

**THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF BAR FOUNDATIONS
2011 FUNDRAISING FOR SUCCESS AWARD**

NOMINATION FORM

DEADLINE: Thursday, December 8, 2011

Please limit narratives to three pages or less. Up to ten pages of supporting documents may be submitted. Documents should be explained in the narrative, and should not be used as a substitute for the narrative. Please submit nomination and all supporting materials via email to Kira.baltutis@americanbar.org

Name of Bar Foundation: Illinois Bar Foundation

Address: 20 S. Clark Street

City Chicago

State: IL

Zip 60603 _____

Phone: 312.726.6072

Website address: www.illinoisbarfoundation.org

Size and type of affiliated bar association (state, local, rural, urban, special interest):
Illinois State Bar Association, 33,000+ members

1. Overall Budget, including percentage of budget from fundraising: \$1,119,900

Question 2: Description of the fundraising initiative.

A. Objectives: The objective of the annual Gala is to raise significant funds in support of the Illinois Bar Foundation's mission. The IBF's mission is to ensure meaningful access to the justice system, especially for those with limited means, and to assist lawyers who can no longer support themselves due to incapacity. With the vision to be the statewide leader in advancing equal justice, the Foundation has established the following organizational objectives:

1. *Enhance the availability of legal aid to those of limited means.*
2. *Encourage pro-bono legal work.*
3. *Educate Illinois residents regarding their rights and responsibilities under the law.*
4. *Extend assistance to colleagues in need of support.*

13 years ago, the Gala was created by the IBF Board of Directors, with the intent to create an annual fundraising Gala that would continue to grow, increase the foundation's visibility, and raise significant funds for the IBF. They established the *Distinguished Award for Excellence*, and their first honoree was Mayor Richard Daley. That first event was quite successful, and it has continued to grow every year, and most recently, raised just under \$500,000 in October, 2011. Honorees have included noted author Scott Turow, Chicago Public Library Commissioner Mary A. Dempsey, Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne M. Burke, and most recently, Newton N. Minow, former FCC Chairman under John F. Kennedy.

B. Budget: The budget of the annual Gala is \$205,000.

C. Target audience:

There are a number of groups targeted to support the Gala, which is why sponsorship and ticket pricing varies.

1. Law firms;
2. Individuals who are supportive of the Honoree;
3. All of the IBF Fellows;
4. Individuals who have supported the IBF in some way but haven't become Fellows;
5. YLD (Young Lawyers Division of the ISBA) members;
6. New donors.

D. Timeline

Planning for the annual Gala starts almost immediately after it's held in October. Early planning is crucial to the success of this (or any) event. A monthly timeline of tasks is maintained and updated by IBF staff. Following is a brief overview:

- ♦ Potential Honorees are reviewed by December, and chosen in January.
- ♦ Once the Honoree is confirmed, Gala Co-Chairs are named within the following months, and the committee begins to be assembled at the same time.
- ♦ The IBF promotes the event even before the Honoree is named through a Save the Date ad in the current Program Book, on the website and facebook page.
- ♦ Once the honoree and committee is named, a press release is sent in the spring, and committee photo is taken for publication.
- ♦ Solicitations for sponsorships, auction items, program book ads and raffle ticket sales are sent early June.
- ♦ Raffle prizes are chosen and tickets are printed in June.
- ♦ Personal follow up begins in the weeks following.
- ♦ Table sponsorships are confirmed early to include in the invitation mailing in late August.
- ♦ The invitation, with at least half of the event sponsorships already listed, is sent.
- ♦ More follow-up by IBF staff through Gala Chairs, committee members and board members. This continues until event is sold out at its capacity of 420 guests.
- ♦ October – Hold event
- ♦ Acknowledgement letters sent within two weeks of event.

E. Implementation:

The IBF staff is primarily responsible for the implementation of the Gala: Executive Director, Grants and Development Coordinator, Development Assistant and Executive Assistant. They work closely with the Gala Co-Chairs, 2 Board Gala Chairs, and the Auction/Raffle and Program Book Chairs, as well as the Vice Chairs of the event. IBF staff coordinate the tasks listed above in the timeline, and also manage the following:

- ♦Honoree liaison
- ♦Venue/Program management
- ♦Design of printed materials/event theme
- ♦Volunteer management
- ♦Auction coordination
- ♦Program script, a/v presentation

Question 3: Who and how many people were involved in developing and implementing the program?

