



LCU

SUPPORT RAISING

HELP GUIDE

LCU Student Help Guide for Support Raising

This guide is intended to help you successfully walk in relationship with those whom the Lord has put around you as you aim to fulfill God's Kingdom vision for your life. We're confident you'll be surprised by the number of people that would love to support you financially in your endeavor to attend LCU!

Below, we've assembled easy-to-use, practical tools to help you raise financial support for your student tuition. This framework will help you step out in faith to see the Lord financially confirm what He's already placed in your heart.

The first step as you raise support is to speak with your local church about what the Lord has called you to do and discuss the financial component of your attendance at LCU. Churches are often willing to support you by allowing you to use their IRS 501c3 classification. Whenever churches do this, it allows your partners to deduct their donation off their taxes. This provides an additional layer of accountability for you and confidence for those that are giving.

The tax deductible status of your local church does aid your partners as they consider giving! You will need to speak with your church leadership about LCU and share what you feel the Lord has confirmed to you about LCU. Explain why their help is needed as you raise the funds necessary to attend. There are other options if this is not available to you. GoFundMe, YouCaring, and your own Facebook page can all be effective tools to raise the resources to attend.

We must inform you that LCU cannot act as the receiving agent nor offer its 501c3 status to you or your partners. This means that anyone giving toward your tuition directly to LCU will not receive a tax deduction on their gift. The use of an independent third party (such as your local church) with at 501c3 is really a best option for many reasons -- both practical and legal!

Regardless of what direction you take, the following information may be a great help to you!

So Why Raise Support?

Some people say, “I don’t like to ask for money.” Many people are not available to be involved in missions or ministry directly, but they are eager to financially support someone else—including you! By sowing financially into your training, they are sowing seed for a Kingdom harvest through your life!

Offer people the opportunity to share in the ministry to which God has called you so they will reap the same eternal rewards for the fruit of that ministry that you will! People are not likely to support you unless they are aware that you have a need. Personal contact, whenever possible, is the most effective means of communication. Relationship is also key. As you share your vision and needs with individuals, your church, and perhaps other churches, commit in your own heart to seeing their needs met as well.

Look for ways to bless and serve them. Your motivation should not be, “What can I get from them?” but rather, “What can I give to them?” Be sure to remember to pray for them, as they are becoming a part of your “team” through their generosity.

Biblical Foundations

Let’s take a look at what the Bible says about funding ministry through the lives of Jesus and Paul. Jesus and his disciples demonstrated to us that they partnered with others for the sake of the Kingdom. Below are some biblical references for your review and to build your faith.

Jesus Himself gives us the pattern.

- In Luke 8:1-3, it says He had a team who supported Him. It wasn’t a fund. It wasn’t someone else doing it for Him. It was relational between Jesus and the ones He had ministered to. He was accountable, in a sense, to them because of their giving.

How did Paul get his support?

- Although he was a tentmaker, he also followed the Jesus way, where individuals who knew him and that he had ministered to were able to give to him.

What Else Does the Bible Say?

You are taking an active step in “harvesting the field” that Jesus is talking about. KNOW that you are worthy of support. Remember that God will honor your desire to go in His name.

1. People sometimes feel guilty or like they’re on “welfare.” Did you know it is biblical to be supported by others to do the work of God? Would it be better if we were self-supporting?

Verses: Luke 8:1-3; 1 Corinthians 9:1-18

2. Is it biblical for people to make financial appeals to their own, and/ or other churches?

Verses: Romans 15:17-27; 1 Corinthians 16:1-6

3. Is it biblical to raise financial support from strangers- or from people you do not know well? Should support come primarily from those you have already ministered to?

Verses: 3 John 5-8 , Matthew 10:5-13

4. What about making financial appeals to non believers? What about to family?

Verses: Acts 10:2-4, Nehemiah 2:1-8

5. What about making financial appeals to those who are not as well off? Or are already giving a lot of money other organizations and/ or people?

Verses: Philippians 4:14-20, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

The Importance of Prayer

Support raising starts and ends with prayer along with plenty of prayer sprinkled in the middle! Remember, if God has called you to this, He will provide!

Prayer is not begging God to do something you want, but entering into relationship with Him about His plan for you! Ultimately only God can move in a person's heart, but that doesn't mean we don't have to do our part.

Prayer is crucial, but it should be coupled with action! For example: pray before you send out support letters, pray before you make follow up phone calls, pray and thank God every time support comes in... you get the idea. Inviting others to pray for you is a great way to get more prayer and get others invested in what you are doing.

Support raising can be one of the most challenging/scary things someone can face, but it forces us to fully rely on the Lord. We should always pray continuously and that doesn't change when support raising. In fact, many times support raising creates strong prayer habits that should overflow to other aspects of our lives!

