

Friends of Jordan Association 2020

ANNUAL REPORT



Mission Statement

“To facilitate networking and knowledge exchange among persons with a common interest in the country of Jordan, promote a better understanding of Jordanian people and culture, and support projects and activities of the U.S. Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan.”

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March 2021

Letter to Our Members

Welcome to Friends of Jordan's 2020 Annual Report! This year, the COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a standstill, and active Peace Corps volunteers were forced to abandon their projects and return home. However, the work of Friends of Jordan continued. In fact, 2020 brought an increase in officers to our board and an increase in members. We made significant progress toward our efforts to identify and reconnect with all Returned Peace Corps Volunteers that served in Jordan. One bright side of the devastating COVID pandemic has been that we have all learned to harness the power of technology to connect with friends, family, and colleagues around the world. This has inspired us to begin developing and supporting virtual reunions for various training groups (J-groups) of Jordan RPCVs, beginning with a J-1 reunion in December. In the year ahead, we hope to continue facilitating these kinds of connections by supporting additional reunions.

A recent family move and the need to launch a job search in my new state necessitates that I step down from my Acting President role in 2021. I have enjoyed working with Friends of Jordan tremendously, collaborating with my fellow officers to nurture our connections to Jordan and each other. I will continue to stay connected to the organization and look for ways to get involved again in the future.

In this report, the Friends of Jordan Officers look forward to sharing what Friends of Jordan has been up to this year and where it is headed. Please read on for more details in the report.

Sincerely,

Karey Sabol
Outgoing President,
Friends of Jordan Association

Association Background

History

The Friends of Jordan Association (Friends of Jordan, FOJ, or “the Association”) was founded in 2004 by a group of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) from Jordan along with former in-country staff. This group of RPCVs and former staff adopted the concept for Friends of Jordan from existing Peace Corps country “Friends of” groups. Peace Corps Jordan began in 1997, and six groups of returned volunteers existed by 2004. These returned volunteers were interested in having an organization that would bring them all together, help them stay connected to Jordan, connect them to others outside of the Peace Corps with an interest in Jordan, and provide a base for Jordan-oriented educational and charitable activities.

Friends of Jordan became incorporated as a state non-profit in Maryland in October 2004. In late 2004, the Friends of Jordan Association formed an affiliation with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA), a non-profit organization that serves as an umbrella organization for many of the RPCV groups.

In February of 2005, Friends of Jordan held its first election and welcomed its first group of officers. The Officers discussed and finalized the draft bylaws by vote in September 2005 and an application to gain federal 501(c)3 non-profit status was in process at the end of 2005. After its first full year Friends of Jordan became a functioning non-profit with 39 members. Members have included not only Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and staff but also Jordanians, others with a connection to Jordan, and anyone interested in the goals of the association.

2007 saw the creation of two more officer positions, acceptance as a 501(c)3 organization by the IRS and the success of numerous objectives and activities, which are outlined in the sections of this report that follow.

In March 2015, Peace Corps suspended its volunteer activities in Jordan. At this time, there have been 17 cohort groups that have served in Jordan, which totals 560 former volunteers.

Mission & Goals

Mission Statement:

To facilitate networking and knowledge exchange among persons with a common interest in the country of Jordan, promote a better understanding of Jordanian people and culture, and support projects and activities of the U.S. Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan.

Our Association’s Main Goals:

- Encourage charitable and educational activities relating to the third goal of Peace Corps – to promote a better understanding of Jordanians on the part of Americans;
- Provide a forum within the U.S. and abroad for charitable activities, professional development, networking, and exchange of knowledge among persons and organizations with a common interest in Jordan;
- Support projects of the U.S. Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan;

- Assist Peace Corps volunteers returning from Jordan to reconnect with their communities and cultures in the U.S.; and
- Help Peace Corps volunteers returned from Jordan to continue with public service and related activities similar to those they performed during their Peace Corps service.

Organization

Officers

Officer positions rotate in March each year. Generally, an officer may stay in their same position for up to three years. In the term from March 2020 to February 2021, there were eight officer positions. There were several officer vacancies during the 2020-2021 term.

