



# VANNO Voice

## VANNO: Celebrating 5 Years of Service To Those Who Serve

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<a href="#"><u>Legal and Regulatory</u></a>	With the arrival of Spring comes the closure of our 2009 General Assembly Session. You should have received a final Legislative Report for the Session-highlighting laws that go into effect July 1, 2009 and may impact your nonprofit organization. You'll also see in our "VANNO Updates" section below that we are continuing to work with our national partner, the National Council of Nonprofits, to monitor federal stimulus opportunities and keep you informed as to how your nonprofit organization may benefit from that federal legislation.	
<a href="#"><u>Public Policy Impacting Nonprofits</u></a>	In these challenging times for our sector, having a statewide association looking out for the collective interests of Virginia's nonprofit community could not be more paramount. As you read through this latest monthly edition of the VANNO Voice, I am certain its contents will reinforce the value of VANNO. As we strive to continue to be an information source to and advocate for nonprofits across Virginia, we remain grateful for those organizations that support our ability to do so via annual membership. Each month, VANNO Voice highlights some of the exclusive benefits of membership. If your organization currently is not a VANNO member, we look forward to welcoming you. And for those of you whose organizations are members, THANK YOU!	
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As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions on how to improve all that we do for you.

Deborah Barfield Williamson  
Executive Director

### VANNO Updates

#### **Information on competitive grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Now Available**

Federal agencies are now accepting applications for a wide range of project proposals for competitive grants made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Examples include electrified transportation through the Department of Energy, autism

research through the Department of Health and Human Services, and neighborhood stabilization through the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

To read grant descriptions and deadlines, go to [www.VANNO.org](http://www.VANNO.org) and download the list. Additionally, as part of Stimulus.Virginia.Gov's transition to a disclosure and transparency website, users may now sign up for email updates related to Virginia's economic recovery efforts and implementation of the ARRA. Go to [www.stimulus.virginia.gov](http://www.stimulus.virginia.gov).

Also, VANNO, in partnership with the National Council of Nonprofits continues to provide information via the Special Reports on Economic Stimulus and Recovery. Visit VANNO's website at [www.vanno.org](http://www.vanno.org) to see the latest report, #7, which summarizes a recent White House Briefing for Nonprofits.

### **VANNO Supports Local Efforts to Thwart Service Fee on Nonprofits**

Richmond's nonprofit community received temporary relief earlier this month when the City Council passed a common-sense measure that prevents the City from assessing service fees on tax exempt organizations.

In January, many area nonprofits received letters from Richmond Assessor Jim Hester stating that the City was planning on enforcing a never-before utilized city law that allowed Richmond to assess service fees on tax exempt organizations. According to news reports, the City had identified over 200 eligible properties that could have generate an estimated \$800,000 in annual revenues.

Unfortunately, the fees - up to the tens of thousands of dollars - could have crippled many organizations' operating budgets and impacted the critical services that both residents and the city government have come to expect from the nonprofit sector.

Leading a coalition of local organizations, VANNO spearheaded the effort to support Ordinance 2009-30, introduced by Councilmember Kathy Graziano that repealed and replaced the relevant section of the Code. Unfortunately, the City Council made it clear that this is just a one-year moratorium and to expect to have the fees assessed in the future.

Take a moment to thank your [city council member](#), and let VANNO know if you are interested in joining the coalition to limit the impact of these fees on the nonprofit sector. Write to [info@vanno.org](mailto:info@vanno.org)

The Richmond City Council Finance Committee will be reviewing the

measure on March 19, with the full Council voting on April 13.

### **VANNO Sets Sights on Convening 2009 Gubernatorial Forum**

VANNO is targeting late summer/early fall to convene a 2009 Gubernatorial Forum. The forum will provide an opportunity to engage candidates running for statewide office in a discussion about their knowledge of and experience with nonprofits as well as to learn their positions and policies toward supporting and engaging the nonprofit sector. The event will be modeled from the successful [U.S. Senate Candidates Forum](#) which VANNO convened last September. More details will follow as the program develops.

## Legal and Regulatory Compliance

### **Six Important Facts About Tax Exempt**

Every year, millions of taxpayers donate money to charitable organizations. [Here are](#) six things from the IRS you should know about the tax treatment of tax-exempt organizations

### **Maintaining Public Trust in Charities During the Economic Downtown**

[Read the remarks](#) of EO Director G. Lerner before the Georgetown Law School CLE program, "Representing & Managing Tax-Exempt Organizations," on April 6, 2009.

### **Standard Mileage Rate 2009**

For 2009, the [standard mileage rate](#) for the cost of operating your car for business use is 55 cents per mile. Car expenses and use of the standard mileage rate are explained in chapter 4 of Publication 463, Travel, Entertainment, Gift, and Car Expense. For charitable-related mileage, the mileage rate for the cost of operating your car for charitable purposes remains 14 cents per mile.

