

# Pathfinders

## GUIDE TO RAISING SUPPORT

### ***Step One - Commit Your Work to the Lord***

Begin with prayer. Stop right now and commit yourself to God. Admit your need for total dependence upon Him as never before. Ask God to give you a teachable heart as you prepare to minister at Pathfinders and to allow you to learn more about Him even through the process of raising support.

Continue to make prayer a priority. As you contact people concerning your needs, pray for them. As you share publicly about your summer, pray for those to whom you speak. Commit all you do to the Lord in prayer.

### ***Step Two -Identify Contacts***

List the names of the people you know. These are people you could send a letter to, seeking their support for your ministry. Here are some ideas to help you:

- Family members
- Relatives
- Teachers
- Neighbors
- Friends from church
- Friends from school
- Friends of parents
- Friends from work

You won't necessarily send a support letter to all these people, but they form your pool of contacts. You will want to spend time in prayer, asking God to lead you in sending letters to the right people. We ask that you send a **minimum of 50 letters** of request.

### ***Step Three - Write Your Letter***

Once you have assembled your list of names, you can begin to write a letter. A sample letter is included to guide you. You can use this if it suits you, but it would be better to write your own. A letter as much like you as possible is best.

#### **What You Should Tell People**

- Something about Pathfinders and your role at Camp
- What you hope to accomplish
- How you expect God to work in your life
- The amount that you need to raise
- How soon you need to raise your support (set a target date for getting your full support)
- Specifically how the supporter can be involved (prayer/giving)

You need to decide how you will address your letter. Will you make one letter with "Dear Friend," on it and then photocopy it? Or will you personalize the letter? Either of these approaches is acceptable, however, we advise you not to simply photocopy a letter which begins, "Dear \_\_\_\_" at the

top, and then write in the person's name. A warmer approach is to simply address the letter and then write a brief personal note at the bottom of each letter.

**Guidelines for writing your letter:**

- Be brief - *people get a lot of mail today*
- Be personal - *form letters are okay, but write a note on each of them*
- Be clear - *have someone read your letter and offer suggestions*
- Be accurate - *check your spelling - it makes a good impression*
- Be neat - *type your letter*

With some people, you could add a P.S. mentioning you will talk with them on the phone about your letter in a week or so. Be careful to select who gets this P.S. - some people may be offended with such an approach.

**Guidelines for a telephone contact:**

- Ask if they received your letter
- Tell them a few more details about your trip
- Explain how you hope to benefit from the experience
- If you are comfortable, ask the person if they feel they are able to support you

***Step Four - Assemble Your Packets***

Once your letter is written, duplicate it as many times as necessary. Try to get good, clean copies. After writing any personal notes on the letters you're ready to prepare your packet.

**Your Packet Should Include**

- Your letter
- A Pathfinders information sheet with response form
- A return envelope with your address on it

The response form and the return envelope are critical items in providing people with a convenient way to respond to support your ministry. Prepare these items as follows:

**The Response Form**

At the bottom of the "What is Pathfinders" information sheet you will find a response form. Type or write your name and address in the appropriate blanks in the box on the bottom of the form. **Include one with each letter.**

**The Return Envelope**

Use a #9 letter envelope and self-address it to yourself. (Use pre-printed labels or just hand address each one). If someone chooses to support you, they can place the response form and their check in the envelope and mail it to you. Providing the convenience of a pre-addressed envelope makes it easier for them to participate in your ministry.

***Step Five - Respond to Your Supporters***

**Say Thank You. It is vital that people know you appreciate their prayer and/or financial support for your work.** When someone indicates a willingness to support your mission, you should write them a note or call them (or both) to express your thanks AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. To keep your support team informed, plan to write a prayer letter or information sheet about two weeks before you leave for Pathfinders.

## ***Step Six - Send Your Support to Pathfinders***

As you begin to receive responses and checks, write a thank you note and record the gift on the Summer Staff Support Contribution Report form. When all (or a major portion of) your support has been received, send the checks along with a copy of the original contribution report form to Pathfinders.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. What if I don't raise enough support?**

This should **not** be a problem if you follow the procedures as outlined. Most people can easily raise more money than they need. Although you will receive in salary only the amount you raise, there are no penalties imposed for not reaching the support goal.

### **2. What if I raise more support than I need?**

If you raise more than your full support total, it will **not** increase your salary. This additional money will be used in one of several ways:

- It may be used to pay the balance of your salary/benefit package
- It may be used for scholarships to bring needy kids to camp
- It may be used to underwrite any operating expenses Pathfinders may have for the summer
- It may be used to cover the minimum salary for staff members who do not reach full support

Pathfinders is constantly raising money to pay for its ongoing programs. Any additional money you can raise will help this ministry move forward at a more rapid pace to reach more people for Christ.

### **3. What if I discover that a sponsor has given me a check made payable to me, but I'm not sure if he wants a receipt?**

Assume that he *does* unless he has specifically told you otherwise. Return the check to him and graciously ask him to replace the check with a new one made payable to Pathfinders. *Important: Do not* cash the check and replace it with one of your own made payable to Pathfinders. We cannot issue a receipt in this situation.

### **4. What if I want to sponsor myself?**

You may, but you will not be receipted. Your check will be handled as an anonymous contribution. On the "Contribution Report" form, list the sponsor as "Self."

