



CASE STUDY

CMCA finds fundraising fit with Bonterra Donor Engagement's Guided Fundraising solution.





Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA) is part of a national movement U.S. President Lyndon Johnson established in 1965 to eradicate the causes and conditions of poverty. CMCA does not focus on crisis intervention. Rather, the organization assesses each family unit and matches them with services and resources to meet their needs.

Because CMCA is a federal nonprofit and receives federal funding, some donors assumed the organization had all the money it needed. For Cheryl, CMCA's director of development, that misconception needed to change. Cheryl and her team knew that federal grants come with restrictions on how the money can be spent. Some of CMCA's essential needs could not be supported through government funds, which is why Cheryl wanted to focus on individual giving.

Enter Bonterra Guided Fundraising.

Bonterra Guided Fundraising: The “just right” software solution

During her career, Cheryl worked with two fundraising software solutions: *Raiser's Edge* and *Raceplanner*. She used *Raiser's Edge* at a larger organization and found it more technical than she liked. *Raceplanner*, a database used to track runners, was challenging to use for tracking donors.

With Bonterra Guided Fundraising (formerly Network for Good), Cheryl found an all-in-one tool with an engaging interface she could use seamlessly to steward her donors. The integrated email functionality allowed CMCA to send updates to donors directly. When individuals sign up to receive CMCA's newsletter, their information is automatically added into the Guided Fundraising database for fundraising outreach. For Cheryl, these features make Guided Fundraising the perfect fit for CMCA:

“Now I'm happy. I'm like Goldilocks and the Three Bears trying to find the right bed, and I've found the right bed.”

Coaching creates connections

When it comes to fundraising, Cheryl is a team of one. That's why having access to a fundraising coach is invaluable to her. Paige Jarrett, an experienced nonprofit fundraiser, assisted Cheryl in establishing development plans and priorities while also sharing her professional experiences as a fundraiser. According to Cheryl, that connection was crucial in her work:

“Having Paige as my coach is just like having someone who understands what I do, and we can have some frank conversations. I do best when I can collaborate and interact with other people around ideas, and better ideas come out of that.”



Bonterra Guided Fundraising helped to successfully double CMCA's recurring donors.

Seasonal engagement plans.

One of CMCA'S recent goals is to re-engage lapsed donors and encourage them to support the organization through recurring giving. With Paige's guidance and Guided Fundraising's Subscription Giving research and resources, CMCA successfully jumped from 10 to 20 recurring donors!

In fact, a previously lapsed donor felt inclined to reach out to CMCA and reminisce about her positive memories of the organization as a result of the Subscription Giving engagement plan: a built-in, multi-channel fundraising plan you can send out in a matter of minutes.

"This really stood out to her, and it led to a great conversation. Now she's feeling more engaged because she's getting those updates that I've promised."





Doubling down on donor stewardship

With the Guided Fundraising solution, CMCA started sending text and video messages to their donors when they had an immediate need, an event invite, or a quick thank you to share. Donors started reaching out to CMCA's executive director to share their excitement and appreciation for the quick acknowledgments they received.

Different ways to ask and thank people have been important for the CMCA's approach to people who respond to a variety of different channels. And statistics show that a tailored approach is making a difference. In the two years that CMCA has used Guided Fundraising, they have doubled their donor retention from 18% to 44% and increased their income year-over-year. As a result, they earned enough funds to expand their programming for the first time. CMCA's executive director is thrilled, and Cheryl says they have Bonterra Guided Fundraising to thank:

"When I started, we didn't have Guided Fundraising. Now, we are fundraising to a level where our director gets to see that there's a benefit to having someone do this, and he's got some new ideas around how we can start using these unrestricted funds that are really exciting."

Need help finding your organization's fundraising fit? Visit bonterratech.com to contact us or request a demo.