

VIEWPOINT

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WSPN mission:

Offering support to development professionals and advancing philanthropy since 1986.

Donors Forum is moving 'Beyond Overhead' from myth to action

By Valerie S. Lies

The first rule of effective advocacy is “Take advantage of your moments.” In 2012, Donors Forum created a moment with its Communities of Practice, bringing together a group of its grantmaking and nonprofit members; one focused on streamlining grants and the other focused on addressing the overhead myth. Throughout 2012, the CoPs met multiple times to learn from national experts on the topics, developed relationships with each other and brainstormed solutions to some of the toughest challenges that impact the nonprofit and philanthropic sector.

The Community of Practice on overhead connected to the national resource The Bridgespan Group and brought this conversation to a larger Donors Forum community in March 2013. Their purpose was to broaden the conversation, debut the video that the Community of Practice produced as a tool to aid in the discussion about overhead and co-create with others the ideas that would generate the tools that funders and nonprofits would need to pursue the conversation in their own organizations.

Taken singly, these steps would barely be enough to contribute to a movement taking place; but taken together, and with the research of The Bridgespan Group behind it, this Chicago-based Community of Practice conversation called Real Talk About Real Costs, donorsforum.typepad.com/realcosts/, generated a significant buzz around overhead costs,

(continued on page 9)

Veteran Fundraiser Jerold Panas on the Subject of Asking

GuideStar.org interview reprinted with permission

Jerold Panas has helped a diverse range of organizations raise an estimated \$11 billion. He recently spoke with his publisher about asking for major gifts. GuideStar is pleased to share Panas's additional thoughts with you.

You've been at this for 40 years. What motivates a person to make a major gift?

I've done studies on this and the results are almost always the same. The primary reason someone gives a major gift is that he or she believes in the mission of the organization.

A second important factor is the organization's financial stability. Would-be donors have to be convinced the agency is prudently managed.

As you can imagine, people don't want to give money away. They want to contribute to bold and heroic programs. They want to make things happen. And mostly they want to change and save lives.

To be successful in asking, what factors have to be present?

As I discuss in my book, *Asking*, three pieces are important. The first is that the organization and the project must be relevant. The donor has to feel this is something that's significant.

(continued on page 11)

WSPN mission:

Offering support to development professionals and advancing philanthropy.

WSPN core services:

education, networking and advocacy

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We invite your membership. Annual dues to join WSPN are \$40. Register online or make checks payable to West Suburban Philanthropic Network and mail to:

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President's Message

In between way more snow-shoveling than I think is fun, I have been trying to catch up on a little reading!

An article by Raymund Flandez in the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* caught my attention. Flandez shared that a recent study conducted by Blackbaud surveyed 4,000 nonprofit organizations and captured a snapshot of giving worth \$12.5 billion. This study concluded that charitable contributions given in 2013 grew by 4.9 percent making this the largest increase reported since the beginning of the recession.

I'm sure you will agree that this is great news, particularly as this survey further found that charitable organizations focused on a wide range of societal needs, ranging from environmental to healthcare, reported increased giving last year.

One of the findings I found particularly thought-provoking related to the 13.5 percent increase in online giving, making this the second year that online giving has increased by more than 10 percent. I wonder how much attention you are giving your online giving programs. I have just added a review of this part of our development program to my own things-to-do list.

At WSPN, we are excitedly preparing to honor those members of our own communities who are making such positive contributions to philanthropy throughout the western suburbs. I hope you will join our celebration that highlights the many contributions to the greater good made by these individuals, foundations and organizations. Our organizations are stronger because of the trust and commitment all of our donors make to our missions, and we are thrilled to thank this year's award winners on behalf of those we serve.

Sincerely,



Chrissie Howorth



Attention members:

We want to keep in touch!

Have you changed jobs or received a new title?

Do you have a new email or mailing address?

Simply log into your profile on www.wspnonline.org with your email and password and update your contact information.

You can even request a new password if you've forgotten yours.

Also, join WSPN on LinkedIn, tinyurl.com/WSPNLinkedIn, to extend your networking possibilities and be a part of the dialog.

Philanthropy Collection News

Philanthropy Center Closing?

