



## Planned Giving With Bequests

*Bequests – A written statement in a donor’s will directing that specific assets, or a percentage of the estate, will be transferred to the program at the donor’s death.*

### Characteristics of Bequests:

- ❖ Bequests are the backbone of a planned giving program and are historically the most popular planned giving method used by programs.
- ❖ Bequests do not require that the donor part with his or her assets during life, and the donor feels secure that the assets are available if necessary for unanticipated expenses such as medical or long-term care.
- ❖ Bequests are easy to explain, require little cost to promote and once in place are seldom revoked.

### Marketing Tips for Bequests:

- ❖ Bequests can be for any amount and should be marketed broadly to donors of any age and net worth.
- ❖ Develop specific print materials that can be shared with donors, who may be considering including the program in their will. The materials should include:
  1. education about the gift program options
  2. information about how the gifts will enhance the *Faith in Action* program’s efforts
  3. assurance the gift will help prepare the organization for addressing long-term goals and objectives
- ❖ Regularly include sample language promoting this gift option in your organization’s regular communication efforts such as donor appeal letters, annual reports and newsletters.

*“Please consider including Faith in Action in your will. Your bequest can ensure our services are there for years to come. For more information, please call Janet at (123) 456-7890.”*
- ❖ Consider offering educational seminars on planned giving by area attorneys for donors who are interested in gathering more information to make an informed decision about including the program in their will.
- ❖ Remember to acknowledge planned gifts in your newsletters as they are promised, not just as the bequest is actualized. However, as always ensure you have permission from the donor. It is generally inappropriate to list the amount of bequest yet to be realized. Instead, consider having a special recognition category such as Legacy Circle or Promise Family for those living donors who have included the program in their wills.

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