THE OAKS COLLABORATIVE
CULTIVATING CHRIST-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

Treasurer

GENERAL

Financial Stewardship & Accountability

"For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men." - 2 Corinthians 8:21

Financial Principles to Keep in Mind

1. God is the creator (Gen. 1) and sustainer of all things (Col. 1:17) and the One "who works within us to accomplish far more than we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20) is a God of infinite abundance (Ps. 50:10-11) and grace (2 Cor. 9:8).
2. We are called to lives of stewardship, as managers of all that God has entrusted to them (1 Cor. 4:1-2).
3. God entrusts possessions to us and holds them accountable for their use, as a tool to grow God's eternal kingdom, as a test of the believer's faithfulness to God, and as a trademark that their lives reflect Christ's values (Lk. 16:1-9).

The following financial guidelines are provided for understanding, to keep us working together well, and to make sure that we are operating above reproach. We all know that retreats like this require a lot of money movement - registration costs coming in, expenses going out, fundraising dollars coming in, etc. We are so thankful for the role you play with your retreat and want to help you and your retreat thrive.

At The Oaks Collaborative, it is very important to us that we operate with the highest levels of financial accountability as we steward the funds that God is blessing us with. We also have requirements concerning tax reporting as a nonprofit ministry that must be maintained in order to keep this status and continue receiving charitable contributions. Therefore, we need each of you to help us in your role of overseeing the financial issues of your respective retreat.

We ask your team to consider each purchase wisely. With each purchase, we want your team to be mindful of whether that use of funds is furthering the mission and thereby honoring the Lord and your donors. Our desire is also that each member of the team adopt the vision and financial

stewardship mindset of "doing more with less." Think purposefully about each purchase - is it necessary, does it benefit our mission to reach freshmen, is there a cheaper option that serves the need just as well? Can they do their job well without purchasing something unless absolutely necessary? We ask that they honor the budget they have been given as a way of honoring the gifts that have been given by so many family members and friends.
Your primary point of contact regarding finances will be Sarah Kiel, Director of Finance for The Oaks Collaborative.

Sarah Kiel – sarah@oakscolab.com or 334-750-6193

BUDGETS

In order to help you manage your retreat financially and to be above reproach in all our financial dealings as a ministry, we continue to strive to improve our budget systems each year. The purpose of the budgeted expenses is to be a guide for each retreat.

Our budget year is October 1 – September 30.

You will need to review these budgeted expense categories with your team and let us know if there are any significant changes. For example, maybe you have used your decorations for a few years and it is time to replace those decorations. We would need to budget extra for hospitality this year. Final budgets changes are due to Sarah Kiel by the end of November.

MASTER SPREADSHEETS/BUDGETS

Your budgets are loaded into your master spreadsheet under the Budget sheet usually prior to the Summit Retreat. You are welcome to use this budget for your own recording purposes or tracking or you can use one you create yourself. TOC will occasionally update the budget based on registration numbers, especially as we get closer to retreats. Any changes to the budget will be noted in red and usually a timestamp will be listed. Example

REPORTS

Prior to the retreat and during the retreat, you will receive the following weekly reports (Tuesday):
* Fundraising Totals

- Fundraising Totals - The total amount fundraised from various fundraisers including donations. Example
- Fundraising - This will list the individual donations, contributions, report from fundraising events but without the amounts. We strive to protect the donor and keep as much of this information as possible private. Example
- Treasurer - a report all expenses.Example

It is important once your retreat starts spending funds to make sure that expenses are staying in the budgeted amount. You can review our Master Spreadsheet budget and compare spending on these reports to ensure you stay within your budget.

EXPENSES / PURCHSING CARD / GROUP ME

Purchasing Card - Each retreat is provided with a retreat specific purchasing card. That card should stay with the Retreat Specialist. The address related to the purchasing card is below. Please make sure you obtain the purchasing card from retreat specialists when needed.

