

# Pioneering Partnerships to Fund Energy Assistance

NEUAC Conference – Denver, CO  
Tuesday, June 7, 2016  
Session 5-E

# About Dollar Energy Fund

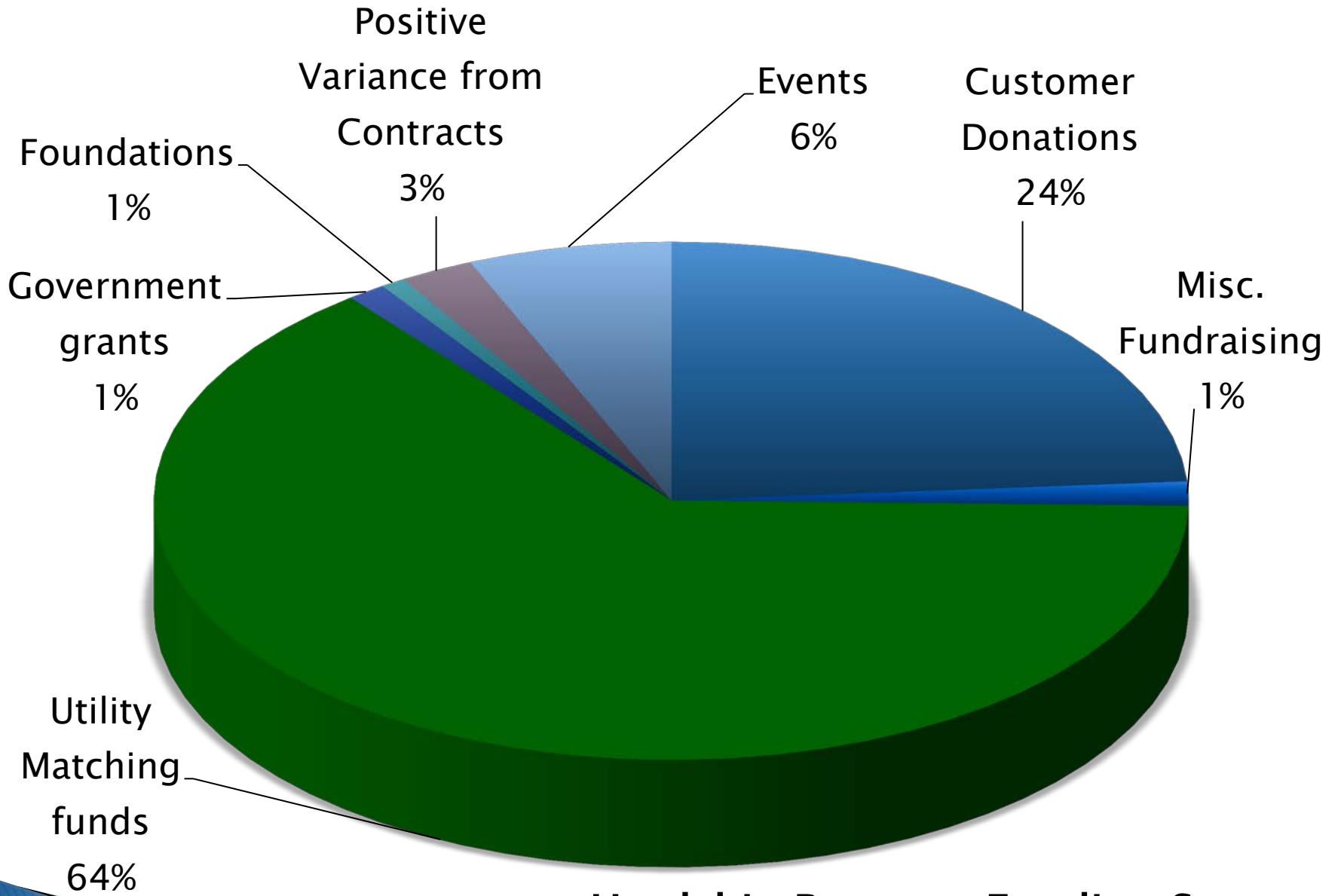
- ▶ Founded in 1983
- ▶ Headquartered in Pittsburgh, PA
- ▶ Currently administering Hardship Programs in 11 states
- ▶ Partners with 32 Utility Companies
- ▶ Distributes \$10 million per year in grants to 40,000 limited-income customers
- ▶ Distributed \$134 million to more than 470,000 households since 1983
- ▶ 96-seat Call Center – handles the administration of a assortment of limited-income assistance programs
- ▶ Program funding comes from a variety of sources



**MISSION:** To improve the quality of life for households experiencing hardships by providing utility assistance and other services that lead to self-sufficiency.