By Christine Kickels, Librarian
College of DuPage's Philanthropy
Collection

After 13 years, the formal partnership with the Donors Forum and the College of DuPage Library has ceased. However, the collection of databases and resources for fundraisers and grant seekers continues to be here in the newly named **Philanthropy Collection**.

Access to databases is still available along with books on nonprofit management, prospect research and proposal writing. We are also maintaining our relationship with the Foundation Center as a Funding Information Network partner.

As a network partner, the College of DuPage Library provides access to databases such as **Foundation Directory Online Professional** and **Philanthropy In/Sight**. With only 12 network partners in Illinois, the College of DuPage Library continues to be the sole location in DuPage County.

In addition to the books and databases provided through the Foundation Center, we continue to add new titles to our circulating collection. Some of our newest titles include:

- **Start your Own Grant Writing Business**
- **Charity Case: How the Nonprofit Community Can Stand Up for Itself and Really Change the World**
- **Giving 2.0: Transforming Your Giving and Our World**
- **From Passion to Execution: How to Start and Grow an Effective Non-Profit Organization**
- **With Charity for All: Why Charities are Failing and a Better Way to Give**
- **The Nonprofit's Guide to Human Resources**

The College of DuPage Library has finished its renovation and we now have two entrances. **Register for our next FREE orientation** to the books and databases at 9:30 a.m. Friday, May 9. Join us and get a first look at our new spaces.

All are welcome and anyone who works or lives in District 502 is eligible for a COD Library card.

If I can help you become more familiar with our nonprofit resources, please contact me at (630) 942-2313 or kickels@cod.edu or visit codlrc.org/philanthropy. ●



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Donors Forum helps you do more, with more: more capacity, more connections, more impact!

We understand what funders, nonprofits, and their advisors need to be effective, strategic, and make an impact in this environment:

- High-performance capacity to meet community needs and create greater outcomes
- An effective voice with policymakers in Springfield and Washington
- Cross-sector, collective problem solving for greater impact



To find out more, call us at
312-578-0090 or visit
www.donorsforum.org



Editor's Note

Dear VIEWPOINT readers:

Congratulations to WSPN's 12th Annual Philanthropy Awards honorees. Numerous organizations in the western suburbs have benefited in countless ways through the generous contributions of these philanthropists.

Please join us in recognizing their contributions and reflect on the meaning of giving and all that it accomplishes.

The spirit of volunteerism and philanthropy is alive and well and stronger than ever. We'll see you on May 21.

Sincerely,



Jill McWilliams

Advertising in VIEWPOINT

A limited number of business-card sized (3.5 x 2 inches) advertising spaces are available in VIEWPOINT.

\$190 - four issues

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WSPN's Philanthropy Awards Honorees

WSPN is pleased to announce the 2014 honorees who will be recognized at the 12th Annual Philanthropy Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, May 21 at Eaglewood Resort and Spa, 1401 Nordic Road, Itasca, IL 60143. These honorees provide funding, leadership and gifts of time and talent to many nonprofits that do so much to enhance the quality of life in our communities.

West Suburban Philanthropic Network's 12th Annual Philanthropy Awards Luncheon Honorees

Philanthropists of the Year

Julia and Ken Wegner (Elmhurst)

Philanthropic Leadership Award

Joyce Van Der Molen (West Chicago)

Humanitarian of the Year

Mark Milligan (Wheaton), co-founder of Bridge Communities

Nonprofit Executive of the Year

Gloria Bunce, executive director of CASA Kane County (Geneva)

Corporate Philanthropic Award

Navistar (Lisle)

Foundation Philanthropic Award

DuPage Medical Group Charitable Fund (Downers Grove)

Service Club Philanthropic Award

Kane County Farm Bureau (St. Charles)

Grantmaker of the Year

Deborah Kustra, grants manager of Community Memorial Foundation (Hinsdale)

Nonprofit Volunteer of the Year

Bill Archer (Carol Stream)

WSPN Distinguished Service Award

Lora Vitek (St. Charles)

The networking reception is from 11 to 11:30 a.m. followed by lunch. Individual tickets are \$50 per person or \$500 for a table of 10, which includes a business card ad in the program. For more information regarding reservations or to inquire about ad rates and sponsorship opportunities, please visit www.wspnonline.org or contact Maeven Sipes, awards luncheon co-chair, at msipes@northernilfoodbank.org. ●

Resource Round-up

Request for applications:

St. Raphael Special Appeal Grant – An annual collection, which reaches about \$15,000 to \$20,000, is held during the Advent season to support the efforts of a nonprofit, church ministry, social agency or peace and justice organization. To request an application, please contact Margaret Huck, coordinator of service ministry and pastoral care of St. Raphael Catholic Church, at (630) 615-7616 or mhuck@st-raphael.com.

