Making the case for a donor centered philosophy that includes a donor Personal Thank You Program

- As the Alliance continues to develop a donor-centered philosophy, the definition of fundraising as simply asking for money will give way to a more accurate definition of fundraising as a spectrum of varied and continuous communications. Time spent thanking donors and providing them with information will be recognized as equally essential to time spent asking for money.

- Research shows us that simply calling donors to thank them for their gifts is the single most effective method for retaining donors. Many research studies and tests have consistently shown that raising more money sustainably is the product of a cycle that includes providing information, asking, thanking and providing information again. Contrary to the popular adage, fundraising is not the art of asking but the art of communication that includes asking. Relying on short-term revenue tactics forfeits much more money that can be raised through relationship building.

- When we receive a donation from someone, why don’t we pick up the phone and give that person a call? Donors will be thrilled and you will feel great! Fundraising isn’t about mass volume campaigns and struggling to reach a goal. Sometimes we can secure a partner for life through a thirty-second call.

- General “fear of asking” prevents our leadership volunteers from experiencing the rewards that come with developing closer relationships with donors.

- A one-minute phone call can represent the equivalent of one year’s worth of solicitations. You never know why or what someone might give. If you wait for donors to offer major gifts before you make a special effort to acknowledge their support, most will never get there. It is direct contact and the evident gesture of respect that reinforces donors’ commitment and influences them to reach for the stars. In essence, the than you is the ask. It’s as simple as that.

- You’ll be surprised how much information about your donor you can acquire with a simple phone call.

Sources:
Donor Centered Fundraising by Penelope Burke
Donor Centered Philanthropy by Gail Perry
Simple Development Systems by Pamela Grow
Various blogs and posts by Joan Garry