



Nation Ford High School

South Carolina

Partnership with Business

Falcon Fest

2009-2010

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Development: Goals of the Partnership

Every child deserves to have his or her dreams come true. This is the essential goal of the Make-A-Wish Foundation. This organization strives to give hope, strength, and joy to children with life-threatening medical conditions. The Make-A-Wish Foundation's mission reflects the life-changing impact that one experience has on children, families, and entire communities. Fulfilling a child's wish provides a joyful and meaningful experience that benefits both the child and those who were able to play a role in creating the miracle. As the Nation Ford High School chapter of Future Business Leaders of America, we partnered with our local division, the Make-A-Wish Foundation of South Carolina, which is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

There were many goals for our partnership with the Make-A-Wish Foundation of South Carolina. Our main purpose was to better educate our chapter on the workings of a non-profit organization. We wanted to simulate the work that our partners perform on a daily basis. Our chapter chose this particular non-profit organization because we hoped to create a stronger presence for the Make-A-Wish Foundation in our community. We created a project that was challenging and labor-intensive because we wanted to heavily involve a great majority of our chapter members. Ultimately, we wanted to create a partnership that not only benefited our chapter and the business but also the entire community. Our Future Business Leaders of America chapter has come to believe in sharing the power of a wish and extending this unique initiative across our entire community.



Development: Planning Activities

To begin the planning aspect, we established a committee that would make all of the major decisions. In our first committee meeting, we came to the conclusion that we wanted to partner with a non-profit organization. We brainstormed potential organizations and conducted further research on each. Finally, we determined that we would attempt to establish a partnership with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. We contacted the South Carolina chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation and established our main contact with Heather Pierce, the Communications Coordinator.

We began to meet with the committee more often to establish the groundwork for our project. Through our research, we learned that the Make-A-Wish Foundation generates the majority of its revenue by conducting fundraising activities. Through our partnership, we decided to simulate how the organization functions by also holding a community fundraising event. The event would closely resemble events that the Make-A-Wish Foundation of South Carolina presents on a regular basis. Ms. Heather Pierce provided us with many fundraising ideas that gave inspiration for our project.

In the end, we decided to hold a festival that would involve the entire community; we called the event Falcon Fest. The name was derived from our high school mascot, the falcon. Our festival would be a day of fun games, tasty food, and great local entertainment. Our chapter decided to adopt a wish in our local area. Johnathan, a little boy from Rock Hill, South Carolina suffering from cancer, dreamt of going to the Mall of America. All of the proceeds from Falcon Fest would benefit his wish.

A lot of planning was necessary to undertake this project. For example, we had to correspond with our partners, work out a budget, recruit volunteers, and plan all of the day's events. One of our major challenges in planning Falcon Fest was budgeting. Because we were putting on a charity event, we wanted to keep our costs minimal to maximize our income. To fund the event, we decided to further partner with businesses in our local community. We met with many different businesses to sell sponsorships for the event and further established eight partnerships, including booth sponsors, event advertisers, and local food vendors for the festival. Through these partnerships, we were able to raise over \$500 prior to the event; this money was spent in advertising and buying materials to bring the event to life.



Development: Role of Business Leaders

Once we established contact with the Make-A-Wish Foundation of South Carolina, the business leaders were willing to provide us with any assistance that would help make our project a success. We corresponded mostly through emails and phone calls originally. They provided us with several ideas of how to go about organizing and planning a large-scale fundraiser. Ms. Pierce sent us several example projects, outlines of the events, and potential flyers and materials that could be used.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation also allowed us to adopt a wish kid in our area. Thus, the fundraiser was on a more personal level and ultimately made our goal much more meaningful. We also questioned the Foundation's President and Chief Executive Officer, Russell Smith, about the workings of their organization. The Make-A-Wish