### **Final 2008 Forms 990 and 990-EZ Available**

The 2008 Forms 990 and 990-EZ information returns for [tax-exempt organizations](#) are now finalized, along with schedules and instructions, for filing in 2009. [StayExempt.org](#), which provides online IRS educational resources for tax-exempt organizations, now features five [new online mini-courses](#) on the redesigned Form 990. These mini-courses provide information on preparing to file the new Form 990 as well as a walk-through of the entire form and frequently used schedules.

## Public Policy Impacting Nonprofits

### **Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act with Nonprofit Capacity Building Amendment Passes**

It is anticipated that President Obama will soon sign the [Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act](#) (HR 1388) into law. This measure could more than triple the number of Americans in national service programs and carries an estimated cost of \$5.7 billion over five years and includes the [Baucus-Grassley Nonprofit Capacity Building Amendment](#). This amendment is the realization of VANNO's long-standing efforts, through the National Council of Nonprofits, to enact a federal grant program for nonprofit capacity building. Congratulations and thank you to the state association network and everyone who picked up the phone in support of these measures!

### **The Forward Together Declaration**

In March, nonprofit leaders finalized the [Forward Together Declaration](#), which set as part of its long term agenda the improvement of government-nonprofit partnerships and the launching of a nonprofit capacity building initiative. The passage of the Serve America Act with the Nonprofit Capacity Building Amendment (see above) is a major step forward together. Continue the momentum and [sign the Declaration today!](#) By signing, you add your name to the list as an individual; organizational names are listed for identification purposes only.

## Training and Networking Opportunities

### **Just in Time Audioconference Recordings Available**

In January and February, VANNO organized a series of audioconference workshops pairing Virginia nonprofit leaders with leading nonprofit consultants. If you missed the sessions, you can purchase many of the recordings from VANNO with the related handouts and presentation materials! The set can be purchased for \$65 for members, and \$95 for non-members. Contact [info@vanno.org](mailto:info@vanno.org) or call 804-565-9871 for more information or to purchase your set today.

Recordings Available:

- Creating and Leveraging Corporate Strategic Alliances - by Kristy Hall, Universal Synergy Group
- Strategic Planning in Challenging Times -- by Gail Merridew, Nonprofit Management Solutions
- Successful Fundraising in Tough Economic Times -- by Keith Curtis and Wendy McGrady of The Curtis Group
- Operating Efficiently - How to Make the Most of What You Already Have -- by Deborah Coleman of The Coleman

#### Group

- Still Money for Good Projects, But You Can't Rush the Process - by Brownie Hamilton, Ph.D, of the Hamilton Group
- Brand: The Single Most Important Word for Every Nonprofit - by Burton Glass of Hairpin Communications
- Emergency Funding Sources in Times of Economic Crisis -- by Tom Triplett of The Fieldstone Alliance

#### **FREE Grantwriting Workshop May 14-15 in Clintwood**

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), in partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) are offering a free Professional Grant Writing Workshop. Participants may bring their laptop computers Hurry!! Registration is limited to 25. Date: Thursday, May 14 and Friday, May 15, 2009 from 9am - 5pm. Location: DickensonCenter for Education and Research, 818 Happy Valley Drive, Clintwood, VA24228 Register by May 8, 2009. Please e-mail or fax your registration form(s) to Marie Harris at [marie.harris@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:marie.harris@dhcd.virginia.gov) or (804) 371-7093. For additional information, contact Ramona Chapman.

#### **Free Webcast: Maximize Efficiencies Across Your Value Chain --Hosted by the American Marketing Association**

In today's challenging marketplace, you need expert advice on how to:

- Streamline and improve business processes with new systems and technologies
- Improve direct marketing efforts without increasing costs
- Effectively capture and utilize donor information
- Reduce donations processing time and costs while improving funds availability

[Register now](#) to hear expert advice on the current state of the nonprofit industry, trends within the data capture services and information processing businesses, including the latest practices for leveraging donor information to drive customer service and marketing applications.

