Crowdfunding Portfolio

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Strategic Document

When kids enter the foster system, they tend to bounce from home to home with nothing but a trash bag to carry their belongings. When the kids carry their lives in something that typically carries trash, it sends the message that the kids and their belongings are trash. The trash bags are also unreliable and tear, mocking the instability in their lives. We want to raise money to provide reliable duffel bags for the kids to use. This will relay the message that the kids are not trash and they deserve some dignity.

The belief that children are not trash is commonly held by the public. Though this is a common belief, children are still being "thrown away" by parents and handed a plastic garbage bag to pack their belongings. This fact will contradict the values of our audience and urge them to act and contribute to our campaign.

We want our message to be able to affect donors' *pathos, logos, and ethos*. Our persuasive message will be to appeal to our donors' *pathos* by telling them stories of children who have endured the hardships of being removed from their homes and then sent off with their possessions in a trash bag. We will want to paint the trash bags in a negative light to our donors. It is important to show that trash bags are designed for trash collection, not for carrying around the remains of your life. We will also want to show our donors that the foster kids carry around these bags for so long that they believe they are trash as well.

We will appeal to their *logos* by mentioning the logical benefits of having a duffel bag or suitcase over a trash bag. This will be accomplished by mentioning the weakness of trash bag plastic, the lack of a good way to carry a trash bag, and the failure to use a trash bag the way it was designed to be used. The duffel bags are also durable enough to last for a long period of

time. If a child moves from house to house, they will always have something to carry their belongings.

Our donors' will be able to see that we have solid credibility through the stories we can tell of these kids or ones who have been in similar conditions. We will also contact people who work in the foster care system and ask them to share with our audience their experience with this issue. Providing information from first-hand sources will allow the audience to trust our campaign.

Our goal is to raise as much funding as possible, so we want to reach out to as many contacts as we can. This includes donors of all psychographic and demographic backgrounds including family members, friends, peers, professors, etc. However, our primary audience would be Stark County residents, especially those of Malone University, because they are our most local assets and would be receptive to helping foster children in their own county. Malone's mission statement of "Christ's Kingdom First" will help us reach this audience. One of Jesus's biggest messages is to take care of those less fortunate. We give our audience the opportunity to do so by providing for children in need. With Pattie Anderson and the Student Development department, we can reach the entire Malone population with our message and gain valuable contacts.

Our secondary audience is anyone we know outside of Stark County. This includes family and friends at home and on social media. Our tertiary audience is anyone who is connected to our primary and secondary audiences. As our donors share our campaign, we hope to expand our assets and reach those who are outside of our circles. As for target psychographics, we would focus on people who value life and children. Especially if these people have

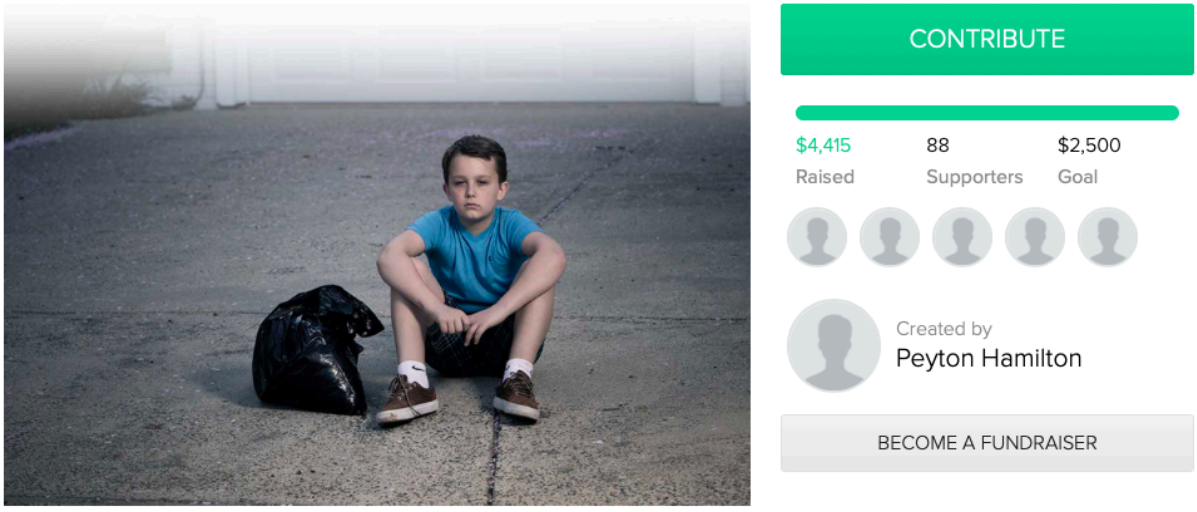
experience with the foster care system, whether it be as an agent, a foster parent, or a child. These audience members might be particularly sensitive to our cause.

