



Letter Writing and Fundraising

Developing a support base (financial and prayer) is vital to the effectiveness of any outreach. It can be awkward and uncomfortable for some of us who would rather be independent and not impose ourselves on others. Yet, God designed us to be in relationships and cross-cultural ministry is no exception. By inviting others to join you in the process, you allow God to work in their lives as well as yours and share the blessing of your ministry opportunity. Raising support also reminds us of our dependence on God. The missionary experience of the apostle Paul indicates the importance and joy of having others support and encourage you.

RAISING SUPPORT:

- Pray:** Start by spending time with God. Ask Him to provide direction and wisdom, and to provide for your needs.
- Name storm:** List family and friends who may be interested in fulfilling the Great Commission with you through prayer and/or financial support.
- Write:** Compose a letter introducing the outreach opportunity with Reid Saunders Association and explain what the team will be doing in the outreach. Then invite others to partner with Reid Saunders Association by supporting you.
- Call:** Get in touch with those who have not responded to make sure they received your letter, and answer any questions or concerns.
- Thanks:** Send a personal thank-you note to each person who participated on your team, through prayer and financial support of the outreach.

Now that you have a general sense of how raising support works, let's take a detailed look at each part of the process.

Step One: Pray

Acknowledge your total dependence on God.

- Proverbs 3:5-6

Consider the following verses in light of raising support:

- Job 42:2
- Jeremiah 32:27
- Ephesians 3:20

Mediate on this aspect of God's character, and other attributes, such as His faithfulness, goodness, loving kindness, sovereignty and wisdom.

You may also want to pray and ask God for the following:

- Wisdom: James 1:5
- Provision: Philippians 4:19
- Peace: Philippians 4:6-7

As you spend time in prayer, commit your support raising to God, and ask Him to use this process for his purposes and glory.

Step Two: Name storm

Start developing an initial list of people who might be interested in partnering with you. As with brainstorming, in name storming, there is one cardinal rule—anything goes. No name is unqualified. Don't decide for someone else if he or she is interested. If you limit yourself to those you think can give, you might be prematurely disqualifying those whom God wants to partner with you. Later you will need to prioritize which people to contact first, but for now, don't disqualify anyone. A good goal is 30 names.

Step Three: Write

The main focus of the letter should be on building a personal relationship with those to whom the letter is sent. Writing a support letter does not need to be a dreaded task. Think about the missionary letters you may have seen from people you know. What kind of things do you enjoy hearing? Make it creative and fun. Enhance your content by using pictures, a map, and creative stationery. Keep it to one page so it'll have a better chance of being read.

We've provided several materials to read over while writing your letter. Look through the ideas presented, consider the guidelines, and then add your own personal spin to your letter.

Basic Guidelines to Keep in Mind:

- Give your letter a specific date: March 4, 2020; not March 2020
- Start off with a personal greeting. Ask some questions or refer to a shared experience. It's important to give each letter a personal touch.
- Bring your reader up to date with what God has been doing in your life. If you haven't seen some of your potential ministry partners for a while, this is especially important.
- Educate your reader. Share how you became involved in your current ministry activities and how God led you to join this outreach.
- Discuss the purpose of the outreach, the ministry of RSA, and some information about your destination.
- Explain your need. Share specific ways that the reader can participate in this ministry through prayer and financial support of the outreach and your participation in it.
- Ask your reader to respond. Give a specific timeline, and encourage him to call with any questions or concerns.

- Acknowledge your relationship again with an emphasis on thanks, appreciation, gratitude, partnership and commitment.
- Close the letter and sign it.

Here is a simple, three paragraph format to follow:

Paragraph #1—Briefly update your life

Let those who will be supporting you know what God has been doing in your life and open the door to lead into this outreach opportunity. This is especially important if you are reaching out for support from people whom you may not keep up with daily. You don't have to be overly detailed here, but giving them something personal opens the door to having them support you as you go out.

Paragraph #2—Explain the trip and why you are participating

Clearly spell out the outreach opportunity with Reid Saunders Association that you are participating in, including dates, important details, and an explanation of the purpose of the trip and why you decided to go. Also mention what your specific involvement on the outreach will be, whether it's being a part of the drama team, medical clinic, or leading worship, people like to hear about what YOU will be doing. If you're not sure, don't stress about it. Give an overview of the ways the team will serve, through medical clinics, festivals, pastor's conference, etc.

Paragraph #3—Invite people to join Reid Saunders Association by supporting you

Explain how people can be involved. Invite people to pray for the outreach and for you (include a specific request or two). Let them know you are raising money for Reid Saunders Association outreach expenses and you are counting on God to raise a specific amount (include the actual amount) toward your goal. Money raised above your personal goal will go toward outreach needs. Invite them to participate in the financial need by sending checks in the enclosed envelope payable to: RSA with the wording: preference for (your name) . Putting a stamp on this envelope makes returning it much easier. Emphasize that you and your supporters are a team in this effort. They are sending you through prayer and contributing towards expenses. Remind them that donations to Reid Saunders Association are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

We've also included some sample letters. Allow them to help get you thinking, but make sure your own letter is from your heart.

Step Four: Call

After two weeks of mailing your letters, get in touch with those who have not responded to make sure they received your letter, and answer any questions or concerns. Make sure the phone call is not only about soliciting support. You want to be making a connection with your supporters.

Step Five: Thanks

When receiving responses, make sure to write a personal thank you to each supporter. You are welcome to contact Reid Saunders Association to receive a list of all who have contributed to your

participation in the outreach. This confirms to them you received their gift and shows gratitude. After returning from the outreach, send a second thank you letter and recognize them for the role they played. In your letter, tell them about what you did, how God worked, and some lessons you learned, and the way the people were impacted. Just as with the support letter, make your thank you letter personal and creative. Your thank you can be in the form of a written letter or postcard and may include pictures from your trip. This letter should be sent as soon as you can put your experience into words.

We recommend having a response card for your supporters to return with their checks. Please ask the RSA International Department for that template to include with any letters you are sending out.

SAMPLE LETTER

March 3, 2020

Dear Family and Friends,

I have had a very growing year. My classes at school are going well, and I am excited to see what God has in store for me through the rest of my school term. I also want to let you know about an exciting opportunity I have this summer! I will be going with the Reid Saunders Association on an outreach to Valencia, Venezuela. We will be going for about 2 weeks, leaving on August 2. Please be praying with us that we will be effective in our ministry there.



We will be serving in an orphanage, having medical clinics, and doing street outreach. We will also be distributing clothing that we are taking with us. We will be there from August 2-17. We will have several staff members from Reid Saunders Association with us who will be providing ministry oversight as we work with the people of Venezuela.

One of the ways that you can support this outreach is to pray. Pray for the outreach ministry we will be performing, pray for our team to be unified, and pray for me personally. Only with prayer support will I be able to bless the people we are ministering to in Venezuela. The next way that you can support me is financially. Each team member is responsible for raising \$3,000 towards the cost of the outreach. Please pray with me that the funds I need to raise for the outreach costs come in.

Gifts to Reid Saunders Association, with a note of preference for my portion of the funds to raise, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

If you will commit to pray, please check the appropriate box on the form below. If you are able to make a gift to Reid Saunders Association to help me raise my funds, please fill out the form below, make your check payable to Reid Saunders Association, and indicate in the memo field your interest in helping me raise my funding. If I am unable to participate in the outreach, your gifts will be used to support this and other outreaches with Reid Saunders Association.

May God bless you richly as you consider your involvement in this outreach!

In Christ,
Joe Bob
Joe Bob