



## **CAPITOL CUP FUNDRAISING TIPS FROM OUR TOP FUNDRAISER**

- **The best thing you can do is to start early.** The key is to make the first ask early and then have enough time to follow up.
- Go through all of your contacts to identify possible donors.
- Think of any place where you spend money repeatedly - restaurants, car dealerships, an accountant, etc. These contacts may be happy to help and give back.
- If you have a business and you have been spending money and writing checks, these contacts will in many cases be happy to support your cause.
- If you can find the time, **send out individual emails.**
- In your initial fundraising email, personalize it a bit in the introduction, and perhaps once or twice throughout. You can work off a template, but adjust it a bit to make it personal for each contact - “Nice to see you last week Joe – hope all is well with the family, etc.” - can make a big difference. It is easier to ignore what is perceived as a group letter or blast. An individual email only takes two or so more minutes per contact. This will also save more time than you spend as it will cut down on follow up phone calls because more of your contacts will reply to a personal email than a group email.
- Emphasize that this organization is not just about squash, but that squash is the critical hook and the program is equally focused on improving educational outcomes and developing character.
- Describe in your email how much a donation means both to you personally, the kids, and the organization.
- Describe your involvement if appropriate. For example, some of you have played in the Tournament for a few years, some of you have volunteered, etc.
- Explain to the donor what squash or education has meant in your life. If squash helped open doors to high school or college, reference that this program is doing the same. If going to a boarding school or college had a major impact on your life, explain how you’re hoping to give the Capitol Squash students this same opportunity.

- Where appropriate, you can ask some contacts to be a Sponsor. Don't be afraid to ask those contacts that have this ability. Shooting high helps get a bigger donation than expected in many cases. Include the sponsorship PDF attachment and explain how it works.
- Don't be shy about reaching out to multiple contacts. The worst that can happen is that you will get turned down or get no response, but you will earn the respect from your contact who will learn that you are working and committed to helping a good cause.
- **Follow up, follow up, follow up.** Many donors simply forget to respond. Send them a follow up email or call at least once if not twice before the event. Many donors will thank you for the reminder.
- Have someone make an initial gift of your target donation amount. If you hope your friends and family will each give \$100, have a friend make the first gift at that level. If your target donation is \$250, have someone make an initial gift at that amount. People tend to follow suit, so have the giving start at where you'd like them to be.
- Reach out to Meg with any questions at [meg.taylor@capitolsquash.org](mailto:meg.taylor@capitolsquash.org), 860-918-6199

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*Below is a sample solicitation letter – feel free to use whatever parts you like and make any edits/changes. **Don't forget to adjust it where the \*\*\*\*\* are.** Include the sponsorship form in all solicitations, but if you are asking for a Sponsorship, you need to work that request into the sample letter below, such as “Joe, would you consider becoming a Tournament Sponsor – please see the sponsorship information in the attachment”.*

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Hi **\*\*\*\*CONTACT NAME\*\*\*\***,

I'm excited to be participating in a fundraiser this March for Capitol Squash and I'm hoping for your support! In a nutshell, Capitol Squash is a squash and education program based out of Trinity College in Hartford. While squash is the hook, the program is about so much more. They are focused on developing citizens of character and preparing inner city youth for high school graduation and college, using squash as the vehicle. More specifically, the program provides intensive educational support and tutoring, mentoring, SAT college prep, community service opportunities, family support, tuition assistance, and top-notch squash and fitness training.

To learn more about the program and its impact, take a look at this [FOX61 Feature](#).

Capitol Squash is now in its 12<sup>th</sup> program year and has had **four graduating classes head off to college**. Capitol Squash alumni have played squash at Bard College, Bowdoin College,

Connecticut College, Mount Holyoke College, Trinity College, University of Connecticut, Vassar College, and Wesleyan University.

Capitol Squash has its annual fundraising tournament taking place on Saturday, March 28, 2026. My team is competing both in squash and fundraising!

\*\*\*\*CONTACT NAME\*\*\*\*, would you consider making a donation to Capitol Squash (or if so inclined even be a sponsor as part of your work/business - sponsorships are explained in the attachment).

The funds raised for the Capitol Cup supports the work that Capitol Squash is doing each and every day to change the trajectory of these students' lives and help them reach their full potential.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to email/call me with any questions. To make a donation, please see the link below:

\*\*\*\*\*INSERT YOUR DONATION LINK HERE\*\*\*\*\*

If you'd like to learn more about Capitol Squash please visit [www.capitolsquash.org](http://www.capitolsquash.org) or read the latest [annual report](#).

Best,

\*\*\*\*YOUR NAME\*\*\*\*