### **5. My church took up a collection and gave me cash. How should I handle it?**

Ask your church treasurer to convert the cash to a check from the church made payable to Pathfinders. If you *must* accept cash, convert it to a "cashiers check" at your bank and mail it with your other support to Pathfinders. **DO NOT** send cash in the mail.

### **6. Where do my supporters send their money?**

To you. Be sure to provide them with a pre-addressed return envelope with your address on it. But remember, the **checks should be made out to Pathfinders, not you.**

**If you have any questions, call the Pathfinders office (423-349-8078)**

## ***EXAMPLE SUPPORT LETTER***

*This letter is intended to serve as an example only. Please feel free to use this as a guide, not a template for writing your letters. It would be ineffective for all 30 of our staff to send the same letter. Make it your goal to make this letter personal, and from your heart!*

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

The reason I am writing this letter is to tell you about an opportunity I have for ministry this summer. I have been accepted as a missionary with Pathfinders, a non-denominational student development organization in Kingsport Tennessee.

Pathfinders' mission is to enable emerging generations to discover and fulfill their God-given destiny. This summer I am going to be able to help them fulfill that mission through outreach day events to at-risk and underprivileged youth, and week-long residential camps.

This generation of students is the most unreached generation in American history. Suicide, addiction, and teen pregnancy rates are staggering because as a group this generation doesn't know God or His purpose for their lives.

Ministering with Pathfinders will allow me to take the message of God's love and purpose to young people. The opportunity before me this summer is amazing! I will be able to use my summer to serve God with my skills, talents and energy. I will be helping kids connect with God and His purpose for their lives, while growing in my own spiritual life and relationship with Jesus.

As great as the opportunity is I can't do it alone, I need your help. As with most ministries to students, Pathfinders asks their team to raise their own support for summer service. This enables fees to be reduced for students and donations that are given to the organization can go directly to ministry not salaries.

Would you consider partnering with me this summer to reach kids for Christ? First and most importantly I am asking you to pray for me, the team and the students we will minister to, and second I am asking for financial support.

Your gift toward my support this summer will enable me to serve God by reaching students who may never have heard the gospel and have no idea that God has a specific plan for their lives. The total I need to raise for the summer is \$2,100 (please change that amount to whatever is appropriate for your situation and JR staff the maximum is \$675). I'm trusting God to raise up partners who will support this ministry opportunity.

If you would like to give monthly you can send your check the first of June and July or you can give a one time check. Please note on your check if it is a one time gift or the 1<sup>st</sup> of two so I can properly calculate my sponsorship. Please make your checks to Pathfinders and send to my address.

Thank you in advance for partnering with me to reach a generation for Jesus.

Your name

# SUMMER STAFF SUPPORT CONTRIBUTION REPORT FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the information requested below for each of your prayer and financial supporters. **Make a copy for your records and return the original along with the checks to Pathfinders.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Prayer Supporter  Yes  No  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Financial Support \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Received \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Thank you letter sent  Yes  
Relation to you \_\_\_\_\_

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## Pathfinders Vision

According to George Barna, this generation is the most unchurched generation in American history. It is a day of acute transition in our society and as believers we have not effectively reached this generation.

Our vision as an organization is to be a part of the solution in reaching this generation. We will facilitate members of the emerging generation in finding their specific mission and purpose and then train and enable them to fulfill that mission through understanding leadership and the principles of teamwork.

Our vision is large and clear. We want to see a generation reached for Jesus and released as effective Christians and citizens to accomplish their God-given purpose in the world.

Each summer through our camp programs hundreds of students are challenged with these truths in an atmosphere of fun, adventure, acceptance and love. Many make life-changing decisions. To carry out these programs and our vision we involve the service of approximately 40 summer staff members. As we are a non-profit non-denominational organization we ask that summer staff raise their own support for the duration of their employment at Pathfinders.

Please consider joining us in our quest to reach this generation for Christ by pledging your support to our dedicated summer staff. Thank you for considering this request.



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Kingsport, TN 37660  
Office phone: 423-349-8078  
Fax #: 423-349-5791  
Email: clay@pathfindersonline.com

## Contribution Guidelines

- Pathfinders is a non-profit organization and contributions are **tax-deductible**. Because of Internal Revenue Service regulations, your check must be made payable to **Pathfinders**. Please **do not** make checks payable to the individual staff member.
- A tax-deductible receipt will be mailed to you after checks are received and processed by Pathfinders.
- All staff support contributions are donations to Pathfinders and are non-refundable and non-transferable. In the event that a staff member raises contributions exceeding their required amount or withdraws from their assignment, these funds will be used to meet needs in other areas of the ministry. Financial disbursement is at the discretion of Pathfinders.

## Instructions

1. Make Checks payable to **Pathfinders**. Staff member's name **should not** appear on the check.
2. Complete and detach the form below and return with your check to the staff member you are supporting. Do not mail to Pathfinders. **Thank You**.

## Yes! I want to be part of the team.

I will support financially with an enclosed gift of: \_\_\_\_\_

I will pledge the following additional amount of \_\_\_\_\_ to be given by \_\_\_\_\_.

I will be a regular prayer supporter.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, ST, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## RETURN THIS FORM TO:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Members Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone