



# The Service Collaborative of Western New York

Public Relations Campaign  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Service Collaborative of Western New York is a non-profit organization that serves the Greater Buffalo community through different transformational service programs. TSCWNY consists of four different programs: Americorps Builds Lives through Education (ABLE), Opportunity Corps, ServiceCorps, and VISTA. Each different program is granted restricted funds through the government, who has recently cut back on these funds. The Service Collaborative, as a whole, does not have any sort of unrestricted funds at their disposal in order to maintain success or grow within their organization.

We've established a set of goals that include increasing the visibility of TSCWNY throughout different local businesses and encouraging them to be a donor to the organization. Another goal is to plan and execute a fundraising event to generate discretionary funds. Within the first ten weeks of our campaign, our objectives are as follows: Contacting 175 business owners to have an effect on increasing the awareness of TSCWNY's purpose, Contacting 80 business owners to have an effect on the generating interest toward TSCWNY, and To generate 10 corporate sponsors donating a total value of \$50,000 in discretionary funds.



To meet our goals and achieve our objectives, different communication tactics have been carefully established. One tactic in place is having spokespeople of TSCWNY meet face-to-face with different business owners that are target donors. These meetings will be informative on the organization itself while promoting the benefits in being associated as a donor with TSCWNY. Another tactic is planning a fundraising event in the form of a race, titled, "Race for Service." This event will raise awareness and visibility in the area while also attracting donors to sponsors the event.

To measure the effectiveness and success of the campaign, evaluation methods are put in place. The effectiveness of the plan is based on to the extent of which each objective is achieved. By keeping tabs on any feedback generated after meetings with businesses and by counting the amount of funds raised from the Race For Service, TSCWNY will know if our campaign was effective in reaching their goals.



## PHASE ONE: FORMATIVE RESEARCH

### *Step 1: Analyzing the Situation*

The Service Collaborative of Western New York is an independent non-profit organization that creates opportunities for all individuals to become involved in helping their community through transformational services and civic responsibilities. TSCWNY acts as a host to 4 different, government-funded programs that each provide an individual the chance to serve their community, and at the same time, earn funds for their own further education or receive a GED.

The funds received by the government to run the different service programs are restricted grants-to be spent exactly how and where the government wants them to be. The Service Collaborative has no source of personal, unrestricted funds to be used toward operational costs for the organization. Instead, they take small amounts of money out of each different government-grant to pay for the necessities that keep the organization afloat. In addition to the lack of raw funds, the government has recently cut finances toward all programs at a national level- leaving the organization with even less money toward operational costs. This has become the main problem for any hopes of growth or improvements within The Service Collaborative.

If the organization continues to depend on restricted funds rather than implementing a successful plan to gain *unrestricted* funds, the organization will miss out on opportunities to grow. The ability to add new programs will continue to be limited, which will in-turn leave the needs of other critical impact areas throughout Western New York, unaddressed. Lastly, without access to unrestricted funds, the organization will be unable to update or increase resources such as technology throughout the organization, among other operational costs necessary to grow.



## *Step 2: Analyzing the Organization*

The Service Collaborative of WNY provides different services within its separate programs. In the AmeriCorps Builds Lives through Education (ABLE) program, members (volunteers) serve students in grades K-12 through tutoring and out-of-school programs. In the Opportunity Corps program, committed to fighting poverty, members serve economically disadvantaged adults through financial literacy education and training sessions. In the ServiceCorps program, members assist low-income families or individuals by improving the community through community revitalization, environmental conservation and hunger elimination efforts. Lastly, in the VISTA program, members serve local organizations that serve the unmet needs of low-income or impoverished individuals/families. In a similar VISTA program, Serve NY VISTA, members serve organizations throughout NYS that serve the unmet needs of veterans, active military personnel and military families. Members of VISTA serve through activities such as fund development, community education and more. Depending on the program, members that serve can be compensated for their work by TSCWNY's offering of training and certification courses, such as earning a GED, or money toward college.

The Service Collaborative of WNY lacks visibility outside of other state and national non-profit organizations. Many individuals within the public and private sector are unaware of this organization and the different services it provides. However, the reputation and quality of the performance of the both TSCWNY as a whole and the services it provides, is held high with those who *are* aware.

To communicate and inform the public on the organization, The Service Collaborative has a basic brochure available, and utilizes websites such as Facebook and Twitter, along with their own personal website that includes a blog. However, the public is commonly confused on what exactly 'The Service Collaborative of Western New York' is. This misunderstanding is due to efforts in explaining



the different programs under 'The Service Collaborative' name.

TSCWNY is satisfied with their reputation but recognize that in order to continue in growing and maintaining that reputation, there is a need to expand the visibility of their organization so that more people become familiar with the unique and rewarding services offered.



