



STUDENT MOVEMENT FOR REAL CHANGE
Student Movement for International Relief (SMIR)
University Chapters of SMRC

Operations Package

Saul Garlick, Executive Director

2006

“My faith in the people of the United States to act in the interest of a better life for all the people in the world is vindicated by people like yourself in the Student Movement for International Relief”

– President Nelson Mandela

www.StudentMovementUSA.org

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1. Welcome to the Student Movement for Real Change

Mission Statement:

To be a leadership development organization that provides students in the United States a vehicle to **advocate** for positive change in neglected regions of the world. We **empower** students to become leaders, giving them opportunities to **improve** health and education in developing communities worldwide.

The Student Movement for Real Change (SMRC) was founded three and a half years ago in Denver, Colorado by Saul Garlick and has since grown to be a national organization endorsed by The Nelson Mandela Foundation. For the past year and a half, the Student Movement has been working diligently to build the Mashlati School of the Mpumulanga Province of South Africa. Today, the movement includes hundreds of students from East to West, all of whom participate in campus chapters of SMRC called the Student Movement for International Relief (SMIR). We have only begun our efforts to reach out to thousands more students.

In the past few years, the Student Movement became a major entity on American college campuses. Johns Hopkins, for example, raised nearly \$10,000 for the Mashlati School and offered a tour for six Hopkins students to visit South Africa and see the school's progress. Pomona has raised an additional \$7,500 in one year. As a result of student fundraising efforts, and tireless advocacy for underprivileged students, three new classrooms have been built. However, the full job of creating a sustainable and positive development program for this school is not yet complete. It is not rare to see 3 students sharing the same chair with a broken backrest. The entire kindergarten class sits on cinderblocks.

Often people fear that money sent to neglected countries in Africa or elsewhere is lost to bureaucracy and corruption. Such is not the case with the Student Movement. The Student Movement sends all donations for the schools we build directly to organizations that have an established system of accountability. The Buffelshoek Trust, which closely watches the building process at the school in South Africa, is one such organization. We are also building new relationships constantly, including one with the Ubuntu Education Fund in the Eastern Cape and many others.

Building schools in rural Africa only accounts for part of our programming and relief agenda. We have fundraised for children in Afghanistan and for measles vaccines. We have hosted lectures on public health issues in Africa, India and Russia, as well as staged demonstrations on genocide in Sudan. Our scope is constantly growing, but our core values have remained.

The extent and impact of our programming, advocacy and impact is dependant on a strong infrastructure and investment into its future. SMRC has already been endorsed by The Nelson Mandela Foundation and works closely with organizations ranging from South African Airways, Protea Hotels of South Africa, and Societe General.

2. National Office and Your Chapter

We at the National Office offer the following services to your campus chapter:

1. Leadership Development
2. Project support
3. Speaker contacts for your campus
4. Annual Campaign Support
5. Internship and Networking Resources
6. Database of Internships/News/Information/Action Plans
7. Intra-campus connections/coordination
8. Chapter materials/paraphernalia/ “Student Movement-wear”

As a chapter leader you have the opportunity to:

1. Develop your own leadership skills/run meetings/initiate projects
2. Devote your time to something you are passionate about
3. Associate with other students like you from your campus and across the nation
4. Travel to national conferences and to regions where you will be making a difference
5. Find national and international internship opportunities and mentors
6. Increased publicity and media attention for your school
7. Invite respected speakers to your campus

3. Establishing the Organization

Starting a new organization on your campus can be a daunting experience. The National Office will provide you with all the resources and support you need to start a chapter. As a student leader you will have increased access to professors, national leaders, and international opportunities.

First

Decide you want to lead. This can be the most difficult part of the process because it means taking on an additional responsibility. There are many different kinds of leaders; you don't have to be the loudest kid in school to be effective. In fact, some of the best leaders are soft spoken individuals who do most of their work behind the scenes. Everyone can lead; to be effective you just have to believe in your cause and be willing to organize and work with others.

Second

Find friends who share your interest in international relief. The best leaders do not go in alone. All CEOs and Presidents have advisors and assistants. As a campus leader you will need advice and participation from peers and colleagues, too. Find three or four other people who are willing to devote 2-3 hours per week to assist you in starting a campus chapter.

