

# FUNDRAISER TOOLKIT



**over the  
EDGE**

**August 25, 2024**

**Manchester Grand Hyatt  
Downtown San Diego**

[give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2024](https://give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2024)





## Fundraising for First-Generation College Students!

Thank you for signing up to raise funds for Reality Changers and go Over The Edge. 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!

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# YOUR IMPACT

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 3,500 program graduates since 2001.** Reality Changers helps students apply for college and financial aid, provides free tutoring, teaches career readiness skills, and much more!

## Meet Bekhruz:



Bekhruz moved to the United States from Uzbekistan at age 7. He graduated from Reality Changers in 2019 and from SDSU in 2023. During his 3rd year, he was the first-ever SDSU junior to be recruited by a high-profile East Coast financial firm. Now, he is mentoring others and maintaining the recruitment pipeline for first-generation SDSU students who want to work in finance.

*"In Reality Changers, we had achievement coaches who had already gone to the college. You could ask them 'how can I best position myself to get into this college or to do this type of career?' and then they would guide you through the process.*

*Coming from a business background, I believe that Reality Changers is truly an investment. For donors, their goal is to drive as much impact as possible. And Reality Changers is probably the epitome of what you can invest in, because you literally see where your funding gets put to work. You are changing realities after all."* - BEKHRUZ

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

# SETTING YOUR FUNDRAISING GOAL

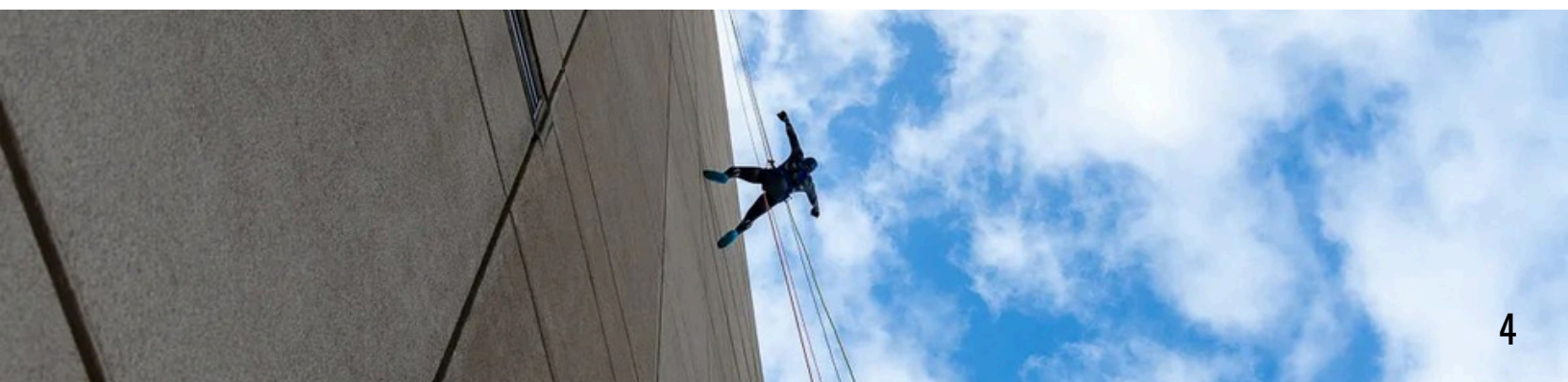
**In order to go Over The Edge, you must raise at least \$1,500 for Reality Changers.** Every dollar raised benefits current and future first-generation college graduates. If you'd like to challenge yourself to go beyond the \$1,500 minimum, here are some questions to help guide you...

**Have you ever done 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 15 people to give that much to you? What about 25 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.

**Are you working as part of a team to send one person Over The Edge?** In that case, your minimum goal can be anything! See the page 11 for more info.





# YOUR 9-STEP FUNDRAISING PLAN

## 1 Set Up 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?
- How did graduating from college affect your life?

## 2 Create a Contact List

Make a list of your closest friends, family members, and biggest supporters. Decide the best method to get ahold of each person (email, phone call, text, in-person, etc.).

