



# Innovate Your Healthcare Fundraising Strategy

A Guide to Turning One-Time Donors  
into Powerful Fundraisers

**DonorDrive®**

# Healthcare Fundraising Today

From small community clinics to large hospitals, healthcare organizations of all sizes depend on donations to deliver critical services, procure technology, and advance treatments for their patients. Foundations and organizations are tasked with the challenge of consistently driving fundraising growth among their communities of employees, grateful patients, and supporters and it's no easy task.

Hosting an annual event is often the go-to strategy for many organizations to go all-in to raise money. At many organizations, these events are a large source of annual campaign fundraising for vital programs to support current and future patients.

In fact, U.S. charitable giving saw a significant increase in early 2022. But of that increase in giving, those gains were accompanied by a continuing steep decline in donor acquisition and retention, particularly among new and newly retained donors. (Source: [AFP Global](#))

Understandably, many healthcare organizations and hospital foundations spend a large amount of time and money driving toward a single fundraising event because at the end of the event, it can result in a successful fundraising total that everyone can celebrate. **Short-term wins always look great, but is your single event strategy truly supporting your organization's long-term goals?**

When your fundraiser is only an annual one-time event, it may be limiting the fundraising potential of your supporters. More importantly, the format and execution strategy could be leaking potential new donors — and shortening the lifespan of retaining those donors — because the campaign is failing to meet their needs and expectations.

If only a small percentage of your donors return each year and never donate to other campaigns, you're basically starting from the ground up every time. If your supporters are all major gift donors, but perhaps your grateful patients or employees are underrepresented, your engagement strategies are clearly not connecting with them.

If the buzz about your event faded as quickly as it came, you may be missing critical connection points to spur fundraising momentum.

**To meet the needs of your employees, grateful patients and their families, and the wider community around you, traditional fundraising strategies need to evolve.** Understanding how peer-to-peer fundraising could help your institution, learning to create powerhouse fundraisers, and getting actionable steps on how to put these new strategies into practice could help you reach your long-term fundraising goals.

*"WITH SO MUCH VOLATILITY IN DONOR ACQUISITION AND RETENTION, NOW WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT TIME TO INVEST IN BROAD GRASSROOTS ENGAGEMENT. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT WAY TO CREATE RESILIENCE WITHIN THE SECTOR."*

- Woodrow Rosenbaum, Chief Data Officer  
Giving Tuesday (Source: [AFP Global](#))



### **Think about your organization's fundraising events and try to answer these questions:**

- What happens to the donors after the event? Do they come back? Do they ever become a different type of supporter, like a recurring donor?
- Did your donors and promoters feel involved, valued, and engaged? Do you have a diverse body of supporters? Is this campaign the only connection point you have with them for the entire year?
- Was there enough lead time to get adequate exposure to the campaign? Did you utilize social media and have enough "buzzworthy" noise? How long did it last?



# How Peer-To-Peer Fundraising Helps Healthcare Organizations

Short-term fundraising strategies for once or twice-a-year events are no longer enough for healthcare organizations. The fundraising world is changing and organizations are trying to change with it to avoid falling behind.

A simple social post or email that announces your event won't cut it in today's fundraising landscape. Neither will asking people to donate if that's the only time you ever reach out to them. You need to foster a relationship with a community that's motivated to fundraise on your behalf.

Evolving your organization's fundraising potential means following in the footsteps of those who are doing it already and thinking about long-term strategies.

Two healthcare organizations that know the ins-and-outs of long-term peer-to-peer fundraising are **The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation** and **Michigan Medicine**.



The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation has a bold but vital mission: "Conquer Cancer In Our Lifetime." As one of the world's top five cancer research centers, Princess Margaret is known for its game-changing scientific achievements and exceptional patient care.