Stay Classy Blog: www.stayclassy.org/blog

This blog offers tips, ideas and articles about online giving, social media and peer-to-peer fundraising. It provides ebooks and downloads and shares real-life experiences and case studies. Their Weekly Round Up link provides the best in nonprofits from around the web.

We the People: petitions.whitehouse.gov

An online petitioning service launched by the Obama Administration that enables U.S. citizens to directly petition the U.S. Government. Although its terms of service specify that only individuals can create and sign petitions, U.S.-based nonprofits and nonprofit staff that regularly participate in e-advocacy should monitor what issues/petitions are most important to U.S. citizens. The site is consistently being reviewed by White House staff and petitions that receive more than 25,000 signatures are guaranteed a response from the Obama Administration.

Job Postings at www.wspnonline.org:

In transition or looking for your next career move? Current job postings are available on WSPN's Jobs page. In addition, WSPN members are provided one free posting per year.

Do you have favorite resources you would like to share with VIEWPOINT readers? Please send them to jillm@elmhurst.edu. ●



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• Research
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Cathy Mousseau President
630.674.4662 cathymousseau@ameritech.net

Building Our Membership

In this issue of VIEWPOINT, we discuss the topic of making “the ask,” but asking applies to so much more than obtaining funding. We can also apply this lesson to other aspects of our professional lives for example, by joining WSPN, which is run by WSPN-member volunteers who support development professionals and advancing philanthropy.

Our programs help further your professional development. As a member, isn't it in your best interest to have a strong and growing organization? Wouldn't it be more fun to attend events with your colleagues? How many people do you know who could also benefit from membership? Have you invited them to join WSPN?

Next time you attend a WSPN event, whether it's a program, awards luncheon or social event, please “ask” someone who is new to WSPN to join you. It will be enriching for you, and your guest will surely enjoy the experience, too. While you're together, don't forget to invite them to become a member.

Thank you,
Mark Dyer, membership chair, mdyer@dupageforest.com

Become a member:

Check out www.wspnonline.org to learn more about WSPN benefits including our monthly educational events, listing of job opportunities and scholarship information.

Join online or by downloading a membership application.
Non-transferable dues are \$40 per year.
Should you have any questions, please contact Mark Dyer, membership chair, at mdyer@dupageforest.com.

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WSPN.



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Blasts from the Past

Program Highlights

by Jill McWilliams

Changing Demographics and Implications for Fundraising



On Jan. 16, **Candace King**, executive director of DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform/DuPage Funders Collaborative, presented at Easter Seals DuPage/Fox Valley Region in Villa Park.

Supported with statistics and demographic trends in DuPage and West Cook counties, King defined: Who are the New Neighbors? The rapid demographic changes occurring in the western suburbs and the failure of both public and private funding sources to recognize the growth in suburban need require organizations to find new fundraising approaches and communication strategies. DuPage County's major demographic changes include increased diversity, growth of poverty, aging population and effects of adverse childhood experiences.

King's highlights include:

- The "social safety net" is supposed to include government-sponsored programs, social insurance programs and charitable programs that are intended to alleviate poverty, disability, illness, death, disruption of families and disaster or other misfortune, but the safety net has been deteriorating.
- The federal government, State of Illinois, local governments and nonprofits are responsible for providing and paying for human services but political and economic trends have led to many cuts in funding. Of the funding that still exists, more goes to Chicago per capita than to counties like DuPage, and the need in DuPage is not completely recognized by many people.
- More government funding cuts are coming, and just when the need is increasing rapidly, funding is decreasing rapidly. This is where philanthropy becomes extremely important.
- Human services should be supported because community services save money for more expensive systems. For example, in-home care keeps seniors out of nursing homes and youth services for delinquent teens keeps them out of correctional institutions.

