

ASSOCIATION OF FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONALS
GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER

NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY®
2017 AWARDS APPLICATION

APPLICATION FORM

(THIS FORM SHOULD BE THE FIRST PAGE OF THE PDF SUBMISSION*)

Award Category: Outstanding Fundraising Program (more than \$2M)

Nominee's Name: Pursuit for Those With disABILITIES Capital Campaign

Associated with (firm or organization): The Center

Contact Person: Linda Bates Position: Chief Development Officer

Mailing Address: 3550 W. Dallas

City: Houston State: TX Zip Code: 77019

Phone: 713-525-8479 Fax: 713-525-8465

Email: labates@thecenterhouston.org Website: www.thecenterhouston.org

Nominator's Name: Jerry Wishe Position: Chief Executive Officer

**Nomination Facilitator Name: Linda Bates Position: Chief Development Officer

Associated with (firm or organization): The Center

Mailing Address: 3550 W. Dallas

City: Houston State: TX Zip Code: 77019

Phone: 713-525-8479 Fax: 713-525-8465

Email: labates@thecenterhouston.org

* Enumerate each criterion and address each one in narrative form using no more than three (3) pages, single-spaced (12-point font with 1-inch margins).

** This is usually the development professional facilitating the nomination. This person will be the "host" from the nominating organization for the award winner and will be the main point of contact for the winner.



Association of Fundraising Professionals Houston Chapter National Philanthropy Day 2017 Awards Application

Overview: The *Pursuit For Those With disABILITIES* Capital Campaign was an historic endeavor intended to begin a transformation by raising capital and provoking imagination for a brighter future for The Center. After 66 years of growth and pioneering programs to enhance the lives of Houstonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), The Center needed a financial makeover and an upgrade of its programs, services, and facilities. The catalyst behind the campaign, The Center's first in 25 years, was board member David Baldwin, and his wife Maire Baldwin, who provided a \$5MM challenge.

The goals of *Pursuit* were three-fold: pursue knowledge by visiting innovative organizations, universities, and research facilities to discover best practices; pursue sustainability for The Center by raising \$13.5 million to purchase our land, advance programming, improve The Center's campus, and establish a fund to overhaul programs; and to pursue awareness for the population at large by creating a viral social media and traditional media campaign.

The campaign centered on David Baldwin riding 3,500 miles on his bike from Portland, OR, to Washington, D.C. While on the journey stops were made at 31 organizations serving adults with I/DD to gain new information on innovative programs taking place across the country. Leading up to, during, and after the ride itself, *Pursuit* became the spark that ignited an awareness-raising campaign to shine a light on this special group of adults. At the conclusion of the ride, focus was geared toward analyzing all the data gathered from the visits that occurred and, in turn, The Center hosted a Learning Summit drawing professionals from across the country and greater Houston to discuss solutions for issues faced by the population we serve.

The initial financial goal of *Pursuit* was to raise \$11MM, which was reached on June 10, 2016, only four days into the cross-country bike ride. The campaign ultimately reached its stretch goal, receiving over \$13.5MM in commitments by May 2017. After the fundraising expenses, including the cost of the ride itself, the net proceeds for the campaign are \$12,926,918.09, reflecting a cost of 4.59%. Funds were raised from over 2,400 individual donors, including 3,028 donations, with 100% of The Center board members participating. Total funds raised exceeded \$13.5 million with \$10.1 million coming from private foundations, \$1.1 million from corporations (including sponsors), \$1.6 million attributed to individual donors, and \$700,000 from individuals donating via crowdfunding. Donations were received from 43 out of 50 states and 6 foreign countries, including Belgium, Canada, England, Japan, Scotland, and Switzerland.

Planning for *Pursuit* began in the summer of 2015. The campaign was formally launched with a Volunteer Recruitment Party on November 11, 2015. The cross-country ride started in Portland, Oregon, on June 6, 2016 and ended in Washington, D.C. on August 3, 2016. A Learning Summit

and final event celebration were hosted on November 3, 2016. The capstone gift that propelled the campaign over the \$13.5MM mark was announced on May 18, 2017. From official launch to official ending, *Pursuit* was less than a year-long campaign. From initial planning to receipt of the final donation, *Pursuit* lasted 21 months.

Throughout the campaign, The Center Foundation's team of two paid fundraising staff worked with one paid *Pursuit* staff member, 18 volunteer co-chairs, 152 committee members, and nearly 3,000 donors to accomplish an amazing feat in a very short amount of time. Lead Rider David Baldwin, took a one-year part-time sabbatical from his job as the CEO of a private equity oil and gas firm in order to dedicate the majority of his time to making *Pursuit* successful.

The funds raised through *Pursuit* will be available to finance and support The Center's long-term growth strategy, which will address future programs and services, renovations and repairs, or the construction of new facilities. The Center's operating FY16 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016) budget was \$14,445,374 and the FY17 (July 2016-June 2017) budget is \$14,728,895.