**Don't Forget:** Your employer may match charitable donations. Check with your HR department. If your workplace offers employer gift matching, be sure to include co-workers on your contact list. Every gift will be worth double!

# YOUR 9-STEP FUNDRAISING PLAN

## 3 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.

## 4 Plan your Timeline

It's helpful to tell people when you are hoping to reach your goal. As we all know, some people just work better with a deadline! Most Reality Changers fundraising pages have between 1 and 4 donations per week. The highest achieving fundraisers have around 10 donations per week.

**Remember:** Over The Edge is August 25th, so you will want to give yourself plenty of time to meet that deadline.





# YOUR 9-STEP FUNDRAISING PLAN

## 5 Ask!

When you're ready, begin reaching out to your network and sharing the link to your fundraising page. (See pages 12-14 for some sample language you can use). Personal emails, texts, and phone calls always have a better response rate than a generic message sent to a large group.

Be sure to remind people to check with their employers about having their gifts matched!

### 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!

## 6 Post to Social Media

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

## 7 Follow Up

If you haven't heard back from someone you asked, be sure to follow up. We all get busy and need reminders from time-to-time!

# YOUR 9-STEP FUNDRAISING PLAN

## 8 Provide Updates

Your friends and family want to help you reach your fundraising goal. Be sure to let your donors know how things are going and to share general updates on social media

### **Example milestones to celebrate:**

- 10 donors
- Halfway to your goal
- 75% of the way to your goal
- Only \$300 to go
- You reached your goal!

### **Tip:**

People who haven't given yet (and some who have) will be excited to help you meet your goal by your deadline. As you get close, begin sharing how much you have left to raise and/or how much time is left before the deadline.

## 9 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.





# HOW TO OVERCOME "ASKING ANXIETY"

## 3 Tips on how to feel more comfortable asking for donations...

### 1 Help Your Contacts Help You

While it may seem like you are asking people to just give you money, what you are really doing is giving your friends, family, and colleagues a chance to get involved in your project. Your network cares about you and they want to help you reach your goals. When you discuss Over The Edge with them, talk about how excited you are and how you need everyone's help to meet the challenge you've set for yourself.

### 2 Share the Impact

Remember that fundraising for Reality Changers is not asking someone to give money to you, it's asking them to invest in someone else's future. Let your network know how their gift makes a difference. The Reality Changers blog and social media feeds have lots of great student stories you can share!

### 3 Provide Social Proof

Thank your donors publicly. A great way to do this is by naming them on social media or thanking them in front of others.

Psychologically, people don't like to go out on a limb and be the only ones doing something. By recognizing your donors, you are showing new donors that they won't be alone. When they give, they'll be part of a generous community!

# EARN PRIZES FOR FUNDRAISING

Over The Edge participants can win prizes for their fundraising! Every dollar raised supports tutoring, mentorship, college application guidance, professional development support, post-high school advising, and much more.

## Meet the following criteria to win prizes:

- **\$750 raised** = drink ticket & food wristband
- **\$1,500 raised** = *above, plus* **rappel down the building** & get a t-shirt
- **\$2,500 raised** = *above, plus* Reality Changers swag item & an opportunity drawing ticket
- **\$5,000 raised** = *above, plus* reserve your preferred rappel time & 2 additional opportunity drawing tickets
- **\$7,500 raised** = *above, plus* bracelet made from retired Over The Edge rappelling ropes & 3 additional opportunity drawing tickets
- **\$10,000 raised** = *above, plus* 5 additional opportunity drawing tickets
- **Top Individual Fundraiser** = *above, plus* reserve a rappel spot for a friend

Multiple prizes are available in the opportunity drawing. **The Grand Prize is valued at approximately \$1,800.**





# FUNDRAISING TEAMS

Fundraising teams are a great way to band together and raise money with your coworkers, organization, or friends! You can create or join a fundraising team when you sign up. (Or reach out to Reality Changers to create one later on.) Each member of a fundraising team must register and create their own individual page.

