

OPERATION

give thanks

2010 Annual Fundraising Campaign Host Handbook



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Welcome To Operation Give Thanks 2010!

We are so excited that you've chosen to join Operation Give Thanks in honoring our military families. What a wonderful way to express your gratitude and thanks at this special time of year.

As a fundraising host, you can help ensure that Operation Shower is able to continue to deliver very special baby showers to help ease the burden on our military families!

This is our first such campaign and we are excited to have you join us. We are here to help!

What Is Operation Give Thanks?

Operation Give Thanks is a nation-wide fundraising event to help Operation Shower continue its mission. We are often asked how to best help Operation Shower. We decided that since Operation Shower gives back to our military families through parties, so can YOU !



We are asking people across the nation to host a party, big or small, between now and the end of the year to raise money for Operation Shower.

We've put together this guide to help make your event a success and offer ideas to make it simple to show your support. You can find more information at www.operationshower.org And, of course, we're just an email away should you have any questions along the way!

Email: amy@operationshower.org or lena@operationshower.org

Your Support Helps Military Families

Who Is Operation Shower?

Operation Shower provides amazing baby showers for military families to ease the burden of deployment.



For military families who are expecting a new baby and are experiencing or have recently experienced deployment, we accomplish our mission through:

- hosting baby showers for expecting military families
- providing baby showers-in-a-box for expecting military families
- providing emotional support and comfort to military families
- delivering high-quality products and parties
- creating a shared experience, and
- providing military families with free information and support around pregnancy and newborn health

At Operation Shower, our Core Values are:

- Spreading Fun
- Oozing Creativity
- Emphasizing Quality
- Being Genuine
- Maintaining Integrity

How Does The Money You Raise Help?

Operation Shower spends the money you raise to support military families in the ways listed above.

Our long-term goal is to reach every military base in the nation. Our short-term goal is to raise \$50,000 through Operation Give Thanks to enable us to shower over 200 more moms-to-be ! That's right, if you raise \$250 for Operation Shower, that helps us to throw a full amazing baby shower with gifts for a military mom to be whose spouse is deployed!

As of October 2010, Operation Shower has showered over 400 moms-to-be and held 12 unit-wide showers at military bases or hospitals across the country. You can learn about our past showers at www.operationshower.org.

By being a part of Operation Give Thanks and raising money, you can help us accomplish our mission and honor even more families!

Visit www.operationshower.org for more information.



Your Role as Fundraising Host

What do the military and successful events have in common? They both need great leaders. That's where you come in.

As Uncle Sam would say, "We Want You!".

As Fundraising Host, we've given you some guidelines as well as some freedom to create your own event. Here are some key steps to executing a successful event:



- CHOOSE what type of event you'd like to host and your event date
- CREATE an atmosphere of both gratitude and FUN!
- ENGAGE as many other people as possible to help you and be a part of your team
- DECIDE on a goal of how many people you want on your team and how much money you'd like to raise with your event and communicate that with all those involved
- PLAN your guest list and send out save the dates well in advance of your event
- ENCOURAGE your team and/or guests to give by letting them know exactly where their donation is going
- SHARE quotes and feedback from some of our previous shower recipients so that your guests get a sense of the incredible impact their donation can have
- PROVIDE your team and/or guests with the sample letter provided to share with their network of friends and family
- COMMUNICATE frequently with those involved to keep everyone motivated and on task
- IDENTIFY and recognize those who help make your event a success
- THANK all those helping with or attending your event
- REWARD yourself and your team for helping Operation Shower express the gratitude we all feel for our military families

Event Ideas/How to Raise Funds

Raising funds can seem overwhelming at first, but once you get started, it is not as hard as you may think. Brainstorm your own ways to raise funds to add to this list and share with us on our Facebook page and the Operation Shower Network on our website.

Don't forget to share this with your team!

Suggested Events

One of the goals of Operation Give Thanks is that people all across the country have the opportunity to give back to our military families with fun and creative events that we can share with others and spread the word.