Originality: From inception, *Pursuit* was unique in almost every way possible from a traditional capital campaign. At the time the original \$11MM goal was set, The Center raised an average of \$1.2 million dollars annually and Houston's energy-driven economy was in a downturn. Knowing that The Center did not have the traditional donor base that a capital campaign requires, The Center had to come up with a campaign with a charismatic leader, that would involve the engagement of new donors, and take place in an extraordinarily short amount of time.

In order to attract such a large amount of support in a short time, The Center knew it would need an out-of-the-box campaign – hence, the cross-country bike ride. Being led by a board member who is highly connected in the Houston community and, possibly more importantly, who made a significant investment into the project, both financially and physically, gave *Pursuit* its unique synergy. Every tool imaginable was brought into play to ensure the success of *Pursuit*. Two that stand out are the Ride-Along with crowdfunding and the introduction of virtual ride-alongs on The Center's campus at "Mission Control".

Early on, many people voiced their interest in riding in support of *Pursuit*, The Center, and David. This turned into organized Ride-Alongs facilitated with help from Trek Travel. Three routes were established with varying degrees of difficulty, length, and price in order to attract a diverse set of riders. Pricing was set in such a way that a large portion of the price was a donation to *Pursuit*. The 100 ride-along riders registered through a crowdfunding page and were incentivized to crowdfund for their ride. Ultimately, over \$700,000 was raised through crowdfunding, with gifts coming from 1,767 donors. These Ride-Along riders had an intense immersive experience with *Pursuit* and The Center, as each ride-along included interaction with Center leadership and board members, as well as learning visits with organizations that serve a similar population.

As not everyone would be able to join the campaign trek, the team developed a plan to bring *Pursuit* to The Center. "Mission Control" became a spin room with video access to *Pursuit* ride feed to allow those in Houston to virtually ride-along with David and the *Pursuit* road team. The room was open seven days a week from 8 am to 6 pm, with a goal of riding 25,000 miles to match the miles ridden by those on the coast-to-coast route. A donor agreed to donate \$2 per mile ridden up to \$50,000. Ultimately, The Center hosted 826 riders in Mission Control who rode 28,556 total miles, including 116 Center clients and 60 corporate groups. One person actually rode 3,500 miles on a stationary bike in Mission Control to support David's 3,500 mile journey on *Pursuit*.

The Center and *Pursuit* staff capitalized on the unique nature of the campaign to shine light on the I/DD population. The social media presence achieved 11K Facebook reactions and 570 shares, 140K Twitter impressions, and 7,500 blog readers. As the trek moved across the country, over 40 media appearances occurred. All marketing efforts culminated with a feature on the marquee corner of Times Square and a front page article in the Washington Post.

Volunteerism: In addition to their matching grant, Lead Rider David Baldwin and Maire Baldwin co-chaired the campaign. They recruited 18 volunteers to lead committees that focused on Ride Logistics, Ride-Alongs, Marketing, Learning Visits, Fundraising, Research, Corporate Sponsors, Young-Stars, Mission Control, and Long-Term Planning. The Committees had 152 members, who worked in quick succession to pull off each portion of the ride. These committees engaged more than 1,000 volunteers throughout the campaign. The Baldwins, the committees, and the Board and Trustees called extensively on their personal and business networks, resulting in sponsorships from 45 corporations, including lead sponsor BBVA Compass Bank.

To pull off this multi-faceted campaign required the help of many volunteers. Members of the Ride Logistics team worked to create a safe route, ensure the availability of medical services, and arrange accommodations for a changing number of riders and staff along the route for 64 consecutive nights. The Research Committee members identified and contacted Center-like organizations along the route. The Events Committee scheduled visits and events at the 31 locations. Ride-Along committee members developed the three Ride-Alongs and their fundraising components. Marketing committee members planned and helped execute the social media campaign, a blog-style daily email to over 10,000 people, and media appearances. Fundraising and Corporate Sponsorship committee members made connections to decision makers at businesses and trustees at foundations. The Young-Stars team focused on planning volunteer opportunities for high school and college aged budding philanthropists – to staff Mission Control, run special events for The Center's clients, and work as interns for the cross-country ride itself.

The *Pursuit* leadership team had a motto that everyone involved with *Pursuit* would come to learn more about The Center and the population it serves, would have an important and meaningful role to play, and would do all of it while having fun. *Pursuit* would not have been the successful campaign it was without the dedication of these volunteers.

May 30, 2017

Association of Fundraising Professionals
1300 McGowen St.
Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77004

To the Association of Fundraising Professionals:

I write to you today with passionate support for The Center in Houston, Texas, receiving the prestigious Outstanding Fundraising Award for the Houston area. There are very few organizations that embody the total spirit of this award like The Center. I have worked with The Center, the people who work there, and their clients for the better part of the past 18 months, and I can tell you confidently that I've witnessed firsthand the priceless contributions it makes for a community that needs it most.