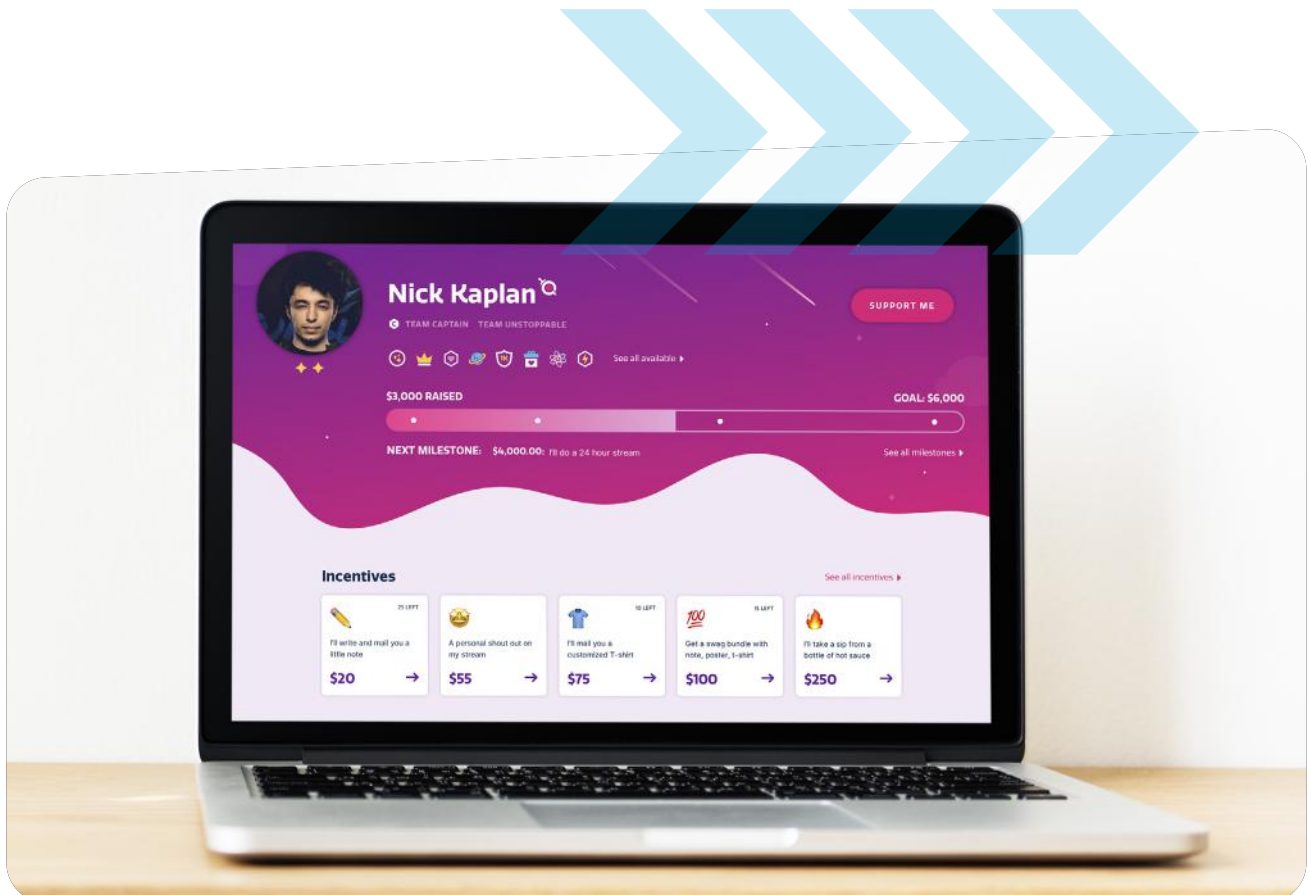
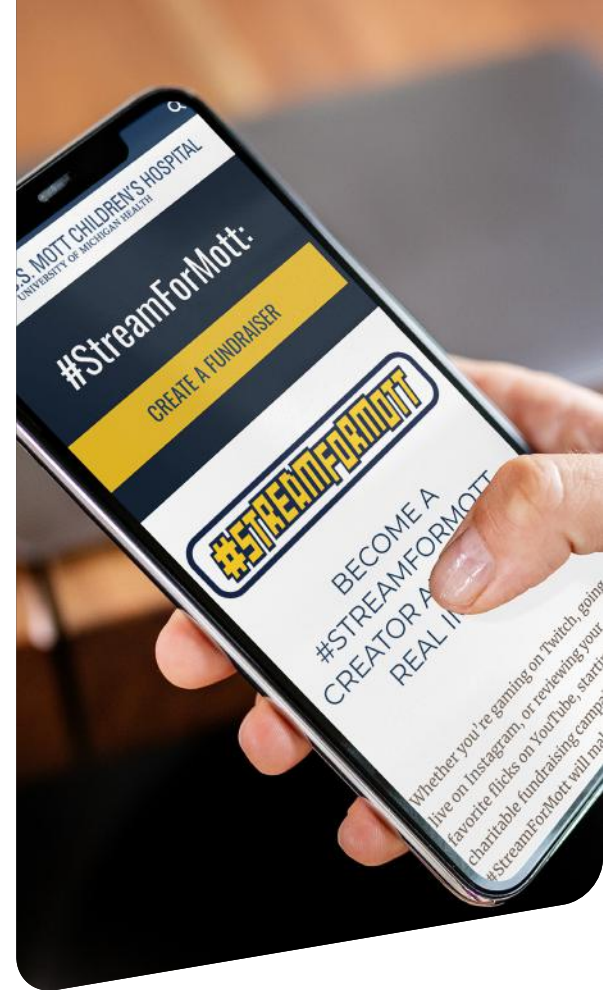


