

# PADDESTAR GALACTICA V

## TOOL KIT



MARCH 26, 2017 - U STREET MUSIC HALL



# GREETINGS, ATHLETES!

Congratulations, you've signed up to participate in Paddlestar Galactica V: A Ping-Pong Tournament benefiting 826DC. We hope that this toolkit will arm you with everything you could want to help make the month of March a fundraising success. Through you, our best advocates, we will forge new relationships, and simultaneously, raise the funds needed to improve writing skills in thousands of students in the District!

## **In This Kit:**

- FAQ
- About 826DC
- Sample e-mail content
- Sample social media posts
- General tips for fundraising
- Tournament Rules and Cheats

We can't wait to see you at the kick-off event! As a reminder here are the details:

### **Paddlestar Galactica Kick-off**

Tuesday, February 21, 6-8pm

Colony Club (upstairs)

3118 Georgia Ave NW Washington, DC 20010

Please bring your \$10 registration fee with you. Although we can take credit cards, we prefer cash or a check. There will also be adult beverages and delicious snacks available (for purchase) and a Ping-Pong table ready for you to show/hone your skillz.

All Paddlestar Galactica events are open to everyone, so go ahead and invite your roommate, BFF, or that attractive human you've been thinking about. If you cannot join us on February 21 (sadface) we'll send you the instructions for how to get started with fundraising on Wednesday.

Questions? Concerns? Some sort of Ping-Pong related emergency? Email us.

This will be fun,

**Team Paddlestar Galactica**



# FAQ

## **What is this all about?**

826DC is raising money by having volunteers and friends of 826DC compete in a bracket-style Ping-Pong tournament. Participants have the month of March to fundraise. The more money you raise, the more money your team has to “purchase” cheats on the day of the tournament.

## **What do I need to do?**

- Become a fundraiser! CHECK.
- Attend the Paddlestar Kick-off on February 21 at Colony Club.
- Ask people to sponsor you by donating money to 826DC via your fundraising page.
- Come to practice—the weekly check-in/happy hours, at Colony Club
- Compete at the MAIN EVENT on Sunday, March 26, 1-5pm at U Street Music Hall

## **Who should I ask for money?**

Solicit contributions from everyone you know and everyone you wish to know. This is the totally legit reason you’ve been looking for to spark up a conversation with that attractive human on the Metro, at the office, etc.

## **Where is the money going?**

To support the programming of 826DC. Our mission statement: 826DC is dedicated to supporting students ages 6 through 18 with their creative and expository writing skills and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. We believe that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success.

## **What do I do when someone is ready to donate money?**

Direct them your secure personal fundraising page, which will be generated by the time of kickoff on February 21. If your donors are web shy, ask them to write a check to “826DC.” (Or if you haven’t yet lost their trust, they can give you cash.) Then you can bring the check and/or cash to the next practice at Colony Club.

## **Are donations tax deductible?**

Yes. Donations made online will receive an automated letter. Donation acknowledgment letters for checks and cash will be given upon request.

## **What’s the deal with the weekly practices?**

Weekly practice will kick off on Tuesday, February 21, 6-8pm and be held each subsequent Wednesday in March except for Tuesday March 14 (so Feb 21, Mar 1, Mar 8, Mar 14, Mar 22) at Colony Club. Practice is not mandatory, but strongly encouraged! 3 Delightful weekly prizes will be distributed each week based on who raised the most money from the previous week and who is the weekly champion of a skill-based challenge.

## **What’s the deal with teams?**

Everyone who signs up to play will receive an individual fundraising page. Participants are highly encouraged to get together for fundraising projects like dinner parties and bake sales, then split the proceeds. On the day of the tournament, if you decide to pool your cheat money with 1-2 other participants and trade off paddles between rounds of play, that will be allowed (but not required). If you win as a team, you’ll split the prize and share the trophy. So go ahead and purchase those matching sweatbands.

## **Do I have to actually be any good at Ping-Pong?**

Absolutely not. The more money you raise, the more cheats you can “purchase”. Making your opponent use their shoe as a paddle or wear an eye patch (see ya later, depth perception!) might be enough to get you into that next bracket. And there’s always prizes such as “Best Uniform” and the famed “Kid’s Choice Award” that is up for grabs—regardless of your Ping-Pong skill level.

## **How can I spread the word?**

Take advantage of technology and post links and info on your Twitter/Facebook/Tumblr/Instagram/Vine/Snapchat, etc. Also, feel free to post your info in local coffee shops, company newsletter, legal telephone poles, etc.

## **How can I get more bang for my buck?**

See if your employer/your donor’s employer can match the gift!