1322 Morris Drive
Auburn, Alabama 36830

All expenses must be approved by your Retreat Specialist before a purchase is made. Expenses should stay within the budgeted amount unless approved by The Oaks Collaborative.

Group Me - All leadership team members needed to be added to your retreat financial Group Me. **All expenses also must be recorded immediately by posting them in your retreat financial expenditures GroupMe.** When that happens TOC will be able to record them to your account in order to keep all accounts updated. Receipts are preferred. When you post the receipt, please try to include what category the expense is for - food, supplies, hospitality, PR, main sessions, etc. If no receipt is available, then the name of the vendor, the date, the amount of purchase, what was purchased and what category should be included.

For many retreats, purchases for the retreats sneak up on them. Plan ahead and be prepared. It is helpful to get with hospitality and head of operations/food to make sure you know what needs to be purchased, how much needs to be purchased, when it will be purchased and what method of payment is necessary. Think about Prime Day in the summer for supplies and plan ahead. Please consider that purchases should be reasonable and the best value for the money. Do not purchase the most expensive items when a cheaper option is available and just as suitable. We want to honor the gifts we have been given.

Work with your team to purchase items for the fundraising events in plenty of time. If purchasing items to sell for a fundraiser, make sure you allow for plenty of time for those events and a plan on how to receive the funds and deliver items. Any merchandise sales should be discussed with the TOC Marketing & Communications Coordinator.

EXPENSE CATEGORIES & ROLES AFFILIATED

Category	**Roles**

Registration	Anything spent by the Head of Logistics or the Head of Registration. Includes items such as: ● Name tags (TOC provides) ● Lanyards (TOC provides) ● T-shirts (TOC provides) ● Stickers (optional, work with TOC Marketing and Communications Coordinator) ● Registration bags. (TOC provides)
Fundraising	Anything spent by the Head of Fundraising. Includes items such as: ● Donor cards, envelopes, stamps, letters (TOC provides) ● Thank you cards (TOC provides) ● Fundraising event expenses such as food for event, merchandise to sell
Training	This includes any expenses spent by the Directors, Counselor Trainer, and Head of Prayer related to training and preparing the leadership team and counselors. Includes items such as: ● Food - We prefer to keep expenses related to food a minimum here and provide options for teams to go out to main meals together and on their own. Snacks are ok. ● Training material (use folders over binders or digital resources when possible), paper, and printing cost.
Retreat Operations	This includes any expenses spent by Hospitality, Crew, Main Sessions and Sustainment (Food). Includes items such as: ● Main Sessions - cords, sound equipment ● Event facilities - facility, chairs ● Food ● Ministry fair expenses ● Gift cards for speakers or panelists ● Supplies for theme night ● Free time supplies (we try to borrow game items as much as possible) ● Coffee station supplies ● General supplies (tape, batteries, pens, first aid kits, cleaning)

Public Relations	Anything spent by Head of Public Relations, Media, or Communications type positions. Includes items such as: ● Website ● Summer tabling expenses ● Signage ● Facebook ads ● Welcome and directional signage

REMIMBURSEMENTS

Under no circumstances should a check/debit/Venmo/cash be paid to yourself. Reimbursements will need to be approved and handled by an Oaks Collaborative staff member. For any retreat reimbursements, those must be emailed to the TOC Director of Finance with a receipt, name of student who made the purchase, a Venmo and last four of the student's phone number.. **Reimbursements will only be made with a receipt.** Reimbursements should also be an exception and mostly only necessary during the retreat when the card has to be in two places. Otherwise, all purchases should be on the card.

GAS REIMBURSEMENTS

For any gas reimbursements, drivers should send an email/groupme message to the Treasurer/Head of Fundraising with the following information: Name, Date of Travel, Purpose of Travel, Starting Location, Ending Location, Miles Traveled, Venmo Information. Treasurer should approve and send to Sarah Kiel, Director of Finance, The Oaks Collaborative. All reimbursements will be made via Venmo and should be noted in each retreat budget. Drivers must provide receipts for gas in order to get reimbursed. They should fill up before they travel and fill up upon their return. Provide receipts for both. Gas reimbursements should be approved prior to the event/expense. Examples of gas reimbursements are for airport pickups and travel to the Summit Retreat.