# Dollar Energy Fund's Hardship Program Funding Sources

- ▶ Utility Partners and Customer Contributions are main source
- ▶ No Federal or State funds received
- ▶ Very small amount from local government and foundations
- ▶ Fundraising events held throughout the year
- ▶ Social Enterprise – Contract Income from Call Center Services



## Hardship Program Funding Sources

*2015-2016 Program Year*

# Challenges

- ▶ Online bill-pay options have caused a leveling off of our “Check the Box” utility customer contributions
- ▶ Average donations tend to be low as donors often give \$1
- ▶ Struggle to move donors up the Pyramid of Giving
- ▶ Lack of Endowment/Planned Giving funding program

# Pyramid of Giving



# Goals

- ▶ Establish new and creative ways to develop new partnerships and raise funds
- ▶ Leverage existing partnerships to increase funding
- ▶ Focus on Major Gifts / address long-term funding methods
- ▶ Increase donor interest and involvement

# Fundraising Plan

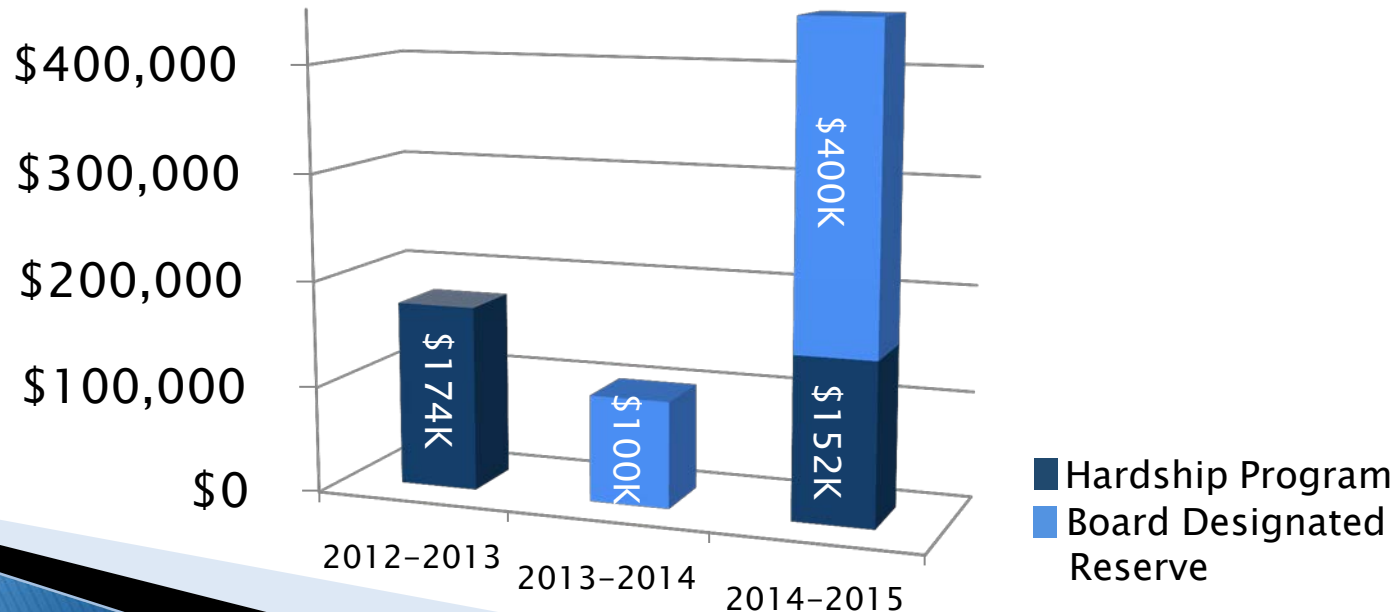
Ways to engage existing partnerships and create new ones:

- ▶ Grow our Social Enterprise initiatives
- ▶ Utilize crowd funding as a way to reach new partners and donors



# Social Enterprise

- ▶ Fee-for-Service Contracts first created a positive variance during our 2012-2013 program year
- ▶ Funds directed to support our Hardship Programs and build a Board Designated Reserve
- ▶ Goal is to grow the reserve enough to start an endowment fund
- ▶ New contracts obtained by growing existing partnerships and exploring new ones



# The Case for Crowd Funding

- ▶ Gets current supporters invested & involved
- ▶ Partners make the ask on your behalf
- ▶ Introduces your organization to a new donor base
- ▶ Partners give the fundraiser and organization credibility
- ▶ Corporate Partners can participate with limited/no budget
  - Participants are asking contacts directly and not taking from the company's charitable giving/community development budget
- ▶ Anyone can join the cause and raise funds

