

# FUNDRAISER TOOLKIT: CEO CHALLENGE



**over the  
EDGE**

**October 23, 2022**

**Manchester Grand Hyatt  
Downtown San Diego**

[give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2022](https://give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2022)



# Fundraising for First-Generation College Students!

Thank you for signing up to raise funds for Reality Changers and go Over the Edge. By raising funds, you are helping youth achieve their college dreams. Please refer to this toolkit for fun ideas, resources, sample content, and more to help you reach your fundraising goal!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Your Impact .....	3
What is the CEO Challenge? .....	4
Setting Your Fundraising Goal .....	5
Your 8-Step Fundraising Plan .....	6
Sample Sharing Language .....	9
Sample Thank You Note .....	13
Offline Donations .....	14
Contact Information .....	15
The Big Day .....	16

# YOUR IMPACT

By raising funds to benefit Reality Changers, you are helping youth to become first-generation college graduates and agents of change in their community. With the help of people like you, Reality Changers has supported more than 3,100 program graduates since 2001, providing programming that helps students to build confidence and work towards goals. Reality Changers helps students apply for college and financial aid, access tutoring, learn career readiness skills, and much more!

## Michelle's Story:



Michelle graduated from Reality Changers in 2020 and is currently a junior at the University of Richmond. Because of her diligence in applying for scholarships and financial aid, skills that she first learned at Reality Changers, Michelle's college and out-of-pocket expenses are fully paid for.

***"Being here at University of Richmond is probably my biggest accomplishment. It reinforces everything I have worked for since high school. When I got to college, I met all of these people who had all of these opportunities available to them since they were young. And I got here and I am like, 'well, I came from a very low-income community, but I made it to the same spot.' Even though we started the race at different starting lines, we all ended up in the same place."***

*- Michelle*

Read more about Michelle on our blog: [realitychangers.org/blog](https://realitychangers.org/blog)

# WHAT IS THE CEO CHALLENGE?

As a San Diego executive, you are a leader in our community. **You can do something BIG and BOLD for local youth by going Over The Edge this fall.** Raise a minimum of \$2,500 for Reality Changers to meet the challenge and secure your rappelling spot.

## Perks & Benefits

Over the Edge is a great opportunity to show that you and your organization care about education and equity. This event always attracts media and local leaders. And, each CEO Challenge participant will receive the following recognition perks:



Logo on event signage & website



Access to VIP area



Recognition on Reality Changers' social media & email newsletter

## What if I don't want to rappel?

You can send a coworker, friend, or Reality Changers student Over The Edge and still participate in the challenge! Offer to match the donations made to your online fundraising page and Reality Changers will work with you to send someone else Over The Edge.



# SETTING YOUR FUNDRAISING GOAL

**In order to go Over The Edge and receive marketing perks, you must raise at least \$2,500 for Reality Changers.** Every dollar raised benefits current and future first-generation college graduates. If you'd like to challenge yourself to go beyond the \$2,500 minimum, here are some questions to help guide you...

**Have you ever done this type of fundraising in the past? What was the goal?** Was it successful? If you didn't reach your goal, could you have done something differently?

**How much can your network give?** If a friend of yours asked you to donate to a worthy organization right now, how much money would you donate? Could you get 20 people to give that much to you? What about 30 people?

**Can you challenge yourself with a goal that is a little bit of a stretch?** The Reality Changers fundraising team likes to set ambitious but realistic goals that take a little bit of extra work to achieve.



# YOUR 8-STEP FUNDRAISING PLAN

## 1 Create a Contact List

Make a list of your closest friends, family members, and biggest supporters. List their phone numbers, emails, and/or social media accounts.

## 2 Designate Gift Sizes

Determine a suggested donation amount for each of your contacts. You know your circle of influence better than anyone and understand that different people are able to give different amounts.

**Check:** Do the gift sizes you proposed for each contact add up to your goal? If not, you may need to ask for more or ask more people.