Officers, March 2020 – February 2021:

President – Karey Sabol (acting)
 Vice President – Karey Sabol
 Secretary – Rose Kyprianou (acting)
 Treasurer – Rose Kyprianou
 Fundraising Coordinator – vacant
 Program Coordinator – Danny Tsai
 Membership Coordinator – Ken Finley
 Communications Coordinator – Allison Freedman

Incoming Officers for March 2021 – February 2022 term:

President – vacant (current officers will rotate until this position is filled)
 Vice President – vacant
 Secretary – Kumbirai Khosa
 Treasurer – Rose Kyprianou
 Fundraising Coordinator – vacant
 Program Coordinator – Danny Tsai
 Membership Coordinator – Ken Finley
 Communications Coordinator – Allison Freedman

Position Descriptions

Currently, the officers also act as the Board of Directors for this Association.

(a) President.

- Arranges and conducts officer meetings
- Recruits officers if a position is vacated between elections
- Ensures that the Bylaws are upheld
- Presents a report of the Association’s activities at the annual meeting
- Calls special officer meetings if/when necessary
- Receives and approves, along with at least 6 members, amendments to the FOJ bylaws

(b) Vice-President.

- Assumes the position of President should the President resign, be removed from office, or require a temporary absence
- Acts as a resource to the President

- Coordinates nomination and election of candidates for vacant Board seats
- Acts as liaison between the organization, the community, the National Peace Corps Association, Peace Corps Washington and other National Peace Corps Association groups

(c) Treasurer.

- Has charge of all funds belonging to the organization
- Receives, deposits and disburses funds as appropriate
- Maintains financial records as appropriate
- Writes quarterly and year-end financial reports and submits them to the Secretary for distribution to Board members
- Receives and enters new membership information (by mail and through NPCA), assigns expiration date and forwards information to the Membership Coordinator
- Maintains Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 status

(d) Secretary.

- Develops, maintains, and distributes the Association's written records including bylaws, annual reports, and any other documentation of the Association's structure and processes; acts as the liaison for the most current versions of these documents; and works with other officers to keep these documents up-to-date (example documents include the annual calendar, position descriptions, membership and renewal forms, and others)
- Records meeting minutes from officer meetings and general meetings or ensures a substitute if planning to be absent
- Archives records required by Maryland law; maintains tax-exempt status with the Maryland Secretary of State
- Maintains Association membership with the National Peace Corps Association, including writing and submitting the annual organizational report to their offices in Washington, DC
- Manage and maintain Association email account

(e) Membership Coordinator.

- Maintains Database: Enters information forwarded by a fellow officer or by a new or renewing member into membership database
- Provides new member contact/orientation
- Liaises with existing members about any membership concerns
- Answers non-member questions
- Contacts non-members and encourages them to join
- Writes articles in newsletter about the benefits of joining

(f) Program Coordinator.

- Plans or oversees Association programs, such as online membership discussion forums, educational or awareness campaigns, small-grants funding, or social gatherings; arranges time and place of program events
- Encourages Association members to participate in programs and events
- Notifies Communications Coordinator of upcoming program events
- Coordinates program event publicity with the President

- Submits a report on each program event to Communications Coordinator for publication in next newsletter
- Develops new programs, events, or activities
- Oversees program committees, comprised of Association members, established for the purpose of promoting one or more Association programs

(g) Fundraising Coordinator.

- Consults with Board Members and establishes the target fundraising amount for the year
- Develops and coordinates fundraising activities to meet the annual goal; example activities could include a banquet dinner, silent or on-line auction of Jordan related items, pitches to other organizations with an interest in Jordan (such as the Jordan Embassy in D.C.), and the like
- Works on funding for new programs that are not contained in the annual fundraising goal and other events that may arise
- Maintains a network of member contacts from each volunteer service group (J-1, J-2, J-3, etc.) to serve as the person to approach Association members if/when asking members to contribute individually

(h) Communications Coordinator.

- Publishes the Association's newsletter on a regular basis and distributes the newsletter to the Association's membership, preferably by email
- Solicits information for the newsletter from Officers, other members, National Peace Corps Association, Peace Corps Washington, Peace Corps Jordan, other Peace Corps Association groups, or other members of the community
- Maintains the Association website so that the information is current and relevant
- Responds to information requests submitted to the site
- Makes sure all dues related to maintaining the site have been paid by the Treasurer
- Maintains communication with website host via email

2020 Accomplishments

Below is a listing of Friends of Jordan's main accomplishments, followed by a more descriptive narrative about the Association's core programs and activities.