What can we do? Raise awareness. Policy makers and the public, in general, need to be informed. Also, advocating is necessary

for increased federal, state, and local support of health and human services and for increased local charitable giving.

New resources can be cultivated in nontraditional partners (such as the business sector) by making a case about low-wage workers, local government support by demonstrating public value, using new tools and technology to improve efficiency and create capacity, enhancing grassroots support and more efficient use of volunteers, and improving the effectiveness of raising philanthropic funding.

Collaboration for Fundraising Success

On February 20, Barb Szczepaniak, director of programs of The DuPage Community Foundation, moderated a panel of nonprofit leaders at PACT, Inc. in Lisle.

Financial Fitness Collaboration



David Neary, executive director of DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Amy Van Polen, resource development director of Bridge Communities; Deb Olson, executive director of DuPage Homeownership Center; Barb Szczepaniak

Mental Health First Aid Collaboration



Barb Szczepaniak; Nan Silva, senior program officer of Community Memorial Foundation; Ann Schreiner, president and CEO of Pillars; Charles Thorpe, NAMI Metro Drop-In Center

Early Childhood Education Collaboration



Kathy Robson, project director of Wheaton/Warrenville Early Childhood Collaboration; Marjory Lewe-Brady, director of partnerships of WeGo Together for Kids; Trish Rooney, director of SPARK; Barb Szczepaniak

The groups provided a wealth of information. Here are 10 tips for creating a successful collaboration:

1. Trust, openness and honesty are key components especially for the organization that takes the lead and has the fiduciary responsibility.
2. The fear of “sharing” your funders should not be a deterrent when considering a collaboration. More often, a holistic approach opens doors and creates opportunities that would otherwise never have been explored.
3. Each partner should leverage their own funding.
4. To avoid territorial behavior, egos should be put aside.
5. Your shared visions should philosophically match, but maintain commitment to your own organization’s mission.
6. Create a memorandum of understanding.
7. Regularly schedule partnership meetings.
8. Commitment to sustainability should include relationship-building opportunities for other organizations’ involvement and provide a coordination of services for the greatest collective impact.
9. With regard to systems change, policy and practice, make connections on a local, community, state and government level.
10. Funders can see through contrived partnerships; therefore, create a collaboration only if it makes sense. ●



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Make a Difference!

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- * Expand your base
- * Plan a capital campaign
- * Ask for major gifts
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Spotlight

Featuring a WSPN Member Organization



Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation

Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, located in Naperville, is the 501(c)3 charitable arm of Delta Dental of Illinois. In 2008, Delta Dental of Illinois formed the Foundation to emphasize its philanthropic commitment to oral health in Illinois.

In the past decade, combined efforts of Delta Dental of Illinois, and Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation have provided more than \$2 million to programs and organizations that provide oral health education and expand access to oral health care for Illinois residents.

Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation's mission is to improve oral health for residents of Illinois with a specific focus on children. The Foundation's vision is to be recognized as a statewide resource of value among oral health experts and the public.

Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation partners with and provides support to Illinois organizations and programs that help expand access to oral health care, promote oral health education and increase community awareness of oral health issues. Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation is the Illinois oral health experts and a resource for oral health education, awareness and support.

Because childhood is the time when good dental habits begin and healthy teeth develop, they have several programs that focus on children's education.



Land of Smiles is a free and fun children's program geared to Illinois students from pre-kindergarten through third grade. Each child who attends receives a free oral health kit that includes a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss and an oral health tip sheet.

Schools in the west suburban area that will receive the program in 2014 include: Sycamore Trails (Bartlett), Manning (Westmont), Ellsworth, Kingsley, River Woods, Steeple Run, Prairie (Naperville), Tioga (Bensenville), Gower (Willowbrook), Albert Einstein, Anne Fox (Hanover Park), Michael Collins (Schaumburg), Pioneer (West Chicago), Heartland, Harrison Street (Geneva), and Lincoln (St. Charles). They are still scheduling others.



