



***“TOOLS FOR SUCCESS” WEBINAR SERIES
FOR ASSETS FOR INDEPENDENCE
GRANTEES***

**Telling Your Story:
The Power of Effective Messaging
February 8, 2012**

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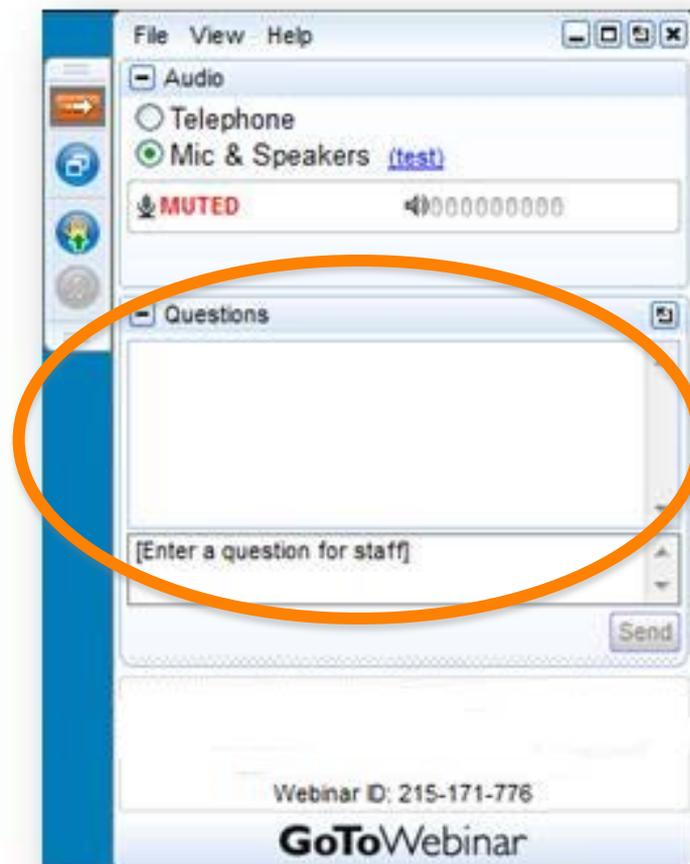
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- A transcript and link to the recording will be available 1 week after the webinar.
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Housekeeping

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Not an AFI grantee yet?

- Assets for Independence (AFI), which is administered through the Office of Community Services (OCS) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides federal funding to community-based nonprofits and government agencies for Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).
- To learn more about applying, visit www.idaresources.org
- Upcoming Orientation Session:
 - AFI Program Overview and Grant Application Process (webinar)
 - Tuesday, February 28, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. EST
 - Register at www.idaresources.org

Your Guest Speakers

- **Martha Wunderli**

Utah Individual Development

Account Network

Statewide Director

Salt Lake City, UT



- The Utah Individual Development Account Network (UIDAN) creates economic opportunities for low-income families to break the cycle of poverty and launch new cycles of prosperity for themselves, their families, and their community.

Your Guest Speakers

- **Christina Cain**

Director, Asset Building Center
New Visions, New Ventures

- New Visions, New Ventures helps women start businesses and create jobs. They provide hope, inspiration and education to entrepreneurs.



Your Moderator

- **Leigh Tivol**
AFI Resource Center



- The AFI Resource Center provides training and technical assistance to AFI grantees, their project partners, and other organizations that are providing asset building services across the nation.

Your Moderator

- **Johanna Barrero**
AFI Resource Center



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Today we will talk about...

- The importance of messaging
- Examples of audiences that grantees should target
- Kinds of messages that resonate with specific constituencies
- Real-world advice from AFI grantees who have used messaging to improve the visibility and funding of their programs

Why Messaging Matters

- As AFI grantees, you are responsible for...
 - Recruiting accountholders
 - Raising funds
 - Developing partnerships
 - Educating decision-makers and the public
- ...and well-crafted messaging can help with all of these.

What Do We Mean By “Messaging”?

1. Articulating answers to key questions:
 - Why should someone join/fund/support/ partner with my IDA program?
 - What has my program accomplished?
 - What is the individual impact? The community impact?

2. Presenting those answers in a way that resonates with your audience



Messaging to Corporate and Business Sponsors and Community Decision Makers

Martha Wunderli
Statewide Program Director
Utah Individual Development Account Network

Preparation

- Know your product
- Know yourself and your style
- Develop a pitch that combines your passion for the product – your IDA program – and its impact on the stakeholders' community

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: Outreach

- Avoid cold calls
 - Find a connection to a corporate sponsor through a board member, legislator, or another funder who knows and trusts your product.
 - Ask that “connector” to accompany you to the first appointment or give you a letter of introduction.