The members of the IBF Board of Directors – 26 individuals – and the IBF Executive Director established the first Gala in 1999.

Question 4: What impact has the program had on the fundraising success of the foundation? What were the benefits to the grantees?

The benefits have been considerable, as the income raised at the annual Gala is used to fund the grants program the following year. As the Gala income has increased, the grants budget has benefitted. Although there are several different fundraising efforts throughout the year, the Gala has been the biggest income producer in terms of events.

Back in 1999 (our FY2000), the grants budget was \$150,000, and funds were awarded to 21 organizations. In 2000 (our FY2001), due in part to the inaugural Gala's success, (\$85,000 in income) the IBF awarded \$172,000 in grants to 27 organizations. And the income remained steady.:

- Gala 2001 netted \$83,000, and the following year the IBF awarded grants to 50 organizations around the state, totaling \$188,250.
- Gala 2002 netted \$202,000, and the following year, the IBF grants budget increased to \$193,300.
- Gala 2003 netted \$185,000, and the following year the grants budget was \$221,300.
- Gala 2004 netted \$175,000, and the following year the grants budget was \$215,702.
- Gala 2005 netted \$180,000, and the following year the IBF awarded \$234,900 in grants.
- Gala 2006 netted just under \$200,000, and the following year the IBF awarded \$295,005 in grants.
- Gala 2007 netted a record \$284,000, and the following year the IBF awarded \$304,965 in grants.

- Gala 2008 netted \$150,000, and the following year the IBF awarded \$234,900 in grants.
- Gala 2009 netted \$221,000, and although the grants budget decreased to \$168,000, because of the economic downturn across the country, the following year –
- Gala 2010 netted \$245,000, and this past year, the IBF awarded \$315,300 in grants.
- YTD – Gala 2011 has grossed over \$490,000.

Question #5. What has been or will be the long-term impact of the initiative? Is the program ongoing?

The long-term impact is that the Gala has achieved exactly what the founders of the event had hoped. It has increased the IBF's visibility through its continued success, and now accounts for more than half of the annual fundraising income of the Foundation. It is the intent of the leadership of the IBF that the annual Gala will continue to grow year after year.

Question #6

6. Provide evidence the program can be adapted and replicated by other foundations.

Two of the most important elements to putting together an event like this are the motivation and commitment to achieve it. The following additional tasks can be easily adapted and replicated.

- The involvement of the Board of Directors;
- Create a goal for the event, including immediate expectations and long-term;
- A donor base that can be solicited for support;
- 2-3 event leaders to serve as Chairs; 1 for a smaller event;
- Create a vehicle within the event that will motivate people to support it: an award, etc.;
- Create a Committee whose goal is to “friend-raise” as much as fundraise for this first-time event; you will need as much outreach as possible;
- Your Committee should be people representing different demographic areas of support/outreach, to provide you with access to as many people as possible. For example, large and small law firms, etc., an individual from a region that hasn't shown a great deal of support for your Foundation in the past.
- Choose an honoree that is well-known and respected, ask them to choose their Gala Chairs. An honoree's friends will work hard for them.;
- Incorporate a number of different ways to raise funds within the event, i.e., raffle, auction, program ads, etc. and promote them as early as possible;
- Give the event Chairs and Committee members specific, attainable goals, and be consistent in follow-up.
- Maintain continuous communication with your Chairs and Committee;
- Call your prospects personally. If you don't receive an answer about a sponsorship, keep calling until you do. Persistence is essential.

- Promote the event in everything that your organization does to further your message, whether it be electronic media, your website, facebook page, newsletters, press releases. Repetition in your message is what is needed to introduce a new event.
- If you don't have a facebook page, get one. They're free and they make a huge difference in your promotions. Update your website so that it mentions your Gala repeatedly.
- Outreach, outreach, outreach. Use every opportunity available to you to involve new people in your efforts; through friends of board members, donors and committee members. Use other small events to promote the Gala.
- Don't give up.