- Continued efforts to identify and reconnect with all Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVS) that served in Jordan through the Finding Jordan Volunteers Project
- Increased membership
- Developed and published two issues of Marhabtain, the Association's newsletter, in Summer 2020 and Winter 2020
- Contributed to NPCA efforts to support recently evacuated Peace Corps volunteers from around the world
- Supported a virtual reunion for J-1 (training group) volunteers and developed a template for facilitating future virtual reunions
- Organized and filed documents and minutes for Friends of Jordan
- Discussed and determined actions regarding FOJ goals, membership, and communication

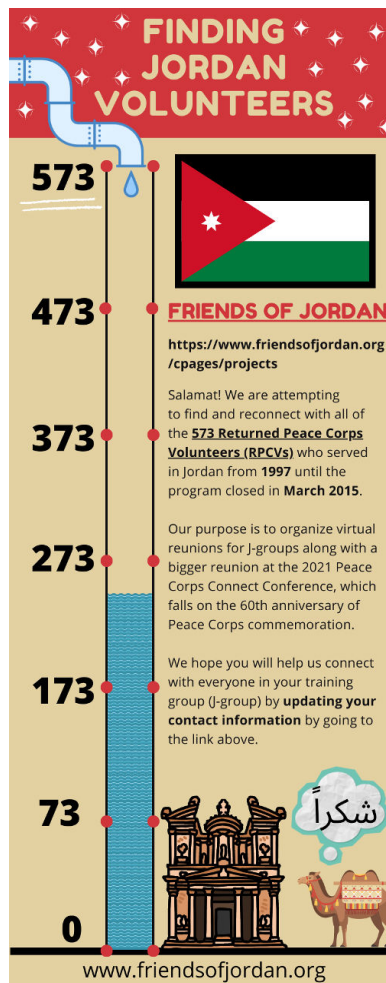
- Prepared and submitted documents to maintain Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 and Maryland non-profit status
- Prepared and submitted for reaffiliation with NPCA
- Continued to promote Jordan and Jordanian interests

Small Grant Funding Profile

The Small Grants Program is currently suspended, and no grants were issued in 2020.

Finding Jordan Volunteers

The new membership platform positioned Friends of Jordan to launch the Finding Jordan Volunteers project. The goal of this project is to connect with all of the RPCVs who served in Jordan from 1997 to 2015. There were a total of 17 groups with over 560 volunteers, and we would like to reach out to every one of them to strengthen our Jordan volunteer network, reconnect through our new internet social platform, and organize group events such as reunions.



Virtual Reunions

Another goal of FOJ is to help Peace Corps Jordan volunteer groups (J-groups) organize virtual reunions through Zoom while the COVID-19 pandemic has made it impossible for in-person reunions. FOJ developed and offers templates and tips for how to run a structured online reunion. In 2020, Friends of Jordan supported a virtual reunion for the J-1 training group.

Newsletter: Marhabtain

Friends of Jordan published two issues of its official newsletter, *Marhabtain*, in the Summer of 2020 and the Winter 2020/2021. As a global pandemic brought in-person connection to a standstill, these issues aimed to keep our readers and members of FOJ connected and informed about many of the impacts of Covid-19 on the Peace Corps and globally. The newsletter also aimed to tackle a number of related issues, including racial injustice, economic struggles, and attacks on our country's institutions and traditions of democracy. Publication of one or two issues in 2021 is planned, with a streamlined format and a focus aligned with FOJ initiatives such as Finding Jordan Volunteers and increasing membership engagement.

Membership Information

Friends of Jordan has a total of 154 members in its membership database, including 51 active members that have joined the new membership platform, up from 128 and 42 last year, respectively. Prior to converting to a free membership model two years ago, there were seven paid memberships in 2018. However, these numbers underestimate the number of contacts that the organization currently has obtained through its outreach and particularly through the Finding Jordan Volunteers Project. When factoring in those former volunteers and staff members who we have contact information for, regardless of their membership status, we have contact emails for 260 people, as of March 2021. These contacts will be integrated into our general membership database in the coming months.