## 3 Draft an Ask

How are you going to ask your contacts to donate? Write out your letter, email, phone call script, social media post, or text. Or copy from our examples (pages 9-12)!

## 4 Make a Calendar

Who will you reach out to when? Break down your fundraising plan by dates, number of requests, and gift amounts. This way, you can track your progress and keep yourself accountable!



# YOUR 8-STEP FUNDRAISING PLAN

## 5 Personalize Your Fundraising Page

Your contacts want to give because they support YOU! Add your photo and your personal story to your fundraising page. Visit [RealityChangers.org/over-the-edge](https://RealityChangers.org/over-the-edge) for instructions on how to set-up and customize your fundraising page.

### What makes a good story?

Let your contacts know why Reality Changers is important to you. Here are some guiding questions:

- Why do you want to go Over The Edge?
- What inspires you about Reality Changers?
- Why do you think Reality Changers is important?

## 6 Ask!

When you're ready, begin reaching out to your network and sharing the link to your fundraising page. Personalized notes and phone calls always have a better response rate than a generic message sent to a large group. If you don't receive a response from a contact, be sure to follow up and remind them.

### What if someone says “no”?

That's ok! Listen to your contact and hear them out. This will help you to gather more information and better understand their motivations. Maybe they don't have all of the details they need or maybe now just isn't the right time. Either way, you can learn from the conversation. Be sure to thank them for their time!

# YOUR 8-STEP FUNDRAISING PLAN

## 7 Post to Social Media

Share your fundraising page on social media. Tag your contacts to encourage them to give!

## 8 Thank Your Donors

The most important thing you can do as a fundraiser is to thank your donors as soon as they give. We recommend sending a thank you within 48 hours.



# SAMPLE SHARING LANGUAGE

We've created some sample language you can use to ask people to donate to your fundraising page. **The most successful fundraisers will take these templates and personalize them.** Your contacts want to give because they support you. Let them know why you want to go Over the Edge or why you think Reality Changers is important.

Visit [RealityChangers.org/over-the-edge](https://RealityChangers.org/over-the-edge) to download graphics for your Over the Edge social media posts. Remember to tag Reality Changers in your posts and use our hashtags: **#OvertheEdge4College**, **#SanDiegoCEOChallenge**

## Reality Changers Social Media Handles

- **Facebook:** Reality Changers
- **LinkedIn:** Reality Changers
- **Twitter:** @RealityChangers
- **Instagram:** @RealityChangersOrg



# SAMPLE SHARING LANGUAGE

## Instagram Post

"I've been challenged to rappel down the side of the Manchester Grand Hyatt hotel... really!

Make a donation to @RealityChangersOrg to help send me Over The Edge. Reality Changers prepares youth to become first-generation college graduates and agents of change in their communities. Donate today to help students achieve their dreams.

#OvertheEdge4College #SanDiegoCEOChallenge

Follow the link in my bio to donate."

## Facebook or LinkedIn Post

"I've been challenged to rappel down the side of the Manchester Grand Hyatt hotel... really!

Make a donation to Reality Changers to help send me Over The Edge. Reality Changers prepares youth to become first-generation college graduates and agents of change in their communities. Donate today to help students achieve their dreams.

#OvertheEdge4College #SanDiegoCEOChallenge

Link: [LINK TO YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE]"

# SAMPLE SHARING LANGUAGE

## Tweet

"This Fall, I'm rappelling down the side of a 40-story building... really! Make a donation to @RealityChangers to help send me #OvertheEdge4College. Link: [LINK TO YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE]"



## Text

Hi [NAME]! How's it going?

I'm raising money right now for Reality Changers. If I raise \$2,500, I can rappel off the side of a 40-story building... really! Would you consider donating?