Be cautioned: your friends may be well intentioned, but they can also be a distraction. Be certain that you find others who are truly devoted to the cause before you ask them to participate. Filling the room with people who are not interested in the project, does not enhance the organization. They may be disrespectful, distracting or cliquish. If that does occur, ask them only to return if they want to contribute to the cause. If your friends aren't interested, don't take it personally. It is okay to encourage your friends to join organizations that interest them.

Third

Have your first “board meeting.” Have a brief meeting with three or four students interested in the Student Movement. This is not an elected board. Instead it is the ‘exploratory committee’ to get things off the ground. Once you have a consistent chapter membership, say by the second semester, you will hold board elections. Priorities for the “first board meeting” with the exploratory committee should include:*

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finding Money 2. Finding Students 3. Setting a date for the next meeting |
|---|

Finding money refers to the challenge of getting a hold of some startup money, around \$500. The National Office will supply materials that will help you create an abstract, constitution, and anything else you need. There are several avenues for getting money:

* See Agenda, page 10, for a more comprehensive first meeting.

1. Approach your student government or student activities commission, whichever allots funds directly to startup organizations, and ask for an initial budget.
2. Approach the Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, Government, History or Economics department chairs to discuss the possibility of securing funds.
3. Approach the Dean of Student Life or your college's equivalent to ask for funding for initial publicity about this new and exciting opportunity to help others. This office at your school will likely appreciate the initiative and will be glad to support you.
4. Other resources: Fellowships Director, Study Abroad Office, College Deans, Student Aid Society (plane tickets, etc.), Career Development Office (internship stipends).

Finding Students: The next challenge is establishing a substantial and consistent member base. Questions you should ask yourself and your peers should include: Who cares about this cause? What are their majors? Where do they hang out? What year (Freshman, Sophomore, etc.) should we target? What courses are these people taking? Are there other groups on campus that are doing similar work? Once you have a general idea about who might be interested in joining this type of organization, put together a targeted campaign to reach out to those students. This discussion should be part of your “first board meeting.”

Ways of reaching out to the right audience:

1. Host an event (i.e. relevant movie¹) to attract students to sign up for the email list.
2. Make announcements of meeting dates and times in relevant classes.
3. Poster on campus with clear, catchy phrases that will attract students to meetings
4. Chalk the sidewalk (check school chalking policies).
5. Make an advertisement for the school paper.
6. Pass out pocket-size flyers with meeting times and the group's mission, also put in mailboxes.
7. Put announcements in school marquees, student government emails.
8. Host a table at your student activities fair.
9. Tell Resident Advisors (RAs) to let their residents know.
10. Invite friends.
11. Once you have secured funds for the group, have a meeting with food.

¹ See “Event Planning” for movie ideas

4. Leading Meetings

Leading meetings effectively is critically important; it will legitimize the strength of the organization and will help you accomplish your goals for the chapter. Meetings must take place in a conference room or classroom type setting in which chairs can be arranged in a rectangle or circle with tables in front of people. People may want to write, and if they are in a circle of only chairs, they will have a hard time doing so. Additionally, lecture style seating is non-inclusive and will create an uncomfortable environment to create meaningful dialogue for new ideas or even expression of opinions. Members should all be able to look at each other in a meeting.

Book a consistent meeting time and space. Chapters should meet weekly. Between general meetings, the board should meet to assess what progress has been made and how tasks can be better delegated.

Having food at meetings is a huge draw for students, but should not become the norm. Rather, have food once or twice per semester, and save funds for larger projects. If members ask for food encourage potluck style meetings.

Remember, running a meeting is a challenge, and you should not be overly critical of your efforts to make sure things run smoothly. People will try to joke around and tease, and the more able you are to take jokes lightly, the more effective a leader you will be. However, your priority is to run the meeting. If there are distractions, look up and say, “I have a few things that I really want to go over and it shouldn’t take more than 15 minutes.” When you offer a short time span to achieve your goals, and master their attention, you should have few problems moving down your agenda.

For now, since there is a great deal to think about in terms of starting the Student Movement on your campus, a meeting agenda has been provided for the “first board meeting” with the exploratory committee.

