memorandum

11/20/2014 2:21 PM

**TO: Stella Ross, Mike Smith, Courtney Lee-Ashley, Missy Kurek**

**FR: Michael Lewis, DC Finance Assistant**

**DT: Thursday, November 20, 2014**

**RE: Finance Assistant End of Cycle Memo**

**OVERVIEW**

The DC Region covers the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area and includes the DCCC’s PAC and Member fundraising portfolio. Events are concentrated in the DC area. In the 2013-2014 cycle, the DC region consisted of the Deputy National Finance Director (Courtney), the Mid-Atlantic Finance Director (Mike), the Mid-Atlantic Deputy Finance Director (Becca) and the Mid-Atlantic assistant.

The PAC fundraising program largely consisted of the Business Council Program (in addition to the Labor and Defense Council) and Member outreach to PAC supporters. The Member fundraising plan was driven by monthly dues whip plans and quarterly Member dinners. There were over 50 events encompassing PAC, Member and individual fundraising in the DC area over the course of 2014. The Finance Assistant helps build these events, provides logistical support for the rest of the team, and ensure the events are smooth and money in collected and processed.

**DAY-TO-DAY / PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Processing Money

*Money In*

The finance assistant is responsible for processing all checks and tracking the money in spreadsheet every night. I tracked this our Money In spreadsheet (S: DC Region 2013-2014 > DC Finance Plan -> 2014 DC Money In and kept separate sheets for PAC and Individual fundraising.

Every night, Mike added new checks received or hard commits on the finance plan and highlights them in green to indicate their status. I then review the green highlights on the Finance Plan and add the new contributions to the Money In sheet. **Make sure the totals in both sheets match up.** Any hard commit pledge should be guaranteed to come in (e.g. sent in the mail).

At the end of the day, the operations director will ask you to send “money in and commits.” Your Money In goes into the daily ***SNAP*:** The ‘SNAP’ is prepared by the finance operations director and national finance directors. This is a daily ‘snapshot’ of our fundraising intake and compares a particular day with that of previous cycles. **It is critical that your Money In is accurate because DCCC leadership uses the ‘SNAP’ to gauge where we stand financially.**  In email include daily totals of money in, hard commits and problem checks.

When Courtney was out, I track Member Money In. For the Member Money snap, we just send new money, new commits, and the Overview to Amy, Missy, and copy Courtney.

*Logging Checks in NGP*

I save the digital copy of the check in S: DC Region 2013-2014 > 2014 Check Copies > 01 January Checks and the digital copy of the transmittal in (S: DC Region 2013-2014 > 2014 Check Copies > 01 January Transmittals). I make a new folder for checks each month. Print one copy of the transmittal, check to ensure the address, employer, and occupation are correct, initial the transmittal, and bring it to the Operations Director. (There is no employer/occupation for PAC checks.)

Logging Checks in NGP:

* + Individual Checks
    - Date Received: Set the date the check was dropped off
    - Amount: $XXX
    - Type: C – Contributions
    - Cycle – 2014
    - Source: XXXX (see “Source Code Requests”)
    - Method: Check, Credit Card, Wire Transfer
    - Check #: Add this for check
    - Account: 606
    - Tally Members: Select “Mid-Atlantic” and whichever Members get credit for the check. This information is on the Finance Plan.
  + PAC Checks
    - Date Received: Set the date the check was dropped off
    - Amount: $XXX
    - Type: C – Contributions
    - Cycle – 2014
    - Source: XXXX (see “Source Code Requests”)
    - Method: Check
    - Code 1: NT – Non-Memoed Note
    - Check #: Add this for check
    - Note: Contribution
    - Account: 606
    - Tally Members: Select “Mid-Atlantic” and whichever Members get credit for the check
  + Member Committee & Leadership PAC Checks (Courtney often did these, but it’s important to know how to process Member checks)
    - Date Received: Set the date the check was dropped off
    - Amount: $XXX
    - Type: C – Contributions
    - Cycle – 2014
    - Source: 14973 – Member Dues (always)
    - Method: Check
    - Code 1: NT – Unlimited Transfer
    - Check #: Add this for check
    - Note: Contribution
    - Account: 607
    - Tally Members: Select “Member Dues” and whichever Members get credit for the check
  + Anomalies
    - Votesane/Realtors
      * Individual check process
      * Code 1: EA – Earmarked Link
      * Note: Earmarked Through Votesane
      * Attribution 2: NAR – Realtors
      * Link: 5898833
      * *Print this on Pink Paper*
    - Partnerships
      * For Partnerships, you make two transmittals. The first transmittal is for the Partnership (so the company). If you are creating a new record in NGP, select A – Partnership.
      * Continue as though you are entering an individual record. For Code 1, select PR – Partnership. Once the contribution is created, note the *Contribution ID* (e.g. 14013210)
      * For the individual making the contribution, continue as though you are entering an individual record. For Code 1, select PT – Partner. On the link, type in the *Contribution ID* from above. A note should show up linking the Partner contribution to the Partnership check you just created.
    - Recount
      * Change Type to “O – Other Miscellaneous”
      * Under “Member” choose the “Recount14 – Contribs for 2014 Recount Contribution Options”
      * Change Account to “1000 – Recount Fund”
      * Add note, “Recount contribution.”
      * *Print this on lime green paper*

