



## CATHOLIC FOUNDATION OF WEST MICHIGAN

### The Catholic Foundation of West Michigan (CFWM) **Donor Stewardship Officer Job Description** 24 January 2020

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#### **Donor Stewardship Officer**

##### **Scope of Role:**

Donor stewardship is the process that occurs *once a donor has given a charitable contribution* to The Catholic Foundation of West Michigan (CFWM). Specifically, donor stewardship refers to the relationship building and communications experiences that take place *after the gift* has been received.

Reporting to the executive director, the donor stewardship officer is responsible for the overall process of engaging with donors post gift and managing their gifts as donors intended; specifically providing timely and accurate gift acknowledgment letters and receipts, honoring donor gift intent, and conveying the desired impact of the donor gift. Donors are updated on the progress and outcomes of their gift, thereby ultimately inspiring donors into the next cultivation experience by actively engaging them with The Foundation and its impact.

The donor stewardship officer actively builds donor trust, loyalty, and retention, so that current and new donors are inspired to provide continued support to The Foundation, furthering a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship. A strong donor stewardship process should help The Foundation retain donors, increase the number of funds, and grow giving levels.

##### **Primary Duties & Responsibilities:**

1. Develop a donor stewardship strategy of engagement and follow-up. Who the donor is and how much they give should determine a respectful donor stewardship strategy.
2. Draft for approval by the Trustees The Foundation's gift acknowledgement policies. These policies are necessary to establish The Foundation's standards and framework for acknowledging gifts and affirm its commitment to thanking donors properly. These policies should include: dollar thresholds, who signs at each threshold, turnaround time between receipt of gift and delivery of the acknowledgement, (gift receipt and thank you's) who is involved as signatories, proper salutations, when to customize additional, approved ways to say thank you, procedures for recording in the database, filing hard copies or digital copies of all thank you letters and notes. Trustees need to approve this policy.
3. Add new donors to donor database and/or update current donor profiles based upon The Foundation's most recent gifts size and timing. Keep accurate records and provide timely updates.

4. Process donor gifts quickly and accurately. Send donation tax receipts ASAP (*No later than 72 hours is best practice*) so that donors know when their gift has been received. Online giving software automates this process for online gifts. The more personal receipts are, the better donors will be able to understand the impact of their gift. (For example, a receipt that thanks a donors for their contribution to Our Shepherds-Our Future Capital Campaign will show that The Foundation is placing the donors' gift toward its intended purpose.)
5. Thank donors for their generosity. It's important that The Foundation thank all donors, but with a specific emphasis on Our Shepherds-Our Future Capital Campaign donors, before moving forward. Gratitude, after all, shows that The Foundation appreciates donor generosity. This initial thank you should be personal and sincere, but it's only the beginning of the gratitude that should be expressed throughout a donor stewardship process. Think of this thank you as a starting point in a more engaging process. Always thank the donor with their preferred name and title, regardless of the size of the donation. Provide a thank you in the same manner/channel that the donor gave. (Online donors, for example, may prefer email communications.)
6. Confirm donor's giving intentions and expectations with their gift. Manage donors' expectations within the realm of their gift size and the Foundation's capabilities.
7. Recognize the donor accordingly. Recognition can be public or private, and can encompass anything from an invitation to a private dinner to an engraved plaque, to a simple post on social media. It all depends on donor preference. Ask for permission before recognizing donors publicly because it is important to understand that recognition should not be reserved for major donors alone. Smaller gestures can be effective for new or repeat gifts, no matter the size. Some donors will prefer to remain anonymous.
8. Provide a report on the donor's gift impact - this step is vital to honoring and fulfilling donor expectations. A donor stewardship impact report should be specific, yet emotionally driven, inclusive of their gift "Story of Impact."
9. Provide professional reminder letters that update the donor on gift impact so the Foundation may secure a timely intended payment for any multi-year pledges to any gift commitments; *never send an "invoice."*
10. Explore the strategy of creating giving societies. Creating giving circles or memberships can inspire donors to give to The Foundation and stay involved with other donors who also care about advancing The Foundation's mission. Donors who give a certain amount or pay an annual membership fee can be invited into various giving societies. The giving society should hold special benefits for members. But ultimately, giving societies should focus on building a Catholic community of generosity!
11. Plan and co-host with the executive director and Bishop donor stewardship events. Hosting donor stewardship events allows The Foundation to thank donors *in person* and demonstrate what being a part of the CFWM community can mean. Invite specific groups of donors to events (for example, host a major donor gala or donor gathering). *Focus on gratitude*, and do not ask for more donations. Bringing donors together motivates them to stay invested in the mission of The Foundation.
12. Assist others in The Foundation with the next steps in cultivating the donor. Once you've properly stewarded a donor, they should feel appreciated and they should understand how vital their contributions are to fulfilling their giving intentions and helping advance The Foundation's mission. Now, you have an opportunity to begin stewarding donors to inspire

their next potential gift, *based on donor timing*, not The Foundation's. A strong stewardship process helps The Foundation retain donors, grow new funds, and increase giving levels.

*Please remember:* A respectful donor stewardship experience takes many months. Cultivation should only begin once a donor has been thoroughly, properly thanked, recognized, and personally updated on their gift impact.

### **Qualifications:**

- Applicants should be a professed and practicing Roman Catholic with a deep appreciation for and understanding of the Catholic faith and a passion for supporting the ministry of the Church through donor-driven philanthropy. Strong knowledge of the Catholic church's structure and mission is preferred.
- Bachelor's degree required with minimum of three-five years of experience in fundraising, stewardship or relevant area.
- Experience working in a charitable institution, or serving high net worth wealth customers.
- Demonstrated success in securing major gifts and annual solicitations, fundraising experience leading a Catholic charitable institution is preferred.
- Ability to speak and write articulately, persuasively, and with sensitivity to donor intent.
- Possess a collegial, collaborative, service-oriented work style.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Attention to details, and timely follow-up.
- Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and effectively.
- Work with diverse groups of constituents.
- Strong computer skills.
- Ability to multi-task and work in a dynamic fast-paced environment making independent decisions and discerning when such independence is warranted.
- Ability to work as part of an effective team within The Foundation, as well as build trust and credibility with donors and the broader diocesan team.

## **Evidence of Organizational Values-in-Action:**

- Passion for knowing & living our Catholic Faith, “in community” - living out formation practices, building community and unity, all done in Christ’s name, giving praise to God.
- Love, Mercy, and Generosity - our central virtues for care of humankind.
- Humility, Authenticity, and Service in Stewardship - Servant leadership to donors and organizations to honor the receipt, cultivation, the sharing and the return to the Lord all of our gifts.
- Innovation - creativity and commitment for piloting or testing new approaches to advance the mission, for example engaging multi-generations.
- Transparency & Independence - in both financial management and communications reporting.
- Accountability to Results-Outcomes-Impact - show donors, organizations, and the community the positive consequences of their generosity.