FOJ continues to have diverse representation with members living in multiple countries, states, and the District of Columbia. Our members also include current and former Peace Corps staff members, family members of currently serving volunteers, spouses of RPCVs, and others with an interest in Jordan and the goals of Friends of Jordan.

2020 Social Media and Online Information

Friends of Jordan has an online presence and belongs to various social media outlets.

Website – <http://friendsofjordan.org/>

Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofjordan>

Twitter – <https://twitter.com/friendsofjordan>

LinkedIn – <https://www.linkedin.com/company/27097352/>

Email service (host to officer email addresses) – <https://mail.google.com/>

Email service (sending listserv/membership emails) – <https://mailchimp.com/>
Website host – NPCA’s SilkStart Platform
Domain host – <https://www.dreamhost.com/>
File sharing – <https://www.dropbox.com>
AmazonSmile – <https://smile.amazon.com/>
Café Press online store – <http://www.cafepress.com/friendsofjordanrpcv>
GoodSearch.com – <http://www.goodsearch.com/>
GuideStar (by Candid) Nonprofit Database – <http://www.guidestar.org>

Other Online Information

Friends of Jordan also uses several other online services, including SurveyMonkey and Zoom, as well as those mentioned in the Financial Information section of this report.

2020 Financial Information

To support its financial transactions, Friends of Jordan has a simple business account with Wells Fargo and an online account with PayPal. The Association also has an account with Square (<https://squareup.com>) to be able to take credit card payments.

Financial Overview

This report covers the period from January 2020 through December 2020. FOJ reports tax information to federal and state agencies based on the calendar year (January - December), as opposed to the officer term period (March - February).

Friends of Jordan continues to be financially stable with extremely low expenses for a non-profit organization. 2020 revenues totaled \$260.33, while we had expenses of \$885.15 (see Table 1 and summary statement below). Revenue included several donations, including one from Dec 2019 that was not accounted for in last year’s report, and credits from Amazon for purchases made through the AmazonSmile program.¹ Below is further explanation of Friends of Jordan’s finances from January through December 2020 which are also detailed on the balance statement at the end of the section.

- a. Expenses included Paypal fees and updating record of address with Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (MD SDAT), through which Friends of Jordan is registered as a not for profit organization.
- b. Costs for office supplies, Zoom calls, and other in kind contributions made by board members to participate in the monthly meetings and other programs are not included in the expense total. We appreciate donations in materials and time made by the Board and other members.
- c. We received several donations in 2020.
- d. In 2020, we did not give any grants.

¹ See <https://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html?nodeId=201365340> for more information.

We are entering 2021 financially stable with steady assets. Assets in FOJ’s accounts decreased slightly from \$7,878.06 on January 1, 2020 to \$7,453.24 on December 31, 2020.

Table 1. Detail on FOJ Quarterly Overview 2020

Category	Quarter (2020)			
	Jan – Mar	Apr – Jun	Jul – Sept	Oct - Dec
Donations (incoming)	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150.00
Other Credits	\$0.00	\$5.00	\$5.33	\$0.00
Expenses	(\$80.50)	(\$200.00)	(\$0.00)	(\$4.65)
Programs/Donations (outgoing)	(\$0.00)	(\$0.00)	(\$400.00)	(\$0.00)
Total in Accounts	\$7,897.56	\$7,702.56	\$7,307.89	\$7,453.24

**2020 Financial Statement
January 1, 2020—December 31, 2020**

Prepared by Rose Kyprianou

Wells Fargo Account

Starting cash January 1, 2020 **\$ 7878.06**

Deposits:

AmazonSmile credit	\$10.33
Donations	\$250.00
Total Deposits Received	\$260.33

Expenses:

NPCA fees	\$200.00
MD SDAT - update address of residence	\$78.00
Donation to NPCA Global Re-entry Fund	\$400.00
Paypal fees	\$7.15

Total Expenses

\$885.15

Balance in FOJ Accounts (December 31, 2020) \$7453.24

Thank You to Our Supporters

We would like to thank Kirk Cunningham and Paul Hendig for their generous contributions to Friends of Jordan in 2019-2020. We additionally thank all the members who provided feedback on programming priorities to support our mission and the FOJ Officers for their in-kind contributions and valuable time.