1. Problem Checks

Occasionally, a check for the DCCC will be a problem check and the DC Finance Assistant is responsible to resolving the problem check. The most common problem checks:

1. Signature Form – The signature on the check is illegible or it is signed by someone else.
2. Entity – When the check is from a firm (ie Smith and Smith LLC). This form ensures that the contribution is from a partnership and is not an illegal corporate contribution.
3. Trust – when the check is from a trust fund (Smith Family Trust). We only need a form when the account name and signer are not the same. A check from the Tom Smith Trust signed by Tom Smith is OK.
4. Earmarked (the most common)– When a donor writes something in the memo line. Often times they will put Leader Pelosi or the member that hosted the event. These checks can’t be cashed into the general DCCC fund as is. The donor needs to sign a form saying that they intended the funds for the DCCC rather than a specific candidate.

The form templates can be found in S: Finance 2013-2014 -> Problem Checks -> 2013-2014 Problem Checks -> Each individual folder has the template for the correct form.

When completed, I save the form in S: DC Region 2013 – 2014 -> Problem Checks and email, call, mail, and generally harass the donor until the form is completed. If the contribution was raised by a Member, Mike or Courtney can reach out to the Member office with the form and ask them to contact the donor.

1. Donor Maintenance (orchids)

We send orchids from NP to donors for birthdays, special occasions and for after they host events. I ordered the “opulent white orchid” from www.telaflora.com. Along with the orchid, we’ll include text like “Dear XXX, thanks for your support and friendship. best, nancy pelosi.” (no caps on best, nancy or pelosi). Always think proactively about who is going to need orchids and keep on top of that.

Teleflora has an active rewards program you can use to save money. I use the Politico Playbook to keep track of birthdays (in addition to NGP notes). Orchids should be sent **the next day** to any event host. Don’t send Member host orchids to their office address – ask the scheduler for a DC or in-district home.

1. Thank you note process

It is important to keep up to date with thank you notes. I recommend sending them to donors every month (or twice a month when there are a lot of contributions). You send one to anyone of our donors that contributed to the DCCC within that time period. **YOU CAN PULL A LIST IN NGP BY GOING TO SEARCH 🡪 OTHER FINANCIAL SEARCHES 🡪 FIND BY TALLY MEMBER. The Tally member is Mid-Atlantic and you can toggle the dates for the window you need.**

I usually complete thank you notes at the end of each month. I create a spreadsheet S: DC Region 2013-2014 -> Thank You Notes with the dates of the Thank You Notes. I then mail merge with the templates for the quarter (provided by the communications department – someone usually asks the speechwriter to draft the thank you note) for individuals, PACs and Realtors. You create the Realtors thank you note by adding the line “Thank you for your membership in the NAR’s President’s Circle,” somewhere into the individual note. **You should make sure the communications department provides different content for the PAC note.**

Each month, you should also make Member Thank You notes on 8.5x11 DCCC paper. This needs to be approved by both NP’s office and the Chairman’s Office, because they both should sign it. I tried to complete the Thank You note so we could include it in the monthly Member Dues Hill Drop.