See next page for an agenda for your first board meeting. Be sure to review each part and read its goals to best explain it to others at the meeting.

Student Movement

Agenda for First Meeting with Exploratory Committee

Mission Statement:

The Student Movement for Real Change is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides students a vehicle to **advocate** and work on sustainable relief efforts in neglected regions of the world. We **empower** American students to become leaders, giving them opportunities to **improve** global health and education for their peers in the developing world.

1. Welcome: Explain mission, history and vision for the group.
2. Establish email listserv
 - a. Googlegroups is one option, yahoogroups is another
 - b. Some schools offer their own systems
3. Meeting place
 - a. Find a nice room to meet with the general membership weekly.
 - b. Designate one person to find and schedule the meeting place.
4. Advertising
 - a. Find your target audience and poster, flyer, and make announcements to those people. Political Science, International Studies, Sociology, Government, Public Health, Anthropology, History and pre-med students are all likely to participate in this type of organization. At this meeting, discuss who you will target and how.
 - b. Designate one person to design flyers and posters on BRIGHT paper and have copies made.
 - c. Schedule a 30 minute meeting within the next 5 days to put the flyers around campus.
 - d. Have everyone at the meeting make an announcement in ALL of their classes.
5. Securing funds
 - a. Discuss efficient ways to secure initial funds for the group. Remember to consider student government, activities commissions, deans and departments for initial funding.
 - b. The chapter founder and one other person should meet with the necessary individuals to secure funds.
6. Introduce website
 - a. Let everyone know that they should become acquainted with the Student Movement's website at www.StudentMovementUSA.org and sign in as new members of the national organization. (Bring a laptop to the meeting for this purpose if possible.)

5. Membership Building

As mentioned briefly above, the task of creating an active membership will likely be the first major challenge to you and your new board collectively. It is important to remember that students, particularly at the beginning of the school year are eager to find programs and organizations that will offer them access to like-minded people. Also, many people between the ages of 18-22 are trying to figure out how they can make a difference in the world. Others still are interested in finding a group that they can learn and grow from personally, put on their resume, and from which they can make new friends. There are many ways to attract potential members.

First you must establish a table at the Student Activities Fair that takes place at the beginning of the semester. The national office will provide you with some materials or even t-shirts to hand out at the fair. Make sure to build an email list from everyone that is interested who passes by the table. Have a table with a neatly printed sign up sheet (which can be found online on our website) or use a notebook. **DO NOT LOSE THE SHEET.** You should also consider getting a white table cloth to look more professional. A number of other useful materials such as literature can be ordered online as well. Other things you may want at your table are Student Movement bracelets, shirts, bottles, or even hemp necklaces to sell. Provide a mirror for the full shopping experience ☺.

Once you have a listserv, a number of interested students, and an advertising strategy, plan your kick-off event. Many people think this has to be a large event such as a school-wide BBQ, but that is not true. Rather, host a movie or a speaker – either a campus faculty member or one provided through the national office – to get students interested in your chapter. You will inevitably get a few new names from this event; even two new people should be considered a success, because members often bring friends to meetings. Always pass around a sign-up sheet to get new members and update your listserv weekly! **DON'T LOSE THE SIGN-UP SHEET.**

Once you consistently have several or more general meeting attendees, it is essential that you keep their interest in the organization. Set goals, both weekly and monthly which will keep them working on a weekly basis. Check in to their progress at every meeting. Establishing committees is the recommended method by which to keep members engaged. This will be further discussed in the “Agenda’s and Meetings” section below.

6. Board Meetings – Official Business

Board meetings are designated times for only the board to attend. Once the leadership has been established, it is essential to meet regularly. At first, it might be best to meet every week for 30 minutes to an hour. These will be less formal than the general meetings, and the chapter president is only responsible for creating a “to-do” list for discussion rather than a full agenda.

The to-do list should include the following issues:

- Old News: Successes, Missed Opportunities
- Advocacy and Awareness Events
- Selecting Speakers
- National Office Coordination
- Fundraising Events
- Marketing Strategies/Publicity
- Membership Retention
- Committees
- Timelines

The board should brainstorm effective ideas for each bullet point.