Lora Vitek, director of philanthropy and community relations of Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, assists Tooth Wizard and Plaque Wizard as they educate children on proper brushing during a Land of Smiles program.

In 2012, the Foundation piloted its Dentist by 1 program as an answer to the need for early health literacy. In August, they conducted their first two-day training for dentists that included a community service event in Elgin.

Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation also provides grants to Illinois nonprofits. Organizations in the Chicagoland area that received grants in 2013 include Community Nurse Health Association, Erie Family Health Center, Howard Area Community Center, Infant Welfare Society of Chicago, Little City Foundation, McHenry County Cooperative Dental Clinic, Oak Park River Forest Infant Welfare Society, and The Children's Place Association.

For more information about Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, visit www.deltadentalil.com/ddilfoundation or call (630) 718-4764. ●

the starvation cycle, and efforts to improve the conversations between funders and grantees.

Then came the Moment.

Last June, the three major charity watchdogs in the United States—Guidestar, Charity Navigator, and Wise Giving Alliance—released a historic letter, nonprofitquarterly.org/philanthropy/22467-the-overhead-myth.html, that called for donors to make their giving choices based on charities' impact rather than how lean they operate. The letter stated:

The percent of charity expenses that go to administrative and fundraising costs—commonly referred to as “overhead”—is a poor measure of a charity’s performance.

We ask you to pay attention to other factors of nonprofit performance: transparency, governance, leadership, and results. For years, each of our organizations has been working to increase the depth and breadth of the information we provide to donors in these areas so as to provide a much fuller picture of a charity’s performance.

Donors Forum and our community of funders and nonprofits saw the opportunity immediately and sent a call to action to galvanize the community's commitment to further action and further public conversations. Donors Forum and The Bridgespan Group shared resources, communications and social media toolkits, tinyurl.com/lb7f8sz, and we used our platforms to spread awareness and build a case for engagement.

As these conversations continued, both across the country and here in Chicago, it was clear this moment wasn't losing legs. Leaders from across the country wanted to know how Donors Forum, in partnership with The Bridgespan Group, was going to keep this momentum going. Toward the end of 2013, Donors Forum decided to

pull together another group of cross-sector leaders from around the country to create a brain trust of next steps when another moment presented itself.

In December 2013, the Office of Management and Budget in Washington, DC, at the behest of persistent advocacy by nonprofit leaders like the National Council of Nonprofits, decided to change its rules around indirect costs for nonprofit organizations with contracts or grants with the federal government, tinyurl.com/o46h4aj. This was a massive win for the sector—and another opportunity to connect the dots between the overhead myth and the insidious ways that insufficient indirect cost allocations from our biggest public funder limits our sector's ability to meet our missions and serve communities.

With that recent moment in mind, last month Donors Forum convened nonprofit sector leaders from around the country in Chicago to plot the future of a discussion that has been taking place within the sector over the course of the last two years: **How can we shift the way we evaluate nonprofits away from overhead costs and focus instead on impact?**

One major challenge identified is the lack of metrics available to show how effective an organization's work and how deep its impact might be. Another was the lack of understanding by many donors about how nonprofits operate, especially as it relates to the importance of overhead costs to deliver services and achieve their missions.

Given these challenges, the group identified a number of ways to reach out to key audiences and mobilize for continued change on the issue. Approaches include taking advantage of public speaking opportunities and conferences to highlight the issue, building a coalition of foundations to launch a campaign and exert influence within the sector, and working with local and regional organizations to pull together local sector and government leaders, especially in the wake of new OMB Guidelines for nonprofits.

The leaders also recognized the importance of nonprofit associations in educat-

ing their constituents about what real overhead costs are and advocating for sufficient funding levels from government purchasers. Grantmakers are a key audience as well, and encouraging funders to open up their thinking about funding operational costs and allocating the resources necessary to build capacity within their grantee organizations will be critical.

While our colleagues help spread this message across the country, Donors Forum will continue to work on expanding understanding of nonprofit overhead costs. We will continue our advocacy on this issue by convening a cross-sector group of leaders to develop a plan for the successful implementation of the OMB Guidance in Illinois and municipalities as well as tools and peer discussions for both funders and nonprofit organizations to change their practices and policies that perpetuate the underfunding of core expenses critical to any nonprofit's effectiveness.