**Please note:** *Individuals who plan to fundraise as part of a team but do not plan on rappelling DO NOT have to meet the \$1,500 fundraising minimum. Teams that work together may nominate one member to rappel for every \$1,500 they raise.*

Team Page

Avatar image for Captain Captain Name

Captain  
Captain Name

Share

Team's Name

Help us to send someone over the edge... and raise money for a great cause!

JOIN TEAM

DONATE

\$300 Raised \$1,500

Campaign

LEADERS

MEMBERS 0

WEEKLY WINNER

MOST RAISED

MOST DONORS

MOST ACTIVITY

Bob Robertson  
\$725 raised this week

Rick Dickens  
\$2,990 Raised

Alice Allison  
52 Donors

Liz Elizabeths  
74 Comments



# 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 hashtag, **#OvertheEdge4College**

## Reality Changers Social Media Handles

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





# SAMPLE SHARING LANGUAGE

## Instagram Post

"This Summer, I'm challenging myself by rappelling down 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

Follow the link in my bio to donate."

## Facebook or LinkedIn Post

"This Summer, I'm challenging myself by rappelling 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

Link: [LINK TO YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE]"

# SAMPLE SHARING LANGUAGE

## Tweet

"This Summer, I'm challenging myself by 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 \$1,500, 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],

This Summer, I'm challenging myself by rappelling 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],

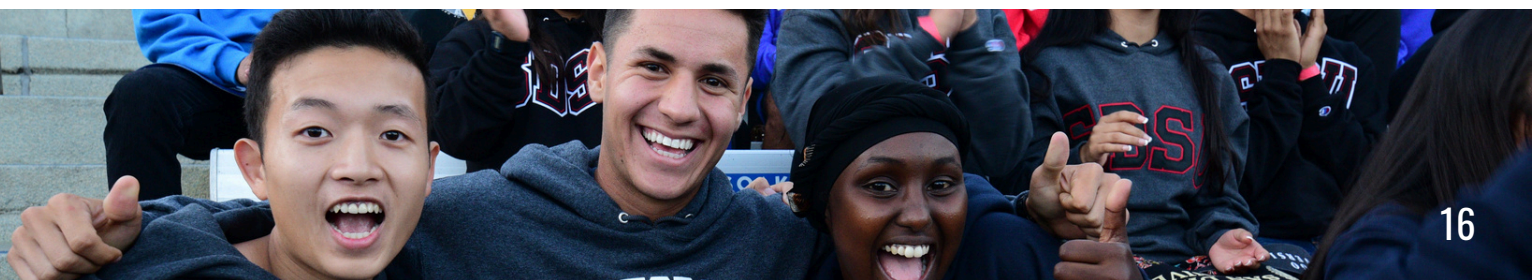
Thank you for donating to Reality Changers through my fundraising page! I am so excited to go Over The Edge and I appreciate your help working towards my goal.

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

I can't wait to rappel in August! 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 Ally Welborn at (619) 516-2223.
- 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, PO Box 50220, San Diego, CA 92165.
- 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, please contact Ashley Morgan, Senior Vice President. Ashley@RealityChangers.org or 619-516-2219.

**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, want fundraising ideas, or just need a little bit of encouragement.

**Gabby Herencia**  
events@RealityChangers.org

## Web Pages

Sign up & raise funds: [give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2024](https://give.realitychangers.org/OverTheEdge2024)  
Resources, FAQs, & more: [RealityChangers.org/over-the-edge](https://RealityChangers.org/over-the-edge)

## 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 \$1,500 fundraising minimum**, the Reality Changers team will reach out to assign you a rappel time. Please hold the entire day of August 25th 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 scheduled rappel time
- Your liability waiver
- What to wear
- Rapelling tips & guidelines
- Parking information
- And more!

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