Here's the link: [LINK TO YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE]

# SAMPLE SHARING LANGUAGE

## Email

Dear [RECIPIENT NAME],

I've been challenged to rappel down the side of the Manchester Grand Hyatt hotel... really! You can help send me Over The Edge by making a donation to support Reality Changers.

Reality Changers prepares youth to become first-generation college graduates and agents of change in their communities. Funds raised support tutoring, mentorship, college readiness training, and professional development programs for young people from diverse backgrounds - all provided at no cost to students and families.

I believe that all students deserve access to college and I believe in the work of Reality Changers. This amazing organization helps to set youth on a pathway towards life-long academic, professional, and personal success.

I am excited (and a little nervous) to rappel off the side of a building, but this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is completely worth it to help students achieve their dreams.

Donate today to help me reach my fundraising goal and send me Over The Edge!

Link: [LINK TO YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE]

Thank you so much!  
[YOUR NAME]

# SAMPLE THANK YOU NOTE

Thanking your donors is one of the most important things you can do as a fundraiser. For each donor, consider how they might want to be thanked. Some people might like a personal phone call or email, while others would prefer a quick text. If they are active on social media, consider tagging them in a thank you post or video... their followers might also see it and make a gift to your page!

Dear [DONOR NAME],

Thank you for donating to Reality Changers through my fundraising page! I am so excited to go Over The Edge and I appreciate your help working towards my goal.

Your donation directly supports tutoring, mentorship, college readiness training, and professional development programs for young people from diverse backgrounds - all provided at no cost to students and families.

I can't wait to rappel in October! I'll be sure to share some photos with you after the event.

Thanks,  
[YOUR NAME]

P.S. - I'm only \$[AMOUNT] away from my goal. Would you mind sharing my fundraising page with your friends and family to help me get there? Here's the link: [LINK TO YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE]



# OFFLINE DONATIONS

Donors can also support your page with an offline donation.

- To make a credit card donation over the phone, donors can call Sarah Verduco Singh at (619) 516-2221.
- To pay by check, please have donors make their check out to Reality Changers and write "Over The Edge" in the memo line. Send to Reality Changers, 4251 37th St., San Diego, CA 92105.
- To donate through a Donor Advised Fund, donors can contact their Donor Advised Fund advisor and direct them to mail a check payable to Reality Changers. Please include a note that the payment is for "Over The Edge".
- To donate stock, donors can work with their brokers to make the contribution. Make sure they ask their broker to provide Reality Changers with their contact details so that we can officially acknowledge your gift and direct it to the correct fundraising page.

**Please let us know if you expect an offline donation to come in, so that we can be sure to credit it to your fundraising page.**



# CONTACT INFORMATION

## Your Reality Changers Fundraising Coach



We're here to support you! Let us know if you have questions, need fundraising ideas, or just need a little bit of encouragement.

**Sarah Verdusco Singh**  
*Development Manager*

**Email:** [Sarah@RealityChangers.org](mailto:Sarah@RealityChangers.org)  
**Phone:** 619-516-2221

## Web Pages

- Sign up to go Over The Edge & raise funds:  
[give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2022](https://give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2022)
- Resources for fundraisers, FAQs, and more:  
[RealityChangers.org/QTE-CEO-Challenge](https://RealityChangers.org/QTE-CEO-Challenge)

## Keep an Eye on Your Inbox!

We'll be sending event updates and regular emails with fundraising tips and tricks. If you haven't heard from us in a while, you may want to check your spam or promotions folders, to make sure that you are in the loop.

# THE BIG DAY

## What's Next?

**Once you reach the \$2,500 fundraising minimum**, the Reality Changers team will reach out to assign you a rappel time. Please hold the entire day of October 23rd on your calendar, as it may not be possible to accomodate schedule change requests.

**As the event gets closer**, you will receive details about:

- Your liability waiver
- Where to go
- What to wear
- Rapelling tips & guidelines
- Parking information
- And more!

**Thank you! We can't wait to see you go Over The Edge!**

