Drafting Donation Requests and Thank-You Letters to Build Relationships

UT Austin Student Organization: Friends of The Daily Texan 501(c)(3)

Mission/Core Activities: Promoting the publications long-term sustainability. “Through mentorship, fundraising, networking and public education, Friends of The Daily Texan works alongside current Texan staffers to continue the publication's rich tradition of journalistic excellence into the future.”

Funding: Funds received are directly given to The Daily Texan and Texas Student Media to support the needs of the Texan and staff. “Funds are used for editorial projects, travel and coverage, education and training, photographic and video equipment, and other needs.”

Types of Donors they Usually Appeal to: Alumni of the organization, supporters of Texas Student Media, current students, individuals interested in journalism, etc….

Form Letter Requesting Donation:
Dear [I would enter the specific donor name],

For over a century, The Daily Texan has been serving Texas by providing ethical journalism. It has been an important beacon within the UT Austin community by serving as a trusted space to get news about all things Texas. The Texan plans on continuing to inspire, motivate, and empower the future generations of Longhorns. We invite you to be a part of preserving that tradition.

Friends of the Daily Texan, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, has aimed to promote the Texan’s long-term sustainability. The organization supports the Texan’s staffers through mentorship, fundraising, networking and public education. Your support would benefit those staffers with necessary resources like advanced camera equipment, travel funds to get that good story, and even professional training for our editors and reporters.

Currently, we are raising funds to support student journalists and increase news coverage around the Texas community.

Are you willing to consider donating $50 to help us reach our goal? Every contribution, no matter how big or small, directly impacts the future of our journalistic staff here at UT Austin.

Together, we can ensure that the future of the Daily Texan is bright and strong.

Best,

Grace West
On behalf of the Friends of the Daily Texan

Thank You Letter Acknowledging Donation:
Dear [I would enter the specific donor name],

Thank you for your generous contribution to The Friends of The Daily Texan. Your support is not just a donation but rather an investment towards powerful journalism produced by the next generation.

Because of donors like you, our student journalists will gain professional mentorship and training, opportunities for travel, access to advanced equipment, and so much more to thrive in today's media landscape.

Your donation helps us at The Friends of the Daily Texan preserve the future of journalism and student opportunity and contribution.

We are so grateful for your commitment to helping out student media! If you would like to learn more about us or stay updated with the impact of your generosity, please visit our website or to join us at an upcoming event.

Thank you again for your contribution.

Best,
Grace West
The Friends of the Daily Texan

Memo:

I wrote both of these letters with the intent to practice building relationships between donors and members of an organization. I referenced the lecture and slide deck materials multiple times throughout this assignment to learn the rhetorical practices that would be most helpful in creating effective letters requesting donations and thank you's. Before anything, in both letters I put a placecard for the specific name of the individual I am seeking a donation from and later thanking to create a personal aspect and show that the letter is intended for them, also grabbing their attention. To further grab attention, I aimed to open up the request letter with a bold statement that sets the scene and explains why their donation would be important. I also tried to spotlight a few important avenues that their donation would cover instead of inviting an initiative too broad or overwhelming. I made it a goal to also try to let the donor know that they are necessary to the future of the organization to motivate them to contribute to the cause. In total, the donation

request letter includes an explanation of the cause, a specific donation request of $50, a section to thank them for their support and a further notice of why their contribution is so important. The thank you letter also emphasizes the personal relationship between the donor and the organization, reinstatement of the cause, how their donation will benefit the cause, and an invitation to stay connected to the organization with the hope to establish them as a recurring donor.