Michigan Medicine is a nationally-ranked hospital and one of the largest research institutions in the country. For over 170 years, they've specialized in treating patients, conducting critical research, and educating future doctors to advance health through a mission of transforming healthcare through philanthropy.

Both The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation and Michigan Medicine are successful because they've built strong communities around their causes through long-term initiatives that focus on peer-to-peer fundraising.

With peer-to-peer fundraising, participants can set up their own personalized fundraising pages to raise money and gain support directly from their families, friends, colleagues, and other people who come across their campaigns and have a shared interest in the program's mission success.

This type of fundraising is a multi-pronged approach that empowers individuals to organize personal campaigns and receive donations from their peers. When it comes to long-term fundraising, a peer-to-peer element makes all the difference in improving engagement and fostering communities.





## ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITIES

Peer-to-peer fundraising allows your supporters to fundraise on behalf of your organization by fostering the engagement and community of their own network of supporters. Allowing your supporters to create their own individual donation pages and engage with their own community builds effective fundraiser and donor relationships. You are able to create a network that sets your campaign up for success:

- Build communities, including people not directly connected with your organization.
- Reinforce your organization's branding and turn current donors into more committed fundraisers who can be ambassadors on behalf of your mission.
- Improve marketing and bring in more donations by getting people talking about your organization's causes.

In today's environment, with donor acquisition and retention on the decline, you must find new ways to diversify revenue and reach a new demographic of supporters.



*PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING IS A MULTI-PRONGED APPROACH THAT EMPOWERS INDIVIDUALS TO ORGANIZE PERSONAL CAMPAIGNS AND RECEIVE DONATIONS FROM THEIR PEERS.*



## Starting Points to Maximize Impact, Engage More People, and Drive Donations

- ☐ Months prior to your event, invite supporters, employees, and anyone connected to the organization's causes to set up a fundraising page.
- ☐ Encourage them to connect with a team of former supporters or to create their own team and invite their network of friends or family to donate.
- ☐ Reward them as they fundraise, earning exclusive badges, branded apparel, or incentives for completing certain fundraising activities to spur fundraising motivation.

## HOW TO CREATE POWERHOUSE FUNDRAISERS

Organizations need to support their participants in order to turn them into successful peer-to-peer fundraisers. For this to happen, healthcare organizations should focus on what their supporters need most:

- Awareness
- Trust
- Connectedness
- Ownership
- Promotion

### The Hierarchy of a Supporter's Needs



## Awareness

Extending your organization's major event with peer-to-peer fundraising requires awareness. But it's more than just sending emails or posting on social media. It's about the cause.

Encourage your supporters to share their own personal stories and connect to the mission on a deeper level. Creating personal fundraising pages that allow supporters to tell their stories and why they are connected to the mission allows them to be invested in the cause on a deeper, mission-aligned level.

