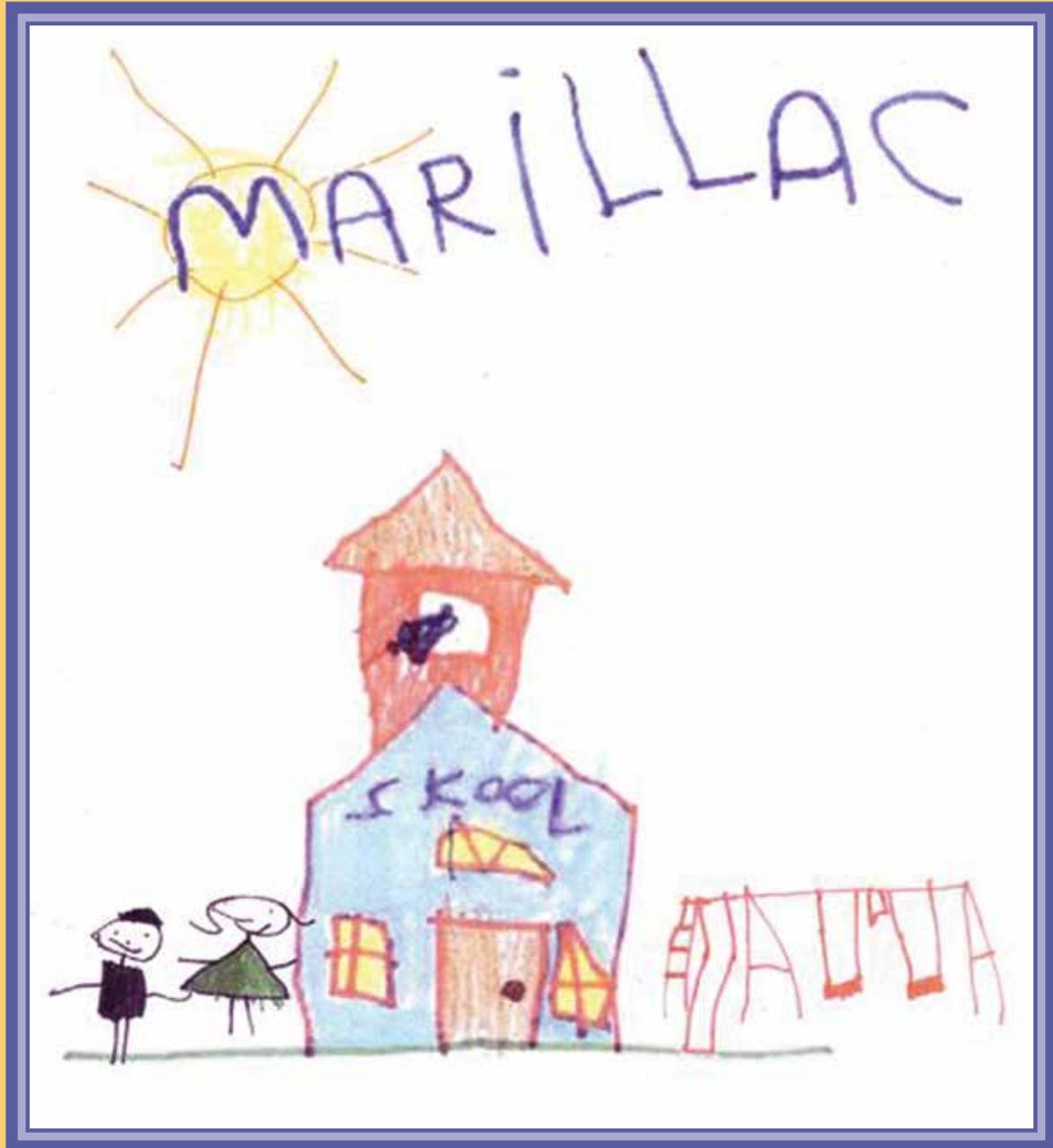


Campaign for a Brighter Tomorrow





Campaign for a Brighter Tomorrow



Campaign Name: “Campaign for a Brighter Tomorrow”

Original Campaign Goal: \$8 million

Amount Raised: \$8.2 million

Campaign Objective: To raise funds to purchase, renovate and expand a building to include an on-site school and much-needed therapy wing.

Campaign Highlights:

- Organizational transparency and an open-arms policy resulted in many new donors and volunteers into the life of the organization.
- Incredible communitywide support from foundations, corporations and individuals, including two angel gifts.