Donors Forum will also continue to act as the hub for this national group working to change the conversation with private foundations, individual donors and public sector funders as well.

From moments like these, whole movements grow.



Valerie S. Lies is president and CEO of Donors Forum. Lies is a founding chair of the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers, and currently on the board of Grantmakers for Effective Organizations.

In addition, she was a founding partner of the D5 Coalition, which grew out of the Diversity in Philanthropy Project, a national, five-year effort to increase philanthropy's diversity, equity and inclusiveness. In 2012, Lies was named by The Nonprofit Times as one of the sector's "Top 50 Power and Influence Leaders" in the United States. ●

Member News



After more than 22 years of guiding the West Suburban Community Pantry as founders and as executive directors, **Barbara and Roger Schmith** advised WSCP's board of their decision to retire from active management. Each will continue with the WSCP as board members.

In July of 2012, the Schmiths indicated their desire to step back from running the pantry but agreed to the board's request that they continue as the first development directors for the pantry. For the last 13 months, they have served the WSCP as executive directors of donor and resource development. During that time, the pantry significantly benefited as they organized and structured the development function within WSCP. The Schmiths will continue in their development roles until a successor is named.

The WSCP has begun a search for a director of development. Information on the position is available at www.wcpinc.org.



In February, **Courtney Simek** began as the new executive director of Positive Parenting DuPage, an organization located in Wheaton that enhances the ability of parents and caregivers to stimulate, protect and nurture young children through a network of collaborating organizations.

Simek's past experience includes 10-plus years working with the staff and volunteers of Teen Parent Connection as parent and community engagement manager. Simek's primary focus at PPD will be reconnecting with partner organizations and helping create a development plan to secure funding and strengthen the community's knowledge of PPD.

Established in 2004, Positive Parenting DuPage focuses on the prevention of child abuse through the promotion of positive parenting in all families. For more information, visit www.positiveparentingdupage.org or call (877) 411-PARENT.



Kimberly L. Spayer joined Young Naperville Singers (YNS) as director of fund development in August. In this role Spayer collaborates with staff, board and volunteers and is responsible for a comprehensive fund development plan comprising of sponsorships, grant writing, and donor cultivation, which support general operations and other special projects of the choirs.

Spayer brings with her nearly 30 years of nonprofit experience and has served numerous organizations in the Chicago metro area including the Union League Civic and Arts Foundation, where she served as executive director.

Presently, YNS, founded in 1984, has eight ability-based treble choirs with total membership exceeding 350 boys and girls in first through twelfth grade. YNS is dedicated to promoting the highest

level of artistic excellence in choral music through extraordinary educational and performance experiences that enrich the lives of young people. YNS looks forward to its 30th Anniversary Festival conducted by world renowned Bob Chilcott on Sunday, May 4 at North Central College's Wentz Hall. For more information, visit www.ynschoirs.org or email KSpayer@yns.org



In August, **Bernie Steiger** started as Literacy DuPage's new executive director. A former Literacy DuPage tutor and staff member, Steiger will guide the organization recognized in 2012 as the second largest volunteer tutor literacy organization in the United States.

Steiger, a Glen Ellyn resident, brings over 25 years of management, development and marketing experience to Literacy DuPage and is also an adjunct faculty member at Elmhurst College in Elmhurst. She holds a bachelor's in finance and economics from Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., and an MBA from the Universidade Nova de Lisboa in Portugal.

Literacy DuPage, a nonprofit organization that provides one-on-one English literacy tutoring to adult learners, currently serves over 460 adult learners in DuPage County utilizing over 350 trained volunteer tutors.

To become a volunteer, make a donation or for more information, call Literacy DuPage at (630) 416-6699 or visit www.literacydupage.org.



Kathi Wagner was recently appointed chief development director of Wake Up Narcolepsy (WUN), a five-year-old, national nonprofit headquartered in Boston. Narcolepsy is an autoimmune neurological sleep disorder affecting one in 2,000 people. Narcolepsy most often presents itself in childhood, adolescence, or young adulthood,

and lasts a lifetime.