We are also willing to reach out and connect in person with specific organizations that show greater interest in our cause. Ideally, these organizations would be faith-based or have experience in dealing with foster children or similar fundraising campaigns to our own. We want to focus on these groups because they have an accessible network of people with generous and compassionate hearts. Beyond being more likely to donate, these people may be able to provide us with more contacts to grow our network of donors.

Social media can serve us as another tool in spreading awareness. During our time of fundraising, we will post on all channels accessible to us with details about our cause and how to donate. While this avenue may not be effective in reaching our desired targets, social media makes it easy to send a single message quickly to many people. Since this is a crowdfunding campaign, any donations gathered through social media audiences are welcomed.

Through our *pathos, logos,* and *ethos,* we will have a message for donors who react best to emotional, logical, or credible persuasion. Our child-focused and compassionate donors in and out of Stark County will be able to join us in providing foster kids reliable bags and ultimately removing the trash bags from the equation because kids are not, and never will be trash.

Website and Analysis



Peyton

Our Rally page may be effective in persuading our audience, but it is nowhere near perfect. In order to convince our audience members to donate to our cause, we have incorporated ethos, logos, and pathos components into our page. While these appeals are all present, they most likely need more clear information while still being personal to the audience, so they decide to help. The areas where we are most persuasive are our introduction, our reason for raising money, our usage of the donated funds, and our call to action. Our introduction effectively tells the audience who we are and what we stand for. This way our audience knows right from the start that the foster kids we want to help are local in our own county. The audience also knows that we are college students and not an official organization with many resources.

Our reason for raising money begins by giving the audience some background information about how and why foster kids use trash bags instead of regular bags. We also explain to the audience

how using a trash bag affects the kids emotionally and then address the lack of resources to provide foster kids with reliable bags. Finally, we use a logos approach to show our audience that logically, trash bags are inferior to regular bags because trash bags break easily, are not designed to be luggage, and can easily to be mistaken for trash and thrown out.

We explain the usage of our donations to the audience very simply. We tell them that all money will be used to buy reliable bags, which are not just physically superior to trash bags but give foster kids something to call their own.

In our call to action, we are clear to our audience in asking them what we want them to do. We give dollar amounts for both duffle bags and luggage bags so donors can see just how much it costs for each bag. We also make it clear to them that each bag represents one foster kid in need to connect our cause directly back to helping the foster kids of Stark County.

Despite being persuasive and clear in our Rally page, there is still more we can do in areas where we are not as persuasive as we would like to be. Our introduction explains who we are, but it does not capture the attention of our audience. In fact, it lacks ethos or credibility that we are qualified to help foster kids or ask for money from people.

Our reason for raising money is where the greatest audience appeal is supposed to be, but we do not incorporate any pathos in our explanation. We address that trash bags have emotional impacts on foster children but, we do not appeal emotionally to our audience. We need to make our audience empathetic to the struggles that foster kids face so they decide that they want to help us buy bags.

In explaining what we will do with the funds, we restate that we will use all donations to buy the reliable bags that foster kids need. This section makes an attempt to say that a better bag will be comforting because it gives a foster kid something to call their own. While this may be a good reason to purchase a bag, we never mentioned this reason in our page until now. It may confuse the audience about what the true point of buying reliable bags is.

Our call to action lists the prices of the bags we want to purchase, but it does not include a fundraising goal. Without a stated goal, our audience doesn't know how many bags we need to buy. In our inclusion of prices for bags, it sounds like we are trying to sell the audience a bag rather than convince them that it is a donation. Finally, we don't tell our audience that donations of any amount are welcomed. It sounds like they can only donate the listed amounts and no less. If we don't make it clear that all donations are appreciated, then people may decide not to donate smaller amounts which could potentially add up very quickly.

