



Sarcoma Foundation of America

Case Study: Growing an Existing Event

The Sarcoma Foundation of America (SFA) was founded in 2000 and the organization's mission is to advocate for increased research to find new and better therapies with which to treat patients with Sarcoma. The SFA, a national organization based in the Washington DC area, raises money to privately fund grants for Sarcoma researchers and conducts education and advocacy efforts on behalf of Sarcoma patients.

The SFA held their inaugural fundraising gala in New York City in 2003, and, nine years later, the gala remains their largest annual fundraiser. Four years ago, the SFA began working with Powered by Professionals (PBP), a professional fundraising and event management firm specializing in the non-profit sector. The SFA was confident that PBP could help them continue to raise awareness about Sarcoma while simultaneously furthering the fundraising success of their gala.

The 2007 gala, the last one prior to PBP being hired, raised \$640,000. In the SFA's first year working with PBP, the firm implemented their model of incorporating multiple honorees and award recipients, each of whom has a different network that the firm engaged in the event. The first gala working with PBP raised \$915,000, a 43% increase over the previous year.

This past May, the SFA celebrated their 10th Anniversary at the gala with the goal of breaking the million dollar mark. PBP identified, managed and supported the two main honorees as well as the seven Courage Award Recipients (all Sarcoma survivors) and with the help of the dedicated committee, the dinner sold-out and raised nearly \$1.2 million! 30% of the total was raised at the event, due in large part to the emotional and moving survivor video introduced and created by PBP, the live and silent auctions and the Fund-A-Grant (a concept that involves individuals raising their hands and pledging on-the-spot gifts ranging from \$1,000-\$25,000 in support of a Sarcoma Research Grant).

Matthew Alsante, the SFA's Executive Director says that, "Powered by Professionals' expertise has helped the Sarcoma Foundation of America turn our annual gala into a 1.2 million dollar event, an increase of close to 100% over the four-year period. We have exceeded our fundraising goal every year working with them, our donor base continues to grow and our organization's presence in New York is more prominent than ever before." Needless to say, looking ahead to 2012, the SFA is eager to continue working with Powered by Professionals to grow their annual fundraising gala in New York City.