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: Doing Your Homework

- Research potential sponsors
 - Visit their websites for
 - Hints on their corporate giving interests
 - Historical levels of financial support
- Visit similar nonprofits' websites to see who their funders are and levels of sponsorship

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: “When In Rome...”

- Understand their perspective
 - Speak in their language - beware of inside jargon!
 - Return on investment
 - Creating new customers
 - Public relations
 - Dress for their environment

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: Providing Background

- Bring business documents to your meeting
 - Business planning
 - Budgets
 - Strategic plan

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: Making the Case

- Identify the connection between IDAs and their businesses
 - CRA credit for banks
 - Do lower-income people shop or work in their businesses?
 - Use success stories and tangible results of IDAs
 - Try to connect to their humanity – they may have friends, relatives, or employees who could benefit from the program

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: Making the Ask

- **Ask for their support**
 - Be prepared to request a realistic and specific dollar amount
 - Tie the support to a specific measurable return: “Your funding will allow us to...”

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: Closing the Deal

- Recognition
 - Tell them how they will be recognized for their donation
 - Assure them that they will receive feedback on the measurable impact of their donation
- Don't exceed your allotted time frame
- Leave them with materials that summarize your program
- Establish a follow-up time with them

Reaching Corporate/Business Sponsors: Saying “Thanks”

- Thank them for their time
- Follow up with a thank you letter that summarizes your visit

Community Decision Makers

- Know your audience and their perspective
- Establish a common ground and an environment of cooperation
- Be professional and keep your cool
- Present measurable outcomes

Community Decision Makers

- Making the social justice argument
 - IDAs level the playing field for all people
 - Hope in concrete form
 - End poverty
 - Equal access to all
 - Use saver success stories with pictures, videos and personal letters of thanks

An Effective Message: Making the “Personal Responsibility” Case

- IDAs build local economies
- IDAs build wealth
- IDAs create educated financial customers who will start small businesses, provide skilled labor and purchase and maintain homes in a down housing market
- Use data on assets purchased, dollars saved, saving compliance rates, tax dollars increased, housing vouchers released, earnings capacity increased, small businesses started



Keeping it Simple: Messaging for Success

Christina Cain

Director, Asset Building Center

New Visions, New Ventures

Language as a Lever – Not a Barrier

- Talk to people, not at them
 - Listen, understand and act
 - Ensure your curriculum is interactive, rather than a lecture
 - Use classes as focus groups
 - Evolve and adapt your IDA marketing
 - Don't constantly remind people they are poor
 - Instead, focus on what IDAs do
 - Matched savings is the carrot and incentive
 - The behavior change is driven by education and support from program staff

Sticking to the Message

- Keep messages consistent, clear and focused
 - Don't drastically change your message for each audience (e.g. funders, future accountholders, etc.)
 - Do use testimonials from successful graduates to underline a specific message
 - Make sure all your staff says the same thing every time

Keeping the Message Clear

- Use plain English
- IDAs are hard enough to explain – give the acronyms a rest!
- Example of keeping the message clear: New Visions, New Ventures overhauled our mission statement because it was hard to understand

New Visions, New Ventures' Old Mission Statement

- *Our mission is to provide people with the knowledge, skills, resources and confidence necessary to achieve economic success and financial security through entrepreneurship, high-wage employment and/or asset building.*

New Visions, New Ventures' New Mission Statement

- *We help women start businesses and create jobs. We provide hope, inspiration and education to entrepreneurs.*

Rebranding: Process and Impact

- The process:
 - Created new mission statement
 - Overhauled our website to reflect our mission statement and use the same words
 - Learned social media and keep up with it daily
- The outcome: **Financial literacy enrollment and IDA application inquiries increased by 200%**

Messaging: It's About Our People

- Our clients' experiences need to be shared
 - Clients need to hear they are not alone and that they have support
 - Funders want to see the return on their investment

Celebrate Successes

- We get to define success
 - Number of savers
 - Number of business plans
 - Number of graduates
- Shout from the rooftops (or the web!) when clients move forward
- Acknowledge collaboration
 - Partner with other like-minded organizations
 - Promote the partner relationships you have built
 - Funders love this!



Questions for Our Speakers



Contact Information

For general questions about the AFI program,
visit www.idaresources.org.

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Upcoming “Tools for Success” Webinars

- **Putting Savers on the Fast Track:
Strategies for Express IDAs**
February 15, 2012
- **Register now at**
<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/117695096>