

# 7 PROVEN VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT IDEAS

Thinking about holding your next virtual fundraising event but need some new and effective ideas to ensure it reaches (or even exceeds) your goals? Here are **7 proven virtual fundraising events that increased engagement, brought in new donors and boosted donations for these nonprofits**. Read on and get inspired!

## 1. Virtual Turkey Trot

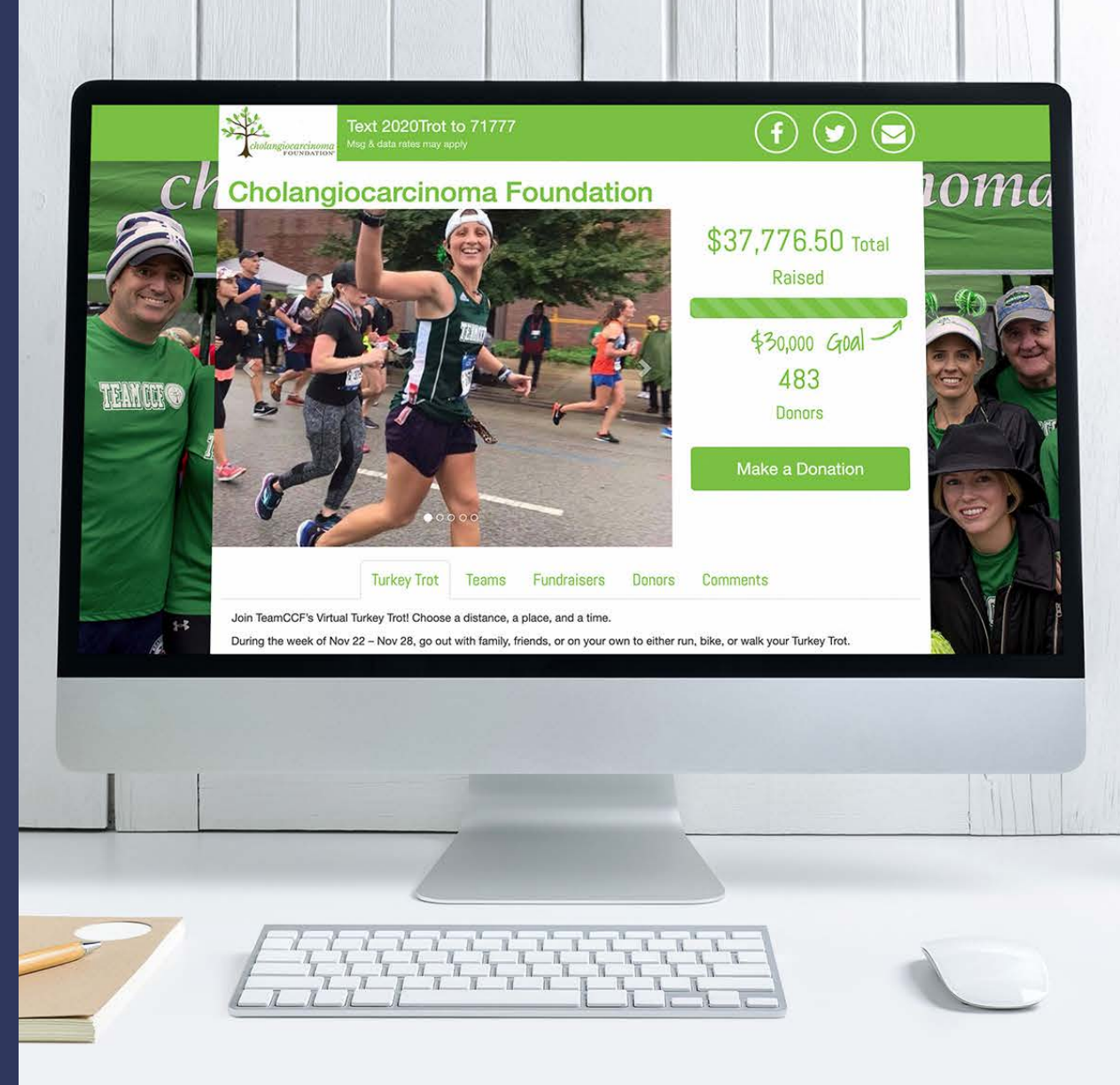
**HOST:** Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation

**WHAT:** Participants could run, bike or walk any distance, from any location.

**HOW:** With two registration levels, fundraising was optional but encouraged. Heavily promoted via social media and emails, their Virtual Pep Rally and incentives for participation created additional excitement and engagement.

