

Students of AMF Support Network at Penn
Application to Generous U!

University Name: The University of Pennsylvania

Organization Name: Students of AMF Support Network at Penn

Organization Website: <http://www.facebook.com/AMFatUPenn>
www.studentsofamf.org

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Essay: Attached

Letter Confirming Official Status: Attached

Students of AMF Support Network at UPenn ***Turning Loss into Purpose through Service***

Mission and Purpose

One in three college students experiences the death of a close friend or family member each year (Balk, Walker & Baker, 2010). Despite the high prevalence of grieving college students, few students disclose their grief to others (Fajgenbaum, Chesson, Lanzi, 2012). Students facing grief during college often feel alone, an experience exacerbated by factors unique to college life, including distance from home and usual support systems, academic demands, college’s “carefree” social life, and lack of support from peers.

Research shows that, if unsupported, grieving during college can compromise students’ academic performance, persistence in school, mental health, community involvement, and personal development, yet few resources exist for these youth (Balk, 2001; Servaty-Seib, 2008; Fajgenbaum, Chesson, Lanzi, 2012).

Founded in 2006 by (then) Georgetown University sophomore David Fajgenbaum after the death of David’s mother (Anne Marie Fajgenbaum, “AMF”), National Students of AMF provides chapters that include peer-led support and service groups on 61 campuses nationwide. AMF’s vision is that grieving college students not only receive the support that they need, but **actively move forward** with their grief by channeling it towards positive outlets through service in honor of loved ones. Today, David leads the AMF chapter at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Students of AMF Support Network at UPenn (AMF at UPenn) was founded in 2008 and has been one of the most active chapters of National Students of AMF. The student-led chapter includes both a peer-led grief support group and community service group. The support group provides a safe space where students can connect with one another, and the service group empowers students to participate in community service activities, provides a healthy and positive outlet for grief, and attracts many students for whom counseling or grief support groups are less desirable. AMF at UPenn utilizes philanthropy as a therapeutic tool for grieving students, as an opportunity for non-bereaved students to support their bereaved peers, and as way to honor deceased loved ones.

Organizational Structure

AMF at UPenn is student-led and faculty/staff advised. We have a 6-member Executive Leadership Team that meets weekly to guide activities. We hold support group meetings every two weeks and two service events per semester based on the priorities and experiences of group members. The purpose of AMF’s service is not exclusively to raise funds or volunteer for one specific cause, but to utilize philanthropy as a therapeutic method by which students can honor their loved ones, express their emotions, and engage the larger community in a variety of causes.

Motivation for Promoting Philanthropy

Students come to AMF having experienced the death of a close family or friend, but seeking to support those in similar situations. They provide direct service to one another by participating in peer-led support groups, and also encourage one another to take action through service, to think through the meaning of their loss and how that connects to the larger community. It is a powerful intervention that shapes students' values during some of the most challenging moments of their lives.

When students come together around experiences of loss through AMF, they find a shared strength, which they express through service. The motivation for philanthropy – channeling energy towards positive outlets in memory of students' loved ones – adds a depth to traditional concepts of service and is a powerful testimony of the ways in which philanthropy can help both givers and receivers.

At the University of Pennsylvania, AMF has engaged the campus community, including students, faculty, and staff, in nine service projects since its founding in 2008. In academic year 2013/2014, the group hopes to mobilize even more members of the Penn community, and the larger Philadelphia community as well, including students from other AMF chapters at Temple U., Thomas Jefferson U., University of Delaware, and West Chester U..

Strategy and Activities

With funding from Generous U, we will organize a month-long awareness campaign called "Philanthropy helps me to..." which will be dedicated to raising awareness about the benefits of philanthropy. Phase I of the campaign will last for one week and then Phase II ("consolidation") will continue for the next three weeks. We'll use our current position on campus as the student organization that hosts some of the largest service events and our multiple digital media tools to engage the entire campus community. Similar to the "Before I die" fill in the blank billboards (<http://civiccenter.cc/the-before-i-die-toolkit/>), we'll encourage students to complete "Philanthropy helps me to" on a massive billboard on campus. Examples: "Philanthropy helps me to feel connected to my deceased mother" or "Philanthropy helps me to make a difference in the lives of children at the Ronald McDonald house."