The dialogue in these meetings should be as open as possible! Every board member should be able to voice opinions. When ideas flow, there is a greater chance for success. Open dialogues will also help the board iron out any difficulties that it is facing internally. Working with other people is never easy, and nobody is perfect at it. DO NOT feel bad if you are having a hard time controlling the board. All you have to do is remind them that if you focus for a few minutes and respect each other’s opinions, more will get done in less time.

The last point, and perhaps most important one, is setting deadlines and delegating responsibility for tasks and events. First, it is critical to note that people follow leaders who LEAD BY EXAMPLE. This cannot be stressed enough. People admire hard work on the part of the leadership, and will contribute more of their own time if they see that others are doing the same. Also, you do not have to control everything. This is meant to be a team effort, and it is important to stress that you facilitate the efforts of others. The chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

Delegation depends on a responsible secretary. The Secretary of the organization is responsible for writing down who is taking on what responsibility and when deadlines are set. The secretary must send that information out to the board so that everyone is on the same page. Once that is completed, the President will know when they must follow up with different board members.

Example:

1. When you decide on an event, ask how the board can fulfill different responsibilities.
2. For Example, Publicity is done by the Marketing Director. Ask how much to spend on publicity, fliers, ads, etc. Then find out if the Marketing Director will need help.
3. If help is needed, ask the board to help.
4. If the board cannot help because of other obligations for the club, ask the general membership at the next meeting.
5. Set deadlines for when each task needs to be completed. No exceptions without good reason. Events fail when people don't do their part.
6. Follow up with the board on their duties. Send emails, call, ask when you bump into them on campus, but make sure deadlines are being met.

Example of First Agenda for General Meeting

1. Welcome; Introductions; Ice Breakers
 - Mission, vision and history
 - Website
 - Opportunities – Africa trip, leadership, make a difference!
2. Goals this year (examples)
 - Building a School in Africa
 - Advocacy for peace in Sudan
 - Brainstorm together for new ideas/issues
3. Building legitimacy
 - Advertising
 - Hosting events
 - Contacting departments
4. Committees
 - Publicity
 - Awareness: Education/Health
 - Fundraising
 - Programming
5. Next Meeting Date
 - Plan one for next week

7. Becoming a Successful Chapter

Once you have established the group, you have become the leader of the chapter. You are charged with working in a diverse group of your peers, and it is important that you approach this with confidence and enthusiasm. Here are a few tips to make sure that you are running your meetings effectively:

1. Never yell, scream, shout or raise your voice at others! This is one way to guarantee failure.
2. When people are being disrespectful, ask them to please quiet down so you can just get through a few details. If they are really rude, remind them that this group has some important goals that you and others in the room care about, and if they cannot be respectful, it is fine if they leave.
3. Lead by example: If you are prepared for meetings, other people also will be.
4. Initiate dialogue with confidence. Introduce yourself. Ask everyone to go around and say who they are, class year, major, and interest in the group (for the first 3-4 meetings). Thank them for coming.
5. You are facilitating the meeting so let others speak and act as an equal.
6. Be the last to give an opinion; and only give one if you absolutely HAVE TO.
7. Always be open to other ideas. They usually do not hurt your cause, and if people are really off-base with their suggestions, just remind them of the group's mission.

As your chapter develops, you are going to be challenged with making sure the group continues to be productive. It is essential to lay-out realistic goals at the beginning of the semester and follow-up with the membership on your progress. Here are ways to do that:

1. Hold meetings every week.
2. Every meeting, review how your recent efforts have contributed to your chapter's goals.
3. Organize appropriate committees to address needs as they pertain to the goals.
4. Once you have achieved a goal, tell them and thank them!

Committees are critical for your chapter's success. A number of initial committees must be established, they include (chairperson denoted in parenthesis):

Publicity (Marketing Director)
Awareness (Vice President)

Fundraising (Treasurer)
Programming (Programming Coordinator)

At the first meeting, and at all subsequent meetings, request that students, who have not yet done so, sign up for a committee. Each committee shall be chaired by a member of the executive board (see above). When event planning is underway, these different committees will collaborate and fulfill different responsibilities. This system allows for successful delegation of tasks.

