

A Safe Haven

A CAMPAIGN FOR SUNLIGHT CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY & RIGHTS FOUNDATION



SWANSON HOUSE
FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONALS



NONPROFIT PROFILE

SUNLIGHT CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY & RIGHTS FOUNDATION

LOCATION

El Dorado, Kansas

SERVICE AREA

Three Counties
Population: 76,000

FOUNDED

2004

ANNUAL BUDGET

\$267,000

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING PROGRAM

\$115,000

STAFF

Four Full-Time Employees

A Child's Secret

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Child neglect. Child abuse. Child sexual abuse. Few issues are as challenging, and damaging to American communities.

If children are not rescued, treated and taught a different way to grow up, the majority repeat the cycle of violence. More than half turn to drugs and alcohol. As adults, many cannot maintain relationships or employment. Some commit suicide.

The secret of a child's abuse, combined with the physical scars, can emotionally and psychologically cripple the child for a lifetime.

For Butler, Greenwood and Elk counties in Kansas, revealing a child's secret, and breaking the cycle of violence began with chartering a nonprofit: Sunlight Children's Advocacy & Rights Foundation or SCARF. SCARF's first

program was Sunlight Child Advocacy Center. Advocacy, education, recovery services and aid with the legal system



highlighted their programs and activities. Seven years into their mission, one new and significant program was required—a safe home.

"SCARF covers a service area of 3,200 square miles, many rural, and 76,000 citizens," says Executive Director Suzi Thien. "We had children taken from their homes for their safety, then spending the night in law enforcement and juvenile intake offices. It was unacceptable. In other instances, the children had to go on 50- to 75-mile trips to Wichita, the nearest metro city. It was not a positive way to start the healing process."

Too often, children have to be taken into temporary protective custody, until either



CAMPAIGN DYNAMICS

a healthy reintegration into the family can be accomplished or other longer-term arrangements can be made. Sunshine Children’s Home provides a temporary residence for these children, closer to home, and without separating them from their siblings—all things critical to the healing process.

“Nothing is more powerful than an executive director who is willing to learn and push against her comfort zone,” says Swanson House Senior Consultant Chris Keeshan. “Suzi set the tone and tenor with her attitude and approach. She wanted to learn the workings of a campaign and the major gifts process. Her professional

“We as fundraising consultants provide structure and strategy, but at our core we are teachers, mentors and guides.” – Chris Keeshan, Swanson House Senior Consultant

“We had many reasons to launch a campaign to build a safe home for those we serve,” says Cindy Miles, board member. “The fact is, the majority of child abuse is perpetrated by a family member, often a parent. If the abuser believes a child is going to tell their secret, child safety must be ensured.”

Only seven years old, SCARF turned to professional fundraising counsel to help them achieve their goal. Swanson House, Inc., completed a pre-campaign assessment study to determine community support and then provided ongoing campaign counsel.

“We had a board member with extensive campaign fundraising experience,” says Thien. “She encouraged us to seek professional guidance. ‘Even the most savvy of organizations, including institutions of higher education in which they have dedicated fundraisers consistently raising funds, hire counsel,’ she says. The board agreed. ‘Let’s do it the right way from the start’ was our attitude.”

With no development office or major gifts experience, “the start” began with a courageous board and a dedicated executive director.

approach was reassuring and encouraging to volunteers and donors.”

Thien, aided by a core group of volunteers serving on a campaign leadership committee, notes, “We were surprised to learn that raising millions of dollars does not require a large committee. This type of fundraising is highly focused. Working with our consultant, we were able to keep everyone on task.”

Susan Franz Koslowsky served as the campaign chair.

“She provided a level of gravitas that communicated SCARF was serious

about fundraising success. Her personal commitment to the campaign and SCARF’s mission spoke volumes to major donor prospects,” says Keeshan.



CHALLENGES

- ◆ Age of nonprofit, seven years
- ◆ No experience with major gift solicitation
- ◆ No development office
- ◆ No major gift development experience
- ◆ Service area, three rural counties

ASSETS

- ◆ Heart-wrenching mission
- ◆ Dedicated executive director
- ◆ Committed volunteer leaders
- ◆ Fundraising Counsel

CAMPAIGN NUMBERS

The comprehensive campaign secured **\$2.7 MILLION**

Gifts Range	# of Gifts
\$250,000 & Above	3
\$100,000 to \$249,999	3
\$50,000 to \$99,999	2
\$25,000 to \$49,999	10
\$10,000 to \$49,999	23
\$1,000 to \$9,999	45
\$1 to \$999	1,100

SAMPLE OF MAJOR GIFT DONORS

- ◆ Cox Communications
- ◆ JE & LE Mabee Foundation
- ◆ OneOK Foundation
- ◆ INTRUST Bank Charitable Trust
- ◆ Emprise Bank
- ◆ Delta Dental of Kansas Foundation

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ABOUT SWANSON HOUSE

Swanson House consultants have successfully completed capital, endowment and annual fund campaigns. Pre-campaign assessment studies and ongoing campaign counsel have benefited a wide range of nonprofits including youth development, education, museums, healthcare, art and culture. As a full-service firm, Swanson House also provides training and support in the areas of board government, staff development, communication and crisis management.

SWANSON HOUSE AXIOMS

- ◆ The 80/20 rule equals success.
- ◆ Cultivation trumps marketing.
- ◆ If you're not asking your donors, someone else is.
- ◆ Communication is the essence of appreciation.
- ◆ Study. Plan. Practice. And then complete your solicitation.

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► A Child's Secret...continued

The \$2.7 million raised included the second largest J.E. & L.E. Mabee Foundation challenge grant ever earned in Butler County. "Asking for \$500,000 was an experience," recounts Thien. "Once I believed that I was doing a prospect a favor by asking them to end child abuse, I became more effective. This is a perspective Chris made me understand."

"We as fundraising consultants provide structure and strategy, but at our core we are teachers, mentors and guides," says Keeshan. "It is rewarding when a nonprofit as important as SCARF embraces what we have to teach and takes their organization to new heights. SCARF's campaign harnessed the power of philanthropy."

"We have a tried-and-true campaign process—our major gift process is very specific," says Robert Swanson, President and CEO of Swanson House. "We work with our clients to study their prospects and plan individualized cultivation and solicitation meetings. Plan for the meeting. Practice in advance and then present. SCARF executed this strategy very well, and the result is that they are better prepared to serve their clients."



Sunlight Children's Advocacy & Rights Foundation Ribbon Cutting

SCARF Board of Directors

Lee Butler, Andover, KS ◆ **Mike Clifton**, Augusta, KS ◆ **Randy Coffman**, Andover, KS
Mark Conway, Rose Hill, KS ◆ **Katherine Cox**, Benton, KS ◆ **Leah Ford**, El Dorado, KS
Susan Franz Koslowsky, Towanda, KS ◆ **Terry Huelskamp**, Andover, KS
Tim Kice, Andover, KS ◆ **Cindy Miles**, Wichita, KS ◆ **Matt Morris**, Wichita, KS
Seth Nesmith, El Dorado, KS ◆ **Linda Ralston**, Augusta, KS