***Fundraising Ethics:***

***Respecting and Protecting Donors***

Here are two resources that can guide you in applying high ethical standards to your fundraising:

**Code of Ethics**

<http://www.afpnet.org/Ethics/EnforcementDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=3261>

The Association of Fundraising Professionals requires its members to adhere to 25 standards for ethical practice in soliciting contributions. Its standards — recommended for any fundraiser — are available through its website.

**Ethical Principles for Nonprofit Fundraising**

<http://www.principlesforgood.com>

<http://www.independentsector.org/principles_free_pdf>

The nonprofit organization Independent Sector offers a free PDF outlining good practices for nonprofit governance and ethical practices — including ethical standards for fundraising.

We hope you will become familiar with these important and comprehensive guides. As an introduction to fundraising ethics, we offer the following ten-point guide:

* Never raise money on commission or hire a fundraising consultant who asks to work on commission. While being paid based on the amount one sells is common in the for-profit world, it is considered unethical in the nonprofit sector. Among reasons it is discouraged are that the amount one requests should be clearly and honestly related to a financial need — not on the largest amount of money imaginable. Good fundraising depends on cultivating relationships with donors over time, not on rushing to secure a gift — any gift — so the development director can be paid. Further, a fundraiser might do an excellent job for a nonprofit but not succeed at raising much money if the nonprofit’s finances are not in order or its board is small and inactive — factors the fundraiser cannot control.
* If you are raising funds by phone, always identify yourself and the fact that you are seeking a donation at the beginning of the call. (This guideline is required by the National Do Not Call Registry.)
* Always be honest about your relationship to the nonprofit organization you are representing. For example, in our proposed telemarketing script, our callers indicated that they were volunteers. If they are staff members, board members, or paid callers, they should say so.
* Always represent your nonprofit organization clearly and accurately.
* Always permit a donor to remain anonymous if that is his or her preference.
* Ensure that donors’ contributions are used according to their wishes. Receive their clear and explicit permission to change the original purpose if necessary.
* Always permit your donors to “opt out” of receiving mailed or emailed announcements from your organization.
* Never trade or sell your mail and email lists of donors unless those donors have agreed that you may do so.
* Protect your donors’ financial and personal information, including credit card and bank account numbers, and birth dates. If you are using a service to collect online gifts through your website or through crowdfunding or distributed fundraising, make sure that those platforms will protect your donors’ contact, personal, and financial information, following the same standards as your organization.
* Never disparage your nonprofit organization’s competition.