

Can I get a show of hands if you are having a hard time raising funds this year? Come on, if your hand is not up then you need to email us right away and tell us what you are doing! We are all having a rough time with the way things are in the world right now.

Don't worry, your Sponsor Engagement Team is here to help! Yes, we are pretty much superheroes that most people don't know are there. We are out there calling businesses and looking for grants daily, and yes, I mean daily.

First things first, get a team together that doesn't mind asking or begging for money (I like the word "team" better than "committee" because that's what we are). Once your team is ready and organized, jump right in with both feet running. Make a list of local businesses and separate the list evenly amongst the team. Always remember, it's better to call. This is the perfect job for people who are staying at home. Before you start calling, do your research: who is in charge of community outreach in the business? It could be the marketing person that you need to talk to or the CEO or anyone. Learn a little about the business on the internet.

Once you've done your research, start calling. Are you nervous about calling and asking for money? Don't be! The worst that can happen is they say no and you move on. Be yourself when you call, get the right person on the phone, and explain how you can help their company. If you can't get someone on the phone then leave a message and follow up with an email. Wait about two weeks then follow up again with a phone call.

Listen to them when they talk. Decide what's better for them and offer it. It could be anything from donating money to in-kind donations to having a get together at their business (remember social distancing and masks). You need to customize a packet for them so they say yes. Just remember the best thing you can do is **LISTEN!** Don't offer the same packet to the "mom and pop" shop next door that you offer to a big retail chain; know the businesses in the community.

Once you have them, keep them! Appreciate them! Thank them! Add in extra bonuses that they didn't sign up for every now and then. It doesn't have to be big; have kids write them thank you notes, call, or email them for the holidays. Remember, it's the little things that count.

While sponsorships are important and an awesome way to bring in money, let's not forget grants. We are constantly looking for grants that local units can apply for. Visit <https://floridapta.org/grant-opportunities/> to see all the opportunities that are available! Ask around your school and see if there is anyone that writes grants and ask them to help out; if not, that's ok you've got this! We can provide assistance in guiding you with this too.

You can do this! Your Florida PTA Sponsor Engagement Team has faith in you! Email us with any questions at sponsor.engagement@floridapta.org