

The Mercury News Cash Contributions Program

The Mercury News Corporate Objective

The Mercury News is committed to social responsibility and community involvement. We promote these values not only in our coverage of the community, but also by our active support for organizations and causes that serve the public interest and well-being.

As a concerned corporate citizen, the Mercury News maintains a formal contributions program that has the following objectives:

- To provide an annual level of contributions funding that reflects the company's success.
- To support programs that address compelling needs within our communities of interest and serve to enhance the quality of life and encourage social and cultural progress.
- To encourage and support employee involvement in local philanthropic activities.
- To increase positive awareness of the Mercury News and promote goodwill in the communities we serve.
- To support efforts that complement the role of public institutions and funding and do not compete with or substitute for these resources.

Focus Areas (Request must fall into one of the following)

Health and Human Service

- Children's programs and initiatives.
- Programs that contribute to the prevention of crime and gang activity by providing youth development.
- Programs intended to mainstream disadvantaged groups.
- Eldercare programs.
- Housing/Homelessness.

Education

- Journalism Education Programs or other curricula relevant to the newspaper.

Arts and Culture

- Programs that reach out to the broad community to improve understanding and educate communities on the diversity in the arts.

Civic and Community

- Community and neighborhood economic development programs.
- Voter registration and education.
- Citizenship training.

Eligibility - General Requirements

- Qualify as tax exempt under IRS code, Section 501 (c)(3)
- Maintain non-discriminatory policies and practices.
- Focus activities in communities considered to be within the company's geographic boundaries. These currently are Santa Clara County, southern Alameda County (Newark/Fremont/Union City), southern San Mateo County (Menlo Park/ Atherton/East Palo Alto).
- No more than one grant may be received within a calendar year.

Funding Restrictions

The following organizations or fundraising programs are ineligible for contributions, except as otherwise stated.

- Political organizations and candidates for political office.
- Religious organizations whose programs and services are limited to members of a single religious group.
- Veteran's organizations, fraternal orders or clubs, private or neighborhood clubs and associations, unless the contribution is intended to benefit the community at large.
- Trips or tours.
- Subscriptions to testimonial dinners, unless the honoree or sponsoring organization is directly connected to the newspaper's community role.
- Direct grants to individuals apart from the company's minority scholarship program.
- National health agencies.
- Other grant-making organizations except community foundations.

Administration

Review and Approval

Responsibility for approval and administration of cash donations is assigned to a committee appointed by the publisher.

This committee is chaired by the senior manager, community relations and meets quarterly.

Request Procedures

Requests for cash contributions must be made in writing and must include the following information:

- Cover sheet with official name and address of organization.
- Grant proposal typed on organization's letterhead (proposal should be no longer than three pages).
- Objective and major activities and, if appropriate, details regarding the specific program for which funding is being requested.
- Geographic scope and ethnic composition of the population being served.
- List of organization's other sources of financial support, as well as other pending proposals.
- Copy of tax exempt status 501(c)(3) letter from the IRS.
- Organization's officers and board members, their professional or business affiliation and ethnic/gender composition.
- Brief evaluation report of previous grant (required if a grant was received from the Mercury News previously).

Contact

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