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For 30 years L'Arche Heartland has been a community for adults with and without intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Overland Park, Kansas. As a not-for-profit organization, we rely on fundraising to further our mission of sharing the gifts of persons with I/DD with our world as we create homes and programs for the men and women whom we serve.

Eight years ago we began to hold an annual Anniversary Celebration: cocktail hour, four course meal, music, silent auction, and raffle. This event is intended to both celebrate our success as a community as well as serve as the major fundraising event of the year for our organization. Our event had steady growth for 7 years, going from 120 attendees in 2010 to 240 attendees in 2016. As novice fundraisers we knew there was untapped fundraising potential in the room, but we didn't have the skills or experience to access it. We have a captivating narrative with an invitation to participate, but it seemed all out efforts had plateaued. For 3 consecutive years our silent auction netted around \$10,000 and our raffle \$1,500. We decided for our 30th Anniversary we had to add components to get people to engage with us in new ways.

After some simple google research, I found Taking Bids Benefit Auctions and had a call with Trisha Brauer. Trisha was engaged with my story, conscious of our concerns, patient with explaining the services her company could offer, and confident that she could help our organization take our fundraising event to a new level. Trisha was available by phone and in person for the six months leading up to our event and developed a clear proposal for her services. Our committee decided that with Trisha's help we would take our most competitive silent auction items and move them to a live auction, we would add a table dessert auction, and a fund-a-need. There was resistance from our fundraising committee, especially concerning the fund-a-need...would our crowd engage with this fundraising component? Would attendees have the capacity to give more? Would Trisha communicate with an understanding of our mission and our personality? Trisha took the time to truly understand our mission and helped me define how to best communicate our impact. She laid out the logistics of these components, what we needed to do to prepare, execute, and close out the event out.

Trisha joined our event seamlessly. Her professionalism, enthusiasm, and skill were evident from the moment she stepped up to the microphone. Before partnering with Taking Bids Benefit Auctions our night of event fundraising record was \$15,500. For our 30th Anniversary we had a night of fundraising total of \$29,700. \$14,000 of this total came from the fund-a-need portion that Trisha executed with another \$6,500 from the live auction. Every item in the live auction brought in over \$200 more than they ever had in the silent auction. Trisha's ability to engage the audience while keeping in line with our mission was impressive to experience, and the response from the audience was overwhelming.

Anyone considering partnering with Taking Bids Benefit Auctions should not hesitate. Trisha is a joy to work with, she has a passion for connecting with nonprofits' missions and using her expertise to maximize the results from your fundraising events. Plans are underway to bring Trisha back for our 31st Anniversary Celebration. You will not regret making Trisha Brauer a partner in your mission as you take steps to further the impact of your organization.



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