Catch A Lift Fund’s

City by City “BENEFIT” Steps

A CAL “Benefit”, hosted by an interested supporter of Catch A Lift’s, city by city, is becoming a hugely successful fun and impactful means to raise awareness, new support and fundings across the Nation. It also allows our supporters to include and use their own city or town to start a movement within their network and give back to those who have given so much for our country.

Below are a few basic steps to start the ball rolling and let you see... it isn't as hard or as overwhelming as you may think. The key to the event is to have a main host and a solid core team of co-hosts with a strong network of friends/ peers, that believe in our mission and want to take part in healing minds, changing bodies and saving lives.

✮**HOSTS**: Rally a group of your friends, peers/ interested people from different networks who become “CAL Hosts”. 4-6 usually works well but the more the better. Lead Host and their “Co-Hosts” should each have a diverse group of peers, friends, business associates. The idea is for each host to reach as many new groups as possible. Each host and co-host should have a few go-to friends to help or be a committee, to help him/her execute their responsibilities of hosting, as well as push out the event into their network.

✮**DATE**: Choose a date. Be sure to clear your date options with Lynn at CAL lynn@catchaliftfund.com so that we can have proper support for your team back at headquarters.

Think of your city and what appeals to the residents (your guests) which would make for a *good date* to gather around. Think Veterans Day, sporting event tie in’s or a month with not much happening and people are itching to get out (Spring). In considering the date keep in mind *bad times* of the year which would affect attendance decline; vacation months, holidays, weather considerations etc.

✮**TIME:** Select a time for your benefit. After work, a weekend afternoon or evening, brunch gathering etc. 3 (to 4) hours is an average time limit.

✮**VENUE**: The Host determines event venue. In selecting a venue considerations to keep in mind are:

* Space. How many attendees do you expect? Can the venue or venues room handle this?
* Depending on veterans attending- handicapped accessibility and if service dogs are allowed entrance.
* Pricing. Is the venue willing to donate or discount food, drink and/or space? Some venues give back a portion of the money spent to non-profits. Some venues will discount food, give leveled pricing on beverages, others donate the room or space and heavily discount the menu items. Gratuities are usually set and included in final bills by venue.
* CAL strives to maintain event cost at an average of 10% of donations *raised* at the event. *Raised* donations include additional donations individuals or businesses contribute. Be mindful of additional donations as part of your benefit goals.
* “Happy Hour”. We have kept pricing down through a “Happy Hour” type atmosphere and a casual feel to the event. Guests aren’t bogged down with anything “fancy”, but instead enjoy a few hours of socializing with friends and business associates, meeting new people, and learning about/supporting CAL by hearing from and meeting the veterans we serve. If you feel your city/group would be open to a more formal setting, than please do so. This would require more negotiating for donated items,vendors, food etc. by the hosts in order to keep costs within the % goal. Often though, it is easier to sell “tables” to a company in this type of arrangement.
* Audio system (microphone) is provided and set-up by venue.
* Videos can be provided by CAL to stream through televisions if available at venue.

✮**TICKET PRICE:** Your ticket price will be determined by your benefit type, the venue costs, your guests attending and the 10% for event expense ratio. Tickets can range from $25 to $500 and up. Average ticket price range is $75 - $400.

✮**INVITATION:** CAL creates an invite (hyperlink) with all of the information about your benefit. Our IT lead Henry Pompper, can produce this invite within 5 business days once you have your committed hosts, date, time, venue, and ticket price. This link can be sent out to all to all of your guests emails from the main host and co hosts email addresses. Each host personally writes the content of the email that is being sent to the guests, including the benefit invite link CAL created. Guests open the link, see all the information for the benefit and purchase their benefit ticket from that link. Checks should be mailed directly to the CAL office. Most tickets are purchased through a credit card on this invite through a protected portal. The invite will include a button to purchase the ticket, a button for ”additional donation” and a button “If unable to attend but would like to donate”. Ticket purchases or donation buttons are direct links to our PayPal account. The following link is previous benefit invite sample:

[**http://www.catchaliftfund.com/bcc15/**](http://www.catchaliftfund.com/bcc15/)

**Sample email for invite to your guests:**

**May I take a moment of your time to invite you to the First Annual Veterans Day event for Catch A Lift on Veterans Day evening in Westport, CT. Every year I sit at the memorial service at Town Hall wondering what would I do if my freedom or the freedom of my kids, my friends, or my family was in jeopardy. What if I was asked to go serve? What if we lived through another draft? Duty, honor, courage, commitment, integrity, country and service are words that some very special heroes live by. It is our job to protect those people that make those words their lives. We live in the best country in the world and one of the best parts of this country as well. We all have many wonderful things to be thankful for.**

**Go to the website and read the story behind CAL. & its founder Lynn Coffland. The fund was formed after her brother, Corporal Chris Coffland, who volunteered after 9-11 and lost his life in Afghanistan in 2009. Lynn, her father and 3-4 heroes that were World Trade Center responders, veterans of the middle east, and Purple Heart Recipients, will be flying in to attend and share some remarkable words and discuss the unbelievable amount of nearly 2500 veterans that are getting back on their feet because of CAL. Just over 90% of every dollar is going directly to wounded veterans. Please consider coming or making a donation, or just spreading the word. Thank you for your time. Adam Vengrow**

**The event page is online at this address:** [**http://www.catchaliftfund.com/bcc15**](http://www.catchaliftfund.com/bcc15)

✮**SILENT AUCTION:** Items such as golf foursomes, special sports memorabilia, destinations or experiences i.e. cooking classes, are always a great way to make extra funding and stir some interests and competition within the event.

