

The Women's Board of The Johns Hopkins Hospital Suggestions for Letter Writing

ONE PAGE

Make letter one page, and don't accomplish that by using small type, narrow margins, thus creating a daunting looking epistle. Use an enclosure for details you think are necessary; i.e. list of grants, sponsorship opportunities and/or contact information.

FIRST PARAGRAPH

By the end of the first paragraph the reader should know exactly why you are writing. Offer thanks as applicable right away, then state purpose. If you have an amount of donation in mind or specific sponsorship level, state it.

PERSONALIZE

Personalize as much as possible. Name and address of recipient, use name, if possible, in first paragraph and at end.

DATES AND PURPOSE

If writing about an event, give upcoming date, location. Include purpose, history in a brief statement.

WORDING

Don't use the phrase "would like," just say it.

Examples: On behalf of The Women's Board of The Johns Hopkins Hospital, I am writing to thank you/or company for your generous donations to/sponsorship of, and to invite you to continue this support/by donating to.... This sentence is getting awfully long!

Maybe better: The Women's Board of The Johns Hopkins Hospital is grateful for your ongoing generosity. I am writing to ask that you/name of company make a donation to support...

Avoid using very, so. Sentences often are stronger without adverbs and adjectives. We are grateful... The Board hopes we can count on.... We are grateful for your generous support – as opposed to We are so grateful for your support...

New donor request

The Women's Board is a volunteer organization, founded in 1927, dedicated to Advancing Patient Care at The Johns Hopkins. Fund Raising events provide an essential source of money for grants from the Board for hospital departments and for scholarships to medical

and nursing school students. On behalf of the Board, I am writing to invite Name of Company to be a sponsor of...

Develop a “boiler plate” sentence to describe the event or activity, which can be used in letters that are personalized. Event title and brief description, date, location, expected guests – number and type – if known, amount to be raised. (This should be in the first paragraph, or at least the second.)

i.e. Style & Elan, a fashion show, to be held on November 1, 2021, at the Kenilworth Mall in Towson. The Board expects at least 200 guests, primarily women, of all ages, who represent an upscale retail market. Publicity for the event will include mailing and media coverage throughout the Baltimore region.

NAMING

When the entire name is used, it is The Women’s Board of The Johns Hopkins Hospital. It is The Johns Hopkins Hospital and The Johns Hopkins University. To finesse this, use the Women’s Board, Johns Hopkins (never Hopkins!), the board or the Board. Once you decide what you want to capitalize, be consistent in the letter. My personal preference is to capitalize the words Women’s Board, Board, Hospital when used in the body of the letter.

PUNCTUATION

Be consistent also with punctuation. If you use a comma before the last item in a series, add one whenever you have a series. Same with dates and times. i.e. Don’t use 6 p.m. one time, and 6 PM another.

LAST PARAGRAPH

Close the letter with a repeat of the thanks and/or ask, and whatever you plan as a follow up. For example: We look forward to continuing our partnership with you/Name of Company.... I will call your office next week to follow up on our request. We hope you will use the enclosed form to indicate what level of support we can expect from....

CHECKING FACTS AND SPELLING

Google is a helpful tool to check spelling, sometimes facts.

PROOF READING

Reading the letter aloud is a good proofreading tool. Don’t hesitate to ask a friend or family member to look it over. An “outside eye” can be helpful.

Header for Enclosures

(Second and third paragraph may be omitted)

Founded in 1927, The Women's Board of The Johns Hopkins Hospital is a volunteer, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing patient care at Johns Hopkins. The Board has granted well over \$20 million to programs at the Hospital and University. Long standing, loyal community support has been essential to achieve this giving. This support comes from donations, from sponsors and guests at special events, and from patrons of the Board's businesses.

The Grand Grounds Coffee Bars, the Gift Shops, and the Carry On Shop, a high end resale store, serve patients, families, and staff at Johns Hopkins. The Best Dressed Sale, a biennial event selling high end donated women's and men's clothing and accessories, combined with the Carry On Shop to create a successful retail offering in the Towson area, at present at the Shops at Kenilworth.

Over the past five years, the Women's Board has awarded close to \$500,000 to Johns Hopkins, in grants to Hospital departments and in scholarships to medical and nursing students. This extraordinary record is despite the impact of Covid for the last two years.

Grants include:

Visit: www.womensboard.jhmi.edu

Be in touch: jhwb@jhmi.edu, 410-955-9341, fax 410-614-9856