



Job Description: Acquisitions Chair

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VOLUNTEER POSITION: Benefit Auction Acquisitions Chair

Purpose: Coordination of donations of items and certificates to be presented for bid at the Auction.

TIME COMMITMENT: August - May

DESCRIPTION: See information month by month below.

GUIDELINES:

- **Jason Roder** is your point person and administrator for all documents. He has done these tasks for many years and is familiar with the timelines. However, YOU, as the Acquisitions Chair, will need to REQUEST from Jason all edits, updates, printings, and tasks that need to be accomplished. Be prepared to follow up with him to ensure on-time completion. Most of the follow-up can be accomplished in the regular Auction Committee meetings.
- There is a list (report generated from our database **NeonOne**) of about 250 businesses that have consistently donated to the Benefit Auction in the past 5 years. This list is referenced as the “Renewables” list. Request for Jason to print the **Renewables** list from **NeonOne** database and provide a spreadsheet for you to work with. When you’re reviewing the **Renewables** list, if you find any businesses that are closed or have moved, let Jason know to make any updates in the database or remove them from the printed list. We always keep the business information and data in **NeonOne**, but we will not print a mailing label for them.
- All item donations should be NEW items (or very much like new). In previous years we have sent a survey of types of Auction items families would like to bid on at the event (themes of baskets, certificates, experiences, etc.) so we can target/request those items from our donors.



- We have also provided families with a pre-developed list of specific items for themed baskets so they can choose to donate one or two items that can be put together with other families' donations to make a basket or donate an entire complete basket. Sometimes we receive donations of items that are random items or small and we have to be creative in how we group random items into a biddable basket.
- Every item that is donated must have a **Donation Sheet** filled out with it so information can be entered accurately into the database for each donation. Jason usually prints the Donation Sheets on blue paper, and they are part of the packets provided to parents at the Fall and Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences. Copies will be available at the school as well.
- Steppingstone's EIN is #38-2377598. You'll need this number as well as the school's address and contact to enter into any online forms to request donations. Use: 650 Church St UNIT 119, Plymouth, MI 48170.
- **info@steppingstoneschool.org** email account - Jason will receive all information at that email address. See example of information for online form requests. You may also need a copy of Steppingstone's proof of non-profit status 501(c)3 letter.
- Auction collateral includes the **Save-the-Date Postcard, Benefit Auction Posters**, and **Invitation Postcards**. The **Winterfest Tri-fold** will also have the Winterfest raffle items and information on the deadline to purchase **Early Bird Benefit Auction** tickets.
- The **Ask letter** is mailed to the **Renewables** list asking for donations to our Benefit Auction fundraiser. There is one letter for the mailing, but there may be a need for creation of customized versions of the Ask letter for sending or emailing to specific businesses or individuals requesting a donation of specific items.
- The **Auction Tri-fold** brochure document is usually mailed with the **Ask Letter** and has all the information about the current year's Benefit Auction event, including how to donate items or certificates, levels of sponsorship and sponsorship of specific auction needs (i.e.: Dessert, Entertainment, Dinner). The **Benefit Auction Tri-fold** also has information on how to advertise in the **Keepsake Catalog** and purchase tickets. Let Jason know what needs to be edited and updated in the Benefit Auction Tri-fold.
- Winterfest Raffle (and student variety show) is an important event for Early Bird ticket sales for the Benefit Auction. Be sure to communicate to parents that there are several options for ticket sales, Individual tickets, and Tables of 10. Parents can "purchase" tickets by putting the cost of the Benefit Auction tickets on their school account and pay monthly, as long as the tickets are paid in full one month before the Benefit Auction event. Tickets can be sold at the Early Bird pricing (until the Winterfest event) as long as the commitment to purchase tickets has been confirmed with the school. Tickets do not need to be paid in full by the



Winterfest event date, but DO need to be paid 2 weeks prior to the Benefit Auction event.

Monthly Duties:

September:

- At the **First Day Orientation** and the **Welcome Back Potluck** introduce yourself to the parents as the Auction Acquisitions Chair and let them know if they, their families, or their companies would like to donate anything to the Benefit Auction, they can contact you.
- Review the **Ask letter**, and the **Auction Tri-fold** brochure. Let Jason know what needs to be edited and changed in these documents. Decide a cut-off date for donations. Usually, the cut-off date is right before the basket wrapping event so all items can be received before that date. Coordinate with the Auction Committee Chair and the Auction Committee to have everything proof-read.
- Coordinate with Auction Committee and Winterfest Chair to decide on items for the 1st & 2nd prizes for the Winterfest Raffle event. (3rd prize is usually 2 tickets to the Auction event). Solicit donations for these items. Typically, the 1st prize value is around \$500 value. 2nd prize is around \$300 value, and the ticket value is \$170. For previous prizes, Chateau Chantal winery in Traverse City has donated a VIP wine tasting for 6 people and the committee has purchased (with donated funds) a gift card for either Chateau Chantal's restaurant /shop or a Hotels.com gift card is put with this prize. For the previous 2nd prize, The Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea has donated 2 show tickets and The Common Grill has donated a gift card for dinner. The Common Grill is right next to The Purple Rose Theatre.
- Jason needs to know exactly what the Winterfest raffle prizes are, and their values are to before beginning the application process for the **Winterfest Raffle License** from the State of Michigan. As soon as the prizes are confirmed, communicate the prizes to Jason.
- Review the **Winterfest Tri-fold** showcasing the raffle prizes. Let Jason know what needs to be edited and changed in this document. Coordinate with the Auction Committee Chair and the Auction Committee to have everything proof-read. The goal is to have this ready for the **Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences** along with raffle ticket packets to send home with the students.