When supporters, employees, and patients are passionate about a cause, they become invested. They recruit their peers. They tell their family and friends. They raise money.

However, making supporters and employees aware of your campaign isn't enough to get them involved. You also need trust.



*WHEN EMPLOYEES AND GRATEFUL PATIENTS ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT A CAUSE, THEY BECOME INVESTED. THEY RECRUIT THEIR PEERS. THEY TELL THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. THEY RAISE MONEY.*



# Trust

Trust is crucial for getting grateful patients, employees, and supporters to advocate on your behalf. You earn it through transparency and empowerment.



**Transparency:** Healthcare organizations and hospital foundations need to be candid about how the funds will be used. Grateful patients and community and employee donors want to know how the money is being invested, and that they're supporting a worthy cause. This helps them feel confident that their fundraising efforts are working. Donors are also more likely to give if they know where the money is going and understand the impact it will make. Two-thirds of donors say that understanding the impact of their donation would encourage them to give more. **Transparency among charities can [increase donations by 50%](#) and that applies to healthcare organizations and hospital foundations as well.**



**Empowerment:** Healthcare organizations and hospital foundations can also build trust with their donors by empowering them. Employees, patients, and their families need to become invested in your cause or they won't have an interest in fundraising. Giving your supporters the flexible ability to support what they want and how they want for your institution, whether it's fundraising for your Children's Hospital, Cancer Center, or Cardiovascular Center, allows them to feel empowered by your cause on a deeper level.



## Connectedness

Building a community that supports your fundraising efforts all year requires connectedness. When people come together for a worthy cause, powerful things happen.

### The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation

The Princess Margaret's event Quest to Conquer Cancer is an opportunity to diversify their revenue and reach a new demographic of supporters with an event harnessing Livestream Fundraising and the gaming community.

They launched Quest to Conquer Cancer using DonorDrive, an industry-leading Livestream Fundraising virtual event tool. But more than just livestreaming integrations, mission-focused design, personalized communication, and gamification, DonorDrive's partnership helped The Princess Margaret employ best practices, engage new corporate partners, and reach supporters who previously had never heard of their organization.

The first Quest to Conquer Cancer raised \$350,000 in 2020. In 2021, **the event grew by more than 50%, raising \$570,000, for a total of \$920,000 over two years.** The big success for The Princess Margaret came from more than just dollars raised. They were able to reach a whole new segment of supporters around the world.



"We want to make sure that we're not only thinking about raising money. We also think about how do we make this event fun for the people who participate in it, because ultimately that is kind of what the gaming community is coming together for: a good cause, but also having fun. We want to tap into that and never lose sight of what makes the gaming community really special."

**Steve Merker**

VP of Corporate & Community

# Ownership

To create a sense of ownership around a fundraiser, patients, community members, and employees need the ability to fundraise in ways that work for them.

## Michigan Medicine

Michigan Medicine drove prospect engagement and acquired new donors by prioritizing a digital fundraising program with peer-to-peer fundraising events. They were able to expand their supporter experience by using scalable and easy-to-use tools allowing them to quickly respond to the fundraising appetite of their constituents.

Along with having the technology to support their fundraising needs, Michigan Medicine also allowed its fundraisers to support what they wanted, how they wanted. From traditional peer-to-peer fundraising events like [5k walks](#) to unique athletic partnerships with current students, to finding fundraising opportunities within existing programs, Michigan Medicine uses every element of digital fundraising. [U-M's football kicker](#), Jake "Money" Moody, launched a campaign that features a weekly sponsor who donated \$300 for every field goal he made during that particular game of the football season. [#StreamforMott](#) allows content creators on Twitch and YouTube to support patients who use therapeutic gaming for treatment at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. Whatever the passion, Michigan Medicine has the tools to support the campaign.

By encouraging their participants to tell their stories and own their personal fundraising pages, Michigan Medicine, during their 2021-2022 fundraising season, **raised over \$1.8 million**, across 92 campaigns with more than 10,000 donors, an increase of 48% in the annual number of campaigns executed.