#### **Upcoming Idealware Seminars**

Turn your attention to learning about the software that can help you raise money- maybe even in time for this year's appeal. Idealware has a great spring line up of online seminars about the software that can help your organization. VANNO members receive a discount for Idealware seminars (usually \$40 each). Learn more and register for the below seminars by [clicking here](#). Upcoming seminars:

- Considering Social Media for Your Organization - Wednesday, April 22 1pm

- Choosing Broadcast Email Software - Thursday, April 23 1pm
- Getting Started with Online Distributed Fundraising - Thursday, April 30 1pm
- Building An Effective Email List - Wednesday, May 6th 1pm

## VANNO Services and Benefits

### **New Member Benefit from UST**

Save up 60% on unemployment costs with UST. UST helps nonprofit organizations save money on their unemployment costs through lower rates and expert claims monitoring. 501(c)(3) organizations have an exclusive advantage over their for-profit counterparts: Did you know that as a nonprofit you can opt out of the state tax-rated unemployment system and only pay dollar for dollar for the unemployment claims paid out to former employees? When you directly reimburse the state dollar for dollar for your former employees' unemployment claims you are not subsidizing other employers that have higher unemployment claims. Unlike state unemployment taxes, your contributions to UST remain as an asset on your organization's books. For more information on UST please visit [www.ChooseUST.org](http://www.ChooseUST.org), or call toll-free 1-888-249-4788, or visit [www.VANNO.org](http://www.VANNO.org) for more information on this and other member benefits.

### **Save Time, Money... Try Web Conferencing for Free with ReadyTalk!**

ReadyTalk isn't just for conference calling - VANNO and its Members use ReadyTalk to hold webinars, train new volunteers, and conduct Board meetings. The discounted price for web conferencing is just 8 cents per participant per minute. Even better, VANNO has negotiated a FREE web conferencing trial for any Members who have not yet used ReadyTalk's web conferencing service. Try web conferencing free for the next 90 days. Visit [www.readytalk.com/vanno](http://www.readytalk.com/vanno) today to request more information, or contact Betsy Wells at [betsy.wells@readytalk.com](mailto:betsy.wells@readytalk.com) or 303.209.1553. *\*Trial is only available for active members and Partners of VANNO, and applies only to organizations that have not used ReadyTalk web conferencing previously. Audio conferencing will bill at \$.04 per participant per minute during the free web trial. VANNO's discounted web conferencing rate of \$.08 per participant per minute will apply after 90 days. Sign up before April 30th in order to be eligible for this free trial.*

**Shopping for Affordable Health Insurance Coverage for Your Employees?** Contact VANNO at 804-565-9871 or [info@vanno.org](mailto:info@vanno.org) to learn about the providers and plans in its group health insurance program. For those already enrolled, open enrollment is May-June, 2009. VANNO will be hosting an open enrollment meeting via

audio-conference for all current participants as well as those wishing to learn more about this costs-saving program. Date: May 15, 2009. Time: 9:00-10:00 am. Contact VANNO at 804-565-9871 or at [info@vanno.org](mailto:info@vanno.org) to RSVP. Details to follow.

### **Do Employees Need Access to Prescription Drug Coverage?**

Through your VANNO membership, you, your staff, your members, and their families can save 15% to 75% on prescription medication costs through SunRX. Getting started is simple. There is no signup process. All that anyone needs to do is visit [SunRx](#), select VANNO from the drop down menu, and print out their card

## Resources and Opportunities

### **Free Legal Services Available to Nonprofits**

The Pro Bono Clearinghouse, a program of the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation, provides pro bono legal services to non-profit organizations in the Richmond area. 150 attorneys serve as volunteers who have agreed to donate their time and services to help charitable organizations in the community. If your nonprofit currently has a need for help with a legal transaction or you would like additional information about the Pro Bono Clearinghouse program, please contact Carol Deitrick at 780-2600 or by email to [cdeitrick@richmondbar.org](mailto:cdeitrick@richmondbar.org).

### **A Cheat Sheet For A Down Economy - the *Nonprofit Times***

Stop worrying about the economic mess and start doing something concrete about it. If you're a CEO or member of a board committee, call in your top financial person and ask them the questions in this column. If you're a street-smart nonprofit executive or a manager, take the CFO out to lunch and put this cheat sheet on your lap. (Lookoff in the distance occasionally to make it look like you're thinking deeply.) Or, see if you can get someone else to ask the questions. To read the complete article go here...<http://ga0.org/ct/x128AYn1YrwZ/>

### **Tools for Success in Tough Times**

VANNO members receive discounts on GuideStar products. With trusted nonprofit information from GuideStar, you can make confident decisions, even in these challenging economic conditions. We have a variety of tools and services to meet your diverse needs.

