**Cultivation Activities**

Special events can play an important role in fundraising, either by introducing the organization to new potential donors or by serving as an opportunity to cultivate the interest of potential supporters. Cultivation activities also educate prospects about the organization and make prospects feel that they are part of the movement. All prospects must understand why their support is needed, how their contribution may be used and the appropriate level of giving to make the needed impact.

For many prospects, initial cultivation steps would be necessary to introduce them to the Affiliate and familiarize them with the mission of the movement. The cultivation period is very important, as it develops personal relationship with the prospects.

Cultivation opportunities could include:

1. Private events, such as a reception hosted by a Board member or donor
2. Small reception or breakfast meeting that coincides with conferences where donors and prospects may be present
3. Annual Equal Opportunity Day events
4. Targeted events at Annual National Conference
5. Golf outings
6. “Lead an Affiliate for a Day”
7. Observation of program execution/delivery
8. Tours of schools impacted by programs
9. Meeting with a client who has benefit from Affiliate programs
10. Service project with NULITES

Cultivation events should be carefully organized and orchestrated occasions. To maximize success, careful consideration should be given to:

1. Host of the event
2. Duration, venue and program
3. Speakers
4. Audience
5. Messages

Additional detail on items for consideration when planning a cultivation activity may be found in the Project Rock Affiliate Fundraising Program Fundraising Toolkit (“Cultivation Events: Things to Consider”).

As volunteers are recruited to help further the Urban League movement, they should be asked to consider the types of events they may wish to hold. Similarly, the local Affiliate should examine how some existing events could be used to raise awareness about the fundraising program.