### *Step 3: Analyzing the Publics*

The Service Collaborative alone does not provide any one specific service and instead, exists as a consulting force between 4 different service programs. This makes understanding and identifying the key publics of this organization a complicated process. The following 4 categories of publics provide insight into the key publics relevant and linked to TSCWNY.

#### *1. Customers:*

The **primary customers** are those who receive the services of the organization. The Service Collaborative's primary customers are the actual service programs that operate under TSCWNY:

- Americorps Builds Lives through Education (ABLE)
- Opportunity Corps
- Service Corps
- WNY Americorps VISTA & Serve NY VISTA

These programs rely on The Service Collaborative to apply for grants and provided volunteers.

The individuals who are in need and benefit from these services are **secondary customers** to The Service Collaborative. Characteristics of these secondary customers are:

- Students in grades K-12 in Western New York (Customers of ABLE)
- Individuals earning less than \$15,000 annually within the Greater Buffalo Area (Customers of both Opportunity Corps and Service Corps)
- Non-profit organizations or local, state or federal agencies that focus on serving individuals earning less than \$15,000 annually within the Greater Buffalo Area. (Customers of WNY Americorps)
- Non-profit organizations or local, state or federal agencies that focus to serve active duty military personnel, military families and veterans living below the national poverty line. (Customers of Serve NY VISTA)



## 2. Producers:

The paid employees and volunteers within each service program under The Service Collaborative are examples of producers of the organization. Without employees to manage each program and without volunteers to generate services, these programs could not serve to their customers- (the secondary customers of TSC.)

The National Government grants the funds needed to run the different service programs under The Service Collaborative. A small amount of these grants are able to contribute to the necessary costs in operating The Service Collaborative (rent, bills etc.), which makes the government a distant, *secondary type of producer* to The Service Collaborative.

## 3 & 4. Enablers and Producers:

The government has the ability to increase, decrease or completely stop the flow funds to the different programs under TSC.

As an enabler, the government works as an ally to TSCWNY. The Service Collaborative must write a ‘Request For Proposal’ (RFP grants) to the government in order to receive any funds toward the service programs from them. TSC and the government share the same interest in serving the community and work together toward that.

However, the government is also a limiter to The Service Collaborative. The government is constantly looking to cut back on spending essentially anywhere possible, including these service programs, and recently *have* done just that. In addition, the grants received by the government are restricted funds, where every dollar is limited to how and where the government states it must be. The power that the government has over each service program within TSC has a direct effect on the overall performance and growth of this organization.



## PHASE TWO: STRATEGY

### *Step 4: Establishing Goals and Objectives*

Goals and objectives are equally important while serving separate functions. A goal provides direction and guidance when planning actions or reactions. An objective in contrast provides concrete, measurable definitions highlighting the desired end result. Aside from these two, it is important for The Service Collaborative to clearly understand what position it currently holds in the minds of its key publics, and work towards making the position to be what it should.

Three different categories of goals are important; reputation, relationship and task.

**Reputation** goals are currently identified as:

- Increase The Service Collaborative's visibility among local business owners.

**Relationship** goals are currently identified as unessential after evaluating and judging that The Service Collaborative has a strong relationship with each of its national programs.

**Task** goals are currently identified as:

- Execute a fundraising event to generate discretionary funds.
- Identify a group of local business owners to financially support TSCWNY.

Due to the unique environment The Service Collaborative provides in the Western New York region, the only perceived competition it has, is against other government funded services and program. Therefore we have identified TSCWNY's position applies universally to customers, producers, enablers and limiters:

*"The Service Collaborative of Western New York wants to be known as the most essential non-profit service to individuals with low incomes in the entire Western New York."*



**Objectives** for target key publics are listed as follows:

**Business Owners:**

- To have an effect on awareness of business owners; specifically to increase their comprehension of the purpose and results of The Service Collaborative (175 business owners contacted within the first ten weeks of the campaign.)
- To have an effect on acceptance; specifically to generate interest in The Service Collaborative continuing to be able to grow their local and national programs (80 business owners contacted within the first ten weeks of the campaign.)
- To have an effect on action; specifically to generate ten corporate sponsors donating a total value of \$50,000 in discretionary funds within the first ten weeks of the campaign.



## *Step 5: Formulating Action and Response Strategies*

### **Proactive Strategy**

- Take advantage of the many newsworthy activities associated with a fundraising event.
- Involve the sponsors in fundraising events.
- Enhance alliances with local non-profits who share key publics with potential sponsors.

### **Reactive Strategy**

- No reactive strategy is anticipated, because a fundraising event is unlikely to generate opposition or criticism.



