

FCA Banquets of Excellence

Banquets can be a great way to engage, equip and empower donors with FCA. They can be a key source of revenue, but banquets are not the answer to all of your funding needs. It is just one way to introduce many people to the ministry. Remember, the best time to raise support is when you do not need to. Banquets are not crisis fundraising events!

Banquets are a Great Way to:

- Clearly cast the FCA vision, mission and values
- Celebrate the work of FCA
- Encourage people to join the Home Team

The Goals of the Banquet are to:

- Emphasize the fact that everyone who cares about coaches and athletes can help through his or her involvement and investment.
- Communicate a message from a keynote speaker, a local ministry report, a local athlete/coach award and FCA athletes and coaches sharing how God is working in their community.
- Celebration and a cast the vision.
- Provide a once-a-year opportunity to raise financial support toward ministry growth and cultivate new relationships.
- Create Board engagement and allow them to work on a project year around.

3 FCA Banquet Strategies:

1. **Pre-Banquet** (Planning, Promotion, Sponsorship, Table Hosts)
2. **In-Banquet** (Program)
3. **Post-Banquet** (Follow-Up)

7 Keys to a Great Banquet:

1. **Mindset:** When the Banquet is over, the funding process has just begun. They had a chance to hear your story at the Banquet. Once it is over, it is time for you to hear their stories and their passions. The Banquet is one-way communication. True stewardship is two-way communication. You now need to know the heart of the people that make a financial commitment to your local FCA ministry.
2. **Shortcuts:** Each Banquet requires hard work and the complete ownership of staff, Board members and volunteers. There are no shortcuts and no easy roads. It is a year around process.
3. **Model:** This Banquet model is based on two keys: (1) table hosts (2) sponsors. It is not a ticketed event in which you can charge a certain amount for each ticket or table. It is an opportunity to invite people to hear the story and then to let God move in their hearts to give. It is important to keep both the table hosts and sponsors in mind as you develop the Banquet. You should not do one without the other. Focusing on both will lead to success.



4. **Goals:** You should meet with your Board to determine two goals: (1) what is your ministry goal for the upcoming year; and (2) what is your financial goal to meet the ministry goal. Your ministry goal should be a specific goal to grow the local ministry, such as add new staff, develop new areas or increase camp attendance. People respond to specific, tangible goals that can impact lives, not general help toward the overall budget. Additionally, you and the Board should pray about a God-sized financial goal for the Banquet. The ministry goal is shared during the Ministry Report and the financial goal is shared during the Ask.
5. **Clarity:** Clear vision, clear budget, clear goals, clear program and a clear ask. Be specific when sharing the funding goals for the night. Every aspect of the Banquet (each person on stage and each component of the program) needs to communicate the impact and the need. Communicate the need. Always share that the mission is about transforming lives, not about events and programs! FCA staff should do the Ministry Report. The emcee can be a Board member, volunteer or coach who is a good communicator and knows the ministry. The Ask should be given by someone who is comfortable asking people for money who is currently giving themselves.
6. **Vertical Concept:** When people don't support, do not take it personally. God is your Source, not the donors. Keep a vertical view of the banquet, not a horizontal one. Prayer is the foundation to your Banquet. Assign a prayer coordinator for the event. Have the prayer coordinator assemble a team that will be interceding throughout the entire Banquet process. Have them pray for the speaker, guests, table hosts, sponsors, volunteers, coaches, athletes and for the financial goal.
7. **Ask:** Make sure the Ask is clear, concise and compelling. It should be communicated in your promotional material that the banquet is a fundraising event. The Ask should be no longer than eight minutes. The person giving the Ask should focus on the opportunity to join the God-sized vision to impact coaches and athletes. The funding goal for the night needs to be communicated. Everyone in the room can help and ask everyone to complete a giving card. Emphasize joining Home Team/AMP and additionally making a special Banquet one-time gift to reach the Banquet goal. Take time to walk through the entire card and give them time to complete (with music in background).
8. **Values:** Our core values are what the Banquet is all about!
 - Integrity – The Banquet is about being authentic and real. Do not portray something that FCA is not. Do not try to impress. Be the real deal!
 - Serving – The Banquet is done out of love not duty! Serving is keeping in mind that the Banquet is about relationships, not projects or events. The Banquet is about the guests, not us; God, not man; opportunity, not obligation!
 - Teamwork – With so many people involved in the Banquet (staff, Board members, volunteers), personalities can clash, and relationships can go astray. Pray that God will bring the spirit of teamwork to the Banquet.
 - Excellence – Rehearse & do dry runs. All videos should be queued up & technology should be tested in advance. Make sure stage has proper lighting & sound system is adequate (bring in light & sound systems if necessary). Be on time – don't go long! Demonstrate excellence through the whole banquet process.

