



PGCH

Planned Giving Council of Houston

PGCH Summer Tour Program

- The program originated in 2004 as an incentive to increase membership. The impetus for the program was the fact that many non-members were attending the program meetings but not joining as members.
- The tour involves 3 non-profit organizations whose representatives are members of PGCH. Each organization hosts an event at their facility which usually includes an exclusive behind the scenes tour of their operations. The events are traditionally held on the last Thursday of June, July and August, which would be a regular PGCH program meeting date. However, unlike program meetings, the tour events are open to members only and are totally free.
- The host organization designs the event and schedules it for a time that works best for them. The events which have ranged from breakfasts, lunches to after-work receptions, usually last from two to three hours. Attendance varies from 15 to 35 with an average of 20. Many host organizations feature special speakers from their organization. Some provide guided tours of their facilities particularly in areas that are not open to the general public.
- The PGCH board member responsible for organizing the summer tour is the president-elect.
- The host organization works with the PGCH administrator to create the announcement which is e-mailed to members only. Members register for the event as they would do for a regular meeting but there is no fee. The host can download the RSVP list from the PGCH website at anytime.
- The incentive for the host organization is that they can use this event for cultivation. Collaboration with other non-profits is also possible. PGCH encourages the host to serve some refreshments at the host's expense so that there will be time to socialize and network.

Added Benefits:

- An opportunity for current members to stay in contact over the summer months when program meetings are not offered.
- An additional educational opportunity for members to learn firsthand about other charities in the community.
- An incentive for lapsed members or new members to join over the summer months rather than waiting until September when regular programming begins.

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Recommendations:

1. Try to balance the tour each summer with various types of charities.
2. Be mindful of the location for some host sites. Some might be prohibitive because of their distance from downtown.
3. Be understanding. Some host sites might have to incur additional costs (e.g., museum security guards) and some might not be able to give a full tour due to patient privacy. If your budget permits, consider having your council incur some of the additional expenses.
4. If possible, vary event times to provide more opportunities for members to attend at least one tour.
5. Be flexible. As with all event planning, develop a contingency plan for a back-up date or a back-up host. Fellow board members are the perfect back-up hosts!
6. If audience capacity is not a factor, do not turn away someone who has registered that you do not recognize. Use the opportunity to cultivate a potential new member or to meet a new member who recently joined but whose name is not yet on your roster.

PGCH Summer Tour Sponsors:

2004: Houston Zoo (breakfast and tour of new giraffe exhibition), Baylor College of Medicine (tour of two research programs closed to the general public) and Star of Hope (tour of the Transitional Living Center for Women and Families)

2005: Texas Children's Hospital (breakfast and tour of the Clinical Care Center), DePelchin Children's Center (light lunch, presentation and tour), and Boys and Girls Country (Note: event was an evening presentation held in the offices of Tanglewood Capital Management because the charity is located 35 miles north of the city)

2006: Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet (joint evening reception, presentation, display, and guided backstage tour of the Wortham Theater Center), Rice University (breakfast at the Jones Graduate School of Management), and Menninger Clinic (Note: breakfast was held at the Houstonian Hotel because of patient privacy at the facility. Noted psychiatrist from the clinic spoke)

2007: MD Anderson Cancer Center's new Proton Therapy Center (special presentation by research scientist Dr. Frank Marini, Assistant Professor of Medicine, on adult stem cell research. Note: presentation was in lieu of a tour because the new facility was in high demand with patients receiving treatment until 8:00 pm), Houston Museum of Natural Science (evening reception and private tour of two exhibitions) and University of Houston (breakfast and tour of new UH Welcome Center)

2008: KUHF Houston Public Radio & KUHT Houston PBS (evening reception and tour of studios), University of St. Thomas and Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart (lunchtime private tour of Houston's new cathedral which opened in April), The Kinkaid School (breakfast at the school and tour with school in session)

Website Link for More Information: www.pgch.org