Sarah

The most persuasive part of our rally page is the picture of the little boy sitting next to a trash bag. This picture shows the visitors the perspective of the child. We don't have to tell you the boy looks disappointed and lonely-- visitors can see it themselves. The grey and washed-out colors also add to the melancholy mood. Before reading the description, visitors already feel inclined to help this boy. This picture only works because of the common held belief that children are to be taken care of. The picture triggers sadness. These emotional appeals are the building blocks for our campaign and the picture utilizes them well.

The next thing I notice is the title. Our title is “Help Us Throw Away the Trash! Not the Foster Kids!” I think this title is unclear and misleading. Because I am familiar with the campaign, I can make the connection between the title and the cause, but I don’t think a random viewer would be able to until reading the description. The title is one of the first things a visitor notices and it should get their attention-- which it does-- but it should also clearly state our mission. We need to ground the viewer. They should be able to tell what we are here for just by looking at the title. Not everyone is going to read our entire campaign description and we need to keep that in mind while deciding on a title. The action in the title asks for help to throw trash away. Reading this, I am under the impression the campaign deals with throwing away trash and I struggle to connect that to the foster system. The title takes this metaphor that we have been working on all semester and tries to fit it in with no context. Though our ask is confusing, I do think that our title uses an active voice well. If we keep that active voice and focus more on our mission rather than making the title sound creative, it will be more persuasive.

The description does well in identifying early on what we are trying to raise money for. Right after identifying who we are, we state what the need is. I think the description is pretty wordy though. Again, it feels like we are trying to push a metaphor onto the visitors. The metaphor works, but I think there is probably a better way to present it.

We identify 3 different reasons for this campaign: trash bags represent being thrown away, the trash bags are unreliable and tear, duffel bags will give the child some ownership. I think all are valuable and persuasive...but having all of them spread throughout the description makes it sound a little messy. We should either focus on a single, persuasive reason throughout the description or find a way to mention all of them in a more clear and cohesive manner. Perhaps mentioning all at once at the beginning of the description and then later expanding would ground the reader better. Otherwise, the reader is unexpectedly introduced to different

reasons throughout the description. Being direct and using a more active voice will help the messiness as well.

I think we do well in identifying specific amounts that the bags would cost. This information is helpful because the reader knows if they donate so much money, they will be covering the cost of an entire bag. We mention the cost of two different types of bags though, which weakens the ask. We need to give the reader a single number to focus on. We should deliberate on a single bag to buy instead of using both because then it is not clear what exactly we are buying or how much we need. When reading both costs, I am under the impression that some kids get one kind of bag and other kids might get the other.

Lastly, it would be more persuasive to directly ask the visitor to donate that specific amount. All we do is mention how much it costs per bag. We need to straight-up ask "will you donate 10 dollars to cover the cost for 1 child's bag?"

Bryan

Our crowdfunding campaign could be stronger in several areas I believe. Here are ways we can improve our Rally page. From our promium to conclusion, starting off with our picture, I believe we need a picture more appealing to our *pathos.* Although our picture is contingent, it looks like this kid was just used for a photo shoot, and is not a foster child. We need a very realistic picture that will grab a potential donors' attention right off the bat. Most people look at the pictures at the beginning, before they read any words, so that's why we need a strong picture. Along with this, we could produce a video. A clear video of our endoxa will be an immediate click and engage our audience's pathos, and ethos. This will be tough to do and will take a lot of work, but I believe it will definitely get our audience on board with us. Next, I think we could

present a diegesis of Peyton's friend who experienced the foster system and how she started out with a trash bag. This will help grab the attention because someone in our own campaign has a friend who sadly went through this, so it will be a great appeal to the pathos.

Then, we need to spread our rally page across social media. Because we live in 2019, that is the best way to get our page out to people. Each of us should at least post the link to our Rally page in our Twitter/Instagram/Facebook bios. Most rally pages I have seen that blow-up, almost always go viral on social media first.

Lastly, we could do a better job of explaining what this duffel bag really will mean to the foster kids. We explained why the trashbags are so bad but could do a better job of explaining why the duffel bags will be better and mean more than just that to them.

