



## Never Underestimate the Importance of Thanking Donors



Everyone enjoys feeling appreciated, including donors. Effective fundraisers understand the importance of saying “thank you” and expressing sincere appreciation in a variety of ways.

### Seeing their gifts at work

Donors feel a great sense of satisfaction when they see their dollars at work. Arrange for a donor to observe or participate in an activity or event funded by their charitable gifts. For example, invite a donor who supports the arts to attend a children’s theatre performance. Nothing says “thank you” better than the face of a smiling child.

### Support your donor’s cause

Chances are your donors support a variety of nonprofits in addition to yours. A unique way to demonstrate your appreciation for a donor is to support one of their causes. Volunteer for an agency or attend a fundraising event for an organization supported by your donor. You’ll not only send a message of gratitude to your donor, but also strengthen the relationship with the donor by sharing a common interest.

### Handwritten notes

A simple notecard with a lovely compliment written “just for Mrs. Tate” was a small gesture that meant so much. It was all it took to make her day. Today, electronic forms of communication are the norm, so receiving a personal handwritten card or letter in the mail is an uncommon occurrence that attracts notice. Sending handwritten notes to donors for any occasion—whether in thanks for a gift or to acknowledge a birthday, anniversary or other life event—conveys appreciation in a personal way.

“Thank you” should be second nature to effective fundraisers who express their gratitude in a variety of meaningful and individual ways. Donors who feel appreciated for their charitable nature are more likely to continue their support and increase their donations. The importance of saying thank you cannot be overstated.

*Guest contributor: Theresa A. Hearn, Executive Director, Derby Community Foundation*