At each meeting, it is recommended that the Awareness Committee organize a list of interesting facts, recommended books, news articles and movie ideas to distribute to the general membership. This will help increase awareness at meetings. If there is any significant news, a member of the Awareness Committee should be prepared to give a brief description of the event and its implications. See the national website for details.

8. Event Planning

In this section we will run through a few hypothetical situations and discuss who is responsible for what activities. Whenever the group is hosting an event, the burden for the event's success should never fall on the shoulders of just one individual.

Scenario 1 - Speaker

Your board, along with the support of the general membership, decides that the best way to increase advocacy about the genocide in Darfur, Sudan is to invite a speaker. The issue is constantly in the news, but nobody really understands it or is willing to do anything about it. The board decides to invite Ambassador Joe from Sudan to speak at your college. The idea is bold, and many of you are worried it is a pipe dream.

Initial steps for selecting a speaker:

1. Find the names and office contact information of potential speakers. If they are diplomats, non-profit workers or government workers, find their office number, address and email.
2. Look into any possible connections, i.e. Amb. Joe graduated from your university or your professor's alma mater...
3. Compose a professional invitation stating your reason for inviting the speaker and explain that they will kick-off a large effort by students to advocate change. Provide examples of future projects that will deal with the issue the speaker will address. Print this on the Student Movement's official letterhead (provided by national office).
4. Send letters and emails out, and follow up 3 days later. Leave messages, call until you reach someone.
5. Give dates: months and days, if possible, that are best for your campus, and ask if they are available for any.
6. Make an offer for their honorarium (speech fee), hotel, dinner, plane ticket, expenses. Consult national office about appropriate honorarium.*
7. Once you have a speaker confirmed for a date, the planning process will follow.

Now for planning the event:

1. Utilize committees for programming, fundraising, publicity, etc.
2. Establish priorities that need to be taken care of: Room assignments for the speaker, advertising strategy, t-shirts, funding, programs/pamphlets, invitations, tickets, etc.
3. Assign priorities to committees, and set deadlines. For example, programming would arrange room assignments, pamphlets and the logistics of the event. Fundraising would find sponsors and donors, etc.
4. Use the next meeting to ensure that all assignments are completed and to get information about where additional help is necessary.
5. If you are reserving a room, only one person should be responsible for that activity. Pamphlets can be made by two people, three at most. The more directed the assignments are to individuals, the higher likelihood of them being completed correctly.
6. The timeline for an event should be clear and followed as closely as possible.
7. It is the president's responsibility to follow up with committee chairs to ensure that jobs are being completed and to assist with any challenges that arise.

* Current government employees cannot accept an honorarium. Professors at your university never will. Professors outside of your university might. Non-profit and NGO staff usually just want expenses covered.

Scenario 2 – Movie

Your chapter decides that an effective way to explain the seriousness of genocide is to show a powerful film. You decide that not nearly enough people have seen “Hotel Rwanda,” and you want to raise awareness before a speaker arrives on campus. You aren’t sure how big you should make the event or where to host it.

Steps to plan the event:

1. Select Movie: In this case you have selected Hotel Rwanda
2. Select Date and Time (pick 3 options) – Remember that this movie should be held within close proximity to the speaker event to keep student interest.
3. Consider Friday night (Dinner and a Movie is optimal)
4. Find a room available with DVD projector and seating for 25-50 people.
5. Get permission to show film.
6. Ensure that you have a technical person aware of how to run the film/projector. Run one test.
7. Organize committees as mentioned above for publicity, fundraising, etc.
8. Use the event to get more email addresses and announce future meetings and events.

Other possible activities:

Dinners, movie nights, talent shows. Collaborate with a cappella groups or comedy groups. Invite speakers, host rallies, sell bracelets, pass out bookmarks, run poker nights or bingo. Organize races (i.e. “Race for Education”), write articles for newspapers about the issue your group is focusing on, organize club nights, and sell t-shirts. (Contact the National Office for more information).

