

Cover Letter Best Practices



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Dear **John**, **3**

As I look back on all we have accomplished together this year, I'm overwhelmed by the support of our Utopia University community. **Thank you for all you do to help** the university deliver a high-quality education while remaining affordable for our students. This fall, President Eleanor Evans announced the successful completion of our **Student Success initiative for scholarships**. Since the start of this initiative four years ago, more than **25,000 students** have received support.

6 In the **enclosed newsletter**, you will meet two of these deserving students. Sisters Jane and Jennifer Jones share how scholarship support is paving the way as they pursue their dreams of studying math and engineering.

7 Jane and Jennifer are just two students who need your help. Utopia has experienced six consecutive years of record enrollment, yet state and federal funding hasn't kept pace.

8 **It's going to take a collaborative effort from the broader community to ensure that all our students receive the education and opportunities that will prepare them to make a difference in our world. That's why I'm asking you to consider making an investment in Utopia's future and including a gift to the university in your will or other financial plan.**

10 **A stronger Utopia University benefits all of us.** From building a robust local workforce to addressing global challenges of food, water and energy security, the influence of Utopia will be far-reaching.

Our gift planning staff is happy to meet with **you** to discuss any questions you may have about the various ways **you** can support Utopia University and the potential benefits you can receive. Thank **you** for **your** thoughtfulness as you consider the impact you can make at Utopia. **You are the reason we are able to achieve so much.**

Best regards,

12 *Frank Fundraiser*

Frank Fundraiser
Foundation President

13 *P.S. Feel free to contact me for helpful resources and charitable gift planning tools. You can also use the enclosed survey to request our featured planning guide.*

- 1** Aim for one page, single-spaced. If you have a truly phenomenal story to feature, longer is OK. But don't ramble.
- 2** Consider a four-color logo or image to draw in readers.
- 3** Use variable data for a more personalized salutation. Variable data can also be used throughout the letter to target different audiences (society members, financial advisors, local donors, etc.).
- 4** Say thank you at least once.
- 5** Incorporate mission-specific details.
- 6** Drive readers to the newsletter for more information.
- 7** Establish the need so that donors know why their support is necessary.
- 8** Tell readers how they can make an impact.
- 9** Keep the planned giving information general and simple. Do not use specific terms like "bequest."
- 10** Underline and bold important information.
- 11** Write in first person and use "you" and "your" to make the letter more personal.
- 12** The signee should be someone close to your organization, preferably the person who will do the follow-up to any responses.
- 13** Include a P.S. Sometimes it's the only part of the letter donors read. Drive them to take an action: request a brochure, contact someone or visit the website.
- 14** Include contact information so donors recognize your organization and know how to get in touch.