## *Step 6: Developing the Message Strategy*

Throughout its campaign to improve visibility, strengthen corporate relationships, and generate discretionary funds, The Service Collaborative of Western New York will use the following two spokespeople:

- Adam Bartoszek, Volunteer Center Manager at The Service Collaborative of WNY.
  - Mr. Bartoszek will be perceived as credible because of his expertise within TSCWNY and because he was specifically selected to work on this campaign. He is a confident speaker who presents himself as thoughtful and surefooted. This will set the potential sponsors at ease and inspire their confidence in funding TSCWNY.
- Adam Goldfarb, VISTA Program Manager at The Service Collaborative of WNY.
  - Mr. Goldfarb is equally knowledgeable of TSCWNY. He presents himself as relaxed and enthusiastic adding a positive and successful implication to any presentation. Mr. Goldfarb's loyalty and focus should dispel any doubts within the minds of potential sponsors.
- A note should be made that while Mr. Bartoszek and Mr. Goldfarb are excellent spokespersons individually, care should be taken when they are planning to speak together. Suggestions include clearly defining beforehand which topics will be presented by whom, as well as who to default to if an unexpected topic is discussed.



## Key Message

The Service Collaborative of Western New York will combine rational and emotional message appeals in its message.

- **Rational Appeal-** The Service Collaborative will present two types of appeals:
  - A factual proposition asserting that the support and financial expansion of The Service Collaborative is essential to the repair and growth of Western New York communities
  - These messages will include statistics, personal endorsements, and specific examples of hypothetical local community members who benefit from the sponsor's support. They also will include visual elements such as photographs, charts, and graphs.
- **Emotional Appeal-** The Service Collaborative will present appeals to positive emotions, particularly the virtues of altruism and giving to members of the community who will in turn contribute to their societies.



## PHASE THREE: TACTICS

### *Step 7: Selecting Communication Tactics*

To achieve the goals and objectives established, it's important to carefully select the most effective communication tactics. The Service Collaborative of WNY will execute specific organized sets of tasks to conduct a successful fundraising event, as well as acquire business owners as a new key public.

#### **Interpersonal Tactic 1: Meetings with business owners**

In order to gain funds necessary to The Service Collaborative, building relationships with business owners who can potentially donate to the organization is essential. To establish these relationships, Mr. Bartoszek and Mr. Goldfarb will set up a face-to-face meeting with business owners. These meetings will inform business owners on the different benefits of being associated with TSCWNY, while also providing an overview of the different programs the organization provides and how they benefit the community. A set packet of information will be provided that include this basic information, as well as a list of upcoming events with TSCWNY. At the end of each meeting, it's important that Mr. Bartoszek and Mr. Goldfarb provide their business cards and encourage each business owner to contact them with any further unaddressed questions or information.



### **Interpersonal Tactic 2: “Race for Service”**

The Service Collaborative will host a fundraising event in the form of a race. In order to raise money from this event, TSCWNY must have established relationships with business owners as potential donors. This event will also give TSCWNY a chance to educate the community on what kind of services they provide, increasing their visibility.

### **Organizational Media Tactic 1: *Informational packets***

As mentioned in the first interpersonal tactic, at each meeting with the businesses, a packet containing basic, important information about The Service Collaborative will be provided. Each packet will consist of a brief overview of the organization and each different service program, as well as a list of any upcoming events within TSCWNY. During a meeting, the informational packet serves as a visual for the audience to read along with, and serves as material they can keep and refer back to.

### **Organizational Media Tactic 2: *Invitations to “Race For Service” Event***

Invitations to each business to the “Race For Service” event will be mailed out to local businesses encouraging their attendance and donations.

### **News Media Tactic: *Event listing and Press Release***

Sending an event listing of The Race For Service to a various media outlets will increase awareness throughout the community and generate participants. An event listing also can potentially lead to a feature release, providing a brief overview of who The Service Collaborative is. This positive advertising in the media can help more people understand the services they offer. A few weeks prior to The Race For Service, a press release will be sent out to increase awareness again throughout the WNY community.



### **Advertising and Promotional Media Tactic:**

Promoting and advertising tactics are vital in a successful campaign. The first step will be creating and sending out the invitations, these invitations will promote the fundraising event, while also gain visibility in the area. The next tactic is meeting the set business owners and giving them a brochure on what TSCWNY is and what it can offer. Using both of these advertising tools will help promote both the event while also promoting TSC to potential donors.



## *Step 8: Implementing the Strategic Plan*

**Tactic 1:** Meetings with Business Owners (potential donors)

**Public:** Business Owners

**Objective:** Build personal relationships with businesses who are potential donors. Helping businesses understand what The Service Collaborative has to offer them and how their donations can better their cause.

**Strategy:** At each meeting, the designated public will be given a packet and brochure. These materials will go along with presenting the idea of being a donor to TSCWNY. The meeting will be a basic summary of who TSCWNY is and how they benefit the community. More importantly, explaining how donating will help keep their unique services up and running, will not only benefit the region and organization, but the donors themselves.