Phase I

For Phase I, we'll utilize a powerful in-person, public space, and viral peer-to-peer platform, which will be led by dozens of outstanding "Philanthropy Awareness Leaders," to inform and motivate every member of the Penn community regarding philanthropy. Each leader will be charged with getting as many of their friends and classmates to perform the "action of the day."

The actions of the day will include: (Sunday) **Educate** others about philanthropy and how philanthropy can be a positive coping mechanism, (Monday) **Share** your own experiences of philanthropy, (Tuesday-a) **Support** your friends who are engaged in philanthropy, (Tuesday-b) **Encourage** your friends who are not engaged in philanthropy by emailing them your story and *Easy tips for getting involved*, (Wednesday) **Donate** financially to the charity of your choice, (Thursday) **Serve** others by volunteering for a charity or do something helpful for a friend in

need,, (Friday) **Connect** others with philanthropy resources (Saturday-a) **Celebrate** the person who motivated you to get involved in philanthropy and (Saturday-b) **Community**- we will invite all Philanthropy Awareness participants to our culminating event, which will be our annual Boot Camp 2 Beat Cancer/Castleman's to raise money for cancer research and Castleman's Disease in honor of a member of our chapter who is currently battling the disease and all those who deal with the cancer of a loved one. The Boot Camp is a fun, exercise-based event, where students do a boot-camp style exercise routine to "fight back" against disease. Money raised will go to CARE (Castleman's Awareness & Research Effort) and the American Cancer Society.

Phase II

Phase II ("consolidation"), which will last for three weeks, will include continued announcements and information exchange through social media, online marketing, and other virtual tools. We'll also engage local nonprofits, local businesses, PR outlets, and utilize unique student talents to raise awareness. We have been very successful in attracting significant print and TV coverage, such as for the Give a Spit about Cancer bone marrow drive (<http://www.studentsofamf.org/2012/07/chapter-service-project/>) and are confident in securing similar coverage for our month-long awareness campaign.

Also, several members of the chapter have begun working on developing the plan for an AMF iPhone app. The app, "Actively Moving Forward," will connect grieving college students to one another and to community service events throughout the city, categorized by cause, so that any student having a hard time dealing with their loss can find a project that interests them. Currently, funding is a barrier to developing this worthwhile resource, which the Generous U grant would enable. The initial app would be for students in Philadelphia, but we hope that it will expand nationwide.

Results

Over the last seven years, National Students of AMF has worked with students from over 170 different colleges and universities to start up Campus Chapters, developed 61 active Campus Chapters, supported over 2,000 grieving college students in support group meetings, and raised more than \$1 million for causes in honor of loved ones through campus chapter Community Service Group projects. In addition to raising tremendous funds for important causes and providing a therapeutic outlet for griever, successful service projects build community by engaging entire campuses behind a cause and raise awareness about the value of service as a way of channeling our energy towards positive outlets.

Since our founding in 2008, AMF at UPenn has engaged more than 800 students in 9 service events, including Relay for Life, Free to Breathe Lung Cancer Walk, Give a Spit about Cancer Bone Marrow Drive, and Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk. The group's fall 2011 Give a Spit about Cancer bone marrow drive involved a team of 72 volunteers, which planned, executed, and registered 327 students for the bone marrow registry, the most of any of the 1200+ colleges participating in DoSomething.org's Give a Spit about Cancer campaign. This spring, we're organizing a Boot Camp to Beat Cancer/Castleman's. We're also organizing "Paint

Philly Teal” to raise awareness about the earliest signs of ovarian cancer, which is the disease that took a member’s mother last year.