"Michigan Medicine has unique branded institutions... [Constituents] might not identify with Michigan Medicine, they may consider themselves team Mott Children's Hospital or team Rogel Cancer Center and want to do things that are supporting their specific passion. So, DonorDrive has been a great tool in helping us do that. We have the big Michigan identity but can also serve the needs of our constituency groups and build out tools that allow them to feel like they are supporting the area or hospital they want to."

**Kristen Kurtz**

Director, Digital Fundraising  
Michigan Medicine





## Promotion

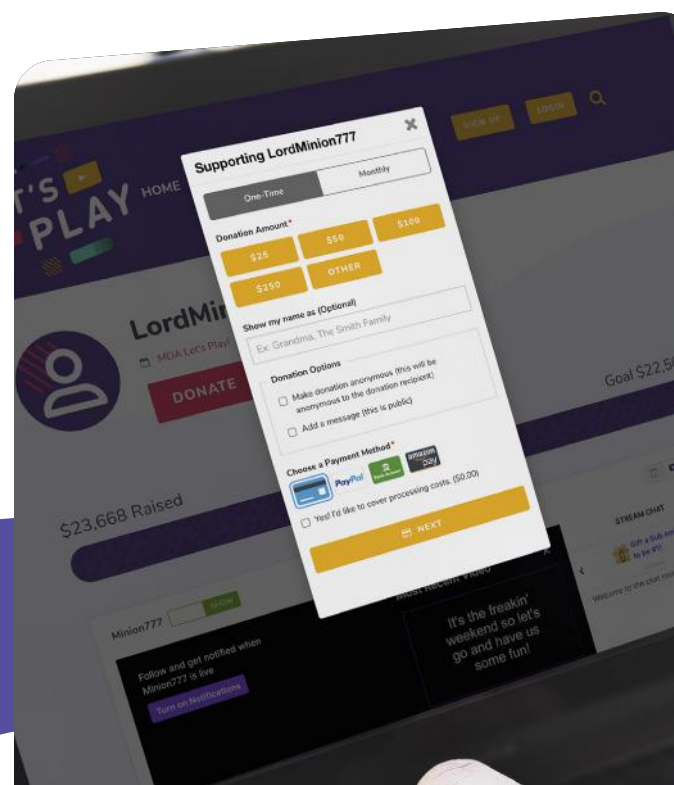
Finally, you need to equip supporters with the ability to communicate and promote their involvement with your campaign effectively. There are two fundamental ways to ensure your participants are empowered to promote your cause: 1. Specific coaching and suggestions they can build from and 2. A platform that allows them to raise money their way.

## HOW TO PUT THIS STRATEGY INTO PRACTICE

Now you're ready to build a peer-to-peer fundraising community, but how do you make this tried and tested strategy work for your healthcare organization?

### Take these 5 key steps to jumpstart a peer-to-peer fundraising strategy:

1. Upgrade your digital fundraising experience.
2. Personalize your communications.
3. Create community with participants.
4. Make giving easy for all.
5. Find the best fundraising tool for your organization.





## 1. Upgrade Your Digital Fundraising Experience

A new peer-to-peer fundraising program with thousands of supporters doesn't happen overnight. Start by integrating new strategies and building loyalty with your employees, patients, and their families.

A great place to start is your existing donation campaign pages. Use suggested donation amounts and a toggle button that allows people to easily become recurring donors. These simple changes can improve your donor's giving experience and increase your funds raised.

Then, offer DIY fundraising opportunities in which your community can set up personalized pages and recruit their network to donate. Continue building your digital fundraising program with engaging solutions like virtual events, livestreaming, and mobile app fundraising.



## 2. Personalize Your Communication

Once you have your upgraded donation campaign site in place, it's time to communicate with your supporters. Impersonal mass marketing approaches, including generic mailers or emails, are no longer effective for today's donors.

Personalize your communication and meet your supporters where they are, e.g. mobile apps and social networks. You should still use mailers and emails as it makes sense for certain demographics, of course, but adapting communication methods to more modern expectations will help you generate better results and encourage philanthropy with a new audience.