✮**STRIPE PORTAL PAYMENT:** Once ticket is purchased or a donation is made through the buttons via the invite link provided to each guest, the guest receives an immediate receipt for their tax purposes. CAL than receives an immediate notification of payment with donor's name, address,email, ticket quantity and/or donation. Funds are deposited into CAL account with any services fees CAL incurs deducted (2.9%). Upon initial setup of invite with IT, our admin notes the payment submitted is your specific benefit monies. CAL tracks all ticket sales, RSVP’s and donations per benefit in Google Sheets. Your Google Sheet is shared with all hosts and co hosts which can be viewed at anytime. A column will be available on the sheet for each hosts to initial their invitees RSVP, if so desired.

✮**GUEST/TICKET CHECK-IN:** Ticket list will be generated from Google Sheet and available at event for check-in. CAL Team can assist with check-in according to the size of your benefit, if so desired.

It is suggested to have ticket sales at the door as well. CAL has a free payment app that can be loaded to any smartphone or IPad for easy credit card payment or donation by guest.

✮**CAL TEAM:** CAL arranges at each benefit to have a strong representation of our team in attendance, with respect to the size of the benefit.

✮**CAL VETERANS:** CAL arranges for 1-3 CAL veteran speakers to attend your benefit depending on the city and the size of your benefit. This by far is the most amazing and inspirational part of the evening. Each CAL veteran shares his own personal story, what they have experienced and where they are now. It is truly life changing to hear. Guests in attendance learn a new understanding in adjusting once our veterans return home.It also is a healing process for our veterans,since it is often the first time they may be sharing their story to a crowd. It takes extraordinary bravery to do so and the authenticity and emotion is inspirational to all present.

✮**MERCHANDISE:** CAL merchandise can be brought to the event for additional sales if hosts so desire. CAL Team assists with sales. CAL has a free payment app that can be loaded to any smartphone or IPad for easy, instant credit card payment by guest.

**TIPS TO CONSIDER FOR THE EVENT:**

✮**MEDIA:** Reach out to any media connections you can think of within your city or town. Local papers, blogs, radio stations, social media all should be consider for pushing out your benefit. Advertising or announcements donated can be a great way to push out the event. Radio and TV spots often have yearly pro-bono spots that they may share with you and CAL.

CAL will post on our CAL Facebook page as frequently as you would like. We generally start with bi-monthly posts and as the event gets

closer weekly and then daily. Email katelyn@catchaliftfund.com with your event details and she can add that to our social media calendar.

Every co-host should push out the event on their Facebook or social media venue as well.

✮**LOCAL BUSINESS:** Local businesses can offer strong support to your event and should be considered. You can offer “sponsor” levels for the event with different options available for each level.

For example:

3 Star Sponsor : $?,000

-3 Star Sponsors will be announced at the event and credited with the placement of \_ wounded veterans into their fitness programs

-Will have their name and logo placed in the Official Benefit Program and on the Sponsor Banner which is prominently displayed at the event.

-Will receive ? tickets to the Annual Benefit

2 Star Sponsor: $?,000

-2 Star Sponsors will have their name and logo displayed on the Official Benefit Sponsor Banner and in the Official Benefit Program which is distributed at the event.

-Will receive ? tickets to the Annual Benefit

1 Star Sponsor: $?00

-1 Star Sponsors will have their name and logo displayed in the Official Benefit Program which will be distributed at the event.

-Will receive ? tickets to the Annual Benefit

Local businesses can also offer items for a silent auction which is another source of revenue during the event and a great way for businesses to be promoted within the community. Local fire departments, police and local VFW can all become involved and support the effort.

✮**CAL VIDEOS FOR AWARENESS**

[**Catch A Lift's CBS Evening News Segment**](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/vets-hit-the-gym-to-heal-their-bodies-and-minds/)

 [**Catch A Lift's WBAL Video**](http://www.wbaltv.com/news/catch-a-lift-helps-veterans-work-out-ptsd/36347232)

 [View video](https://www.dropbox.com/l/s/CBRzIb25kULLpTAuifhGJs) **SGT (Ret.) Ryan C. Major**

[**CALJustin.mov**](https://drive.google.com/a/catchaliftfund.com/file/d/0B3kCuOvQPRt7dDFRcGZsN1N0U3c/view?usp=sharing_eid)

[**CALJon.mov**](https://drive.google.com/a/catchaliftfund.com/file/d/0B3kCuOvQPRt7eWtzb093RUMzd28/view?usp=sharing_eid)

[**CAL - Naji.mov**](https://docs.google.com/a/jostrunning.com/file/d/0B3kCuOvQPRt7ZnBxdlQwY2J5ZW8/edit?usp=drive_web)

[**Michael.mov**](https://drive.google.com/a/catchaliftfund.com/file/d/0B3kCuOvQPRt7QlJaZkxrUkFSdlU/view?usp=sharing_eid)

**For information, help and to discuss your benefit ideas, please contact one of us from the CAL Team :**

Lynn Coffland, 443-858-8848

lynn@catchaliftfund.com

Linda Rubeor, CAL Volunteer Director 410-608-6800 lrubeor@catchaliftfund.co

Susanne Kennedy, Events and Fundraising 855-496-4838

susanne@catchaliftfund.com