As an executive for a top-25 US financial institution, I was proud to be a part of the most unique and inspiring fundraising effort that not only broke barriers, but tested human endurance and will. In the summer of 2016, my company acted as the presenting partner of Pursuit Ride, a cross-country cycling campaign that raised both money and awareness for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Center's own board member, David Baldwin, spearheaded the initiative, assembling 200 volunteers, riders, partners and support staff. His 3,500 mile cross-country effort raised an impressive total of \$13.5 million dollars for the outstanding organization he represented.

Although the money that was ultimately raised exceeded the fundraiser's goal, it was the awareness that the campaign raised for adults with disabilities that I was most proud of. The Center also had a "Mission Control" room at its campus, complete with a virtual ride-along with stationary bikes so that anyone in the Houston area could visit, donate and even "ride along" with David and his companions in support of the campaign. I flew out and rode 500 miles with David, and that alone was a challenge – a challenge I was eager to take on. I can't imagine the courage it must take to do the entire journey, complete with pain, exhaustion, heat exposure, and mental wear-and-tear.

My organization lives by "10 Bright Principles", one of which is "Know Where You're Going". The Center knows where it's going, and knows where it wants to go in creating opportunities for people in need and their bright futures. Their fundraising efforts from Pursuit, in my humble eyes, stand alone amongst the pack. I know this because I was there physically, emotionally and spiritually – not just professionally.

Thank you for your consideration of an organization that I hold close to my heart.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Kelly Dominiquini
Chief Marketing and Digital Sales Officer, BBVA Compass



May 24, 2017

Ms. Dawn Koennig, President
Association of Fundraising Professionals – Greater Houston Chapter
1300 McGowen St.
Suite 120
Houston, TX 77004

Re: The Center's 2017 Application for National Philanthropy Awards – Outstanding Fundraising Program

Dear Ms. Koennig:

It is my pleasure to write to you in support of the nomination of The Center for 2017 Outstanding Fundraising Program (\$2M+) and to share with you my experience with the force of nature that was the *Pursuit For Those With disABILITIES* Capital Campaign. Through this amazing campaign, The Center brought national attention to the needs of this special group of adults and now is able to take the next steps to develop new opportunities for inclusion within their communities. As a participant in a "ride along" on the leg from Pittsburgh to Maryland, I can attest to the dedication and enthusiasm of David Baldwin and the whole *Pursuit* team to The Center and the people they serve.

PwC Houston was proud to be the National Learning Partner for *Pursuit*. Through a \$100,000 financial commitment, PwC supported the key Learning Visits that connected The Center with other organizations across the country who serve adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Center's representatives visited 31 organizations in Oregon, Idaho, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Washington D.C., learning best practices, creative approaches to common challenges, sharing successes and concerns, and gained insight into how to better support The Center's residential, day, and vocational programs.

In addition to sponsoring the learning visits, we challenged our employees in Houston to become part of the campaign. Employees spent two solid days "riding along" with the *Pursuit* team from The Center's Mission Control, watching the video feed, interacting with Center clients and learning about adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The employee engagement part of our sponsorship was important to reinforce our shared values of an inclusive environment in which people of all abilities can contribute their unique perspectives, talents and skills in a way that brings value to our people, the firm and our clients.

I wholeheartedly support The Center's mission and this application for Outstanding Fundraising Program, and am excited to be part of The Center's future.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthy organization.

Victoria Beard



**Association of Fundraising Professionals Houston Chapter
National Philanthropy Day 2017 Awards Application**

The Center: Mission and History

The Center was founded in 1950 when a small group of parents of children with Down syndrome came together with shared hope and concern for their children's future. These parents were dedicated to enriching the lives of their children and combined resources to form The Center – planting a visionary seed at a time when institutionalization and isolation were the norm. As those children aged into adults and public schools began addressing the educational needs of children with disabilities, The Center turned its focus to adults with disabilities.

The Center promotes the pursuit of choice, growth and personal independence for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Center offers high quality residential, vocational, and day services to support its clients and the greater Houston community. The Center plays a leadership role in the provision of services to adults with disabilities through quality programs driven by the needs of its clients, their families, and the community; thus, transforming the lives of those we serve.

Unique to The Center is the variety of program options available to our 452 clients. Our day program services include vocational training, Life Skill classes, an artisan program, an adult activity center for the profoundly impacted and medically fragile, and a retirees program for those wishing to stay active after their career in the vocational workshop or in the community ends. The Center's additional support services include medical, dental, and behavioral counseling enabling us to serve an individual's entire range of needs. We designed this multi-faceted approach to both maximize our clients' abilities and help them live their best life possible. The Center contracts with over 40-area agencies that do not offer this array of services. This allows their client base to receive quality care that would not otherwise be available to them. The Center is dedicated to providing programs that are trustworthy, personalized, and comprehensive for each person served.