1. Call sheets

The MOC who is hosting the event will often make calls to high dollar donors to invite them to the event and make an ask for a contribution. It is often the responsibility of the regional finance team to prepare for this call time by making call sheets. Call sheets need to be as accurate and as thorough as possible. All call sheets should be saved here: **S:\DC Region 2013-2014 🡪 Call Time (Please note that there are differences between individual call sheets & PAC Call sheets)**

Call sheets always need to include the following:

1. Contact Information: make sure you have accurate contact information for each call sheet. You will need to verify this by calling each number before it is sent for approval. **ALL NUMBERS MUST BE VERIFIED. LEADER PELOSI WILL END CALL TIME IF THERE IS A WRONG NUMBER.**
2. Ask: This will have the main ‘ask’ for the call. The call might be for a renewal, an end of quarter ask, or an event invite. Regional Director will let you know what this should be.
3. Background/Notes: This provides context on the relationship between the person and the DCCC and/or member making the call. Here you will add information regarding how long they have been engaged with the DCCC, which events they have attended, and if/when NP or the MOC has met them before. This helps the MOC remember the person they are calling. You will also add in all DCCC giving history in this section, and note whether the person attended a specific event and what amount they contributed on what date.
4. Biography: This is the bio of the person you are calling. Most of the time, this information can be found on the person’s work website. Make sure the information is accurate and to-the-point. Make sure you don’t just copy and paste from a website or Wikipedia. You should edit the information to make sure it’s relevant and that it makes sense.
5. Giving History: Other than confirmed contact information, this is the most important aspect of the call sheet. This information needs to be very accurate and up to date in order for the Member of Congress to have an appropriate ask. You can look up and export the person’s giving history via CQMoneyline. Once you have imported the giving history, calculate how much that individual has federally remaining to give to Federal Committees. Additionally, you will need to list giving history for an individual from the last three election cycles (2013-2014, 2012-2011, 2010-2009).

NOTE: You will need to list giving history by year. DCCC contributions are ALWAYS on top, in BOLD, and with the contribution source in parenthesis.

Giving history should be formatted as follows:

John Doe Giving History

**2012:** **No giving history**

**2011: $30,800 DCCC (June 2011, Donor Meeting)**

$30,800 DNC

$5,000 Obama for America

$2,500 SCHNEIDER, BRADLEY SCOTT

**2010: $5,000 DCCC (August 2010, Chicago Sacks Dinner)**

$1,000 Ellsworth, Brad

$1,000 Grayson, Trey

**2009: $30,800 DCCC (5.12.09 Meeting in Chicago)**

$25,000 DNC

$5,000 Ellison, Keith

**PAC Call Sheets:** For examples of PAC Call sheets, please see: S: DC Region 2013-2014 🡪 Call Time. You can also find individual call sheet examples there as well.

1. Event materials & Briefings

The DC Finance Assistant puts together the first draft of briefings. These are saved in DC Region 2013 – 2014 > Briefings. Use this folder as a reference.

*Event Briefings*

Start with NP’s Briefing. A sample briefing can be found S: DC Region 2013-2014 > Briefings > NP Briefing Template. Once NP’s briefing is created and approve (approval process: Mike > Stella > Missy), flip this into a new briefing for the Chairman and another generic one for Members of Congress. (The generic briefing for Members of Congress should not include individual’s money details.)

In NP’s briefings, you will create two-liners for all attendees (except larger events like receptions, where you can just list out all of the attendees). **Don’t create extra work for yourself. Try to find the most recent copy of a two-liner for an individual before creating a new one from scratch**. Here’s a sample two-liner:

**Michael Smith,** *Washington, D.C.*

Mike Smith is the DC Finance Director at the DCCC. He is the Finance Director of your re-elect. ***In July 2014, Mike contributed $15,000 to the DCCC through the dinner hosted by Tom & Linda Daschle. In February 2013, you had lunch with Mike at Sonoma. After that meeting, Mike contributed $32,400 to the DCCC.***

NP and the Chairman should both have 5x8 cards with a timeline of events and the names of hosts and Members in attendance. You will also create a Thank You memo for NP to call and thank the host.