AIRPORT PICKUPS

<u>Airport Pickup Best Practices</u>

GIFT CARDS

We recommend a nicer gift card for speakers ($50) and a smaller gift card for panelists ($15-$25).They would fall in the Hospitality Budget.

TRAINING/MEALS

For training of leadership teams or staff (counselors, praise team, CREW, etc.), we encourage your teams to think creatively about facilities and meals. Are there supporters of the retreat that might donate a cabin, lake house, or facility for you to use for your leadership retreat if you plan to stay overnight? If not, would a one day retreat be a better fit? For full staff training, we typically encourage retreats to do a one-day training so that overnight expenses are not included. Churches/Ministry Partners are often happy to partner with you in providing a facility. For meals for leadership retreat, we understand that this is a little trickier if offsite somewhere. Just be good stewards of the resources you have and stay within your budget. For staff training, we encourage you to consider ways to be good stewards of your finances that can also be mutually beneficial for the staff. For example, consider having the staff use the lunch break to go eat a meal with their co-counselor or CREW/praise team to get to know one another and utilize that time well rather than spending money on a quick meal for the group as a whole. Start training a little later in the day so the staff is able to eat breakfast before they come. Concluding before dinner will be both a wise financial decision as well as a way to be concise and honor your staff's time well. Purchasing snacks or making coffee for the day are great ways to honor your team rather than providing large meals for training. For pre-retreat training or preparation, one or two meals are ok if they are benefiting the entire leadership team and helping them continue working on preparations. We always want to be mindful of whether our use of funds is furthering the mission and thereby honoring the Lord and your donors. Meals should not be provided for a miscellaneous small number of students or others outside of the team. Meals should not be provided during staff interviews - instead, consider breaks in the day that provide time for people to take a lunch break or go home and eat. These are a few examples of times when leaders are responsible for providing meals on their own.

PRINTING TRAINING MATERIAL & FOLDERS

Printing costs can add up very quickly so we encourage you to be resourceful here. If you need to print material, this is a great way for a church to make a donation. You can ask to print the necessary documents with them. Only print what is absolutely necessary. Printing costs add up very quickly and you can quickly get rid of your budget funds before you know it.

For folders, please do not purchase binders (leadership members can be an exception if needed) but the smaller folders with fasteners work just as well.

CASH OUT FOR FUNDRAISERS

If you need cash for a fundraiser for ticket sales, please reach out to Sarah. The specialists or a leadership team member will need to take cash from their personal account, send a receipt to Sarah, and she will Venmo you a reimbursement. Once the event is over, the cash should be deposited back into the Regions account and a copy of the deposit slip sent to Sarah. If you do not have a Regions bank near you, let Sarah know.

INCOME

Online income will come through one of three platforms.

> Ticket Spice/WePay - Online Registration System - This is your Freshman, Counselor, and Leadership Registration Revenue. More information about Ticket Spice is below.
>
> Fundraise Up/Stripe - Online Donation System - This is the system we use for online contributions made to your retreat and for support contributions made to leadership and counselors. More information about Fundraise Up is below.
>
> Venmo - This is for Fundraising Revenue. More information about Venmo is below.

TTICKETSPICE / STAFF REGISTRATION & REFUNDS

Ticket Spice is our event registration system. As freshmen, counselors and leadership register, payments will be coded to your account. They will show up as WePay on your weekly report. Your Head of Registration will be able to see who and how many people are registering.

Each retreat treasurer is responsible for keeping up with and ensuring all staff have paid. In order to see staff payments, you will login in the registration system (Ticket Spice).There is a separate registration page for staff and freshmen. The previous treasurer should have login information. Multiple retreats in 2024 stated they wished they would have started staff payment collection earlier, announced it earlier in meetings during the year and attempted to make sure everyone had paid earlier.

