

HOST A RECRUITMENT EVENT

Engaging Business Partners



Hosting a recruitment event – such as a breakfast for community leaders – can be an effective way to introduce potential business partners to your academy and to motivate new and existing business partners to increase engagement with your **advisory board** and **your academy**.

At these events, students, existing advisory board members, and staff:

- Introduce the academy
- Showcase academy students
 - Have academy students present portions of the meeting, emcee the meeting, or share stories of how the academy has changed their life.
- Outline how to partner with the academy, see **Partner Involvement Interest Survey** or **Ways to Partner with a NAF Academy** documents.
- Outline the benefits of partnering with the academy, see the **Benefits of Partnering with a NAF Academy** document.

Planning Questions to Consider:

- When will this event take place? Whose schedules do we need to consult?
- Where will this event take place? Pick a location convenient to the people you're targeting to attend. Check with businesses or Chambers of Commerce, they may be willing to host it for free. Another great option is virtually hosting the event.
- How can we identify and map potential partners to invite? See the **Identify New Partners** and **How to Map Potential Partners** documents.
- What is our recruitment and outreach plan? What invitation materials do we need? Learn how to pitch your academy partners.
- What kind of speeches, presentations or performances should be included in the program? View a sample **Recruitment Event Agenda**
- How can we honor the contributions of existing partners and inspire new potential partners into action? Consider presenting awards.
- How will students engage with partners during the event? How will we prepare students for their role in the event?
- What are ways that we would like **partners to support our academy** after this event?
- How will we assess partner interest in future involvement with the academy? View a sample **Partner Involvement Interest Survey**
- How will we follow up after the event?

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Recruitment Event Tips:

- Plan a “Partnership Breakfast,” “Partnership Lunch” or “Partnership Dinner” depending on the time of day most convenient for your partners, including virtual options.
- Task students with responsibilities such as networking, presenting, escorting partners around the building, serving food, managing coat check, signing partners in, and passing out materials.
- Display student work or pictures around the event space as a gallery walk or on a scrolling slideshow as guests arrive.
- Have students speak about ways they have benefited from opportunities partners provided in the past, like internships or guest speakers (be sure to prepare the students and have them practice their speeches!). Brief presentations with opportunities for attendees to ask questions.
- Have current partners speak about their engagement with your academy and/or advisory board. Have influential business partners challenge other businesses to partner with your academy or advisory board. Share Ways to Partner with a NAF Academy or how to become a board member.
- Customize the **Partner Involvement Interest Survey** based on your work-based learning plan and academy needs/initiatives. Do not begin by asking a potential partner to host an internship. NAF has found that academies that are able to place 100% of students in paid internships achieve this by engaging partners gradually over time through the work-based learning continuum.
- Ask potential business partners to complete a survey before they leave the event.

Follow-Up:

Analyze the responses from the partnership interest survey. Send personalized thank you letters the day following the event. Even better, ask the students who participated in the event to send a thank you letter, reiterating the clear call to action that was discussed during the meeting, including the logistical details for the engagement activity in which the partner expressed interest.