



the MESSENGER

a publication of Gabriel Group, an OSG company

A Case Study in Coronavirus Response

SEEING NONPROFITS GLOBALLY SPRING INTO ACTION

to combat COVID-19 over the last few weeks has been an uplifting reminder of how organizations like yours positively impact the world. One of Gabriel Group's clients has become a shining example of the beginning-to-end diligence it has proven to take to get through an emergency of this magnitude. Read below for an inside look at how our outstanding friends at **Operation Food Search** managed to prepare, lead and persevere.

STEP 1: PREPAREDNESS

If this crisis has taught us anything, it is that preparing for the worst is severely underrated. We were blown away when we walked into OFS's offices on Wednesday, February 26, to discuss their upcoming spring campaign and found that they had already scheduled, strategized and prepared for a potential pandemic earlier that day. At this point, there were only 15 total cases in the United States — a time before the true realization that this would change the world as we know it became reality.

STEP 2: LEADERSHIP

Due to their swift execution of plans already in place, including coaching their network of pantries to provide food through drive-through service and scheduled appointments, OFS was asked to serve as the lead agency for food insecurity in the St. Louis region. In this role, they were tasked with coordinating with regional leaders to address the needs of at-risk populations, low-income communities, first responders and other personnel: an incredible responsibility to take on with so many relying on their help — one that they embraced with exceptional grace and extraordinary courage.

STEP 3: TACKLING POLICY

With daily changes being communicated by government agencies, OFS didn't waste any time by immediately activating a policy team to interpret and respond

EMERGENCY RESPONSE 2020

Help Children Facing Uncertainty

Donate now to get food to families in crisis!

We are able to leverage our relationships with food donors so every dollar donated brings in \$10 worth of food.



Dear Operation Food Search Community,

You are simply amazing. One week ago, we reached out to you about how you could help get food to kids and families during this unprecedented emergency, and you immediately responded with donations, offers to volunteer and messages to your networks about getting involved. Your generosity and caring are enabling us to respond to the needs of people who are the most vulnerable during this crisis—as well as those who find themselves having to seek help for the first time.

Now we'd like to tell you more about the work your support is empowering us to do:

1. **POLICY AND GOVERNMENT:** We are in close contact with our

accordingly. This team specifically focused on analyzing the Family First Coronavirus Response Act to determine its impact on education, amendments to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as well as the SNAP Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) in Missouri. OFS was determined to do everything they could to support those who needed immediate assistance.

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Winged Words

WITH
CHARLIE PITLYK
PRESIDENT



Friend,

I'm writing to you today with many thoughts on my mind and in my heart. The first, and most important one, is that I hope you and your neighbors are all safe. The second is how hopeful I have become watching amazing, selfless nonprofits like yours spring into action throughout this crisis. I'd like to focus on this idea in my letter to you.

We've been surrounded by fear and negativity for what seems like months. But looking up from the news on our screens into the real world paints a very different picture. There, we see incredible people bent on helping, supporting and restoring against all odds. We see them creating inspirational stories that give us relief from the hardships surrounding us. It's here we experience the light through the darkness. It's here we find you.

You have joined forces with other nonprofits in your area and around the world to coordinate fundraising initiatives, essential grants and desperately needed volunteers.

You have adjusted using any means necessary to continue providing resources and services to those who rely on them and need them the most.

You have thought outside the box to create one-of-a-kind digital experiences in order to keep your audience members happy, healthy and engaged while we wait for better days to come.

The joy you have spread and the difference you have made will not soon be forgotten after the pandemic is over. Then again, you'll continue doing much of the same when it is — because that's just who you are.

I guess all I want to say is thank you. For always putting others first, for always finding a way to make the good shine through and for never giving up on improving circumstances. We've always felt blessed to work with nonprofits during the good times, but now — it feels every more special during the tough ones.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie".

Recovering from COVID-19 As a Membership Organization

IT'S HARD TO THINK about what life will be like after we get through this, isn't it? Our professional and personal lives have been rocked by something we never saw coming, and the thought of recovering can be daunting.

But as a membership organization, be assured that your visitors will come back once your doors reopen and your community will continue to support your mission once the storm passes. Just make sure you're ready when the time comes. Read on for three vital actions you can take during the recovery process to set yourself up for success.

❖ **CONTINUE DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT.** There's no doubt that you've had to get creative regarding new ways to engage your audience through social media, email marketing and other digital channels. Now that you've increased your momentum, don't let up. Take advantage of the increased traffic you've received from the virtual tours, inside looks and fun videos you've scrambled to put together and improve upon them in the future! You know what they say ... waste not.

❖ **CELEBRATE AND FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES.** After all of the negatives that have come with the coronavirus pandemic, we all need as much positivity as we can get.

Be a source of that for your members. Celebrate with a special grand re-opening party, hold exclusive member events for those who have stuck with you through it all and throw in some promotions and premiums for members who join soon after. Communicate your gratefulness for persevering together.