- Coordinate with Auction Committee Chair to define the **Pick-A-Prize** auction raffle items. Typically, there are three Pick-A-Prize raffle items at the Benefit Auction:
 - A Gift Card Tree (typically 15-20 gift cards with a total value of \$300)
 - Chocolate Basket (including donations from local chocolate shops and a variety of chocolate items, value about \$300)
 - Wine or Beer basket (value about \$300)
- Jason needs to apply for an additional alcohol license with the raffle license for the Pick-A-Prize raffle at the Benefit Auction. He needs a list of exactly which beers or wines (by brand name) will be in the raffle ASAP.
- Coordinate with the Auction Committee and decide if there are going to be any other raffles at the Benefit Auction event. In the past, we have raffled a 1-week stay in a condo in Orlando and Disney Park passes. The condo stay was donated by a Steppingstone family, and the Disney Park passes were earned by Steppingstone as part of the “Points of Light” organization for community service work on the Rouge River testing days. It takes time and effort to set up the paperwork with the donation organizations and coordinate the school’s activities. Early planning is important.

October:

- Coordinate with Jason to print the **Ask Letter, Benefit Auction and Winterfest Tri-folds**, and mailing labels. Check with Jason to make sure he has postage for the quantity of letters being mailed. Stuff envelopes (you can always request assistance from a Board member for this task) and mail.
- Web search “Detroit area” or “Michigan” donation request forms online to identify businesses that offer online donation request forms that can be filled out to request a donation for items or gift certificates. Many Michigan-based and Detroit area businesses provide these online forms that are very quick and easy to submit. Some examples of businesses that have online donation request forms are:
 - Germack
 - Slow’s
 - Famous Dave’s
 - Detroit Symphony Orchestra
 - 313 Presents
 - Soaring Eagle Waterpark
 - MI International Speedway
- Any businesses using **Donation X** as a platform for tracking donations can be reviewed through the Donation X website.



- Confirm Jason has received Winterfest raffle license and request him to print raffle tickets. Prepare the Winterfest raffle ticket bundles & packets for Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences. Coordinate with Board of Trustee volunteers and Jason. Include the Benefit Auction Save-the-Date Postcard in the packet for parents.
- Coordinate with Winterfest Chair, Promotions Manager, and Board of Trustees to get prizes for student top raffle ticket sellers (gift cards or lunch with a teacher).

November:

- Request a list/report from Jason of Auction item donations received to date. Review which businesses need follow up communication, phone calls, or emails to remind them of our donation request.
- Jason will keep all certificates (non-item donations) in a lock box at school. These certificates should also be listed on the Auction Item Donation report.
- Provide a **NEWSLETTER** reminder for parents about Early Bird ticket sales pricing until Winterfest. Also requesting item donations from parents & families (specific list of items).
- Attend **Science Fair** and announce Winterfest raffle prizes, sell raffle tickets, offer Early Bird Benefit Auction ticket sales, and request any specific items that parents may be able to donate. Share info on any donated items that we have received in order to build excitement for the auction event.

December:

- Provide a **NEWSLETTER** reminder for parents about Early Bird ticket sales pricing until Winterfest. Explain payment for tickets on the school account.
- Attend Winterfest on December 15 and sell Early Bird Benefit Auction tickets.

January:

- Request a list/report from Jason of auction item donations received to date. Review which businesses need follow up communication, phone calls, or emails to remind them of our donation request. Some businesses wait until after the first of the year to send donations, so you should start to see some items coming in.



- Coordinate with Auction Committee to target specific donors for donation of unique items.
- Coordinate with the Auction Committee Chair to arrange a location for storage of donated items.
- Coordinate with the Auction Committee to decide which travel packages to offer. We have worked with a company called **Silent Auction Vacations** in previous years.
- Provide a **NEWSLETTER** reminder for parents about donating gift cards they may have received over the holidays and won't use. Provide updated Benefit Auction ticket sales and Explain payment for tickets on the school accounts.
- Confirm all wine and beer donations for Pick-A-Prize and silent auction baskets. Provide Jason with the final list of the exact wines and beers for the Pick-A-Prize raffle and silent auction baskets. Follow up with Jason to make sure he has everything he needs to get the license applications submitted.
- Coordinate with the Auction Committee Chair to arrange a date for the basket wrapping event. The date should be about 3 weeks before the Benefit Auction event so that any items that we have not received or baskets that need small additional items can be obtained.