The Generous U-funded Philanthropy Awareness Campaign and “Actively Moving Forward” iPhone application will raise tremendous awareness for the value of service as a therapeutic tool, reaching students that might not otherwise be aware of the benefits of and opportunities for philanthropy at Penn and beyond.

When dealing with the death of a close family member or friend, students often reevaluate values. Incorporating the value of philanthropy into students’ values assessment during this time can have a transformational effect for years to come. National Students of AMF is in the process of developing an in-depth, scientifically validated assessment, which will further evaluate the therapeutic benefit that students receive from helping others. Penn is one of the final sites being considered.

Budget for Philanthropy-Related Activities

Expense	Description	Amount
General Operating Expenses		
Printing and copying	Flyers for Kickoff meeting, schedule, handouts, poster	\$78.00
Food for Kickoff and planning dinners	Kickoff, end of year dinner, monthly planning dinner	\$515.00
Shipping of care packages	Sent to loved ones of support group members	\$20.00
Philanthropy activities		
Refreshments at service events	For each Service event \$ 20.00/event (2)	\$40.00
Transportation to service Event (Paint Philly Teal)	Vans or public transportation \$ 40.00/eventX1 off campus event	\$40.00
"Team Students of AMF" shirts for Relay 4 Life event	30 X \$7	\$210.00
	General Operating and Philanthropy expenses	\$903.00
Generous U Philanthropy Awareness Campaign		
Phase I		
Printing and copying	100 copies X 20 items @ \$0.08, poster	\$200
Build a “Fill in the blank” bill board on campus	“Philanthropy helps me to”... Using tools from a similar concept’s toolkit at	\$125
Refreshments for volunteers at Boot Camp	Estimate 70 volunteers and 300 participants	\$200
Boot Camp day-of supplies	Facepaint, exercise equipment	\$200
T-shirts for trainers and participants	Totaling \$3700, but half will be paid back for with registration	\$1,850

Phase II		
Online marketing	Google adwords targeted at Penn students to get them to a landing page about philanthropy	\$250
Create a professional video	The video will display the benefits of philanthropy and encourage participation	\$1000
iPhone Application		
Contract with developer to turn plan into reality		\$1175
	Generous U Expenditures:	\$5,000

Sustainability Plan

Penn Students of AMF has been a flourishing student organization for the last 5 years. Our members' energy is contagious, so students keep coming back. Our President will be on campus for two more years and the Executive Leadership team is made up of several underclassmen, who are poised to continue the momentum. Our faculty advisor also provides strong guidance and support. The University of Pennsylvania's Student Activities Council and the Graduate and Professional Student Association provide generous funding to our group (~\$900/semester). Additionally, National Students of AMF provides significant assistance including support from "chapter coordinators" and funding (\$250/year). National Students of AMF also covers the costs for chapter leaders to receive training at the annual National Conference on College Student Grief.

Lessons Learned

In participating in UPenn's AMF chapter, we have learned the value that comes from connecting with others to share experiences and the feelings of productivity and meaning that come from engaging in service together. Counseling is the only outlet we're told about for dealing with grief on our campus, and many of us felt it wasn't right for us. Taking our energy and our emotions and putting them into service in honor of the ones we love is deeply important to our group. It is an active way of coping with loss.

The service gives us hope, helps us see the world outside of our loss while remembering the person we love so much, and helps us reach others that might not get involved in service or feel comfortable talking about grief. We believe that the values we've developed through this process will stay with us throughout our lives, and we want to share this idea with as many students as possible – both with those who are grieving and those who are not. Serving others is a powerful way to cope with difficult experiences and improve our own lives.



University Life Division
Office of Student Life

February 26, 2013

Dear Sillerman Prize Selection Committee:

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit this letter on behalf of the University of Pennsylvania.

"Students of AMF at Penn" is an officially 'registered' student organization with the Office of Student Affairs at the University of Pennsylvania. As a registered student organization on campus, they would be eligible to accept the Sillerman Prize.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hikaru Kozuma", written over a horizontal line.

Hikaru Kozuma
Executive Director
Office of Student Affairs