**RESULTS:** CCF raised \$37,777 (nearly 4x their goal) from 131 fundraisers and with an average donation of \$78. They reached a whole new audience, brought new industries into the fold and exceeded expectations.

**PRO TIP:** Be sure to tag guests and donors on your social media channels to boost your event's visibility and shareability.



## 2. International Gala

**HOST:** Mona Foundation

**WHAT:** Took their annual on-site gala and hosted an international virtual one.

**HOW:** Donors from around the world registered to attend the event held on a Saturday morning (PST) so it would work for all time zones. The 1-hour program included both live and pre-recorded videos from supporters and special guests. 'Together Table' Captains set fundraising goals and sold "seats."

**RESULTS:** The Mona Foundation had 400 registered guests and raised \$100,481 during the gala, plus \$177,742 raised via peer-to-peer fundraising and Together Tables. They both netted and grossed more than their in-person gala.

**PRO TIP:** Use paid tickets to offer exclusive content to virtual event guests and "free" tickets to track participation and target your communications.

## 3. Awareness Event

**HOST:** Continuing the Mission

**WHAT:** An awareness campaign to educate and share their mission with a broader audience and build a base for future giving.

**HOW:** They focused their campaign on what the org does, asked for matching grants from corporate sponsors and promoted heavily through email, social media and phone calls.

**RESULTS:** Continuing the Mission raised \$7,000 and increased their corporate sponsorships by 700%.

**PRO TIP:** In addition to showcasing sponsors' info on event materials, be sure to also give them a shout out during your event.



## 4. Anniversary Campaign

**HOST:** Birch Family Services

**WHAT:** 45 days of activities to celebrate 45 years of service, including a virtual 5K and gala.

**HOW:** BFS held their 5K at the halfway mark of their campaign and made a large promotional push on social media and email. They leveraged peer-to-peer fundraising and shared a video with program info, experiences and a call-to-action.

**RESULTS:** BFS raised \$366,000 from donors across the US. \$83,000 of that was raised through their P2P 5K (over 3X more than their goal!).

**PRO TIP:** An Event Page keeps all the important details of a multi-faceted virtual fundraiser in one convenient location and can streamline all your promotional needs.