February:

- Request a list/report from Jason of auction item donations received to date. Review which businesses need follow up communication, phone calls, or emails to remind them of our donation request.
- Provide a **NEWSLETTER** reminder for parents about Benefit Auction ticket sales and explain payment for tickets on the school account. Also remind parents of the date for the basket wrapping event. Include information about the cut-off date for accepting items donations to make sure you have all items before the basket wrap date. Include the Benefit Auction Invitation Postcard information.
- Web search "Detroit area" or "Michigan" donation request forms online to identify businesses that offer online donation request forms that can be filled out to request a donation for items or gift certificates. Some Michigan-based and Detroit area businesses will only consider requests that are 6-8 weeks from the event date.



- Coordinate with the Auction Committee to confirm the Live Auction Items. Ensure each Live Auction item has a “write-up” explaining the details to the winners. The write-up **Certificates** will be stored in Jason’s lock-box. Past Live Auction items:
 - Personal Iron Chef
 - Dumplings & Hot Pot with David
 - Month of Monday Dinners
 - Germany “bed & Breakfast” (confirm donation from alum parent)
 - Elementary Keepsake Artwork
 - PHS Work Crew
 - Any unique / high value experiential item
- Request a mailing list from Jason of all families and previous individuals/attendees to the Auction event in a spreadsheet. This should be about 400 names. Request that Jason print mailing labels. Mail the Benefit Auction Invitation Postcard.

March:

- Coordinate with the Auction Committee Chair to confirm the date for the **basket wrapping event**. Any items that we have not received or baskets that need small additional items should be obtained.
- Provide a **NEWSLETTER** reminder for parents about Benefit Auction ticket sales and explain payment for tickets on the school account. Also remind parents of the date for the basket wrapping event.
- Request a list from Jason of auction item donations AND the **Auction Lot List**. Jason should be able to start putting the Lots together at this time. This list provides a “Lot” of items that may have been donated from several individuals or businesses that have been grouped together in a single basket. The Lot list should also include Live Auction items, Pick-A-Prize items, Certificates, and silent auction baskets.
- At the **Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences**, provide a list of specific items, baskets, or gift cards that parents may be able to donate. Have the Benefit Auction Invitation Postcards available.
- Request for Jason to print a list/report that divides donated items into Auction Lots. Review the Auction Lot list and make sure items are grouped into the correct baskets and make corrections as needed.
- Coordinate and review with Auction Committee the **VALUES** for Lot items to be sure that they are not too high or too low. Sometimes donors tend to over-value their donations, and the Lot pricing can be inaccurate. Also review the **MINIMUM BID** prices for all Lot items and be sure that they are set to what you want them to be.



- Attend **Social Studies Expo** and announce Benefit Auction tickets are still available! Share info on any donated items that we have received in order to build excitement for the Auction event. Have Invitation Postcards available.
- Coordinate with Keepsake Catalog editor to make sure all raffles/items and ticket prices are listed in the catalog. Share photos of any baskets and descriptions for the Keepsake Catalog. Communicate any advertising that needs to be included in the Keepsake Catalog. Provide a list of the Live Auction items for the Keepsake Catalog.
- Confirm receipt of all the Certificates that Jason has in the lock box and identify which gift cards will be part of the Pick-A-Prize gift card tree.
- Coordinate with the Auction Committee/Board of Trustees to print 8" x 10" sheets for the Certificate items to be placed on the tables at the Auction event. Actual certificates will be placed in a larger envelope and labeled by their Lot number in Jason's lock box. The lock box will be in the item pick up room at the event and the Pick-Up manager will provide the actual certificates to the winning bidders.

April:

- Request Jason to print the auction Lot list with items divided into Groups A, B, C, and D. The "A" group is typically small items and lower value because the "A" group is the first silent auction section to close at the event. "B" group, "C" group are mid-range value items, and "D" group is typically any trips or big/expensive items. This list needs to be as complete as possible at the basket wrapping event so each basket can be identified with its Lot & Section number.
- Provide a **NEWSLETTER** reminder for parents about Benefit Auction ticket sales. Showcase any photos of items from the basket wrapping event to build excitement for the event.
- At the auction event set-up, make sure Certificate items all have a printed 8" x 10" sheet with a brief description of the item. Actual certificates will be labeled by their Lot number in Jason's lock box. The lock box will be in the item pick up room at the event and the Pickup manager will provide the actual certificates to the winning bidders.



- At the Benefit Auction event when each Section (A, B, C, and D) closes, make sure the volunteers who are collecting the bid sheets DO NOT pick up any items or bid sheets that have NO BIDS. Leave these items and bid sheets on the tables. Evaluate these items and decide if the minimum bid price should be edited and re-bid. If any minimum bid prices are edited, communicate the changes in writing to Jason immediately. Include Lot & Section number, original minimum bid and new minimum bad pricing.

May:

- Ensure all donors receive THANK YOU letters.
- Assist with final reports on the Benefit Auction.