

United We Collect: A National Collaborative Campaign

Executive Summary

The United States faces a blood donation crisis that threatens the availability of essential, life-saving medicine. As demand for blood therapies rises, the donor base is simultaneously shrinking and lacks the diversity needed to match the varied patient antigen profiles. At the same time, the marketplace is becoming increasingly noisy, with competing priorities and messages across all channels, making it difficult to reach risk stakeholders and align them with action.

'United We Collect' is a national parent campaign calling on all blood centers to unite under one cohesive brand and message. Similar to "Got Milk?", a unified approach can generate 3-4 times greater awareness vs fragmented marketing, translating into increased blood awareness, donor engagement, and sustained blood availability.

The strategy focuses on:

1. Establishing a singular national brand that all centers adopt for all campaigns
2. New campaigns and assets, e.g., targeted high-school and community outreach, donation as a lifelong civic duty
3. Turnkey kits for stakeholder partners to promote- e.g., hospitals, firefighters, schools
4. Centralized messaging to 'tell the story' of blood in a more aligned way

Background and Rationale

Only 3% of eligible Americans donate blood annually, and donor numbers have dropped from 7.3 million (2019) to 6.5 million (2021). Over 75% of donations come from a homogenous population that doesn't reflect U.S. diversity, creating risk for patients with rare or culturally linked blood types. Fragmented marketing and competition among centers dilute impact and waste resources. As demographics shift and demand for blood therapy grows, matching rare phenotypes will require inclusive recruitment under a unified voice. A consolidated national campaign can reframe donation as shared social responsibility—building on efforts like "Take It Further" while eliminating the inefficiencies of competing messages.

Strategic Framework



1. Unified National Brand: "Every Type. Every Community. One Lifesaving Mission."

All blood centers adopt shared messaging, visual identity, and creative assets while maintaining local contact information. Authentic shared donor and patient stories emphasize collective responsibility. Community leaders and influencers amplify reach locally under the national umbrella.



2. Youth Engagement Initiative

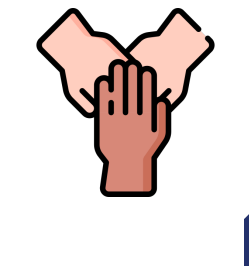
A national High School Donation Challenge builds lifelong donors through competition, digital parental consent, and community service credits or scholarship incentives. Parental engagement reinforces sustained donor behavior.



3. Hospital Partnership Campaign: "See Blood. Give Blood."

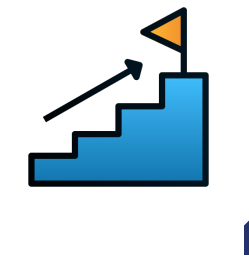
Turnkey materials leverage the moment families witness blood's lifesaving impact and engage the hospital to put 'skin in the game' as a recruiter (potentially in their contract):

- QR-coded blood bag pull aways linking to donation scheduling
- Patient room posters and digital screen content
- Hospital staff engagement kits, pins, ribbons
- All materials feature unified national branding with local center customization



4. National Donor Recognition Program

Co-branded merchandise (t-shirts, water bottles, pins, donor cards) with unified "United We Collect" design and local center logos. Tiered recognition corresponds to donation milestones. Bulk ordering reduces per-unit costs by 30-40% while projecting a powerful national movement.



5. Pilot-to-Scale Model

- Phase 1 (Year 1): Pilot in 5-10 communities, focusing on youth engagement and diversity
- Phase 2 (Years 2-3): National expansion using refined strategies and centralized creative assets

References

1. American Red Cross. (2023). "Blood Donation Statistics." Retrieved from American Red Cross Blood Services data on eligible donor participation rates.

2. Shander, A., et al. (2023). "The Blood Supply Crisis in the United States: A Call to Action." Transfusion, 63(4), 645-651. Data on donor decline from 2019-2021 pandemic period.

3. Custer, B., et al. (2022). "Addressing the Shortage of Blood Donors in the United States: Challenges and Opportunities." Vox Sanguinis, 117(3), 321-330. Discussion of rare blood type needs in diverse populations.

4. Jones, J. M., et al. (2021). "Diversity in the blood donor population: Barriers and strategies for recruitment and retention." Transfusion Medicine Reviews, 35(2), 45-52.

5. AABB. (2024). "State of the Blood Supply Report." Annual assessment of U.S. blood collection and usage patterns.

Did You Know?

'Got Milk?'—which achieved over 90% national brand awareness and increased California milk sales by nearly 8% in its first year—this unified approach can generate 15-20% greater marketing effectiveness than fragmented campaigns, translating into increased donor engagement and sustained blood availability. By using centralized hashtags, branding, and messaging from the parent campaign, we build greater momentum as a group, enabling us to focus on the campaign's reach rather than design.

Key Partnerships

There are numerous key partners critical to the success of this program, such as the Association of Donor Recruitment Professionals (ADRP), given their leadership today. The program would need to include an assessment of key partners for design and rollout, to be part of the core planning committee (e.g., training, best-practice sharing, members' relationships, community partnerships). This bolsters national messaging and partnership translates into effective local action.

Metrics and Key Performance Indicators



New donor registrations (+10% over baseline)



Donor diversity index (+15% from underrepresented groups)



Youth donor acquisition (new donors aged 16-24, +25% over baseline)



Unite all U.S. blood centers under one unified brand and campaign infrastructure, at least 7 blood centers participating in year 1

Governance and Collaboration

A coalition model guides the campaign through a Memorandum of Understanding outlining participation, data-sharing, and tiered funding based on collection volume. A steering committee comprising AABB, America's Blood Centers, American Red Cross, and ADRP provides oversight, impact evaluation, and ensures recruitment professionals have strategic representation.

Risks and Considerations

- Diverse Community Outreach: Success requires partnering with representative organizations to ensure culturally respectful, accurate, resonant messaging
- National Donor Data Sharing: A national donor database would enhance rare phenotype matching, but remains a future consideration given data sensitivity; the steering committee will evaluate feasibility in subsequent phases
- Budget: Campaign costs are estimated at \$200-500K to launch (pending full quote) and require sustained financial commitment through coalition funding and industry partnerships

Conclusion

'United We Collect' unites the blood banking community under one powerful brand, transforming competition into collective impact. A rising tide lifts all boats—when blood centers speak with one voice through youth engagement, hospital partnerships, and inclusive outreach, every organization benefits from increased awareness, stronger donor loyalty, and a sustainable supply that meets growing demand for life-saving therapies. Together, we build the momentum no single center can achieve alone.