Movie Ideas:

Hotel Rwanda, Forsaken Cries, The Constant Gardener, The Lord of War, City of God, Not without My Daughter, Osama, Maria Full of Grace, In My Country, Cry the Beloved Country, Kaffir Boy, Things Fall Apart

Book Ideas:

The End of Poverty, A Human Being Died that Night, A Continent for the Taking, The Fate of Africa, Reading Lolita in Tehran, Long Walk to Freedom, Mountains upon Mountains, Of Love and Shadows, The Bride Price, Beautiful Flowers of the Maquiladora, Globalization on the Line

9. Fundraising

Often viewed as the most critical part of non-profit work, fundraising can make a campus chapter very effective. Some have called fundraising, “Friend-making,” and the label is not far from correct. In fact, you will raise the most money for your chapter and the cause if you build a rapport with individuals and show them why the cause should be supported.

Let’s take a look at the example of the “Ten Dollar Campaign.” This campaign raises money for a school in South Africa. The campaign was designed to offer students the opportunity to sell bracelets designed specially for the Student Movement for \$10 apiece. This could have been done by setting a table in the middle of campus, and asking anyone who passed by to please purchase one. The alternative method, and proven to be far more successful, was to have members of the group sell bracelets to their friends and acquaintances on a one-on-one basis. They would then have the opportunity to explain the cause more fully, and then ask if they would buy a bracelet for \$10, a specific and reasonable amount.

The ideal fundraiser is able to:

1. Educate students about the issue being addressed.
2. Successfully raises some funds from students.
3. Get students’ contact information for future follow up. You may find new members through your fundraising efforts. Some students will give money and then ask how they can get more involved.

Fundraising is easy on a college campus. While some may think the “starving student on a shoestring budget” cannot afford to make donations, the reality is that virtually all students spend money on entertainment in some capacity. So provide it for them, but make money for your great cause in the meantime!

A few proven examples include hosting a poker night in which there is a \$10 buy-in. The winner at the end of the evening may win a poker set (valued at \$50) or a set amount of the money. The Student Movement then can put the rest of the money from the “buy-in” toward a cause. This can raise hundreds of dollars in a single night. Other ideas include cheap admissions to sketch comedy nights or a cappella concerts, in which the Student Movement works on publicity and takes half or all of the ticket proceeds. If 250 people go to a concert and there is a \$2 entrance fee, the group can quickly raise \$500.

Be certain that in creating campus partnerships you offer to contribute through advertising, putting their group’s name on your website, and getting articles in the school paper noting the good efforts of the sketch comedy or a cappella group.

10. Budgeting and Finances

Work on dividing your time carefully between fundraising for administrative costs and fundraising for your cause. This issue will be less clear for a campus chapter that receives funding from the university. That is why your initial fundraising efforts from the school administration is critical to free up your ability to raise money for the issue you care deeply about, not office supplies.

During the semester, if you find that fundraising from the administration does not provide sufficient resources for the numerous projects that you intend to complete each semester, then it is advisable to continue fundraising for your project, but let donors know that 10% or 15% of the total amount fundraised will be used for administrative costs. The rest should be sent to the national office for disbursement to the cause.

Example Budget for First Semester:

	Source/Expenditure	Payment	Deposit	Balance
1	University Administration		\$ 500.00	
2	Flyer Campaign	\$ 35.00		\$ 465.00
3	First Meeting Pizza	\$ 40.00		\$ 425.00
4	Movie Event			
5	Food	\$ 30.00		
6	Movie Rental	\$ 5.00		
7	Publicity	\$ 30.00		\$ 360.00
8	Ten Dollar Campaign (TDC)			
9	Bracelets (x100)	\$ 50.00		\$ 310.00
10	Bracelet Fundraiser		\$950.00	\$1,260.00
11	Donation to SMRC from TDC	\$ 900.00		\$ 360.00

This budget presents the possibility of doing an initial membership publicity campaign, followed by a movie event, perhaps a movie discussing the conflict in Colombia or the educational possibilities for students in rural China. Once awareness is underway, a fundraising campaign such as the Ten Dollar Campaign should be pursued. The chapter will only have to pay 50¢ per bracelet from the national organization which you can sell for \$10 each and make \$9.50 for the cause. Then it is possible that the chapter takes 10% of the \$950 raised to help cover future costs.

This is a basic budget arrangement and is a good outline to follow as you track your financial transactions.

Stay posted for website information about tracking finances that will be available in 2006!