\*GuideStar Premium\* Make nonprofit intelligence work for you - get the data you need faster than ever with GuideStar Premium. Learn more at [http://ga3.org/ct/od4RmLE1TEPH/GuideStar\\_Premium](http://ga3.org/ct/od4RmLE1TEPH/GuideStar_Premium)

\*GuideStar Charity Check\*GuideStar Charity Check is a one-stop, comprehensive solution that simplifies grantmaking due diligence. Learn more at <http://ga3.org/ct/9d4RmLE1TEPQ/Guidestar-CharityCheck>

\*GuideStar Compensation Report\*Use the GuideStar Nonprofit Compensation Report to benchmark your organization's salary and benefits packages. Learn more at [http://ga3.org/ct/974RmLE1TEPR/GuideStar\\_Compensation\\_Report](http://ga3.org/ct/974RmLE1TEPR/GuideStar_Compensation_Report)

\*GuideStar Enterprise Solutions\*GuideStar Enterprise Solutions puts nonprofit information to work for your entire organization. [http://ga3.org/ct/9p4RmLE1TEPY/GuideStar\\_Enterprise\\_Solutions](http://ga3.org/ct/9p4RmLE1TEPY/GuideStar_Enterprise_Solutions)

Running an association? Access free tips, articles and learning templates at [www.nonprofitcenter.com](http://www.nonprofitcenter.com)

## Announcements

### **Register as a Nonprofit with the Neighborhood Assistance Program**

The [Neighborhood Assistance Program](#) administered by the Virginia Department of Social Services emphasizes partnerships between the private and public sector to assist the economically deprived. State tax credits are provided as an incentive for businesses and individuals to contribute directly to an approved nonprofit organization designed to benefit impoverished people. Business contributions may be in the form of cash, goods, stock, real estate, professional services, contracting services and rent or lease of the participating nonprofits' facilities. Individual contributions are limited to cash or marketable securities. In return for their contributions, businesses and individuals receive credits that may be applied against their state income tax liability.

Eligibility for NAP is limited to nonprofit organizations whose primary function is providing assistance for impoverished people. Several of the activities sponsored under the program include education, job training, housing assistance, health care clinics and community services. Organizations wishing to participate in NAP must submit an [application](#) to the Office of Community Services no later than the first business day of May. NAP applications are available in March of each year.

## **7 Steps to Creating Corporate Strategic Alliances** **By Kristy Hall, Universal Synergy Consulting**

Companies are expected to be more strategic with their giving in 2009, according to the Association of Fundraising Professionals. In that context, nonprofit organizations must know how to create Corporate Strategic Alliances (aka Corporate Partnerships). Here are Seven Steps to creating yours effectively.

### **Step 1: Determine What You Want**

Be sure you know what specific support your organization wants and needs. In addition to monetary support, Corporate Partners can offer in-kind support, as well as volunteers, access to potential donors and introductions to other businesses.

### **Step 2: Determine What You Have to Give**

The best way to create a Corporate Strategic Alliance is to develop a mutually-beneficial relationship. Nonprofit organizations have much to provide a potential partner, including opportunities for media coverage and access to the company's target market.

### **Step 3: Identify Potential Partners**

The best source of potential partners are those already linked in some way to your organization. Your board, staff and key volunteers may be able to make introductions to your perfect partners.

### **Step 4: Develop Your Strategic Approach**

One of the best ways to develop your strategy is to determine the business' biggest challenges. Then, solve one or more of them with your partnership/sponsorship plan.

### **Step 5: Create a Clear, Benefits-Oriented Document**

Think like a business. Think mini-business plan. Make sure you clearly define the benefits the BUSINESS receives and use statistics.

### **Step 6: Connect**

The method you use to connect with potential partners depends on the partner. Do your research to determine the best way to reach

out. If you have a board member or volunteer who can help make the initial connection, you'll already have more credibility.

### **Step 7: Follow Up**

There are three points to follow up. First, once you make an initial contact, continue following up. Remember that you are busy and so is everyone else. Stay top of mind by following up consistently.

Second, once you've established the alliance, provide regular status reports to inform the company of how the project is going or specifically how the funds are being used.

Third, once the project or event has concluded, ask your partner what you could do to provide them even more benefits next time. This will make future endeavors even more productive, and you will continue to cultivate your relationship with this particular partner.

*Kristy Hall is an inspiring leader and in-demand speaker, trainer and coach. She is the Creator of the Nonprofit Super Series ([www.NonprofitSuperSeries.com](http://www.NonprofitSuperSeries.com)) and holds a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Georgetown University, as well as a law degree from George Mason University School of Law. Kristy can be reached at [kristy@universal-synergy.com](mailto:kristy@universal-synergy.com).*

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VANNO exists to ensure that Virginia's nearly 40,000 nonprofit organizations are educated, engaged and equipped to serve their communities. Through training and technical assistance, its website, and collaborative efforts with other nonprofit support organizations, VANNO builds the capacity of nonprofit organizations to achieve excellence in management and governance. VANNO communicates the impact nonprofits make and the value they add to communities across the Commonwealth. As the voice for Virginia's nonprofit sector, VANNO advocates for nonprofits and organizes nonprofits to advocate for themselves. For more information, visit [www.vanno.org](http://www.vanno.org).

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