

## **Planet Philanthropy Takeaways from a First-Time Attendee**

By Sarah Siebritz, Molly's House

As a first-time attendee at Planet Philanthropy 2025, I left inspired and energized. The sessions were a great balance between affirming that I'm doing some things efficiently and encouraging bold, creative shifts in how I engage with our supporters.

A few practical takeaways I'm excited to bring back:

- Skip the bulky event flyers—equip staff, volunteers, and board members with small, QR-coded event 'business cards' they can keep in their pocket and easily hand out.
- Switch up the "voice" in your newsletters. Let a donor, volunteer, or client speak instead of defaulting to leadership every time. Fresh perspective = stronger engagement.
- If your donor base has limited capacity, grow monthly giving in a relatable way. Ask, "Could you 'buy a drink' once a month for this mission by sending a \$10 donation?" (And follow up next year with: "Could you make it two?")
- Donors are not motivated by massive, unrelatable statistics. One session shared an example from the Gulf oil spill: two campaigns ran side by side—one featured an image of the sprawling damage, the other showed a close-up of a single oil-covered pelican. The campaign with the pelican saw far more donations. Why? Because people saw a need they felt they could actually fix. Big problems feel overwhelming—small, personal ones feel solvable.
- And finally—underperforming fundraising is usually under-communicating. A multi-channel approach isn't optional anymore—it's essential.

It was such an encouraging three days spent with like-minded, passionate people from all kinds of causes and experience levels. Everyone was open, generous with their ideas, and genuinely excited to help each other grow—not a gatekeeper in sight. I'm leaving with a full notebook, a full heart, and a deeper connection to this work we all love.

Big thanks to AFP Treasure Coast for the scholarship that made this opportunity possible. I'm already testing new strategies and can't wait to see what sticks!