

The Campaign for Sean



LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY, FARMVILLE VA

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Situation Analysis:

This campaign was specifically created to raise awareness about the story of a cancer patient and his rare form of cancer known as Ewings Sarcoma. Sean Karl is a close friend to one of the group members (Steed) and after hearing the story, it was convincing that this would be the perfect campaign. Not only would awareness be raised around campus, but also the personal story of a person close to our team's heart could be shared. Sean has already touched so many lives, so we knew that this was the perfect opportunity to reach out on Longwood's campus. Throughout his battle with Ewings Sarcoma, Sean Karl's parents have been struggling financially. These struggles have ranged from paying for chemotherapy treatments to paying for medication to keep Sean comfortable. This campaign is aimed at helping the Karl's financial situation while also raising awareness about Sean's particular type of cancer. Through donations and the sale of products (t-shirts/towels), the goal is to help the Karl family in hopes that Sean will recover to the fullest. This is a situation that is sad and horrifying, but by standing together, we can raise awareness about Ewings Sarcoma and spread Sean's story. With your help, a difference will be made.

Background:

Sean Karl is a 17-year-old who was recently diagnosed with a very rare type of cancer known as Ewings Sarcoma. Ewings Sarcoma is a cancer that is seen mostly in adolescents under the age of twenty. It is a cancer that starts within the bones and can move throughout the body. Sean was diagnosed with this cancer in November of 2012 and has been battling it ever since. Prior to being diagnosed, Sean was a phenomenal athlete and known nation-wide for his ability to play tennis. He was ranked top ten in the nation and was verbally committed to play tennis for the University of Tennessee beginning in January of 2013. Unfortunately, with his recent diagnosis of cancer, this plan has been delayed. Sean has felt support throughout the country from many friends and family, but the financial support is something that has been lacking. With this specific type of cancer, Sean has to undergo 12 separate rounds of chemotherapy over a six month period. This has already cost the Karl family thousands of dollars. In light of their situation, our group has decided to start a campaign to raise awareness for Sean and also raise money for his family.

Key Publics/Audiences:

For this particular campaign, the decision was chosen to make college students the target audience. Since Sean is 17, it is an age that people on our campus and at our age can relate to. We are hoping that this campaign will make students aware that anyone can be diagnosed with cancer and that it truly is a problem that affects nearly everyone in some way or another. Although college students are the main focus, athletes in particular are a main interest. Sean was a phenomenal athlete whose dream of playing college tennis is postponed. Hopefully athletes will see this and understand that things should not be taken for granted, for anything can happen to anyone. Through targeting Longwood's campus and family members and friends of students here, we can truly make a difference for Sean.

Organization Goal:

There are several goals that this campaign is striving to reach. First and foremost, through the selling of enough t-shirts, the goal is to be able to donate at least \$100 to the Karl family. This money will not take care of their financial problems completely but at least it will make a difference and let them know that we are all supporting them. The second goal that is achievable is to educate the campus about Ewings Sarcoma and how it can change a person's life. It is more than important to let the campus know the severity of the disease and show them that with support, even if it's small, a difference can be made. Lastly, the common goal that this group has is to better understand how a campaign works. Each of us have seen the posters and the rallies for campaigns, but have never been the leaders and been truly involved with a campaign. With this experience, we feel as if we will be better prepared for jobs later in life.

Action Strategies:

The plan goes as follows:

April 1: Create Fliers to advertise around campus.

April 3: Get fliers for posting approved by Student Union.

April 8-18: Table a few times at the dining hall on the Longwood Campus. Dates and times are to be determined.

April 19: Bring our awareness to Relay for Life.

COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

The communication program is intended to raise awareness and funds for Sean, who was diagnosed with cancer. We hope to reach the Longwood campus and make an impact.

The goal is to grab the attention of the Longwood student body and inform them about various types of cancer while also specifically focusing on Ewings Sarcoma cancer. Through the use of the Facebook page created specifically for “The Campaign for Sean” awareness will be created by inviting people to join this group. Furthermore, planned dates for the informational tabling will be posted. The informational tabling will take place on April 15th, 2013 as well as April 17th, 2013. The tabling will occur within the doors of Dorril Dining Hall around the usual dinner hour; starting at 5 o’clock pm. Tabling will consist of explaining our cause while also encouraging the selling of “Pray for Sean” tee-shirts and towels. The funding created by the buying of this merchandise will be going towards Sean Karl’s medical expenses. At the informational table will be fliers supporting the cause, as well as facts about cancer in order to further educate those who are curious about our cause.

PR AND COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Problems surrounding “The Campaign for Sean” have occurred due to multiple factors that have occasionally created bumps that our organization has worked hard to overcome.