## 5. Awards Gala

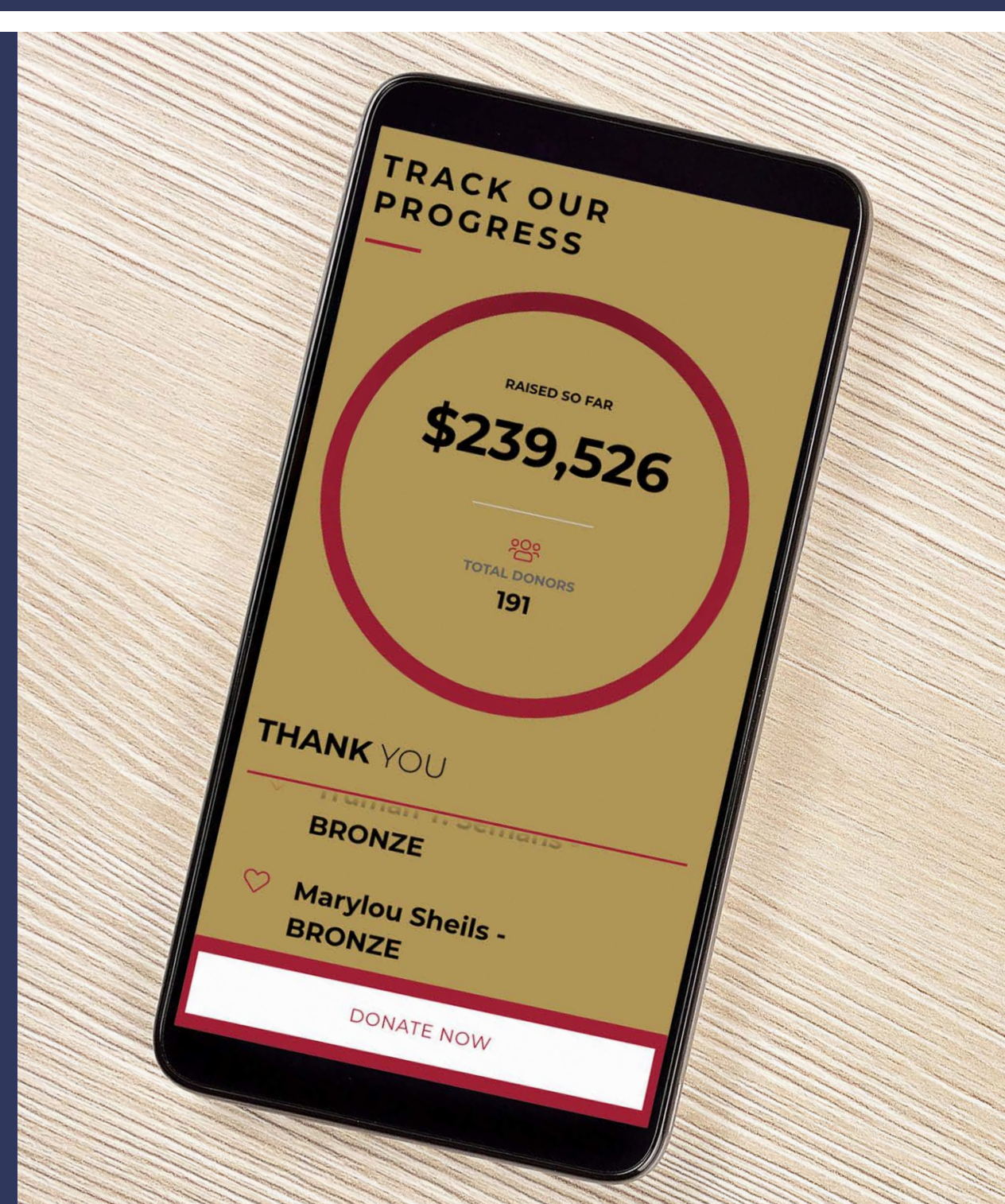
**HOST:** SOAR!

**WHAT:** Virtual award galas temporarily replaced their long-standing in-person events.

**HOW:** They promoted using Save the Dates mailings, invitations with reply cards, social media and email, plus 'Join Us' reminders on text. The gala presentation was unique to their virtual event and focused on the SOAR! Mission, honored award recipients and short videos of communities they've served over the years.

**RESULTS:** SOAR!'s net profit for their New York awards gala was 40% higher and their DC gala's net profit was 25% higher than in 2019.

**PRO TIP:** Text messaging is for more than soliciting donations—try texting invites, information, links and updates about your fundraiser.