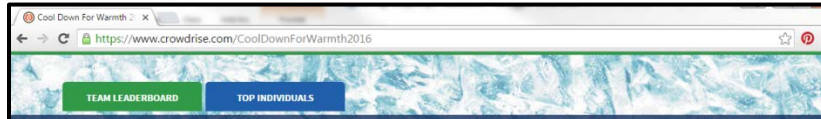
# Creation of a Crowd-Funded Fundraising Event

- ▶ Cool Down for Warmth
- ▶ Participants (fundraisers) agree to sit in a house made of ice until a fundraising goal is met
- ▶ Fundraisers solicit for donations from their contacts

# Setting up & managing the fundraiser

- ▶ Utilize crowd-raising website ([www.crowdrise.com](http://www.crowdrise.com))
- ▶ Reach out to partners early
- ▶ Utilize social media to recruit and promote
- ▶ Make things as easy as possible for participants

# Crowdrise.com



|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>MORGAN'S COOL DOWN</b></p> <p>AMOUNT RAISED:<br/><b>\$14,900</b></p>                  | <p><b>DOLLAR ENERGY FUND BOARD OF DIRE...</b></p> <p>AMOUNT RAISED:<br/><b>\$12,974</b></p> | <p><b>DOLLAR ENERGY FUND STAFF TEAM</b></p> <p>AMOUNT RAISED:<br/><b>\$8,102</b></p> |
| <p><b>COOL DOWN FOR WARMTH - HELP LOW-I...</b></p> <p>AMOUNT RAISED:<br/><b>\$6,655</b></p> | <p><b>DUQUESNE LIGHT TEAM</b></p> <p>AMOUNT RAISED:<br/><b>\$5,000</b></p>                  | <p><b>"I'LL STAY BECAUSE"</b></p> <p>AMOUNT RAISED:<br/><b>\$4,795</b></p>           |

MARK KEMPIC'S FUNDRAISER:  
**COOL DOWN FOR WARMTH - HELP LOW-INCOME CUSTOMERS KEEP WARM!**

**Columbia Gas® of Pennsylvania**

BENEFITING: Dollar Energy Fund  
EVENT: Cool Down For Warmth 2016  
EVENT DATE: JAN 28, 2016  
THE STORY:  
I'll be sitting in the icehouse on Thursday afternoon to help raise awareness for the Dollar Energy Fund's "Cool Down for Warmth" fundraiser.

Please click the green "Donate" button to make a tax deductible contribution. Your contribution will be matched by local utilities, so you will help twice as much!

Any and all donations are greatly appreciated!  
Thank you!

**DONATE TO THIS FUNDRAISER**

**\$6,655**  
MONEY RAISED

|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| June, Anna & Sara | \$100 |
| Larry Nowicki     |       |
| Tom Metzger       | \$100 |
| Anonymous         | \$25  |
| Patricia & Ronald | \$25  |

133% Raised of \$5,000 Goal

**FUNDRAISE FOR THIS CAMPAIGN**

**THE TEAM: \$6,655** TOTAL RAISED SO FAR

JOIN THE TEAM



# 2015 Cool Down for Warmth Video

- ▶ <https://youtu.be/LV-DHD57Poc> (3 minutes)



# Spreading the word

- ▶ Dollar Energy Fund:
  - Social Media
  - Media Relations
  - Emails
  - Website Posts
- ▶ Partners / Participants:
  - Social Media
  - Text messages
  - Emails
  - Word of mouth
  - Videos and video cards

# Outreach Video

<https://youtu.be/25wr7Zi2PGE> (35 seconds)



# 2016 Cool Down for Warmth Video

- ▶ <https://youtu.be/iBjMvEgwUh0> (2 minutes)

# Analyzing the results

## 2015 Event

- ▶ 36 participants
- ▶ \$67,521 (\$135,042 w/utility partner match)
- ▶ Average donation: \$123
- ▶ 89.5% First-time donors
- ▶ 27% of all donations were for \$100 or more
  - 20% of all donations were for \$200 or more
- ▶ 1 Participant reached 120 donors

# Analyzing the results (cont.)

## 2016 Event

- ▶ 50 participants
- ▶ \$73,210 (\$146,420 w/utility partner match)
- ▶ Average donation: \$136
- ▶ 73% First-time donors
- ▶ 24% of 2015 event donors gave to the 2016 event
- ▶ 33% of all donations were for \$100 or more
  - 11% of all donations were for \$200 or more

# Questions?

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