The reservation of a table in Dorril Dining Hall has proved to be more difficult than anticipated. Due to unknown circumstances and lack of knowledge about how to reserve a table, the request that was initially sent into Longwood University’s Student Union was never originally approved. The next step was to take farther strides by once again requesting the use of a table in the Dining Hall on both April 15th and April 17th. The organization is now currently waiting for a conformation about the new request.

COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS

The communication products that were chosen to help our organization further inform the Longwood Community about “The Campaign for Sean” were chosen due to the fact that modern use of social media has been proven to further inform the public on awareness.

Facebook

The team created a Facebook group page called “The Campaign for Sean” as a stem off of the umbrella campaign, “Pray for Sean”. With this Facebook page, invites were available to a great majority of the Longwood campus because it is statically known that the use of Facebook can have a huge impact on a college campus. Through the use of this social media outlet, the word about Sean Karl is currently spreading about his fight with cancer, as well as the knowledge that all should have about cancer in general.

Merchandise

The selling tee-shirts for ten dollars and towels for eight dollars will be available, with the hopes of helping out the family members of Sean Karl who are currently battling with the difficulties of paying for all of his medical expenses. Not only will the distribution of these tee-shirts and towels financially help with the costs for Sean’s medical bills, but it will always draw attention to the fight against cancer when the tee-shirts are worn and the towels are used around Longwood’s Campus. It has also been deemed appropriate to go through with the selling of this merchandise during the week leading up to Relay for Life because of the excitement towards the cause that Longwood’s campus will be starting to experience.

Campaign Fliers

Campaign fliers will be posted in particular places around campus in order to further educate the students about “Campaign for Sean”. These fliers will address the time and place of the tabling event, as well as list specific facts about Cancer, and the fight against it.

PROSPECTOUS AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

Strategic Publics:

Primary Audiences

The primary audience is Longwood University's student body. This is because research concludes that the ideal target audience is affected by some form of cancer, in some way, whether it is through having cancer themselves or knowing someone who has been affected by cancer. Also, the student body is currently more concerned and aware with all things cancer because the week that we are tabling for "Campaign for Sean" is also the same week that is leading up to the eventful evening of *Relay For Life*. Cancer has no age limit and can affect anyone at any age. Ewings Sarcoma, the specific type of cancer that Sean has, is a cancer that primarily happens to teenagers. The average that is affected by this certain type of cancer also plays a role in why our target audience is college age students. Sean, himself, was about to be a college student, so it is important that we raise awareness because it can happen to anyone within the teenage age range.

Secondary Audiences

The secondary audiences that the campaign would have an effect on unintentionally would be the family members and all those personally connected to the student body at Longwood University. They would be positively affected by the information and awareness that the students would develop, and then bring that to their close ones outside of Longwood's campus.

Mass Media and Communication Outlets:

Since it is established that the primary audience are all college age students, it is important to really try and connect with the students at Longwood. In order to do this, the Facebook page was first created. Because of the current modern age and so many people use social media, the Facebook page allowed the group to spread the story about Sean and get people interested. On the page, Sean's story is provided and tells people about the campaign. Through this, the interest level was raised and a judgment was made about how people would respond to the topic that is

being campaigned for. Along with the Facebook page, fliers were created with Sean's picture and his story. Fliers were then posted around campus and informed people about Sean's story and also what is being done to fundraise for him. Facts about cancer were posted and had the listed tabling dates informing people that tabling in D-Hall for the good cause would be taking place. Finally, the last communication outlet was tabling. Set up at a table in D-Hall, flier, merchandise, and a video about Sean were on display for an hour and a half where the goal was to pass out fliers and sell shirts and towels to help raise money for Sean.

Short- term and Long-term vision for the Organization:

In order to make this campaign a success the group decided to set goals for this campaign. Within the group, we decided on one short-term vision and one long-term vision. The short-term vision for this campaign is to raise money for Sean Karl's family so they will be able to handle their financial situation better. As many know, with cancer, one has to go through several rounds of Chemotherapy which is very expensive. With Ewings Sarcoma, Sean has to undergo fourteen rounds of chemotherapy. The group felt as though raising money for the family is more than important. The long-term vision for this campaign is to raise awareness about cancer and Ewing's Sarcoma to the students of Longwood University and the public in general. Cancer is a rising problem and the more people know about cancer and the affects it can have, the better off they will be. It was decided that raising awareness about cancer and Ewings Sarcoma would be the long-term goal because is something that takes more time and would be something that any campaign could really do.

Evaluation

Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics, and the Outcomes

Objective 1: *To create awareness for the commonality of cancer and how it can affect individuals of all ages, both personally and impersonally.*

Strategy 1: Informing the target audience about the statistics and facts regarding cancer and also more specifically, Sean Karl's personal story and his specific type of cancer.