**Evaluation Methods:** Thank You letters sent out by mail to each business within one week after the meeting. Each personalized Thank You note will also include a short survey, to be sent back to TSCWNY in helping the evaluation of acceptance.

**Cost:** Low Cost, Paper supplies for packets/brochures/Thank You notes.



**Tactic 2:** “Race for Service”

**Public:** Local businesses and WNY community

**Objective:** To attract possible donors while also help build better visibility of The Service Collaborative to its WNY public. This will also be an event that will be fun for its attendees as well as informative to what TSC does for the community.

**Strategy:** Invitations will be sent out to possible donors in the area to help raise awareness for his event. Posters and brochures will also be made specifically for the race. Press releases will also be another contributing factor to publicizing this event. The race will have 10 teams, all consisting of 5 members, 6 corporate teams, 3 small business teams, and 1 Americorps team. Teams will compete to finish the race by completing service projects as they go. Participation will be of cost, and prices will be set by level (corporate, small business, etc).

**Evaluation:** After the event, we will look at what new revenue has been brought in as well as what new relationships have been built with the business owners and gain of visibility in the area.

**Cost:** Permits (\$200) Food and beverages (beer, food trucks) Tent, Band(paid for by donations), brochures, posters etc.



*Strategic Implications:*

When applied correctly, these tactics will bring about a positive response for TSCWNY. Using these tools in our promotional campaign will achieve our long-term goal of gaining funds for The Service Collaborative. Using the media as well by setting up an event listing will also bring more spotlights on the fundraiser. Using the media along with other tactics will increase this organization's chance of gaining new donors. Helping gain awareness of the unique services offered by TSCWNY, by meeting key publics (business owners) and inviting them to the fundraiser, will help build new relationships necessary. Creating new relationships and educating those who do not know about the transformational services this organization offers will entice different businesses to donate funds to The Service Collaborative of Western New York.



**Campaign Budget :\$1000**

**How its spent:**

**Tactic 1:** Meetings with Business Owners (potential donors )

Packets: \$.05 per page x10	\$0.50
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Brochures (pre made no cost)	\$0.00
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<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$0.50</u>	—	—	—	—	—
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**Tactic 2:** “Race for Service” Fundraising event

Permits:	\$200
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Tent (donated)	\$0.00
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Food truck(s) (also donated)	\$0.00
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Band (donated funds)	\$0.00
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Event Brochures: 150	\$55.88
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Posters: 30	\$276.70
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Press Releases	\$0.00
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Invitations: 250	\$38.38
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Postage: 250	\$80.00
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<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$650.96</u>
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**Overall total amount spent : \$651.46**



## PHASE FOUR: EVALUATIVE

### *Step 9: Evaluating the Strategic Plan*

Evaluation methods are used to measure the effectiveness and success of the completed strategic plan, based on to the extent of which each objective is achieved.

#### Steps in evaluating the following objectives:

**Awareness Objective:** “*To have an effect on awareness of business owners; specifically to increase their comprehension of the purpose and results of The Service Collaborative (175 business owners contacted within the first ten weeks of the campaign.)*”

#### Evaluation Techniques:

- Note the size of each business that have been met with.
- Analyze message content discussed by TSCWNY spokespeople and informational packets presented at each meeting; noting their accuracy and the use of TSCWNY’s contact information.



**Acceptance Objective:** “*To have an effect on acceptance; specifically to generate interest in The Service Collaborative continuing to be able to grow their local and national programs (80 business owners contacted within the first ten weeks of the campaign.)*”

Evaluation Techniques:

- After meeting with businesses, a Thank You note will be sent through mail within 3 days after meeting. Attached to the Thank You note, includes a brief response card be sent back to TSCWNY, asking the following question: “*On a scale of 1-5, How important do you think The Service Collaborative is to the WNY community?*” These cards will provide room for any additional comments/questions/concerns necessary.
- Record all feedback from businesses after meetings regarding requests for more information and expressing interests.



**Action Objective:** “To have an effect on action; specifically to generate ten corporate sponsors donating a total value of \$50,000 in discretionary funds within the first ten weeks of the campaign.”

Evaluation Techniques:

- Count the number of acquired corporate sponsors.
- Count the amount of money donated to TSCWNY from each corporate sponsor from the Race

For Service fundraising event.

In addition to evaluating each tactic’s success, after the Race For Service, all individuals who contributed \$1,000.00+ to The Service Collaborative of Western New York should be communicated with once every three months with a 2-3 page organization newsletter. Each newsletter will provide information recent accomplishments, present goals and future events. This ensures to maintain the awareness, acceptance and actions within the new relationships TSCWNY has built.