Typically, the Head of Registration will handle freshman registration and refunds. Important information about refunds is below. **Please make sure they refund the correct amount.** *Make sure all financial refund policies are clearly stated on applications, waivers, contracts etc.*

FAQ: We have a staff member that can only participate in one day of the retreat. Do they have to pay the full amount? If the student is participating as a full staff member with just having a minor time away because of another commitment, but is participating in training, is face to face with students, etc. then yes they will need to pay the full amount. If the staff member is a former staff member or alumni and just wants to stop by to maybe help serve lunch, is not in a public position with students, then they would just be a volunteer and no need to be on staff. They would not be expected to pay, but also not counted in any numbers for the retreat. Anything in between we would just prefer to just be one or the other. We want staff to commit to the entire experience, training, investing, serving, follow-up, etc.

Registration Refunds: Stated registration policy:

> *Freshman - Once you complete this form, you will be prompted to pay. In the case of withdrawal from the retreat, there will be a $25 processing fee for any student that withdraws before July 1. The remainder of the fee will be refunded. After July 1, there are NO reimbursements upon withdrawal from the retreat.*
>
> *Staff - In the case of withdrawal from the retreat, there will be a $25 processing fee for anyone that withdraws before May 1. The remainder of the fee will be refunded. After May 1, there are NO reimbursements upon withdrawal from the retreat.*

If the refund adheres to the policy, you can log in to Ticketspice to issue the refund. Please make sure it is noted to the Head of Registration for your retreat. We can also administer refunds via Venmo if Ticketspice is no longer able to process them.

<u>Ticketspice Instructions</u>

Staff Payments FAQ

1. **Can one staff member anonymously pay the registration for another staff member?** Yes, they can pay someone else's registration fee. The staff member will still need to register in Ticketspice like normal with a coupon code for the entire registration amount. The giver of the gift can Venmo, write a check, or pay cash to cover the cost of the registration. Please make sure that Sarah is aware of what is taking place.

2. **We have a staff member having some financial stress and I was wondering if she could register now and pay later? I know we have been pushing the registration deadline, but I know that is just for refunds. What is the absolute latest date a staff member can register and still be fine?** Encourage the staff member having financial stress to hold off on registering and choose a new deadline. This is the best way to encourage them to raise the money or save it instead of going straight toward scholarships as their only option.

NON ONLINE INCOME: CHECKS/CASH RECEIVED

The Oaks Collaborative Account Number – 0151584522 (*Keep confidential)

For checks, you can mail to the Post Office Box or you can deposit for your retreat at a local Regions Bank. Take a picture of the check(s). Please make sure pictures of the checks are clear and we can read the address on the checks. Send a picture in an email to Sarah. Stamp the back of the checks with the stamp provided and deposit at a local Regions Bank. Stamp is an account number stamp that says for Deposit Only. Please make sure you have the stamp from the previous director. **Please make sure to mail in checks or deposit in a timely manner. Not months later. Within the week please.**

For cash, give the donor a receipt from the receipt book your retreat received. Try to collect their contact information if possible (Name and Email Address at a minimum). Take a picture of the cash and deposit slip. Send a picture in an email to Sarah. Deposit at your local Regions Bank. All you must provide the bank is the account number to deposit cash. Please make sure you have the receipt books from the previous director. If you are not close to a local Regions Bank, please contact Sarah.

