

Notes on Raising Funds for Sunsara Taylor's Campus Speaking Tour

In one sentence, asking people to contribute funds for the tour is, above all, giving people an opportunity to play a meaningful role in making this unprecedented tour happen.

Whether on the street outside a concert, in a campus cafeteria or student union, in a classroom or dorm, or at a professor's or artist's home, asking for funds is not only essential to making this tour all it can and needs to be, but giving people a way to do something that will make a difference in how students and youth see the world and what can be done about it, especially the oppression of women. Asking for funds is a very political act, and we need to be bold and confident in approaching people. Not everyone will contribute, but many will. What's certain is that no one will contribute unless we ask them and let them know how their contribution will make a difference.

Each area the tour comes to needs to take responsibility for not only the costs of that particular event – from venue to materials (posters, flyers, stickers, etc.) and publicity (ads in campus and other newspapers, spots on popular radio shows, Facebook ads, etc.) - but also for the tour overall. This includes travel and living expenses, as well national publicity and media.

A few specifics:

First, fund raising must be built into all the work we do. People should have large buckets or baskets whenever and wherever they go out with flyers, go postering, or do the skit. Paste the flyer on the bucket so that it will be clear that this is what we're raising money for. Ask people specifically to donate to the tour. Also, pass the hat at all planning meetings. Even a relatively small amount can help cover initial costs of flyers and posters.

Along with this, set up meetings with people who could potentially make substantial contributions. These could be people in academia, the arts, and other arenas who we think could contribute several hundred to \$1,000. It's possible Sunsara Taylor herself could meet with potentially key supporters and donors while she is in the area, and many will be eager to meet her and talk more informally with her.

We suggest that each area set up at least one fundraising salon with Sunsara Taylor. This could be hosted by someone in academia, the arts, etc. and held at their home or studio. The host would invite their friends and professional colleagues, and members of the organizing committee could also invite people. In NYC, one main invitation explaining the purpose of the salon and requesting contributions of \$50-250 was written and emailed. In NYC, the host also wrote her own invitation to send to friends, based on the main invitation.

At the NYC salon, Sunsara made a short presentation about the tour; her past experiences speaking to students, especially around the oppression and liberation of women; and why this tour is so needed and how it can break through the deadening atmosphere, challenging and inspiring students with exposure and analysis they've never heard before, and calling on them to be part of building a movement for revolution. Lively and engaging discussion followed, with all those attending joining in, followed by a short fund appeal and request for those present to make

generous donations. All who came contributed, including one woman who had previously said she couldn't donate at this time, and another person who made a very substantial donation. The discussion and synergy among all attending contributed to a collective sense of wanting to make this tour happen and on-the-spot commitments to do so.

It's also important to ask one or several students or youth to attend. Young people, in addition to Sunsara, can add to the discussion by bringing in their own perspectives, experiences on campuses and elsewhere; in NYC, the young woman who attended read a poem she recently wrote which was greeted enthusiastically.

We strongly recommend you put together small portfolios of material for potential donors. The portfolio should include: fundraising letter, national tour flyer, the overall budget, and a copy of the article from the March 7, 2010 issue of *Revolution* #194 on the event at NYU.

These are only a few ideas. You will undoubtedly come up with many more. Please let us hear from you.