Now for what we have going for us on the good side. First, we have a good way of showing the foster kids envy for better luggage. "To some of these children, the trash bags serve as a reminder of being "thrown away" by their parents or caregivers." This is a clear way of making our crowd know that these kids need something that they can't afford- a suitcase to hold their belongings, and currently their life. Second, it is a bad thing to ask for money too quickly in the campaign. We did a good job of avoiding that. We have to have a clear endoxa, and appeal to the ethos, pathos, and logos of our audience, and we did a great job of that. We grabbed their attention and got them interested, and then capitalized with asking for money at the end. Next, the paradigm presented of how most foster kids have images put in their heads from the trashbags and poor living conditions is outstanding. This really is a typical thing involved with foster kids, I didn't know about it until our campaign, and I'm sure many others don't know

about it either. Finally- clarity and virtue. I think we are very clear and explain ourselves well on the one page of writing. If we babble on and on, we could lose the attention of our audience. We clearly have good virtue in our campaign. We explain very well how we are here to help and serve people of our community, that are in greater need than ourselves. We are doing the right thing, in the right community.

Nat

First there is so much potential in this campaign that we have begun to unfold. This is a new thing that I have never done before but it is great nonetheless. As I was reading through this rally campaign there are a lot of things that I would change about the "persuasiveness" of this campaign. I don't really see or feel any persuasiveness in this campaign that is the first issue. The entire thing is really repetitive and just really drawn out. Starting with the title which can give many mixed signals on the other end of this if I was a person wanting to donate. If I were to see "help us throw away the trash not the kids" I would assume that this campaign has to do something with waste or recycling. It seems to be to the point but is still a little vague. We don't want to be too vague because the audience can interpret it how they want to and that could lead to them assuming it is about something that it is not. I do not see anything really catching about this title.

In the actual campaign part there is so much potential for this to be an amazing and captivating campaign it is just missing some key parts that need to be addressed. It also just needs to have some words substituted for others. Just reading it there are some things that are

repetitive such as the word “need”. This is mentioned twice in the proomium and both the sentences somewhat sound the exact same like “We have compassion for those in need, especially children. There is a real need for reliable duffle bags and luggage for foster children in our county.” these sentences sound similar just in the fact that the same words are used. In different contexts but nonetheless the same. It happens in other parts of this campaign as well. Like the use of the metaphor “ the kids are like trash bags or just the kids are like trash. This is repetitive and also already known.

“ When children enter the foster care system, they can no longer live at home and move into a foster home. They are given 2 trash bags and 10 minutes to pack up their belongings before leaving for a new home. To some of these children, the trash bags serve as a reminder of being “thrown away” by their parents or caregivers. Since the foster care system in Stark County does not have reliable bags to give to kids, they resort to using trash bags instead.” the end of this sentence is not needed because it is already answered in the beginning portion of it. Again you always tell us and just as I have learned in the comm department but mostly dealing with Ann if you can sum something up in a couple of sentences rather than drag it out or extend it which can cause you to keep repeating yourself in different ways then do that. Which I see a lot of that in this campaign. There is a lack of persuasiveness in this campaign and that is the main part that we need in this entire thing. This campaign is a little bit vague and stretched to the point of repetitiveness. This speech is very deliberative I don’t think this campaign leads the audience to take action. There is a lot here that is not said in a manner that is appealing to our target audiences. It is appealing to us though but that doesn’t matter because we are not the ones donating. The estimated time is somewhat right though that is good proof as to the circumstances

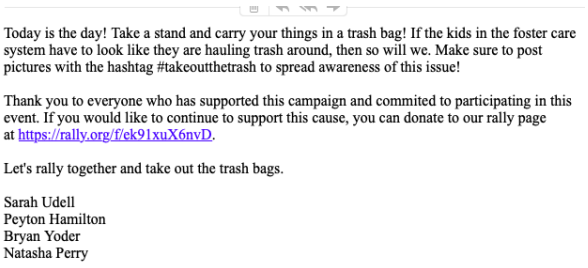
that are handed to these foster kids when it is time for them to go to a new place and maybe it is different in different states but when I was in foster care they gave me a little more time rather than 10 minutes to pack. This campaign has so much potential it just needs some things to be changed and it will be better for the audience.