SCHOLARSHIPS

- If a church sponsors a member or members of their church that are on your staff, no application is necessary. Funds can be donated to the retreat and awarded to the staff member.
- If a family member wants to support their child/grandchild by scholarshipping their fees, they can do so. Our preference is that they give the funds directly to the student. No tax deduction will be available since goods and services are being provided to that student.
- If a staff member or freshman needs a general scholarship, they need to complete an application. There is a retreat scholarship application that is very simple and does not ask many questions. It should be made clear that scholarships cannot be awarded if no money has been given toward the retreat scholarship fund. No promises should be made to anyone requesting financial help until funds are available.
- It is preferred that half scholarships are awarded and that there is a waiting period to make sure that the student needs the scholarship.
- Retreat specialists should also assist in the decision making process regarding awarding scholarships.
- Treasurers should update any scholarship funds given and any scholarship funds awarded as they come in.
- Treasurers or Heads of Registrations should provide coupon codes for scholarships. See Ticketspice Instructions.

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MERCHANDISE SALES

REIMBURSEMENTS

REPORTING EXPENSES

AIRPORT PICKUPS

GENERAL TIPS

- Things will go wrong with the budget - such as not meeting fundraising goals or spending too much in a category. We will help you through those challenges. It is not something to worry over and get upset about. Just be sure to let us know when those challenges happen and let us support you!
- We recognize that you are a student first and we want that to remain the priority.
- When you need help, please ask for it!
- When you don't understand something - there is no dumb question.
- You can keep up with expenses on your own spreadsheet if you like so you can cross-check against reports. There is no exact system on how you have to do this. Whatever works best for you.
- Plan ahead as much as possible for retreat spending.
- Please post to GroupMe any related expenses. Email second option. Prefer not to get text of receipts, reimbursements, etc. They get lost in my personal text messages.

FEEDBACK FROM LAST YEAR'S STAFF

- Share with leadership what we spend our money on.
- Donor Cards - have them stay until they write letters and give addresses.
- During the retreat - not sure what my role was. (With this your role is to serve alongside your team in any way you can! Obviously financially to make sure that all things are taken care of and within budget, but you can ask how you can serve more specifically in other ways too during retreat.Feedback from another student Treasurer/Fundraising that might be helpful here - This role can be difficult at the retreat, because there is no fundraising and hardly any finances to watch out for. So having a willing heart; see a need meet the need, and always be humble in the mundane tasks . Lift up the staff in every moment and pursue the Lord, He will Provide satisfaction in your role while at the retreat!)
- I definitely would have been on top of asking what every role needed a lot earlier.
- I don't think there is anything for the retreat specifically. But I would have intentionally asked for more help when it came to fundraising and utilizing any connections with businesses and organizations that would be willing able to contribute in any capacity!

- I would have been more firm with donor cards. Rather than just letting people come to me with their information, I would make one meeting exclusively donated to donor cards and make sure people finished writing.
- I'm not sure how but obviously get more engagement to help with fundraising.
- Recorded all addresses so thank you cards would be easier to complete. (We encourage the Treasurer/Head of Fundraising not to be responsible themselves for writing donor cards as this responsibility is too great. We have had a few retreats try to record addresses at least so that when donations come in, they can easily make sure the student who sent the donor card has the address on file. This may be possible for smaller retreats but harder for sure for bigger retreats.)
- Keep track of all the spending yourself before the retreat in a spreadsheet and prepare to spend a lot of money during the retreat!!
- There are so many willing people to help contribute whether to fundraising or providing a space for events, all you need to do is ask! Utilize any and all connections of those on lead team and staff. Really hit the heart behind fundraising and finances, this will go a long way in helping everyone understand how to steward and be in prayer for the Lord to provide and sustain the retreat!
- Being the treasurer for the retreat and being mostly behind the scenes helping with Crew for the retreat has really taught me to serve without recognition. I feel like so often in this world we look for the praise of others for our good works, and serve with an expectation of it being noticed. Working on these things that most people wouldn't even realize need to be done for the retreat to happen just makes it that much better. Truly seeing how much goes into making it possible, from the smallest detail to the biggest. I get to experience the satisfaction that you get from serving the Lord and not expecting recognition from others, but knowing the impact that it makes for the kingdom. That is the reason I love what I do and never fail to serve in the background with a smile on my face.