The smartest fundraising strategies in the world cannot compare with the power of a passionate mission and a team of dedicated volunteers. Now add to that, smart fundraising strategies, and you have a highly successful campaign – you have Marillac’s “Campaign for a Brighter Tomorrow.”

Marillac, a private, nonprofit agency for children struggling with emotional and behavioral disorders, provides residential treatment, outpatient services and alternative schooling for at-risk children in the Greater Kansas City area. The majority of Marillac’s children have faced more pain and suffering in their young lives than many adults will ever know. Children who have experienced abuse and neglect, and even children from loving homes who are dealing with severe emotional and behavioral problems, find hope for a brighter tomorrow at Marillac.

Desire or Desperation

Capital campaigns often are launched out of a nonprofit’s desire to grow capacity or upgrade services. However, “Campaign for a Brighter Tomorrow” was initiated, not out of desire, but desperation. Said Capital Campaign Committee liaison Bette Monson, “The Board had never discussed a move because our less than 10-year-old facility was adequate. Of the issues on the table, moving out was not one of them.”

Moving quickly became an issue when Marillac was notified of its lease termination precipitated by the owner’s sale of the building and property. The good news: Marillac was able to quickly secure a new location in a former area hospital. The bad news: They had nine months to vacate their current building—a facility that was more than a headquarters; it was quite literally “home” to Marillac’s emotionally fragile children. This was the first of many challenges.

Challenges to Face

Challenge #1 – The delicate, yet practical need to gently transition children from one residence to another—children who had already been removed once from their own homes in order to find safety, solace and hope at Marillac.

Challenge #2 – A cross-state shift from Missouri to Kansas, which meant pushing past a maze of paperwork and jumping through zoning and regulatory hoops—an exhaustive process.

Challenge #3 – Time constraints, bureaucracy and a cold reception from the community.

Challenge #4 – A lawsuit from area residents on the Kansas side of the state line who voiced concern over the type of children who would reside at the facility. The goal of the lawsuit was to prohibit Marillac from acquiring a special permit needed to expand the building to include a school and therapy wing. The organization’s transparency eventually won over most detractors and the city granted the special-use permit.

These challenges had to be faced head on and without delay. Explained Development Director Bridgette Brooks, “There was a lot of fear and misinformation about the Marillac children. We



immediately started holding Open Houses and offering tours. Visitors were always surprised by Marillac’s 5 to 1 child to staff ratio – a highly supervised program. The public was surprised to learn how many of our children came from their own backyard, Johnson County (Kan.)”

The Campaign ... Fast Forward

The capital campaign to purchase, renovate and expand the building was the largest fundraising effort undertaken by the organization in its 109-year history. The forced move and associated time crunch meant that an initial campaign assessment had to be set aside. Marillac’s leadership went to area funders to gauge support. While the backing was strong and clarion, the consensus was that a \$6 million campaign would likely be Marillac’s limit.

The problem was that while \$6 million might meet the costs of purchasing and renovating the new facility, it would not cover the need for a requisite on-site school and much-needed therapy wing. Expansion costs would stretch the goal to \$8 million.

This was Leawood mayor and long-time Marillac supporter, the Hon. Peggy Dunn’s second campaign with the organization, “It was a much larger campaign than I chaired several years earlier. I have worked with Hartsook Companies, the fundraising counsel selected for this project, on other campaigns and it is always a privilege to work with such a professional team. Our consultant, Hartsook Companies Executive Vice President Susan Schneweis, added direction and a persistent energy to the process. She brought structure and a time line which helped make the campaign a success.”

As with everything else they faced, Marillac’s Board and campaign committee saw the stretch goal as one more challenge to be met and managed. Those who knew Marillac knew potential donors, but Schneweis brought an outside perspective. She offered ideas that had not been considered and prepared the Board and campaign committee members for solicitation visits – time well spent, nearly 95 percent of their solicitations resulted in significant gifts.



According to Campaign Committee Member Don Alexander, “Susan kept us focused as we analyzed donor prospects and devised strategies on how to present Marillac’s requests for funding.”

Major Gifts, Angel Gifts, In-Kind Gifts and Challenges

A \$1 million lead gift from the Hall Family Foundation gave the campaign energy, and credibility in the Kansas City community. On the heels of this gift came several others from area foundations, including: H&R Block, Sprint, William T. Kemper and Oppenstein Brothers. David Ross of Bank of America and Marillac campaign chair oversaw trustee gifts from John and Effie Speas Foundation for \$275,000; and Herbert V. Jones Foundation for \$25,000.