Tactic 1: Handing out fliers to everyone who visits our informational table within the lobby of the dining hall at Longwood University. These fliers display facts and statistics involving cancer, as well as Sean's personal story and a picture of him.

Tactic 2: Hosting two informational days, with the first day leading up to the night of Relay for Life, and then the second day occurring after the campus-wide event. The first day is dedicated to the spreading of information and word of both the statistics of cancer, as well as Sean's personal story.

Tactic 3: Displaying the personal video of Sean Karl's current battle with fighting cancer. To bring out the reality of the issue, his YouTube video is played on repeat which can be viewed at table where the cause is currently being discussed.

OBJECTIVE 1 OUTCOME

During the first tabling session when Longwood students were being informed about the group's cause and the statistics involving cancer, the event gained some very interested individuals who were willing to take more than two fliers with the intentions of passing the information on to their friends. Not only were fliers handed out to the individuals but group members were able to talk to them specifically about Sean's cancer and let them know that individually, they could truly make a difference. Even if the individuals seemed interested and took fliers, they did not buy a shirt or towel but said that they would return to the next tabling

session with money and possibly of buying shirts and towels. Even though no merchandise was sold at the first tabling session, thirty-six fliers were handed out in order to further the sharing of Sean's story so that students were able to communicate with other students about the impact of cancer and how it can happen to anyone.

Objective 2: *To raise money for Sean Karl's family and medical expenses.*

Strategy 1: The selling of merchandise with all funds going towards his family.

Tactic 1: The first tabling session is intended to bring awareness about the campaign to Longwood's campus through marketing and promotions of the merchandise.

Tactic 2: The second tabling session is dedicated to those who visited the group at the last tabling session who are interested in purchasing the fundraising merchandise.

Tactic 3: Combining both tabling sessions, the group is able to sell t-shirts and face towels at an affordable cost of ten dollars for a t-shirt and six dollars for a face towel.

OUTCOME FOR OBJECTIVE 2

The second tabling session at the dining hall was more than successful! The interests of many college students were expressed through the vast amount of donations that were given and merchandise that was bought. Specifically, the group was able to raise over fifty dollars within just one tabling session.

Objective 3: Gaining personal knowledge about the facts of cancer, as well as feeling personally fulfilled for helping out with Sean's family.

Strategy 1: Researching about cancer

Tactic 1: Putting cancer-related facts on the fliers that can be seen all around campus,

as well as the fliers that are being passed out.

Tactic 2: Research Ewings Sarcoma specifically and see what exactly the diagnosis is, who it can affect and what the treatment is.

Tactic 3: Research the expense of chemotherapy to see what kind of financial damage it can have on a family's income.

OUTCOME FOR OBJECTIVE 3

Though constant research, YouTubing, and contacting people who are personally affected by Sean's situation, all group members have all gained a better knowledge about what the risks of having cancer are, as well as taking it into each member's hands to spread the knowledge about Sean. Even without the selling of merchandise, the campaign is able to tell his story and make many others very aware of the chances of being diagnosed with cancer.

Public Opinion

Within this campaign, the group was able to evaluate the public response and approval in a few different ways. Obviously, the amount of shirts that were sold throughout the campaign gave the group an idea of the public's response and approval, but the team wanted to do something that didn't necessarily require any monetary funds. During this campaign, the group created two Facebook pages. One was titled "Pray for Sean Karl" and the other was titled "The Campaign for Sean." The Facebook page titled "Pray for Sean Karl" was open to the public, meaning anyone from anywhere could join. From the time the Facebook page was created up until the current date, 1,731 people have joined. Each of these people either know Sean personally or through family and friends and have purely joined the page to see updates about

Sean and to post inspirational things that Sean, himself, can read. Along with this specific Facebook page, a page was created specifically for our group's campaign. This Facebook page was titled "The Campaign for Sean" and specific details about the campaign were posted like the dining hall tabling dates, as well as the power point presentation that was created specifically for this project. For this specific page, it was decided that it was going to be strictly for invited Longwood students, considering that the campaign was taking place on Longwood's campus. This page acquired 45 likes and got the attention of many.

As a group we are honored to say that we acquired another way of evaluating the public response and approval. This is a way that we, as a group, would never have imagined. Shortly after posting in Facebook about the campaign we had planned to take on for Sean, a member of our group got an e-mail from a girl that lives in South Carolina. She said in her e-mail that she show what our group was doing and thought it was really cool. She continued on to say that this summer she is attending College of Charleston for a communications speaking class and asked if she could use our campaign as the basis for one of her speeches. She said she thought not only would it be something good to talk about, but it could also get the attention of students there and possibly help our campaign raise more money and awareness.