You could:

- Host a dinner or cocktail party for friends in honor of Operation Give Thanks. You can either suggest a donation amount for each guest or utilize donation cards where each guest has the opportunity to donate according to their ability.
- Center your family Thanksgiving dinner around an opportunity to not only focus on the blessings in your own family, but to reflect on those military families who sacrifice being together at the holidays in service of our country. Ask family members to bring a donation to Thanksgiving dinner in addition to or in lieu of the traditional side dish. Set out a Give Thanks jar and watch it fill up!
- Throw an actual fundraiser at a local venue.
- Involve local event planners and throw a "holiday table showcase" fundraiser luncheon.
- Ask your moms' club (or other club you may belong to) to adopt Operation Shower as a holiday charity of choice and host an event. Again, suggest a donation amount for each guest or utilize donation cards where each guest has the opportunity to donate according to their ability.
- Have a friend having a 2nd or 3rd baby? Host a baby shower in her honor during this time and use it as an occasion to get together with friends and celebrate her exciting time all while giving back to our military moms.
- Host a silent auction at your event or party (ask local merchants to donate items)

Additional Ideas on How To Raise Funds

- Start with your own donation
- Post your fundraising efforts on Facebook, Twitter, Your Blog, and the Operation Shower Network
- Send the email letter to all of your contacts
- Email your coworkers for donations
- Check to see if your employer has a matching program
- Ask local merchants for small donations. - Don't forget to ask your doctor, hair-dresser, dry cleaners, etc. for donations
- See if local merchants will let you do a fundraising table a la Girl Scout Cookies
- Get friends involved and host a Bake Sale
- Host a craft party/brunch for kids and ask for donations from the parents attending

Steps To A Successful Event

Step One: Choose Your Event

- Choose what type of event you want to host and pick a date.

Step Two: Organize Your Party Team and Set Your Goal

- The size of your team will depend on the type of event you choose to hold. If you're hosting a small party at your own home, you may choose to fly solo. Remember though, even by enlisting one or two friends to help you can not only help to ensure a more successful event but also reduce your own stress and workload!
- Set a goal for how much money you'd like to raise for Operation Give Thanks.
- Sign up your party on the Operation Shower Network at www.operationshower.org and report your progress and get help from others across the country.

Step Three: Inform Your Guests

- Decide on your guest list.
- Send out paper or email Save The Dates to guests in advance to let them know about your event and create excitement.
- Follow Up with actual invitations (See the sample printables provided at www.operationshower.org) 3-4 weeks prior to event.
- Request guests to RSVP at least 1 week prior to event.

Step Four: Have a Fabulous Event

- Have fun!
- Remind all those attending why they are there and what the fundraising goal is.
- Take pictures, or assign a photographer. Don't forget to get a good group shot.
- Ask people to write a check to Operation Shower, or donate on-line.

Step Five: Report results

- Submit party fundraising results at the Operation Shower Network on www.operationshower.org and via email to amy@operationshower.org.
- Share pictures of event via email, our Network or on our Flickr page.
- Send donations to Operation Shower, 125 Brighton Way, Clayton, MO 63105.

On-line Networking Page

Operation Shower now offers our supporters our very own social network! Simply go to www.operationshower.org and log-in to our Operation Shower Network to interact with other supporters.

It's a fun way to show your support and share with others. Once you join, you can earn points and badges for inviting others, forming groups and accomplishing challenges.

It's the perfect way to stay connected and organize fundraising events like Operation Give Thanks!

Sample Printables

Our last shower for military moms in Washington, DC was our first “A Star is Born” themed party . Whether it is a baby shower, dinner party, or bake sale everyone wants to be a star!

So,we have provided ways in which you could provide your own “star” related event on behalf of Operation Give Thanks. If you are interested in this theme, go to www.operationshower.org and view the links by Parties By Hardie, Paper & Cake or Paper & Pigtails. They are offering free printables for this theme!

These could be great for so many different events!



Parties By Hardie



Paper & Pigtails



Paper & Cake

If you would rather go with more of a Fall theme for your party, check out the links for Hostess with the Mostess and TomKat Studios.

These are all spectacular printables and should give you great ideas!



TomKat Studios



Hostess with the Mostess

Sample Letter

Dear (____),

I am honored to be a part of Operation Give Thanks in conjunction with Operation Shower. Operation Shower is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit that provides amazing baby showers for military families to ease the burden of deployment.

They accomplish their mission through:

- hosting baby showers for expecting military families
- providing baby showers-in-a-box for expecting military families
- providing emotional support and comfort to military families
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- creating a shared experience, and
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Operation Give Thanks is a nation-wide fundraising event to help Operation Shower continue its mission. .

I have decided to join this effort to help honor our military families and would appreciate your help, too. I have set a goal of raising _____ to benefit Operation Give Thanks. I'd love to consider you a part of my "corps" with a donation to Operation Give Thanks. I will be collecting donations until _____. You can send me a check made out to "Operation Shower" or donate directly via secure internet transaction at www.operationshower.org.