

# KOVAR Fundraising Manual



A Virginia Knights of Columbus Charity

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## A message from the President of KOVAR

Brother Knights, Families, and Friends:

When I joined the KOVAR Board in 2016, I knew very little about Intellectual Disabilities (ID). Sure, I knew a few individuals with ID (especially in my church), but my experience with KOVAR opened my eyes to the needs of many Virginians with ID. My work with KOVAR has been some of the most rewarding experiences in my life.

In 1971 Knights in Virginia had the wisdom to create a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to improve the quality of life for "God's Special People". Here in the Commonwealth, there are approximately 11,000 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on a waiting list for Government funding to provide for their care. In many cases, their need is urgent due to the age or medical frailty of their primary caregiver. These people are our friends and neighbors and I've developed a passion to assist them and am fortunate to be able to do so as a member of the KOVAR Board of Directors (BoD).

While KOVAR cannot take care of all the needs of Virginians with ID, we certainly can help the many fine organizations throughout our Commonwealth that provide direct services such as housing, day support, job training, employment, athletics, and education. The KOVAR BoD is committed to helping Brother Knights in their fundraising activities and to provide careful stewardship of the funds that are raised. This is a multi-tiered process: raising funds, investing funds, and accepting/approving grants to various organizations who will carry out our mission. For our grant requests, each grant applicant is visited by at least two Directors and their recommendation is considered by the full BoD. For our home loan applications, an appraisal and minimum of 25% down payment is required. In addition, an outside independent auditor reviews KOVAR's financial records every year and renders their professional opinion. We continue to strive to maintain the high standards you expect of us.

Councils are the backbone of the KOVAR fundraising effort. With your Council's excellent support, KOVAR can help many Virginians with ID. Please help me and all the BoD make this year as successful as past years. We can only give away what **YOU** raise, so please do what you can to enable KOVAR to continue supporting Virginians with ID.

Vivat Jesus!  
Eddie Whitlock

## KOVAR Overview

In 1971, the Knights of Columbus in the Commonwealth of Virginia sought a means to accomplish the charitable goals of the Order throughout Virginia. The result was the formation of a 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to providing financial support to organizations which support fellow Virginians with Intellectual Disabilities, regardless of religious affiliation, race, creed, or ethnic background. This organization was chartered as KOVAR. The primary fund-raising activity for KOVAR became solicitation of contributions at local parishes and public facilities by the individual Knights of Columbus Councils and their families throughout the Commonwealth. Today, brother Knights and their families host concerts, golf tournaments, Brunswick Stew sales, 5K walk/runs and dinners to raise funds for KOVAR in addition to the public solicitations.

In 2021, KOVAR received recognition by the Virginia State Senate via Senate of Virginia Resolution #741 commending KOVAR for “achievements in service to Virginians in need” for over 50 years and received the SOAR 365 Philanthropist of the Year Award for providing “incredible support” for over 20 years.

KOVAR continues to receive the “Best in America” designation by America’s Best Charities.



America’s Best Charities’ Seal of Approval is awarded to the members of Local Independent Charities of America that have, upon rigorous independent review, been able to certify, document, and demonstrate on an annual basis that they meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and expense control. These standards include those required by the US Government for inclusion in the Combined Federal Campaign, probably the most exclusive fund drive in the world. Of the 1,000,000 charities operating in the United States today, it is estimated that fewer than 50,000, or 5 percent, meet or exceed these standards, and, of those, fewer than 2,000 have been awarded this Seal.

## Grand Knights

With your Council's continued excellent support, KOVAR can continue to help Virginians with ID. Appoint a KOVAR chairman who will:

- Energetically support and keep the mission of supporting KOVAR
- Understand and support KOVAR and will educate others
- Help grow the KOVAR ministry within your council

## KOVAR COUNCIL CHAIRMEN

First, thank you for accepting this ministry. This information is intended to provide you with as much assistance as possible in planning your Council's KOVAR fundraising efforts.