## 6. Swim A Mile/Move A Mile

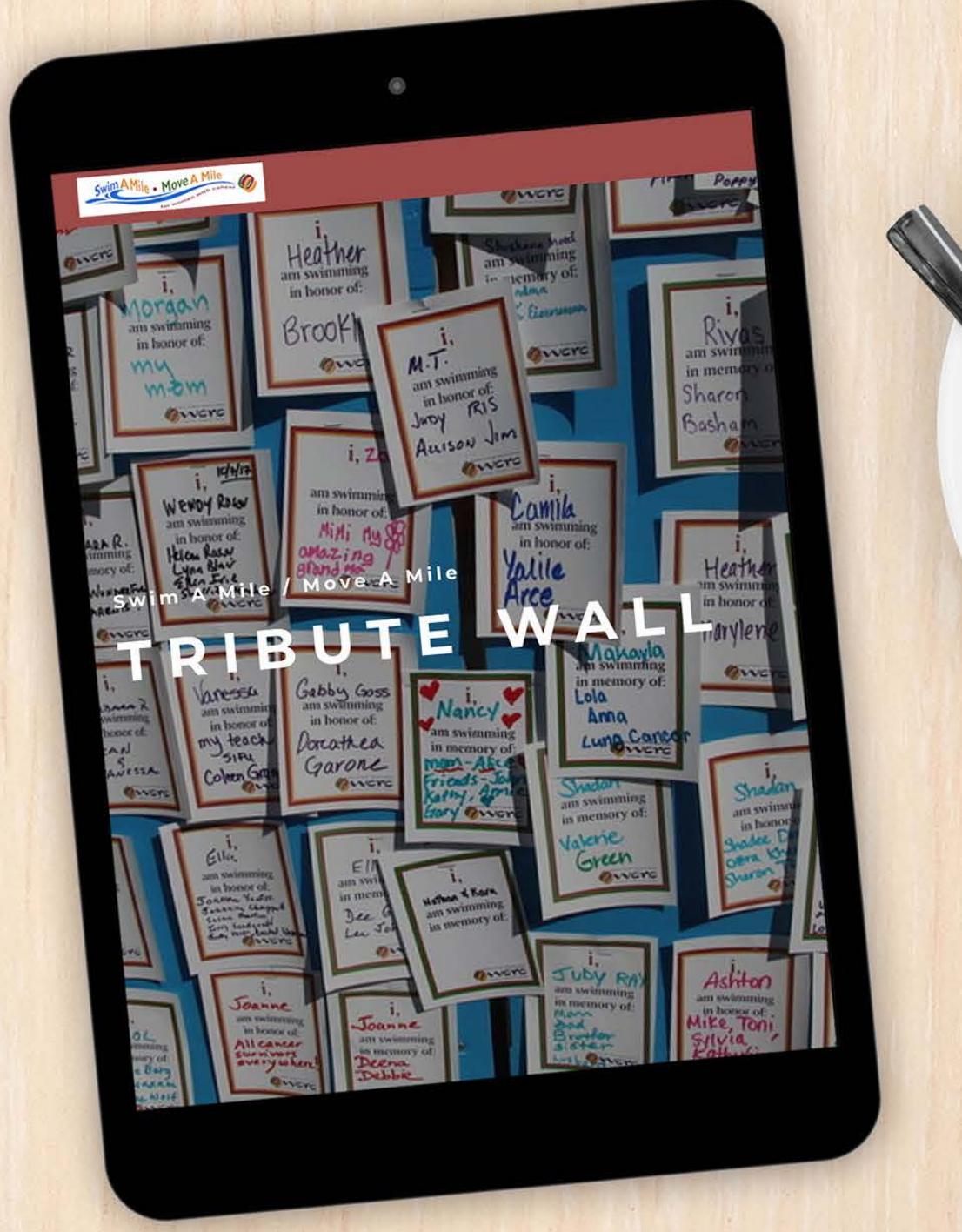
**HOST:** Women's Cancer Resource Center

**WHAT:** Participants could swim, walk, bike or jog one mile, or "choose their own adventure."

**HOW:** Using a '25th Anniversary' theme, they encouraged supporters to help raise \$2,500, find 25 donors, swim 2.5 miles, walk 25 miles and/or register for \$25. They encouraged supporters to share their participation, held an online dance party and a drive-by celebration to hand out swag.

