

## Fundraising tips for No More Deaths volunteers

Raising money from your friends, family, and community is a great way to raise awareness of the work of No More Deaths, open up conversations about the time you spend volunteering, and make your volunteer experience accessible and sustainable. But many people feel uncomfortable asking others for money. This is understandable – we have deep cultural taboos against discussing money, and no one wants to feel like they're pressuring people. Instead of seeing your fundraising as an imposition, you can see it as an opportunity for people in your community to learn about and support your time volunteering.

With this in mind, No More Deaths has put together some tips and encouragement for volunteers who want to raise money for their volunteer donation through contributions.

- **Make a list of people.** Be generous and inclusive – think about everyone you know who would want to know what you're doing. This could include friends, immediate and extended family, coworkers, classmates, members of religious communities or political or social groups, people you know who work on immigration or border issues, and anyone else who'd want the opportunity to support your work.
- **Decide how to ask for contributions.** Think about how you normally communicate with the people on your list. Email is a perfectly appropriate way to ask for support, and allows you to reach a large group and link directly to the donation website. Facebook or other social networking sites are also fantastic for reaching people. For example, you can post a Facebook note requesting support and tag people your friends in the note. Making phone calls, writing letters, and asking people in person are more labor-intensive, but meaningful and appropriate if that's how you usually stay in touch.
- **Write a letter.** Make it personal – explain the humanitarian work that No More Deaths does, and why you've decided to volunteer. Write in short, clear paragraphs. The sample letter that follows gives an example that you can work from. If you're planning to talk to people on the phone or in person, write up a short script to help you.
- **Ask for money.** The most important part! Make a clear request for support and make it up front.
- **Explain how people can donate.** See the sample letter for some help with this. If people donate online, you may want to ask them to notify you so that you'll know your progress toward your goal.
- **Set a goal and show how that goal is achievable.** For example: a goal of raising \$200 takes only ten \$20 donations, or twenty \$10 donations. Don't be shy about setting a goal above the suggested amount that NMD requests for your placement. If you're ambitious, and you show how you can accomplish your goal, then others will want to help.
- **Set a deadline for contributions.** You'll probably want to make this a day or two before you leave, so that you'll know where you stand with donations when you show up.
- **Bring contributions with you to No More Deaths.** Put the cash and checks you receive in an envelope to present when you show up.
- **Acknowledge contributions.** You may want to thank each person individually when they donate, and then send out a follow-up letter or group email when you return. This is a great way to bring your stories home, and share them with people who have already shown that they care about your time with No More Deaths.

## Sample fundraising letter

Dear friends,

In a little under two weeks I'm going out to Tucson to volunteer with No More Deaths, a humanitarian group that works to end death and suffering on the US/Mexico border. I'll be working for a week at their desert camp, setting out water and food and providing medical attention to migrants crossing one of the deadliest parts of the border. No More Deaths also runs aid stations in Northern Mexico for migrants who have just suffered the trauma of repatriation, and works year-round advocating to end the systemic abuses that migrants suffer.

**I'm writing to ask you for donations to No More Deaths.** Each volunteer is asked to raise funds to cover the costs of lodging, feeding, and transporting volunteers. The goal set for my placement is \$[amount for volunteer placement]. However, I'm setting my own goal of raising **at least \$[amount]**. That's just ten donations of \$20, or twenty donations of \$10 [edit as needed], or some mix of the two - and it would be excellent to raise even more!

You can donate in three ways:

(1) Send a check made out to "UUCT-No More Deaths" to me. My address is:  
[Address here]

(2) Make a donation online at <http://www.nomoredeaths.org/index.php/Information/donate.html>  
**Important:** If you donate through the website, please note that you're making the donation "on behalf of" me, and please let me know that you've donated, so I can keep track of how much has been raised.

(3) If you want to give cash, please contact me so we can arrange to meet. I'll keep track of your name and how much you donated, and present both checks and cash to No More Deaths when I arrive. You can reach me via [email, phone, etc].

**The deadline for contributing is [pick a date before you leave!].** Please let me know as soon as you can if you'd like to contribute and how much, so I can track progress toward my goal. And feel free to share this information with friends!

If you want to know more about No More Deaths, check out their website ([www.nomoredeaths.org](http://www.nomoredeaths.org)) or contact me – I can share testimonials and news about their work.

Thanks so much for your support – it is literally vital to reducing death and suffering on the border.

[Your name here]