For every event, you should make sure to bring the following with you. **Always bring extra copies. The one time you will forget, someone will need an extra briefing or card.**

* NP main briefing, attendee briefing, remarks, cards, and thank you memo
* Chairman’s main briefing, attendee briefing, and cards
* Extra Member briefings
* Extra 5x8 event cards
* Event Spreadsheets
* Nametags, extra inserts and holders
* Escort cards (“you will be seated at table 2”)
* Contribution forms
* Sharpies, pens and pencils

*Check Drop Briefings*

You will also make briefings for check drops. Please see the briefings folder for a template for these briefings. These should be created the day before the check drop briefing.

1. Visa

The regional director has a DCCC authorized VISA Credit Card that is used for travel, donor meetings, orchids, and any number of other work related expenses. You will have the number on file, and will regularly book travel, buy and send orchids, etc. **It is very important to keep all of your receipts!!**

1. Tracking RSVPs

Tracking event RSVPs is an important part of the Finance Assistant’s job. In order to keep the region’s RSVP’s localized, we kept all RSVPs in the same spreadsheet S: DC Region 2013-2014 > RSVP Lists > Q1 2014 RSVP Lists. (For some reason, we called it Q1 2014, though it had the entire year’s worth of events.) Keep every event together makes it easy to navigate and track how much money each event raised at a moment’s notice.

Additionally, you will use this list for nametags for events. **Make sure all names and organizations are spelled correctly.** I kept all RSVPs in a separate, personal email folder so I could go back to double check spelling and organization names when necessary.

1. Source Code Requests

For any new event, you can request a new Source Code by emailing the Operations Director. This should include information about the previous source code. When you charge things to specific events, you will have to specify the event code for charges. Every source-coded event should cost no more than 4% of what it raises.

1. Caucus Report

The DC Finance assistant will occasionally put together the monthly Caucus Report. See the Member Dues Director’s exit memo for details of producing the Caucus Report. Additionally, the DC Finance Assistant should ensure that Member raise credits (particularly for Maryland and Virginia Members and Members raising PAC names) are properly logged in NGP and reflected in the Caucus Report.

1. Hill Drops

The DC Finance Assistant will organize monthly hill drops including the caucus report, dues invoices, event invitations, thank you notes, and any other pertinent materials. This was coordinated with the Member Dues Director. Order Staples 9x12 White Gummed envelopes (do not seal them) and use the template for the office labels found in Member Dues 2013-2014 > Member Dues Master Sheet > MOC Office Labels No Zip.

1. Supplies

The DC Finance Assistant should ensure proper supplies are ordered for the region, including 5x8 index cards, 9x12 gummed envelopes, 8.5x11 blue folders, water, nametag materials, etc. To order new supplies, email the assistant to the COO with the staples link and quantity needed. Orders will not be finalized until at least $50 is requested from the entire department. For specialized NP paper and envelopes, please ask Krista/The Events Director.

1. Remarks Requests

It is important to ensure Remarks Requests are submitted to the speechwriter at least two weeks in advance. For anyone speaking besides the Chairman and NP and other rare circumstances, generic remarks requests with DCCC background information is sufficient to color the remarks of the Member of Congress. When sending remarks requests, make sure to copy DC Finance, Amy, Stella and the speechwriter.

1. Quick Messenger:

This is the information for our messenger service: Phone: 240-223-2233, Acct # 410, Reference: FR

**ADDITIONAL MEMO COMPONENTS**

1. DCCC Events
   1. Business Council Coffees

As part of the Business Council program, we offer a monthly coffee that provides an opportunity for lobbyists, PAC supporters, and the general downtown to community to interact with and build relationships with key Members of Congress.

For these events, you coordinate on the dates with the Business Council Chairs (Reps. Neal & Sewell this year) and the Wasserman Room’s availability. (I have reserved the Wasserman Room for one monthly date in 2015 already.) We skipped over months with our quarterly receptions (and August), so there should be seven total events in the off-year.

For special guests, we usually invited a Ranking Member or Members of Leadership and highlighted them on our invitations. We then invited the rest of their committee or caucus to attend the coffee with them. This worked particularly well, as attendees were able to interact with a variety of different Members connected to specific committees before and after the speaking program.