There currently is no cure. WUN was founded by individuals and family members affected by narcolepsy to provide funding to accelerate a cure, increase awareness, decrease time-lapse from symptom onset to proper diagnosis and provide supportive resources for people living with narcolepsy and their families.

Wagner, WSPN's immediate past program chair, will continue to participate with WSPN as she will be telecommuting and traveling across the country as needed for fundraising events and awareness activities. For more information about Wake Up Narcolepsy, visit www.wakeupnarcolepsy.org.

Share your Member News:

Tell us about your job change, promotion, professional development, awards and honors. Please email your news and photo to Jill McWilliams, VIEWPOINT editor, at jillm@elmhurst.edu. ●

Next, what you're raising money for has to have emotional appeal. I like it best when the hair on the back of the neck stands up! I want it to be exciting and have snap, crackle and pop.

But most important, there has to be a sense of urgency. The donor must feel this can't be postponed. The project has to move forward and the decision to give must be made as soon as possible. Time is working against us. Lives are being lost. Kids aren't being served.

The single most important quality of an effective asker is what, in your opinion?

That the solicitor has passion for the cause.

You can't always achieve it, but the ideal is someone who's "burning in his bones" for the organization.

I'll also include persistence. That's because it often takes at least two visits to secure a gift. So you've got to stick with it.

And, finally, the ability to listen. I tell clients that they should talk 25 percent of the time and listen the other 75 percent.

Who's the best person to call on the would-be donor?

This will seem simplistic, but it's key: you send the person who the would-be donor will have the hardest time saying no to.

In some cases, it may be the CEO. It could be a member of the development staff. Or a faculty member who's had a great impact on the person. Or the doctor who performed open-heart surgery on the individual.

I like taking two people on the first call, if it can be arranged. For a potential major donor, I like having the chief executive officer accompany a volunteer. I call that a *magic partnership*.

I also believe the volunteer should testify to the gift he has made. If it's sacrificial or a stretch gift, that's powerful and compelling ammunition. Of course, you never take anyone with you who hasn't already made his own gift.

When the solicitor makes the call, what's usually going through the donor's mind?

The would-be donor wants to know, why should I give to this organization?

What's so important about this cause that I should give it priority?

Next, why is this particular program important enough that I should give? Does the project have my full interest and will it make a difference?

Third, the donor wants to know why she should give now. Is it really urgent? Is it more important to give to your organization than some others I've been considering?

And finally, why me! She wants to know, why are you calling on me for this gift? Why have you singled me out?

My colleague Harvey McKinnon has a terrific book on the subject: *The 11 Questions Every Donor Asks and the Answers All Donors Crave*.

Many people fret about the words they intend to use when asking. They even rehearse them beforehand. Is phrasing really that important?

When I coach solicitors, I give them language I know is successful. I've learned this over the years. But I'm quick to point out they should use their own words—sing their own song. I want them to feel totally comfortable and as relaxed as possible.

I also coach our solicitors to say out loud the amount they're going to ask for. Go ahead, say it out loud—fifty thousand dollars. Say it! The more it's repeated, the easier it gets.

You say that printed materials and computer presentations aren't that important. Really? Even in this age of smartphones and tablet computers?

I put campaign brochures very low on the list of what motivates a donor. Every study I've done supports this. Those fancy line-embossed, die-cut, four-color brochures just aren't read, though the photos will be glanced at. Worse still, publications are often a turnoff, due to the perceived cost of producing them.

And as far as a computer presentation is concerned—ugh!

In my experience, there's nothing that takes the place of a one-on-one presentation, the solicitor probing and asking questions—and listening most of the time.

I do bring a few pieces to leave behind. One is usually a three-ring binder. That's because no one has ever thrown away a three-ring binder! Another is a simple question and answer folder—one that can fit in a breast pocket or purse. Think of seven or eight questions that are likely to be asked, or questions that simply must be answered. This Q & A piece will be one of the most-read pieces in your arsenal.

Reveal the secret once and for all: What makes a great fundraiser?

In every study I've done, the most important quality is integrity. If it isn't there, your donors feel it, and they're turned off.

Closely behind is the skill of listening. Prospective donors want to be heard. I call it, "listening loudly." Listen carefully enough and you'll learn everything you need to know about the donor, what they're most interested in, and how much they're willing to give.

