



Dwight Stuart Youth Fund

Helping nonprofits strengthen their impact with communications and community

BACKGROUND The Dwight Stuart Youth Fund (DSYF) supports nonprofit organizations serving youth in underserved communities in Los Angeles County. Recognizing that strategic communications leads to better results across an organization, DSYF asked us to help its grantees strengthen their communications skills. As a result, Cause Communications has become an ongoing partner to the foundation in building capacity for its grantees, and in doing so, also increasing the impact of the foundation's grantmaking efforts.

STRATEGY Since 2012, Cause has led cohorts of DSYF grantees in a comprehensive communications training program that combines half-day group sessions with one-on-one coaching over six months. The program emphasizes strategy and best practices, and tailors the curriculum to the specific interests and external realities each cohort is navigating. We also prioritize peer learning and connection, fostering a community of practice that often sparks new, lasting collaborations among participating organizations. The responsive and nimble structure of the program has led to rapid response virtual trainings during COVID, sessions on specialized topics for "alumni" participants, and guest speakers that reflect our underlying commitment to being community-centered, strategic, and practical.

OUTCOME For more than 10 years, participants have come away from the program with sharper messaging, tailored strategies to reach specific audience groups, a completed communications plan for their organization, and a network of community-based leaders. Graduates of the program have gone on to update their brands, bring in more fundraising dollars, and produce materials that more effectively articulate the value of their work. For many nonprofits, participation in the program also led to internal changes to make communications a greater priority within their organization. Since Cause began partnering with DSYF, we have helped more than 100 of the foundation's grantees transform their communications and increase their ability to make an impact.

“Cause’s training programs are the best investment we can make in our grantees’ futures. With their newfound communications skills, these organizations walk away more prepared than ever to strengthen their impact.”

Wendy Chang, Director, DSYF

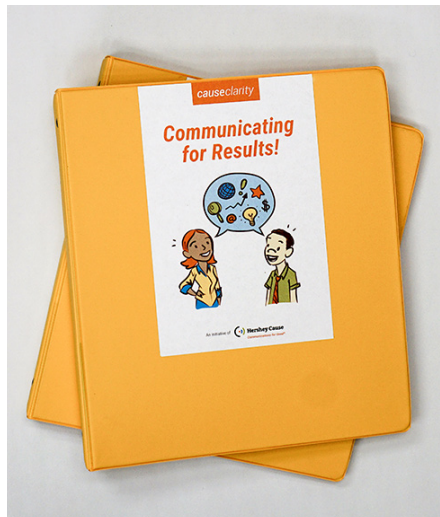
TACTICS

- Training
- Individualized coaching
- Communications strategy
- Capacity building

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“This training gave us many tools to build our communications effectiveness – and the confidence to use them. As we’ve communicated more effectively, we’ve gotten greater results.”

Karen Mack, Executive Director, LA Commons



Training Materials

