

# BUILD Inc.

Founded in 1969, BUILD, Inc. helps at-risk youth transform their lives in some of Chicago's most challenging neighborhoods. BUILD, Inc. serves thousands of vulnerable young people in Chicago escape violence, overcome trauma, and achieve safe and bright futures. Their annual gala has always been BUILD's fundraising lifeblood – so with their mission on the line, the team worked fast to flip their event virtual.

## ONLINE FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

SILENT AUCTION | ONLINE APPEAL | AMBASSADOR FUNDRAISING

## WHAT MADE THIS EVENT UNIQUE?

BUILD adapted their most popular annual gala to a virtual gala and social fundraising campaign, using OneCause Mobile Bidding & Peer-to-Peer software.

They had strong board and staff participation to give online fundraising a good start, enlisting larger social networks to spread the word and give. Both teams and individual created fundraising pages, inviting those they would have invited as guests their table.

Through homemade videos, they brought the storytelling of their live event to life online. With their mission at the center, they unleashed ambassadors and the power of social fundraising to hit their large (and much needed)

## VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

- ★ 8 days of video and content about mission
- 🌐 Promoted daily theme on website, email, social media
- 📺 Told powerful stories of impact with pre-recorded video
- 📺 No livestream
- 💰 Soft-launched site 2 weeks early to help lead donors practice
- 🤝 Held a virtual VIP cocktail hour to build connection
- 📢 Shared all site content across all social media
- 👥 Leaned on Associates Board to Team Fundraise
- 🤝 Met weekly with event chairs and board to gain consensus
- 🗨️ Asked Ambassadors to pre-load photos before launch

## BEST PRACTICES/LESSONS LEARNED

- ✓ Do a soft & hard launch
- ✓ Make it easy to register
- ✓ Use multi-channel communication (email, social, site)
- ✓ Produce and refresh daily content on your site
- ✓ Secure pre-seeded pledges
- ✓ Be positive & uplifting
- ✓ Harness board & ambassadors
- ✓ Do demos to show supporters how to fundraise



## RESULTS

**435** Donations  
**105** individuals fundraising  
**4** teams  
**200** Auction Item Bids  
**150** New Donors

**\$874K Total Raised**

## IN THEIR WORDS

"It was a quick decision to figure out how we were going to make our annual gala go virtual. We had fundraise out of necessity, as this event is a major donation vehicle for our donors. So, it was never a question of would we have it, it was how would we make it work."

Kirsten Mallik, Chief Development Officer