### 3. Create a Community

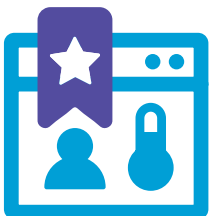
Today's donors want to do more than just open their wallet. They want to be part of a community and are willing to do more to support your cause. Instead of always asking for donations, engage your supporters to be champions of your cause. They will be more willing and receptive to making personalized fundraising pages and asking their networks to donate.

Encourage your supporters to tell their stories and use engagement tools like fundraising incentives, milestones, and badges to reward their efforts.



### 4. Make Giving Easy for All

The best fundraising campaign will fall flat if your donors are met with a cumbersome giving experience. Make donating as easy as possible with digital wallet giving options including Apple Pay, PayPal, Venmo, and more. Then take your fundraising to the next level with Facebook fundraisers, streaming platforms, and other engagement tools that allow your donors and their network of supporters to seamlessly give wherever they are.



### 5. Find the Best Fundraising Tool for Your Organization

With the right fundraising platform, you can embark on peer-to-peer fundraising with innovative functionality to further engage donors and fundraisers and take your event to the next level.

You need tools to make it easy for your team to create custom campaigns that are tailored to your mission. You should have access to everything you need right away to get started and room to grow and expand your peer-to-peer strategies as you evolve to reach your fundraising goals.

With the right choice, you get more than just software. As you learn more about expanding your digital fundraising roadmap, you have access to a dedicated team that can steer your organization throughout the entire journey.



# Make Fundraising Simple

## Personal Fundraising Pages

Empower your grateful patients and community and employee supporters with personalized fundraising pages they can share with their network of friends and family.

## Flexible Donation Forms

Use suggested donation amounts, recurring donation toggles, custom fields, digital wallet payment options like Venmo, ApplePay, and more to make giving easy for all donors.

## Mobile First

Allow fundraisers to advocate for your cause on the go. With a cohesive cross-channel experience, your supporters have the tools to raise more.

## Conversion-Focused Design

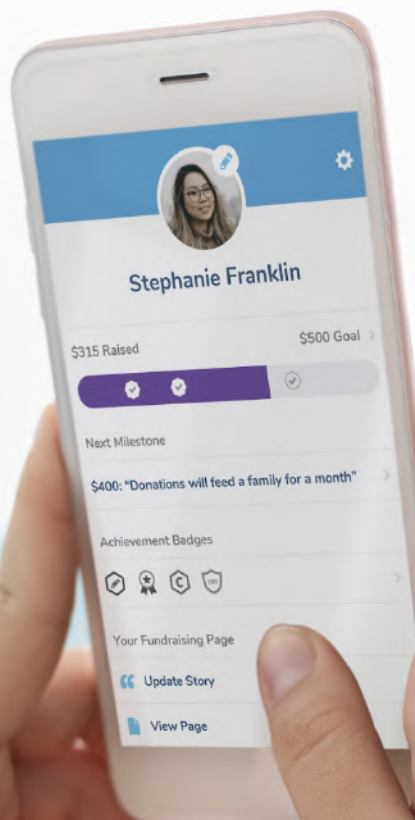
Launch secure campaigns and welcoming event pages to engage your community and increase conversions with easy-to-use setup tools.

## Real-Time Analytics

Organize and track your donors and build a community of new supporters with real-time analytics and integrations with your existing CRM.

## Next-Level Engagement

Increase engagement with your fundraising with gamification tools like milestones, badges, incentives, activity tracking, livestreaming, and other innovations.