Crowdfunding Final Report

What we did (Week of 12/10):

- Continued to push our link on Facebook and Instagram
    - Continuing to use our primary assets to reach a wider audience
    - Using logos to make it easy for a digital audience to transfer their help through a digital fundraising site
- Continued sharing bi-weekly facts about foster care system
    - Improves our ethos by showing we know about the foster care system
    - Appeals to pathos since our audience will be able to make a connection between the bags and kids
- Contacted numerous businesses to tell them about our cause and share awareness event
    - Plan to contact them again and ask for donations
    - Shared pictures from our event
- Shared a final push on social media to ask for donations for christmas

How many donors we have:
88
How much money have we raised so far:
$4,415
Any screenshots or proof of work:



Today is the day! Take a stand and carry your things in a trash bag! If the kids in the foster care system have to look like they are hauling trash around, then so will we. Make sure to post pictures with the hashtag #takeoutthetrash to spread awareness of this issue!

Thank you to everyone who has supported this campaign and commited to participating in this event. If you would like to continue to support this cause, you can donate to our rally page at https://rally.org/f/ek91xuX6nvD.

Let's rally together and take out the trash bags.

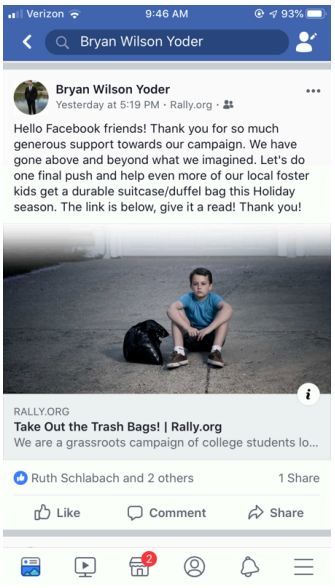
Sarah Udell
Peyton Hamilton
Bryan Yoder
Natasha Perry



Left: Campus-wide reminders of trash bag pseudo event
Right: Table outside of the cafeteria, handing out trash bags

Left: Video of interview with local social worker. Posted on rally page and social media
Right: Post on social media





Facts about Foster System:

1. The average age of a foster youth is 8 and a half years old.
2. A foster youth typically spends just under two years – 20 months – in foster care.
3. Over 25,600 foster youth spend more than five years in foster care.
4. More than 1,200 youth are placed in foster care nationwide because of their own alcohol dependence problems.
5. Over half of all foster youth are reunited with their family or primary caregiver when they exit the system.
6. 6 percent of all children in the U.S. will find themselves in the foster care system before they turn 18.
7. Foster youth are seven times more likely than non-foster youth to have Depression, and five times more likely to have Anxiety.
8. There were 10 percent more youth in foster care nationwide in 2016 than there were in 2012.
9. One out of every five people who age out of the foster care system lack a home when they turn 18.
10. By the time foster youth are 24, only half of them will have stable and steady employment. The same percentage develop substance abuse.
11. Among former foster youth, one-third of all males and three-fourths of all females rely on government assistance programs.

12. In comparison to veterans, former foster youth are twice as likely to suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
13. Close to 56,000 children are foster youth in California.
14. Just under four out of every 10 – 38 percent, to be precise – foster youth in California will never find a permanent housing placement.
15. Close to 19,000 former California foster youth are presently enrolled in MediCal.
16. One out of every two foster youth has dealt with four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences.
17. Eight out of every 10 foster youth enter the system with notable mental health needs.
18. Just over half – 51 percent – of all foster youth graduate high school.
19. Just one out of every five foster youth is at grade level in English and language arts in third grade, and only 9 percent are at grade level in math in eighth grade.
20. Less than one in four foster youth enroll in college.
21. By age 26, just 4 percent of former foster youth had successfully obtained a bachelor's degree.
22. 54 percent of all former foster youth who are adopted have parents over the age of 50, and 16 percent have parents that are 60 or older.
23. 70 percent of children adopted out of foster care have married adoptive parents, and 55 percent of them did not know their co-adoptive parents beforehand.
24. Among former foster youth who are later adopted, 37 percent are white, 35 percent are black and 16 percent are Hispanic. Among these adoptive parents, 63 percent are white, 27 percent are black and 5 percent are Hispanic.
25. As for their reasons for adopting foster youth, 86 percent did so to provide a permanent home for a child, 39 percent did so because of infertility and 24 percent did so because they wanted their child to have a sibling.
26. 60 percent of parents adopted a foster child instead of an infant because it was cheaper.
27. 95 percent of parents who adopt foster youth said they would make the same decision again.
28. Around 184,000 households in the U.S. have a foster youth in them.[9]
29. Compared to their peers, male former foster youth are four times as likely to commit a crime. Females are 10 times more likely.