## **What else do I need to know?**

You are the bee’s knees!

## **What if I have an unanswered question? Or some kind of Ping-Pong-related crisis?**

Contact us at pingpong@826dc.org any time!

# ABOUT 826DC

At 826DC, we believe that writing skills and arts education are vital for every student, regardless of socioeconomic background. We pride ourselves on providing free creative and expository writing programs for all students in the District of Columbia, and believe so fiercely in our curriculum that we try to find every avenue to reach as many students as possible. In order to do this, we reach out to students through several kinds of programs:

- **Field Trips** (teachers bring their classrooms to us!)
- **Workshops** (parents sign their kids up for afterschool and Saturday workshops)
- **After-School Tutoring** (homework and writing help for students, 4x/week)
- **In-School Writing, Editing, and Publishing** (helping teachers in the classroom)
- **Reading All-Stars** (Saturday reading help for students at Tubman Elementary)
- **The Young Authors' Book Project** (student publishing opportunities for high schoolers)

Last school year, we served 5,000 students, with just eight full-time staff members. We could not do this without the 1,200 volunteers that work with our kids in all of our programs, with varied frequency.



*If your friends want to know about what we do, here are some short scripts to help you talk about our work (use any variation that works best for you!):*

"826DC is the local chapter of the 826 National network of nonprofits co-founded by Dave Eggers. They provide free writing programs (fiction and creative nonfiction) and tutoring for under-served children. Their blend of arts education and academic support **help students with their writing skills, which arguably, is just as important as literacy, when it comes to improving the workforce in the next generation.**"

"826DC is the local chapter of the 826 National network of nonprofits co-founded by Dave Eggers. They provide free writing programs (fiction and creative nonfiction) and tutoring for under-served children. Their blend of arts education and academic support **help students improve 21st Century skills, including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity/innovation. They are projected to serve 5,000 students this school year, which is 10% of the student population in the District!**"

"As a volunteer for 826DC, I've gone into their center to help with \_\_\_\_\_ (workshops, field trips, tutoring, Reading All-Stars, or In-School Sessions), and have witnessed how their free programs help inspire kids to express themselves and become better writers. **And great writing skills will be key to their success as students and in the workforce.**"

"826DC is a great place to volunteer. There are thousands of us who go into programs to work with kids, and we try to be as one-on-one as possible, because that's what works for kids. It's a quirky place (especially Tivoli's Astounding Magic Supply) **that sparks kids' imaginations, but then gets down to business by helping them improve their writing skills.**"





# SAMPLE EMAIL LANGUAGE

*If you're going to send an email blast to lots of folks on your contacts list, be sure to Blind Copy them! Your friends, family, and coworkers will appreciate it.*

Dear XYZ,

As you probably know, I regularly volunteer with 826DC, a nonprofit that offers writing workshops, after-school tutoring, and student publishing opportunities for DC students. The organization fosters self-expression and creativity and helps student develop their writing skills—which is so important for success in academics and in the workforce.

Today, I invite you to consider helping me win an epic battle for Ping-Pong bragging rights at Paddlestar Galactica V: A Ping-Pong Tournament benefiting 826DC. This is our spring peer-to-peer grassroots fundraiser and your support would give me such a boost. 100% of funds raised during the tournament will benefit all the free programming at 826DC. You can find my fundraising page here: <<link>>

I'm also excited to share the news that all gifts made to 826DC through Paddlestar (up to \$25,000) will be matched 1:1 by generous donors, including The Kimsey Foundation.

Please consider giving early in the month of March, and if you want to come cheer me on, the final tournament will be March 26, 1pm, at U Street Music Hall. You can learn more about 826DC here: [www.826dc.org](http://www.826dc.org).



# SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA

*A few tips: for both Facebook and Twitter, go to [bit.ly](http://bit.ly) to shorten the link to your fundraising page. Including a photo (like a selfie at weekly practice!) is always a good way to increase traffic on your post. Try posting in the afternoon when folks are totally bored and looking for distractions at work. Feel free to tag @826DC, @colonyclub, @uhalldc and use #Paddlestar2017*

## **Example Tweets:**

- Raising \$\$\$ to win Paddlestar Galactica Ping-Pong Tournament to support @826DC. <<link>>
- Getting my Ping-Pong on to provide writing programs for @826dc students. Give today to enable my cheating! <<link>>
- #Paddlestar2017 is going to be awesome. Have you given to my page yet? <<link>>
- Anyone have costume ideas for the @826DC Ping-Pong tournament? Come cheer me on, 3/26 @uhalldc! <<link>>
- Help me cheat! It's for the kiddos, I swear. #Paddlestar2017 @826DC <<link>>