In 2014, these were our Special Guests and other invited VIPs:

December 2013: Sandy Levin – Ways & Means

February: Chris Van Hollen – Budget Committee

April: Nita Lowey – Appropriations

June: Jim Clyburn – CBC & Leadership (celebrating his book)

July: Hoyer – Chief Deputy Whips

September – DCCC Leadership & Frontline Members

At each event, the Business Council Chairs would welcome guests, acknowledge Members and turn it over to the special guests for their remarks. Bagels, breakfast treats, fruit, coffee and OJ was set-up in the center of the room for each of these events. Bring a 5x98 card to write a list of Members who actually arrived for the Chairs to announce.

* 1. Business Council Receptions

These quarterly receptions give an opportunity for DCCC PAC supporters to meet with the entire Democratic Caucus. After putting together an NP scheduling request and coordinating a location with the events director, submit an invitation for NP’s office approval (after Missy approves, give to the Operations Director) and the Chairman’s approval. Then, distribute to the Email Blast Lists and schedulers and track RSVPs for this event.

8-10 members of the Finance Team would staff these events – checking guests in alphabetically (A-G, H-M, N-Z signs can be helpful and are stored in the basement), staffing Members, etc. Krista will help put together the staff plans for these events. I often tracked which Members arrived – important for the Chairman to announce in his speaking program – and it was helpful to bring the “Member Check-In” sign from the basement.

* 1. Business Council Happy Hours

In 2014, we only did two “Staff Happy Hours,” and both featured House Democrats’ Chiefs of Staff. These events were easy to put on and largely successful, and usually happened the evening after last votes were at 3:00pm.

The budget for these events should be no more than a $1,500 minimum at a bar (with drinks and some food), as they didn’t raise much individual money. PAC and individual supporters often enjoyed attending these events. We typically selected a location on Capitol Hill or Barracks Row for easy access.

Other Staff Happy Hour ideas: Nadeam & Robert (NP’s Chiefs) Happy Hour, DCCC Senior Staff Happy Hour, Women’s Staff Happy Hour.

* 1. LGBT Equality Reception

The DCCC’s annual LGBT Equality Reception is an opportunity to raise money from LGBT individuals, lobbyists, and staff in the DC area. We built this event coordinating with Brad Jacklin, the Hill’s LGBT Caucus Executive Director, and the Members and Chiefs of LGBT Caucus. This year, we hosted it at The Oracle Townhouse on Capitol Hill.

We set ticket levels at $2,500 for hosts (name on the invitation), $1,000 for patrons, $500 for friends, $250 for guests, and $100 Young & Proud (mid-level Hill Staff). Using our LGBT Main Code in NGP and contributors from the previous LGBT events (search source code 09648-14648), we were able to build a strong target list for the event. We had LGBT Chiefs call and raise from their friends and the target list, and we included them as hosts on the invitation.

With the extensive buy-in from the LGBT Caucus, we were able to raise $50,000 for this event, breaking the record for any event without one specific host. In 2012, Barney Frank celebrated his 25th anniversary of coming out and that event raised over $100,000, but it seems unlikely for any Member to take this event on to that extent. In the past Robert Raben has hosted an LGBT event himself, but we found it was more effective to have a broader event including other lobbyists.

Our event this year was on the same night as Lambda Legal’s big fundraiser. This provided some additional challenges in terms of attendance that should be avoided next year.

* 1. Quarterly Member Dinners

See Member Dues Exit Memo for event planning details. At these events, I often staffed the bus to the reception. It’s important to make sure that every Member riding the bus one direction is accounted for on the way back. Knowledge of Members faces is critical for these events, so you should plan to study the entire caucus and recognize names and faces before these events.

* 1. Ranking Member Meetings

Once a month, the Ranking Members have their weekly meeting at the DCCC to discuss updates and, if Member fundraising is slow that month, divvy up floor asks for their colleagues. The Member Dues coordinator will develop that list, but you will use that to create 5x8 ask cards.