Understanding How: Organizing Contacts

Why should I organize contacts?

- A. Organizing your contacts is key because it answers all these questions.
 - 1. Who should I send my newsletter to?
 - 2. Who do I need to have a follow up phone conversation with?
 - 3. Did I send my uncle a thank you?
 - 4. What is the address for my mom's coworker who said she wanted to support me?
 - 5. When did I last email my friend from high school & what is his email?

How do I organize my contacts?

- B. There are several ways to organize your contacts. The important thing is that you organize them in way that you can easily access their information. Here are some examples.
 - 1. Apple Contacts (Can easily be synced with all apple devices)
 - 2. Google Contacts / Outlook Contacts
 - 3. Excel Spreadsheet with all information
 - 4. What information do I need from my contacts?
 - a) Email
 - b) Phone
 - c) Home Address
 - 5. Contact Category (current pledged supporters, special gift supporters, non donors, etc.)
 - 6. When you last contacted them (ex note: called and left a voicemail on 8/17/14)
 - 7. Whether or not you've written a Thank You letter to supporters

Where do I get my contacts?

- C. Namestorming: Take at least an hour to write down everyone you know. When listing people to ask for support, DO NOT ELIMINATE ANYONE who comes to mind. Many times God will even use non-christians to help out! Who will support you is not a decision you can make. That is between the people you inform and God.
 - 1. Do not assume "poor people" won't give (include your friends, students)
 - 2. Do not assume people in full time ministry won't give
 - 3. Do not assume only people you are close to will give
 - 4. Do include friends, family, church members, churches, friends of friends/family, family of friends, etc...

Making Contacts to Supporters

There are many ways to contact those who you want to support you. Some ways are more effective than others. *The more personal the contact is, the more effective it will be!*

For example, meeting a friend for coffee will be far more effective than sending a generic email. Often times starting with a less personal method and moving towards more personal one can be an effective strategy. Another example, making follow up phone calls to everyone that you have sent a support letter to is a must.

Below is a list of contact methods from most to least personal/effective.

- Face to face meeting (coffee, lunch, etc.)
- Facetime or Skype conversation
- Small group discussion
- Telephone conversation
- Large group discussion
- Handwritten personal letter
- Personal Text Message
- Mass produced letter
- Personal Email
- Newsletter
- Brochure
- Mass text
- Facebook post (likes do not = support)
- Note: The things on the bottom of this list aren't bad things to do but should be followed by more personal contact (ex: phone call, coffee, etc.)

Presenting Your Vision & Calling

Whether you are meeting face to face or sending a support letter, you will want to present yourself and what you are doing to potential supporters. The best way to do this is to start with God's calling on your life and the vision he has given you and its relationship to the Kingdom. People will get excited about things that you are passionate about. God has called you to be a part of his Kingdom work, which is something to be excited about. Here are some tips about sharing your vision and calling. This fundamentally comes down to belief! If you believe what God says about you then others will too! Faith is infectious!

1. Clearly articulate your vision; why you want to go to LCU, what you expect God to do, etc. What do you need to fulfill that Vision in this next season? You will need to communicate how their support will go toward the vision! *Tuition, Housing Transportation, utilities, food, etc should all be accounted for in your budgeting. It may be helpful, if working with a ministry sending you, to work out your budget and have it approved by that ministry. Although the fine detail does not need to be disclosed to your supporters, the knowledge that the fine detail has been approved by the organization will build trust with your partners. Your supporters will appreciate this!*
2. Start with big picture calling/vision and work your way down to specifics. Example: "I am called to be a full time missionary in Central America demonstrating the good news in San Paulo Brazil. LCU will equip me by establishing my identity as a son and empowering believers to be naturally supernatural. I know this training will help move me closer the to the vision the Lord has given! Your financial support for my tuition (and other expenses) will take me closer to fulfilling what the Lord has called me to do!".
3. Share stories more than strategies. Your testimonies are powerful and people love to hear how God has already moved in your life. Testimonies are great; including your own testimony. Testimonies about how you are already trying to live out the essence of your God given vision/call will also indicate to people that you are committed and following through. *Ex: I was shopping in Walmart last Thursday and saw a man in a shoulder brace. I asked him what was wrong and then offered to pray for him. When I prayed....and praise Jesus he was healed! I was then able to share the love of the Father through Jesus with him.* Remember to keep your testimonies short, concise and to the point.
4. Presenting LCU, how its Vision and Values align with the Kingdom and your calling is important when informing your potential partners.
 - a. For more information follow this link to our website to see Lifestyle U's Core Values, Vision and Statement of Faith:
<https://www.lifestylechristianityu.com/corevalues>

How Do I Actually Ask For Support?