## **Example FB Posts:**

- Donate today to help me raise money to support 826DC to win Paddlestar Galactica Ping-Pong Tournament to support @826DC. <<link>>
- What does Ping-Pong have to do with Youth Literacy? Visit my fundraising page for Paddlestar Galactica V to find out. I would seriously appreciate the support for one of my favorite DC nonprofits, @826DC! <<link>>
- Friends! The more money you help me raise, the more I can spend on Ping-Pong cheats at #Paddlestar2017, and the more we can give to supporting youth writing programs. This is important. Thanks for any help you can give! <<link>>

# TIPS AND TRICKS

## TO HELP YOU RAISE THE DOLLA DOLLA BILLS Y'ALL

1. **Start early.** Like, right now. Remember, an awesome weekly prize will be distributed every Monday at practice based on who raised the most money for the previous week.
2. **Make the first pledge yourself.** Before you ask others to join in your cause, show you are serious by pledging your personal support with an individual donation.
3. **Educate your donors about us!** (See ABOUT 826DC!)
4. **Ask. Ask. Ask.** Fundraising is easy. No, really, it is. It is as simple as just asking. Solicit contributions from everyone you know and everyone you wish you knew. This is your chance to have a totally fine reason to talk to that attractive human at the office, bar, rodeo, etc. You can only raise money if you ask for it. Don't start by apologizing and don't feel guilty or greedy—you are being generous. You are helping students at a creative writing center have a magical experience. The more you ask, the more you raise, the easier it gets.
5. **Spread the word.** Generate genuine enthusiasm for the cause by reaching out to as many people as possible and sharing your story. Whether it is through word of mouth, email, or letter, this is worth sharing. If you sound excited, your ask will sound like an exciting opportunity to give.
6. **Invite folks to weekly practice.** This is a great way to get people to meet and interact with volunteers who make this organization what it is. Invite folks to come celebrate you and find out more about the organization.
7. **Send thanks.** Always send a thank-you note or email to your donors. Similar to your fundraising letter, the more personal you can make it, the more meaningful it will be to your supporters. Be creative. Take time to express gratitude for their generosity.
8. **Five Seven Five.** Offer haikus, limericks, or short stories to your donors as a token of your appreciation!
9. **Have fun.** Donors like to support people who not only are working towards good things, but who enjoy working towards good things. Good cheer is contagious!
10. **Stay motivated.** Fundraising can be tough. Don't be discouraged if you hear a "no, thank you". Remember, keeping all of our programming free for DC students can only happen because of you. Thank you!



# RULES & CHEATS

## Cheat Purchasing

Teams arrive early on the day of the tournament to purchase cheats. There will also be a few low-dollar \*tournament specials\* so spectators can give the team of their choice a boost during play. Teams may donate their unused cheats once they get knocked out of the tournament.

## Rules of Play

Every table will have 2 volunteers assigned to it: a Scorekeeper and an Official Official. The Official Official is there to settle any disputed points and monitor the use of cheats. They have the final call on all points.

Cheats may be used at any time and last for 2 pts. A round is played best of 3 games. For each game, the first player to reach 11 pts wins that game, however a game must be won by at least a 2 pt margin. A point is scored after each ball is put into play (not just when the server wins the point as in volleyball).

## Serving

Each player serves two points in a row and then server switches. After each game, players switch sides of the table. Serving player must first rest the ball on an open hand palm, then toss it up at least 6" and strike so the ball first bounces on the server's side and then the opponent's side. If the serve is legal except that it touches the net, it should be reserved (no points).

<b>PADDLE-FRACKED</b>	- Your opponent must use their hand as a paddle.	<b>\$200</b>
<b>TIGH ONE ON</b>	- In honor of Col. Tigh. Your opponent must wear an eye patch.	<b>\$200</b>
<b>PHASERS TO STUN</b>	- When you serve, a teammate throws three balls at the same time, your opponent must return one and continue play.	<b>\$200</b>
<b>CYLON SWAP</b>	- This cheat allows you to ask a friend, colleague, family or frenemy to play for you.	<b>\$200</b>
<b>TURBO BOOST</b>	- You get to use a tennis racket with a tennis ball. Your opponent - a measly ping pong paddle.	<b>\$400</b>
<b>STARBUCK'S REVENGE</b>	- Swap your opponent's paddle for a fly swatter. (This one is nearly impossible...nearly.)	<b>\$400</b>
<b>TOTAL ECLIPSE OF...THE PONG</b>	- Your opponent must wear impenetrable sunglasses.	<b>\$400</b>