

## 2017 Bala Gala Business Solicitation Tips

Keep extra donor forms and letters of introduction with you (in your bag, car, etc.) at all times. Take them with you whenever you are running errands.

Ask for a donation even if you don't believe it's likely a business will donate. It can't hurt to try.

It is important to begin your business solicitations in March. (*Most businesses need 4 weeks to make charitable contributions.*)

Begin by introducing yourself and Bala House Montessori, a neighborhood, Montessori preschool that serves 100 families from Lower Merion and Philadelphia.

Explain we are having our annual Bala Gala on May 6, 2017 and are asking local merchants to either donate items, services, or gift certificates for our auction or be a Bala Gala sponsor or advertiser.

Inform them that all proceeds from our auction will go towards supporting more than \$70,000 given in tuition assistance each year, capital improvements, and teacher enrichment.

Deliver the donor and sponsorship/ advertising forms and the accompanying letter of introduction in person if you can. (You will have more success!) This gives the merchant some information and time to consider how they would like to participate. If they don't donate during this introductory visit, ask when would be a good time to return and speak with them. Please follow-up to ask them for their support.

Mention that all donations are tax deductible and will be acknowledged in our auction program. Stress that this is terrific free advertising to over 150 families! Share with them that sponsors will be acknowledged several times during the auction, in our auction program, on tables, and on our website. Point out that research shows customers tend to support businesses that support their favorite charities / causes.

If they agree to donate a gift during your visit, help the merchant completely fill out the donor form. Place the completed donor form on Lisa Valentine's desk for the Gala committee to process. Make sure you collect anything the merchant has that we could use for display, description of products, services. (Examples of such materials are business cards, telephone numbers, flyers, menus etc.)

**THANK YOU** for your willingness to ask local merchants to support our school!