Actually asking for support can be scary and challenging, but it is essential to support raising. Here are some hints when asking for support.

1. It is important to invite people to support you in letters and emails, but following up by asking them in person or over the phone will create a greater response.
2. When asking for support, be clear about your financial needs. Be clear in communicating that you are asking them to join you.
3. If the Holy Spirit directs you to ask for a specific amount, do that! Otherwise, you may want to ask something like, "Has the Lord shown you if you are to partner with me on this? Have he given you a one time or monthly figure.
4. Make it easy for them to support you. Have information and methods of payment easily accessible; web address of your church or ministry's online payment page, address of the organization handling your support, or if those are not available, your gofundme.org/youcaring.org web page information. Empower them to give!

Keeping Contacts & Supporters Updated

Newsletters

Your job with a contact isn't over once they've committed to support you. It is your responsibility to keep your supporters and your non donor contacts updated. The best way to do this is by sending newsletters. Sending out newsletters makes supporters less likely to drop and non donors more likely to become supporters. Here are a few tips on how to create a newsletter.

1. We recommend sending 2 newsletter updates during your school. Once after the second week of school and once two weeks prior to the end. Do your best to be prompt in sending these out.
2. You can either send physical newsletters or professional looking emails. Hard copy newsletters are more likely to get read especially with the older generations.
3. Mailchimp.com or Constantcontact.com can be a great way to create good looking emails
4. Cast vision using a good story of a changed life include lots of pictures & color. Short videos can be helpful if you are using email. Testimonies should be used liberally! Keep them short and to the point!
5. Leave a lot of white space. Too much text is too much work to read. Use bullet points and short paragraphs.
6. Be sincere and thankful in your newsletters!
 - a. This is not a place to ask for money. Do that separately.
7. Include personal info so they can get to know you (hobbies, books you've read, roommates, etc.)
8. Send it to all your contacts (Supporters, Special Gift Supporters and Non Donors)
 - a. Include your contact information

Thank You's

Thank you cards are *essential* to let your supporters know how much you appreciate them. Here are some tips. Write a prompt handwritten letter after you have received a new monthly supporter or a special gift.

Keep a record of everyone you've thanked so you don't miss anyone or thank them twice. Be genuine and make sure each card is personalized. There is great power in a handwritten thank you note!

How to Use Social Media in Your Support Raising

Social media is an amazing resource to help you raise support for your LCU, if you know how to use it.

Here are a few Dos/Don'ts:

1. DO create a personal campaign to help fund your way through LCU. A few sites that are helpful: gofundme.com, youcaring.com and crowdrise.com. These allow you to tell your story, share it on Facebook with friends and family, and make it easy for you to accept donations.
2. DON'T Create a campaign and simply post a link to it on facebook. You won't raise money if you take out the relational aspect. Call you friends/family and tell them where to find the link, ask them personally to support you.
3. DO create a blog and actually use it. Blogs are great if you want to go into detail and share what you've been learning, how God is moving in your life, and what Outreach looks like. Share about what you're experiencing and the people you're meeting on Outreach. Here are some easy to use and free blogging sites: wordpress.com, blogger.com, tumblr.com.
4. DO use Facebook to keep people informed with short, quick updates. However, DON'T create long, detailed status updates. That's what the blog is for. DO include the link to your blog in Facebook updates.
5. DO use MailChimp.com (or other platform) for easy to create and send newsletters. When you create an update be sure to share it on Facebook.
6. DON'T overwhelm your Facebook friends with dozens of updates a week. Too many posts means that people will start to scroll past your updates. Make your updates

meaningful and well-thought out. You can do this by occasionally including pictures so that friends and family can see what you're doing. Photos generate more interaction.

7. DO be specific about what you need - the amount of money, the prayer requests, the supplies you need.
8. DON'T start using a social networking platform and then abandon it. Create a schedule for your posts and be consistent.
9. DO try other social networking platforms like Instagram and Twitter.
10. DO know the best times to post. Think about when your friends and family check Facebook so that they will see your posts. For example, you wouldn't post on a Friday night because less people will be online.
11. DON'T take the relationship out of support raising. At the end of the day, this is all about relationships. Your supporters will discern if you are doing this out of love, or with an agenda. If you focus on being love and building a culture of honor, the people you approach will feel valued and loved regardless of their financial support. You are inviting people to take part in your story and your ministry; no matter if they support you financially or not.

Conclusion

These guidelines and tools are merely here to help get you started. The most important thing is to **START!** The second most important thing is to **ASK!** Many ministries/churches have significant experience in, or access to, those that have expertise in raising support.

We highly encourage you to seek out those resources!!! We hope this guide helps you, and encourages you, to step out and see the Lord creatively provide in ways you may not have expected!