were visited by 20 free-world people. We completed start-up of a women's prison club in Montana and are currently developing clubs in New Hampshire and Indonesia.

From my perspective, our most important accomplishment was enlargement of the Taking Flight board of directors and development of its infrastructure. Once completed, we will be able to more actively promote the Prison Toastmasters concept and increase the rate of club formation.

At this point, we need to ask for your help to continue with program expansion and stability. If you would like to help by giving your time, we could use people to visit prison meetings as a show of support, or to help with publicity, networking, and fund raising. If you are not able to give your time perhaps you could help with a tax deductible contribution. \$5 covers the cost of a basic speech manual, \$25 covers all training expenses for one person for one year. \$50 covers expenses for one person for one year in the advanced speakers program.

Sincerely yours,

## Sample Fund Raising letter #4

This a copy of Taking Flight's most recent fund raising letter:

Dear,

An article in a recent issue of Fortune magazine asked this question.

“Why do people continue to give millions of dollars to universities that already have millions of dollars.”

I think the answer is simple. We all want to be associated with success.

When we give money to successful universities or similar organizations, we do so with the hope, and perhaps some confidence, that the money will be used to continue or create still more successful activities.

That is why I'd like to give you an opportunity to experience the joy, and success, your contribution has created.

The wonderful speech, “The Choice”, was given by an inmate in one of the Toastmaster Clubs your contributions have helped organize. I thought you would find this message particularly meaningful during this Joyful Christmas Season.

It is not hard to figure out why we, and I include myself, simply pay “lip service” to those activities that have a noble purpose, but do not generate evidence of great success. No one wants to just “throw money at a problem that can't be fixed.”

With that in mind, I know you will be pleased that your contributions and support for our activities have generated such success and have earned the respect of those who see the men and women in the prison community first hand.

We know that there are many worthy organizations asking for support at this time of year, however, we'd like you to look seriously at the impact your contribution has and the success rate of our participants. If you find that the odds are in favor of still greater success, we ask you to continue providing your substantial financial support.

You can be assured that your funds will bring new meaning to the word success.

May you be Joyfully Blessed in the New Year.

## Attachment to Fund Raising Letter 4

In 2003, the average cost of housing a prisoner was \$17,000.

There were roughly 2 million+ prisoners in 2003.

Over 95% of all inmates will be released to society.

67.5% of all released inmates are rearrested within 3 years of release  
and 52% return to prison.

*In its first five years at the C. Paul Phelps Correctional Center, only one of 80 inmates released after participating in a Toastmasters program was re-arrested."*

**District Judge Robert Downing**

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

*"This is exactly the type of program that should be in every TDCJ unit and made available to those interested in replacing their negative lifestyle with a positive self-image."*

**Judge Larry Gist**

**Chairman Texas Board of Criminal Justice Judicial Advisory Council**

The cost to charter a prison club is \$100.

The cost for individual participation

ranges from \$5 per six months to \$25 per six months depending on specifics of the program.

Many participants remain in the club for one year.

**Please Make Checks Payable To:**

TakingFlight, Inc.

**Mailing Address:**

P. O. Box 2161

Orange, Texas 77631

**Taking Flight is a 501.c3 corporation. Your Contribution to TakingFlight is tax deductible.**

I'd like to make a major gift. Please Contact Me.

I'd like to become a volunteer. Please Send Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_