Kansas Community Service Tax Credits totaling \$150,000 allowed donors to receive a 50 percent tax incentive for any campaign gift over \$10,000. In less than six months, Marillac had dispersed the initial amount and received an additional \$50,000 in credits.

An in-kind gift from LaMar Advertising provided billboard visibility throughout the Greater Kansas City metropolitan area. Bernstein-Rein, a local advertising agency, gave an in-kind gift of creative advertising and video productions. Haren Laughlin’s in-kind gift came in the form of reduced construction costs. McCown Gordon provided a cash gift as well as discounted pro bono work on renovations of the acquired facility. A gift of \$100,000 from the Bicknell Family Foundation and \$50,000



from Kansas Gas Service demonstrated strong support from the community.

A \$575,000 challenge grant from The J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation came with the stipulation that Marillac complete its fundraising for the school expansion within a year. They met their deadline — and in less than the allotted time.

Another magnificent challenge of \$500,000 came from The Kresge Foundation. Said Brooks, “The Kresge Foundation gift was a real ‘Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval’ for the campaign.” New funding and a few requests for second gifts allowed Marillac to meet its Kresge challenge goal.

A million-dollar angel gift came from a staff member’s sister who had received a tour. Another angel gift arrived from a couple that had seen a press release and called to request a tour. Before leaving they offered suggestions about adding special light and promised, “You’ll be hearing from us soon.” The next week a check arrived for \$400,000 as well as a donation of natural spectrum lights. As “new members” to the Marillac family and as a show of appreciation for their gifts, the couple was invited to come by to turn the lights on for the first day of school.

Moving Day

When it came to moving the children from their previous location to their new “home” the Marillac staff demonstrated both competency and compassion. Said Monson, “The staff was incredible. We kept the relocation quiet until it was time to move the children. Then they were lovingly transported from one facility to the next without disruption. Everything—their beds, toys and pictures—had been perfectly placed in the new building.”

No one was sorry to hear that the steering committee meeting agenda was changed at the last minute to a mini-celebration after the campaign exceeded its goal. The development director had a cake decorated with “\$8,000,000” inscribed boldly across the top. A bigger and more formal celebration was planned for another time when the Marillac children could join the festivities.

A Community Changed ... An Agency Transformed

Since the campaign began the community has come to view Marillac as a nice addition. Neighbors bring in birthday gifts for the children and volunteer their time. Marillac recently received a grant from the Junior League for a literacy program – three volunteers for the program came from the local community.

A capital campaign trains you to expose yourself to and communicate with the community. Marillac was constantly giving tours and continue to do so. They have procedures in place to demonstrate appreciation for donors and volunteers through hand-written thank you notes and phone calls. A regular newsletter informs donors, volunteers and prospects of happenings at Marillac with personal touches interjected whenever and wherever possible.

In the End

“Susan was my sounding board,” said Brooks. “I learned a lot about donor cultivation and solicitation. She probably didn’t realize how much I was learning by her example, watching her interact with donors and volunteers. People trusted her. The campaign has given us momentum for moving forward—former donors have returned, new donors have been added, we’ve gained a positive image in the community and we have a new development department that we did not have before the campaign.”

Susan was quick to turn the credit back to Marillac’s board, campaign committee and development director, Bridgette Brooks. “Bridgette is one of the most in-tuned and effective fundraisers I’ve encountered in Kansas City,” said Schneweis. “Each month as we reviewed assignments, hers had been accomplished with excellence. She developed strong relationships with area funders and individuals and her organizational skills and professionalism were great assets to this campaign.”

“The community certainly stepped up for the children of Marillac in a magnanimous way,” said Mark S. Richards, president and CEO of Marillac. “Our new campus is a testimony of the love, support and generosity of many. Because of this community’s generosity, Marillac can continue to provide hundreds of children each year a place where they can feel safe and loved; and where they can learn, grow and find hope for *a brighter tomorrow*.”

About the Consultant – Susan Schneweis, Executive Vice President, a fundraising professional for more than 18 years, has helped countless nonprofit organizations raise millions of dollars as they seek to expand and improve services for their clients. Susan can be reached at susan@hartsookcompanies.com.

About Hartsook Companies, Inc. – Hartsook Companies, Inc., has served nonprofits nationwide with capital, endowment and annual campaigns; leadership support; board training; marketing and more since 1987. The firm has conducted more than 1,700 campaigns ranging from \$500,000 to more than \$1 billion. The web site: www.hartsookcompanies.com.