❖ **MAKE YOUR ASK.** Don't forget that your organization is still very much in recovery through the process. Don't skip on telling your members and donors that. Your members are your biggest supporters, so start now to craft a special appeal to ask for help via mail, email and digital appeals. Quantify how this crisis is impacting your bottom line. When you are really in need, your members and donors will respond.

Making our way back to where we all were before COVID-19 took hold will be a long road. But know you're not in the fight alone. **Our incredible team of membership consultants is ready to help get you back up on your feet when the dust settles and we get the all-clear to move forward. REACH OUT TO US TODAY to schedule your FREE 30-minute call to prepare for your comeback and bright future ahead.**

The Fundraising Must Go On!

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES the world is throwing us as of late, Gabriel Group associates are happy to report that we've found ways to continue our Pay-It-Forward efforts as we've all become accustomed to a new normal.

AND WHO ARE WE FUNDRAISING FOR, EXACTLY?

**PINK
RIBBON
GIRLS**

No One Travels This Road Alone...™

We are very proud to announce that **Pink Ribbon Girls** has been chosen as our Pay-It-Forward partner of 2020! After two of our very own associates were diagnosed

with breast cancer this past year, it was a no-brainer to nominate and pick PRG as our charity of choice.

Founded in 2002 in Cincinnati, Ohio, Pink Ribbon Girls supports and empowers women who are currently in the fight against breast and gynecological cancers. Their mission to make the burden lighter comes in the form of many free, direct services such as healthy, delivered meals, housecleaning, rides to treatment and peer support. Pink Ribbon Girls operates in a "give where you live" capacity, meaning that although they serve many different areas around the country, all of the money that is donated stays within the community in which it is given.

SO HOW ARE WE GIVING BACK IN THE AGE OF COVID-19?



CONTINUING RAFFLE BASKETS! Distance can't stop us from vying for awesome winnings like this bunch of scratch offs from our lottery tree. (Our Account Manager Peggy came out on top by cashing these in for \$26 last month!)



MAKING EVENTS VIRTUAL! This year, every Wednesday has been designated "Hat Day" where associates can wear a hat for \$1 to benefit Pink Ribbon Girls. Here is Angela Most (l.) and her daughter rocking their favorite caps from home during St. Louis' stay-at-home order. Dave Hawkins (r.) wears his cap well to help out PRG.

CREATING NEW SWAG! One of our amazing graphic designers, Karen Williams, designed a brand-new T-shirt that shows off our 2020 partnership. Soon, associates and friends will be able purchase one with all proceeds going directly to PRG.

Although it's been tough keeping our social distance from our co-workers, we're prouder than ever to share that nothing will stand in the way of our charitable giving efforts. 2020 has had a rough start for many of us, but we're hoping and pushing on to ensure that the rest of the year brings a total of \$15,000 to our incredible partners at **PINK RIBBON GIRLS!** ▶

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STEP 4: PERSEVERANCE

While already leading the way, OFS didn't shy away from going the extra mile by doubling down on providing nutrition to children in need when schools were eventually shut down. By offering free grab 'n go meals to all children 18 years of age or younger, providing emergency food packs for the families of children who rely on free and reduced lunches and creating a map to show where these resources would be provided, OFS became a beacon in the St. Louis community during a time when many didn't know where to find their next meal.

The response we were lucky enough to see play out before our eyes from Operation Food Search and their inspiring team is something we'll never forget here at Gabriel Group. We feel so unbelievably lucky to be their partner in combatting hunger in our very own backyard, but we feel even luckier to know them as the life-changing heroes they are. **THANK YOU, OFS!** ▶



Don't miss out on our next webinar! The Impact of Storytelling

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

1:00 – 1:30 pm CST

Register at bit.ly/ImpactOfStorytelling

YOU'RE USED TO TELLING STORIES of the people your nonprofit helps every day – but what about the ones you're missing? The stories of your volunteers ... your donors ... maybe even yours?

JOIN US IN JUNE to find out how to tap into the stories you haven't been trained to share, but should be. They are your strongest channel for communicating your mission, reporting impact and building connections. Make sure you're doing it right! ▶

Connect with us!

@GabrielGroup



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We look forward to hearing from you!

If you're interested in learning more, please fill out this form and email it to anna.mculty@gabrielgroup.com or mail to:

Anna McNulty
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- ☐ I would like more information about Gabriel Group's following service offerings:
- ☐ Full-service Fundraising
 - ☐ Membership Services
 - ☐ Planned Giving Lead Generation
 - ☐ Newsletters

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| NAME | ORGANIZATION |
| POSITION | ADDRESS |
| CITY | STATE ZIP |
| PHONE | |
| EMAIL | |

Call Anna at 314.743.5796 or email anna.mculty@gabrielgroup.com to talk to us about how we can help your nonprofit thrive.

