



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUNDS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

When the Center for Inland Bays (CIB) in Delaware needed an office and a space for environmental education events, everything seemed to be pointed in their favor. Early on, a capital campaign and grant funding from local corporations, government agencies, and foundations generated about \$175,000. A building was donated by the state, an architect was hired, and a development specialist was retained. When a fundraising luncheon failed to generate financial support, the CIB team stepped back, studied hard, and changed course.

THE NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM IN ACTION

Center for Inland Bays

Their experience offers practical guidance for other community-based programs that may be readying a capital campaign:

- Conduct a pre-campaign assessment. CIB examined how it was perceived in its community. It researched the potential for major support and sought to identify a realistic fundraising goal. It also looked inside the organization: Were leadership and staff ready to do what would be necessary for success?
- Write a case statement. CIB developed its position by gaining an understanding of the benefits and importance of the project from the donors' point of view. It



identified why people should fund the project and what information they needed to make a decision to donate.

- Create a campaign management plan. CIB detailed the tasks, outputs, and milestones of the campaign, and structured a timeline for achieving the campaign goal.
- Prospect potential donors. By identifying potential donors—and their potential donations—CIB defined the opportunity and the target market, including past and present donors, volunteers, foundations, corporations, and agencies.

CIB took additional steps to facilitate their progress. They reduced the cost of the building from \$1.24 million to \$850,000 through “value engineering” options, hired a new consultant to develop the campaign, organized a capital campaign committee, recruited former governor Russ Peterson as their honorary campaign chair, and announced their campaign goal of one million dollars in the media.

The new capital campaign committee targeted key individual donors and, because the facility was state-owned, also requested \$600,000 before the legislative bond bill committee.

The results of the new campaign were impressive:

- Private donations doubled the existing money to \$350,000.

- The general assembly approved a \$750,000 bond in 2006, \$150,000 more than CIB had requested! In fact, CIB was the only nonprofit in the state to obtain bond bill funding that year.

The funding made it possible for the Center to redesign the facility to integrate a variety of environmentally friendly features, including a solar energy system, rainwater collection and reuse, as well as numerous products made from recycled and renewable materials. In addition, the CIB was able to extend their license for the property from 10 years to “30 years or practical life.” Construction was completed and a donor reception was the perfect ending to a successful campaign. Today, the building continues to serve as a landmark facility that hosts seminars, training workshops, and other

technical transfer meetings that focus on sustainable and low-impact design in the Inland Bays watershed.

Visit **www.inlandbays.org** to learn more about this and other CIB efforts.

EPA's National Estuary Program (NEP) is a unique and successful coastal watershed-based program established in 1987 under the Clean Water Act Amendments. The NEP involves the public and collaborates with partners to protect, restore, and maintain the water quality and ecological integrity of 28 estuaries of national significance located in 18 coastal states and Puerto Rico.

For more information about the NEP go to www.epa.gov/owow/estuaries.