And when I ask donors what qualities they like to see in the solicitor, they mention the three Es. It starts with *energy*. They want someone who is a spring ready to be sprung. They want someone who is *enthusiastic* about the organization. Head over heels committed. And finally, donors talk about the caller being *empathetic*. And you gain that by listening and caring.



Jerold Panas is the executive partner of one of the premier firms in America and co-founder of the Institute for Charitable Giving, www.instituteforgiving.org. His popular books include ASKING (newly revised), The Fundraising Habits of Supremely Successful Boards, Mega Gifts, and 14 other bestsellers. ●

Save These Dates . . .

West Suburban Philanthropic Network Programs

Please save these dates . . . and join us for the exciting events we have planned.

WSPN programs are free to WSPN members and \$20 for non-members.

Programs are usually held on the third Thursday of each month.

Registration and refreshments begin at 8 a.m. and the program begins at 8:30 a.m.



-
- Thursday, March 20** **Topic:** Cause Marketing
 Speaker: James Reeves, president of Do Well Do Good, LLC
 Location: Loaves and Fishes Community Pantry, 1871 High Grove Lane, Naperville, IL 60540
(Please park in the retail parking lot located a half block west of Loaves and Fishes. On-site parking is reserved for clients and volunteers during the food distribution that runs from 9 to 11 a.m.)
-
- Thursday, April 17** **Topic:** The Development Professional's Guide to Creating a Social Media Plan
 Speaker: Barbara Rozgonyi, CoryWest Media
 Location: Northern Illinois Food Bank, 273 Dearborn Court, Geneva, IL 60134
(If using MapQuest or GPS, use the address 1800 Averill Road, Geneva. This is the address for the business next door.)



12th Annual Philanthropy Awards Luncheon

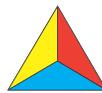
Wednesday, May 21 **LOCATION:** Eaglewood Resort and Spa, 1401 Nordic Road, Itasca, IL 60143
Networking begins at 11 a.m., luncheon follows. Register online—\$50 per person or \$500 for a table of 10 which includes a business card ad in the program.

-
- Thursday, June 19** **Topic:** Funders Panel
 Moderator: David M. McGowan, CFRE, president of The DuPage Community Foundation
 Foundation panelists: Mary Keating, director of community services of DuPage County
 Ronald L. McDaniel of the Ronald L. McDaniel Foundation
 Heather Higgins Alderman, president of Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation
 Location: TBD

For more information or to register, visit www.wspnonline.org.

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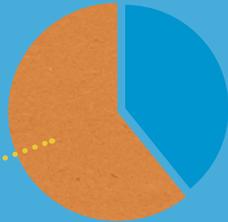
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Effective Nonprofit Direct Mail = Yearlong Campaign... Multiple Touches

By: Ron Rescigno

In order for direct mail to work most effectively, a yearlong campaign in which the non-profit reaches out between 3-4 x per year is increasingly essential. For those that would say their constituency is unique and does not like direct mail that many times per year, the simple fact is that the numbers say otherwise.

Especially for an organization whose constituents aren't accustomed to receiving direct mail, individuals need to read something at least that number of times before it becomes top of mind. Remember, if you send out newsletters, quarterly reports or program updates, those should be counted as opportunities to reach out to your donors and prospects.

Direct mail is an essential part of a multi-channel direct marketing effort to bring in the money and new donors. Any non-profit must depend on the giving pyramid as its base of financial support. This base consists of new or yearly donors who give at around the \$25.00 level. Can you see why the base is so important? Without it, you will never build or secure ongoing giving support beyond what you may already have.

This is not a panacea... in fact, starting an annual giving direct mail program takes hard work and steady resolve. Why? Because the first year or two may not show a positive cash flow. The group you're appealing to is either new or not used to being solicited in a consistent manner.

The best way to get new donors is to purchase a list of people who may have an affinity to your cause. Allocating resources to direct mail is important because, though expensive, after the initial outlay of money, you will see that you have made an investment in the future.

Changing the mindset from short term, one time mailings to long-term cultivation is when you'll see how direct mail really works.

For more blog content & bright ideas, please visit our website at www.rescignos.com

