

All new hires are expected to be fully funded by their start date. The support launch stage of the fund-raising process is crucial – the more effort we put into this phase, the better we can focus our main efforts towards discipling each student during the academic year.

Step 1: Compile a list of contacts (name, phone number, email address, mailing address).

The more thorough you are in tracking down this info now, the easier it will be to send out your first newsletter and contact them throughout the year.

Tips:

Not sure where to start? Try scrolling through your phone and looking up friends on Facebook and Instagram. You may also find it helpful to think of your life in categories such as family, church friends, seminary friends/professors etc. Even if you are not sure they will give, contact them. You never know who will feel compelled to give! If you believe that contacting them will offend or is inappropriate for any reason, there is no need to reach out to them. We want to be honoring to your relationships!

Step 2: Write your first newsletter.

Here is a general outline to follow:

Personal News

Supporters want to know about your life! Are there any major life updates you care to share? (Graduations, kids, moving States, transitions etc.).

Who is Lightbearers?

Give a general overview – remember, most people have no idea what we do and will need a simple introduction to our model. Feel free to give specific details but don't lose them by getting too deep in the weeds. This is a great opportunity for you to learn how to concisely explain what we do. For help, talk this over with other staff and spend time reading our website. Here is a sample to get you started:

Lightbearers exists to disciple students and to fund missions. We do so by utilizing Lightbearers owned apartment complexes near college campuses. College-aged residents are challenged to participate in our Discipleship Track, a 10-month intentional discipleship process. This group of students focus on living in community, Biblical understanding, the local church, and missions while remaining a part of the larger residential community. Lightbearers staff and local mentors are engaged with the students along the way. Meanwhile, rental profits are strategically used to provide funding for church planting projects in North Africa and Asia. As a parachurch ministry, our heart is to support the local and global church in both our discipleship and funding model.

In general, a reader should leave understanding the following:

1. We own apartment complexes for two main purposes: Discipling Students and Funding Missions.
2. We disciple college-aged students while they live in our apartments.
3. Our discipleship model focuses on local church involvement, developing Biblical understanding, and engaging in deep community with peers and mentors.
4. We use rental profits to fund overseas missions, specifically church planting projects in North Africa and Asia.
5. We are a parachurch ministry - our discipleship and funding model is designed to build up and support local churches.

What is your role at Lightbearers and why are you excited about this position?

Let your supporters know what your job will entail. What will a typical week look like? What made you want to be a part of Lightbearers? What are you excited and nervous about?.

What are you needing from them?

Make it clear that you are needing financial support as well as prayer throughout the year. Be bold and clear about your financial needs instead of slipping it in at some point among prayer requests. Share how much you are needing to raise each month. Make it easy for them to give with clear instructions of how to support you through our Lightbearers website. Be sure to be clear, gracious, and grateful in your communication!

Tips:

Include lots of pictures! We have a shared folder on Google Drive, as well as communication assets on the intranet (lightbearers.com/intranet). If you need help with design, don't hesitate to reach out to the Communications team.

Step 3: Get final feedback from your team.

Since this is your first newsletter, have the Donor Development team help you with your content.

Step 4: Send out a physical copy of your newsletter.

Buy some nice paper, print it out, stuff and stamp envelopes and mail out your first newsletter!

Step 5: Set up meetings with potential donors.

Look over your contact list. Who do you thinking is most likely to be invested in you and your new role? Start with them! Keep working through your contact list and setting up meetings over this launch period.

Tips:

When contacting them be clear with your intentions. Explain that you would like to share what your role with Lightbearers will be and that you are needing financial support. Let them know that they do not need to decide right then and there - you will simply ask them to consider giving if able. Your meeting can be at a coffee shop, your home, over the phone etc. Remember that meeting with a close friend will probably feel much more casual than with your former boss. Be creative and think through what is most natural for your relationship.