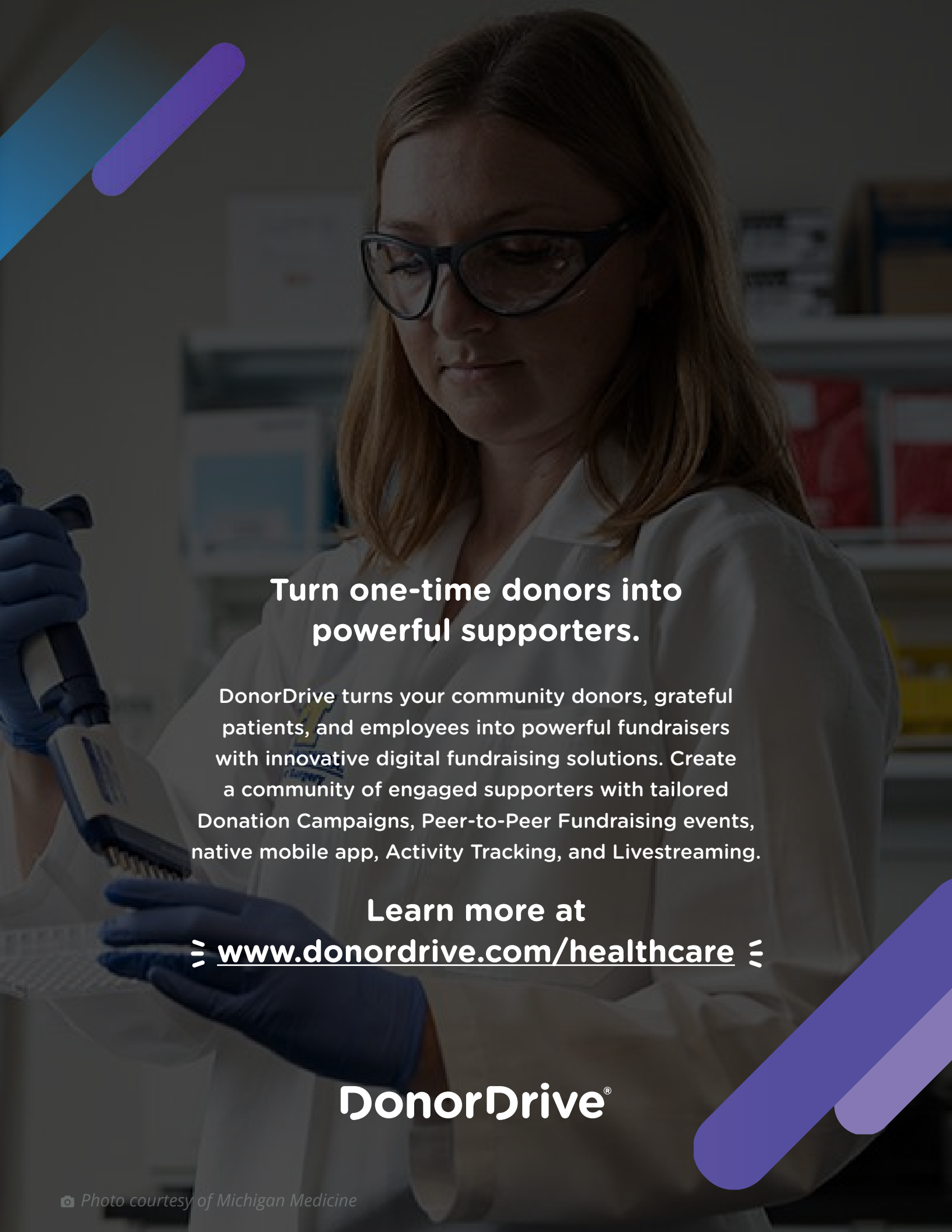


## CONCLUSION

Healthcare organizations are tasked with the challenge of consistently driving fundraising growth among their communities of grateful patients, local supporters, corporate partners, and employees.

To continue driving growth in your organization, invest in a sophisticated fundraising platform that can help you increase communication, host engaging events, reach untapped supporter communities, and streamline your fundraising. This way, you can transform your current donor lists into a thriving fundraising community.

Drive engagement and loyalty with industry-leading tools and integrations and get your community involved with an experience centered around your organization's mission.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing safety glasses and a white lab coat, is focused on using a pipette in a laboratory. The background is slightly blurred, showing shelves with various lab supplies. The image has a dark overlay with white text and decorative blue and purple diagonal bars in the corners.

## Turn one-time donors into powerful supporters.

DonorDrive turns your community donors, grateful patients, and employees into powerful fundraisers with innovative digital fundraising solutions. Create a community of engaged supporters with tailored Donation Campaigns, Peer-to-Peer Fundraising events, native mobile app, Activity Tracking, and Livestreaming.

Learn more at  
≡ [www.donordrive.com/healthcare](http://www.donordrive.com/healthcare) ≡

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