Additionally, I made a folder for the Members for each of these meetings that included information about their committee’s dues contributions, upcoming events, etc. This information can all be found in Member Dues 2013-2014 > Ranking Members > RM Reports. When the Members split the ask cards, it was my job to track which Member took each card. Again, it is important to know who shouts, “I’ll take X Member” so we can follow-up with that person’s staff.

* 1. New York City Issues Conference

There were numerous different parts to leading staffing for the annual New York City Issues Conference.

*RSVP Sheet*

Keep the RSVP sheet up-to-date each day with RSVPs, hotel confirmation numbers, event registration, and contact information. Use the template from the 2014 Issues Conference to create the new RSVP sheet. This can be found in S: NYC ISSUES > 2014 Issues Conference > 2014 Issues Conference RSVP Sheet. You should be the only person changing the RSVP sheet and you should develop a tracking mechanism to ensure hotel paperwork and event paperwork has been properly handled.

*Hotel*

I was the point-of-contact for the hotel on room reservations and handled faxing them all reservation forms and receiving all confirmation numbers. If we are out of rooms and need to increase the number, speak with the Events Director who handles the contract. Always be friendly to the hotel staff – they will be helpful if you are nice to them!

*Coordinating Regionals*

The regional director’s will communicate with their attendees (invite them, send confirmation numbers, etc.), but you will facilitate the hotel forms and be a point of contact for any conference attendee. Most attnedees will be from the DC PAC community, so you will assist the DC Finance Director with managing the region’s RSVPs.

*Nametags*

For the weekend, the entire staff should help you make one set of nametags of every conference attendee for each event. So, if there are 200 attendees and 3 events, you should have 600 unqiue nametags separated into different events **before you leave for NYC/wherever the conference will be**. This will be extremely helpful to ensure each person has a new nametag every day. You can still recycle their old nametags at the end of the event and use them for the duration of the year at other events.

1. Relationships with other departments

I felt the DCCC Senior Staff gave us ample opportunities to build relationships with co-workers in other departments out of the office, which helped ease our ability to work together in the office. Staff “Forced Fun,” happy hours, and the Alex Sink GOTV weekend helped me get to know colleagues in other departments. Knowing and having a comfortable relationship with other colleagues allowed us to depend on one another and trust one another when we worked together.

1. Deployment

Deployment was the culmination of a year’s worth of skills development for me and allowed me to continue to grow and enhance my fundraising skill set. Without the knowledge and resources from the DCCC, I would not have been able to help the campaign raise as much money in one month as they had raised in the third quarter, but I also developed more managerial skills that I can apply to my job back at the DCCC.

This opportunity also allowed me to work in an environment without an extensive approval process and challenged me to ensure my product and the campaign’s product was perfect, as senior staff were not their to edit and adjust my work. Developing that skill (and mentoring junior campaign employees) was important and useful in my personal growth and development and would help me expand my role at the DCCC. This combination – developing a set of skills to excel in an environment that could help me hone a different set of skills – was incredibly beneficial.

My work in Iowa’s First District was also incredibly challenging and rewarding. While I was not particularly well-liked on the campaign, I did enjoy fixing a lackluster fundraising operation and get the campaign in a better place (though at the end of the day it wasn’t enough).

There are two things I would have changed about deployment. 1) I should have sat down more extensively with the research department to find out what they knew about the race, the candidate, and the opponent. That would have helped me better grasp the situation and there was knowledge I learned on the ground I could have transmitted back to the DCCC better that I did not. (Meeting with the PAC consultant beforehand was incredibly effective – I’d highly recommend that to others.)

2) I think I would have had a more significant impact on the campaign if I had left earlier in the cycle. In the DC region, August and half of September were very slow and if I had an extra two weeks with the campaign, I think it would have had a significant, longer-term impact.

1. Positive and negatives of the role

Combining the DC Finance and Member Dues into one DC region was a successful strategy for the region and the finance department. I think having four people oversee and work closely together while managing PAC fundraising and Member Fundraising allowed each part to flourish.

Rarely were there moments or weeks when the House was in session where there wasn’t a lot of action happening from the DC Region. I would highly recommend the next DC Finance Assistant cover Member Dues, PAC and Individual fundraising in DC, MD, and VA again.