Budget Projection for 2021

The Association belongs to a membership management platform run by the NPCA called the “Community Building Platform.” To fund this initiative in 2021, \$200 will be needed for annual fees. Friends of Jordan may also need to cover operating cost expenditures and start-up costs for other new programs. We have also included a goal to donate up to \$250 to one or more causes furthering the mission of Friends of Jordan. Below outlines our projected costs which will be funded from existing revenue and any donations.

Summary of 2020 Projected Costs	
Item	Amount
NPCA Community Building Platform (annual fees)	\$200
Operating costs and programming	\$500
Donations to causes furthering our mission	\$250
Total	\$950

The officers project a need of less than \$1,000 for expenses. Given the current balance in FOJ accounts, the Association does not anticipate a need to fundraise in 2021.

Objectives and Work Plan for 2021

FOJ’s current membership outreach project called “Finding Jordan Volunteers” will continue to be the main focus for the officers this year. This project focuses on trying to find all the past Peace Corps Jordan volunteers. Complementing this will be continued efforts to support virtual reunions to bring former Peace Corps Jordan volunteers and staff together. Another area of focus will be to recruit and fill the officer positions more fully this year. Outreach in the form of one to two newsletters is planned as is looking at how FOJ structures communications generally.

Finally, FOJ Officers plan to look at the mission and goals of the Association to determine if they should be updated and modernized. Other areas of interest will be kept in mind for the future and include the following: developing a new core grants program for the Association, supporting displaced Peace Corps volunteers, and potentially looking into refugee assistance organizations to connect Friends of Jordan members with Arab refugees needing assistance.

Friends of Jordan goals for 2021 are specifically to:

- Implement “Finding Jordan Volunteers” project for FOJ
- Build up and sustain an operating board of officers
- Continue to build and fully implement a new membership restructuring initiative, utilizing NPCA’s Community Building Platform and “Find the 250K” resources²
- Bring former Peace Corps volunteers and staff together for reunions
- Strengthen the infrastructure of Friends of Jordan to make it more resilient
- Review and update the Friends of Jordan Goals and/or Mission Statement as needed, since there are currently no volunteers serving in Jordan
- Develop a strategic communications plan to identify priorities and guidelines for organizational communication and publish one to two newsletters
- Encourage charitable and educational activities relating to the Third Goal of Peace Corps—to promote a better understanding of Jordanians on the part of Americans
- Provide a forum within the US and abroad for charitable activities, professional development, networking, and exchange of knowledge among persons and organizations with a common interest in Jordan
- As practicable, collaborate with known refugee assistance organizations to build alliances to assist Friends of Jordan members to connect with Arab refugees needing assistance
- As practicable, support projects of the Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan

Below is a list of detailed plans by office to achieve these goals.

Detailed Plans by Office

The priority activities for each officer are listed below for the 2021 term (Mar 2021 – Feb 2022).

President

2021 Goal:

Represent the organization, provide leadership around the Finding Jordan Volunteers project and other potential new core programming for FOJ, strengthen the infrastructure of the Association by developing and recruiting new leaders, and assist the officers in implementing their respective activities.

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Support Finding Jordan Volunteers project – *timing as outlined in other officer positions below*
2. Produce the FOJ Annual Report, which includes the work plan – *February/March*

² See <https://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/cpages/find-250k> for information on NPCA’s Find the 250K initiative

3. Recruit replacements for vacant officer positions – *ongoing*
4. Lead monthly officers meetings – *monthly*
5. Manage officer elections – *January/February*
6. Liaise with Peace Corps Washington, National Peace Corps Association, the Embassy of Jordan, and other organizations – *ongoing*
7. Lead discussions on potential revisions to FOJ mission statement and goals – *fall/winter*

Vice President

2021 Goal:

Support the President and the other officers in implementing their respective activities, and provide organizational leadership in collaboration with the President.