**RESULTS:** The WCRC raised over \$300,000 from 237 fundraisers, with a \$93 average fundraising amount.

**PRO TIP:** Incorporating peer-to-peer fundraising is a fun way to engage supporters and boost your fundraising total.



## 7. Day of Giving + Auction

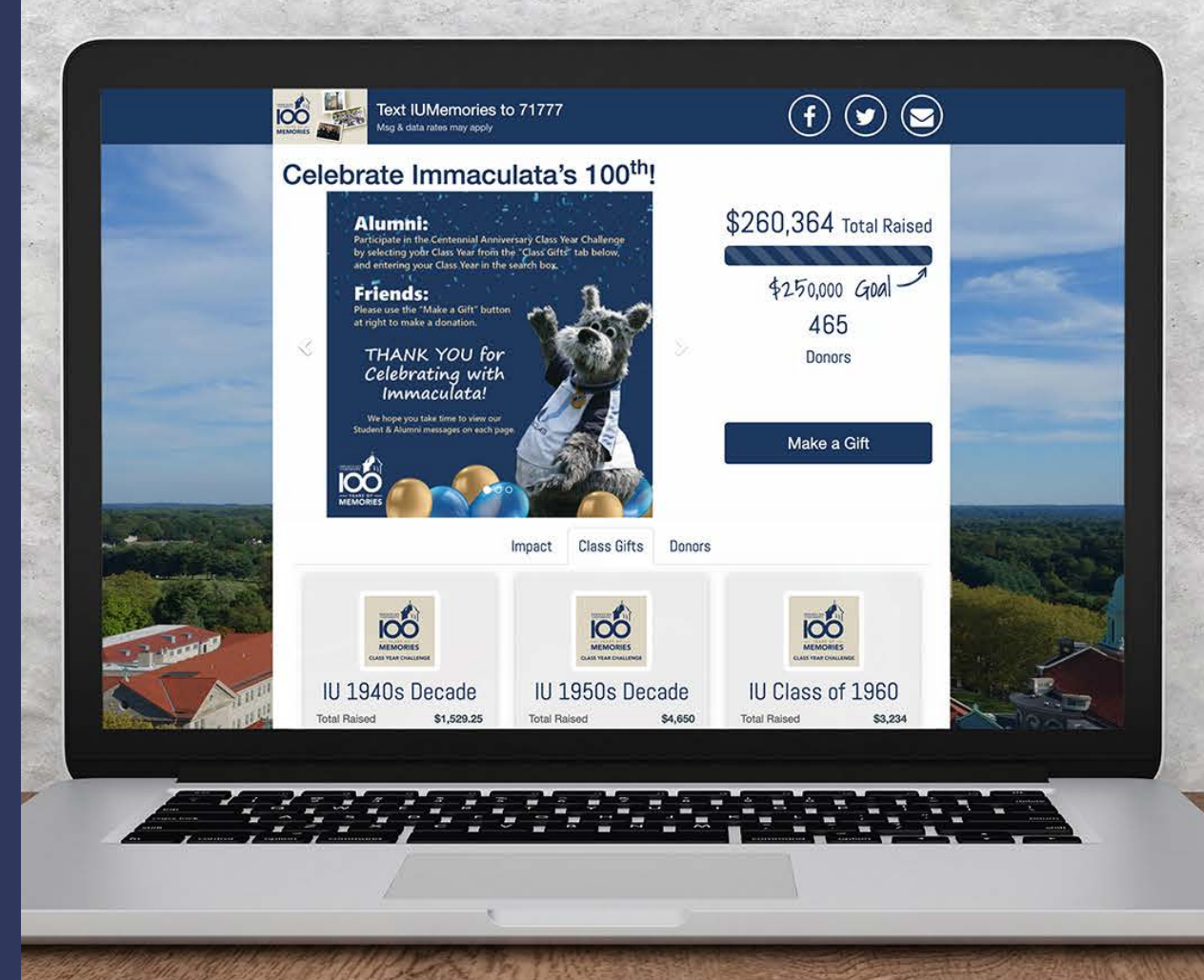
**HOST:** Immaculata University

**WHAT:** Day of Giving which incorporated peer-to-peer fundraising with Class Year Challenges.

**HOW:** Part of the 100th anniversary Centennial Campaign, they used "class agents" to create enthusiasm, write letters, send emails and call classmates around the theme of "100 Years of Memories." Donors could share on the event's "memory wall" and bid on Immaculata-themed auction items at various price points.

**RESULTS:** Immaculata University raised over \$267,000, 6% over their goal.

**PRO TIP:** Online auctions can be held for longer durations than at in-person events, which boosts bidding and increases participants.



These virtual events created opportunities for their nonprofit hosts to **reach new audiences while driving giving and engagement in exciting ways**.

We hope you're inspired to try out some of these dynamic ideas for your next virtual fundraising event and see what they can do for your nonprofit.