Your Council chose you, no doubt because of your planning and leadership ability, to lead the way in this endeavor. You can ensure the success of this year's campaign by **planning**, **organizing**, and **involving council members**. Without these three ingredients, no fundraising venture can be successful. We also need prayers for KOVAR and for the organizations and individuals we support.

**Yours is not a one-man job!** Identify the people who will help you in your effort early in the year. You will need help collecting donations at storefronts and other fundraising activities. Find those people early and provide them with clear duties and guidance. Your job will be made much easier. This is a great opportunity to build fraternity. It is positive family opportunity to grow in love and acceptance of All God's Children. It will build lasting friendships.

Planning is the first step in effective fundraising. A council plan should be developed at the start of the fraternal year. You may want to conduct several different fundraisers during the course of the year, and this is the time to set your dates for those events.

The KOVAR Chairman is expected to supervise and coordinate the whole operation and to gain the support of other members of the Council. He must stay close enough to all activities to be able to monitor the performance of others and ensure everything is continuing according to the established timetable.

If you hand out candy at storefronts in exchange for contributions, you may want to do this several times during the year, depending upon the availability of those locations and council

volunteers. Hopefully, you plan other fundraising activities such as a golf tournament, Brunswick Stew sale, 5K walk/run, bowling tournament, or church collection, if your pastor approves. You can also explore other ideas that you and/or members of your team come up with. All of these require planning and coordination.

You can submit your funds throughout the year either online at [www.kovarva.org](http://www.kovarva.org) or by mailing a check to:

**KOVAR Corporation**  
**P.O. Box 20872**  
**Roanoke, VA 24018**

You may also be able to contribute through your employer if you work for the Federal Government via CFC (#42569), the State of Virginia Campaign (#200467), or a company that participates in the United Way Campaigns in the Greater D.C. Area (#8838).

Employers who provide matching funds should also send those funds to the KOVAR Treasurer.

## **Council Challenges**

Council fundraising challenges are assigned based on the council's past performance. The challenges are posted on the [Council Information Page](#) at [kovarva.org](http://kovarva.org) by October of each year. The KOVAR Board of Directors considers these challenges to be realistic, based upon past performance.

With the changes in the State Deputy Award criteria, KOVAR is no longer a required activity. Recognize that KOVAR is a charitable endeavor, not a burden. We appreciate you and all your efforts to raise funds for this important mission/cause/ministry.

KOVAR's Website has a link listing all 15 members of the KOVAR Board of Directors. Each Director has been assigned Districts to which they have primary responsibility. If you need assistance, whether it is for planning your campaign or to request promotional materials, please contact the KOVAR Director assigned to your District, or you can reach out to the KOVAR [VP-Fundraising](#). [Click here](#) to see which Director is assigned to your District.

## **Who has KOVAR helped?**

Through the years, KOVAR has provided grants to over 200 organizations across the entire Commonwealth of Virginia. Recent recipients include Special Olympics Virginia, A Farm Less Ordinary, Rappahannock Adult Center, DePaul Community Services, Reclaimed Hope Initiative, NorthStar Academy, Faison Center, and Down Syndrome Association of Greater Richmond.

## **MEDIA**

During your solicitation of contributions and other fundraising activities, be sure to prominently display the most current KOVAR posters and have KOVAR tri-fold pamphlets available for interested donors.

You can download the KOVAR poster and KOVAR tri-fold pamphlets from the KOVAR website under [Council Information Page](#) or you can request them from the KOVAR Director assigned to your District. [Click here](#) to see which Director is assigned to your District.

## **PERMITS & PERMISSION**

KOVAR's Commonwealth of Virginia and KOVAR's Liability Insurance Policy are available for download under the [Council Information Page](#).

If a facility landlord requires a "specific insurance binder", you can contact the KOVAR president at [president@kovarva.org](mailto:president@kovarva.org) to request one.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

We can't say it enough, KOVAR's success is solely due to the individual Councils in the Commonwealth of Virginia who raise funds to support our fellow Virginians with ID. We thank you for your past efforts and hope this manual will assist you in your future endeavors. Feel free to contact the [KOVAR BoD](#) for any questions or support you require to make this mission a successful one.