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Help with projects / activities when requested by the President or other officers – *ongoing*
2. Fill in for officers when on travel or if positions are vacant – *as needed*

Secretary

2021 Goal:

Provide leadership for officer meetings and records management, and maintain and improve the system for managing Association files.

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Organize and schedule monthly officer meetings. Take notes during the meetings, post notes to officers for correction – *monthly*
2. Assist President and other officers with writing reports, such as Annual Report and documenting how the Association works – *as needed*
3. Prepare and submit for reaffiliation with NPCA – *April/May, once Annual Report is complete*
4. Organize and maintain electronic records – *ongoing*

Treasurer

2021 Goal:

Manage finances and support business processes of the Association.

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Advertise AmazonSmile Program – *in next newsletter*
2. Resolve bank account access issues with Wells Fargo – *Jun - Aug*
3. Manage day-to-day finances of FOJ – *ongoing*
4. Manage incoming/outgoing funds – *ongoing*
5. Reconcile finances with Wells Fargo statements – *ongoing*
6. Maintain IRS and 501(c)3 status and file taxes – *mostly Mar - Apr*
7. Reporting: Submit quarterly financial reports to the Officers – *quarterly or as needed*
8. Support fundraising officer and events where needed – *as needed*
9. Support fundraising events where needed – *as needed*

10. Support thank you notes to donors – *as needed*

Membership Coordinator

2021 Goal:

Revitalize the membership of the Association, maintaining open lines of communication with existing members and reaching out to gain new members. Ensure that we have the most up-to-date contact information for all members and continue the integration of our membership platform with our Finding Jordan Volunteers database, incorporating updated NPCA membership information through the Community Building Platform and individual member updates. Streamline the membership process and change over to a permanent membership model, which would allow a singular focus on finding members and doing outreach over focusing on the benefits of membership itself and continuous renewals of one's membership status.

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Create a new membership model which allots permanent membership to all former Peace Corps Jordan volunteers and staff. Develop a methodology to update and streamline our membership platform and communicate the benefits of this change to membership.
Spring-Summer-Fall
2. Complete updating most recent contact information as provided by member surveys into our various platforms – *spring*
3. Continue to encourage all FOJ members and all other Jordan volunteers/staff to help us with Finding Jordan Volunteers project by sending contact emails for their friends for whom we don't have contact information – *summer*
4. Regularly review our membership platform and internal membership spreadsheet to fix any discrepancies or update information – *ongoing*
5. Membership outreach activities – *as needed*

Communications Coordinator

2021 Goal:

Develop a communications strategy with a focus on a clear digital strategy to be reviewed and agreed upon by the FOJ officers. Establish a plan for and maintain regular outreach and communications to FOJ membership around the strategy in order to maintain and improve the quality and reach of the Association's online presence.

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Develop and publish a Summer *Marhabtain* newsletter to focus on opportunities to contribute to the current global issues as well as general outreach and communication to members.
2. Develop and publish a Fall / Winter *Marhabtain* newsletter to include general outreach and communication to members.
3. Support communications around the Finding Jordan Volunteers project – *all quarters*
4. Plan and maintain FOJ Social Media, such as Facebook and Twitter according to the communications and updated digital strategy – *continuous*
5. Re-launch and maintain FOJ profile on other websites, such as LinkedIn according to the communication and digital strategy – *continuous*

6. Update website and archive old information – *quarterly*

Program Coordinator

2021 Goal:

Finding Jordan Volunteers project will continue to be the main focus for the Program Coordinator this year. This project focuses on trying to find all the past Peace Corps Jordan volunteers. Other areas of interest include developing a new core grants program for the Association, and potentially looking into refugee assistance organizations to connect Friends of Jordan members with Arab refugees needing assistance.

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Finding Jordan Volunteers project – *spring, summer, fall, winter*
2. Help J groups organize virtual reunions – *as needed*
3. Work with Communications officer to update website and contribute to other communications – *as needed*
4. As practicable, scope out and develop other programs for the Association – *no timeline*

Fundraising Coordinator

2021 Goal:

Support new programs development; fundraise as needed

Priority Activities and Timing:

1. Support program development – *spring, summer, fall*
2. Assess need for fundraisers – *winter*
3. Send thank you notes to donors – *as needed*