



VANNO Voice

December 17, 2008

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Greetings and Happy Holidays! We are pleased to bring you the December edition of the VANNO Voice – your link to news and resources for Virginia’s nonprofit sector! We encourage you to forward this valuable information to your colleagues, both inside your organization and throughout your community. You also can read past issues on the VANNO website at www.vanno.org

VANNO Updates

VANNO Announces “Just in Time” Conference Call Seminar Series for Nonprofit Leaders

Responding to the current economic downturn, VANNO has scheduled a special series of conference call seminars with leading consultants across the state. These one-hour seminars will touch on some of the most urgent issues facing many nonprofits and provide new tools, techniques and ideas for managing your organization through a challenging time.

[Click here](#) to register online

Thursday, January 8 – 3:30pm

Forming a Powerful Fundraising Partnership with Your Board
Presented by: Katherine Morrison, Morrison Nonprofit Transitions

Tuesday, January 13 -- 3:30pm

Creating & Leveraging Corporate Strategic Alliances
Presented by: Kristy Hall, Universal Synergy Group, LLC

Thursday, January 15 – 12noon

Executive Leadership in Uncertain Times
Presented by: Jane S. Kornblut, M. Ed., Third Sector Services, LLC

- Nonprofit Tools: Who to Consult for What Decisions
Wednesday, January 21 – 3:30pm
Strategic Planning in Challenging Times
Presented by: Gail Merridew, Nonprofit Management Solutions
- Earn a CVA - Certified in Volunteer Administration
Tuesday, January 27 – 12 noon
Successful Fundraising in Tough Economic Times
Presented by: Keith Curtis, President & CEO, and Wendy McGrady, Vice President, The Curtis Group
- Year-End Fundraising Tools - Upcoming Idealware Seminars
Thursday, January 29 – 3:30pm
Still Money for Good Projects but You Can't Rush the Process
Presented by: Brownie Hamilton, Ph.D, The Hamilton Group
- VANNO Benefit: NTEN Technology
Tuesday, February 3 – 3:30pm
Operating Efficiently - How to Make the Most of What You Already Have
Presented by: Deborah Coleman, The Coleman Group, LLC.
- VANNO Benefit: PR Newswire
Thursday, February 5 – 12 noon
Brand: The Single Most Important Word for Every Nonprofit
Presented by: Burton Glass, Hairpin Communications
- FREE Delivery of The NonProfit Times!
Tuesday, February 10 – 3:30pm
Sustainability Strategies for Challenging Times
Presented by: Katherine Morrison, Morrison Nonprofit Transitions, and Katherine Gekker, Strategic Solutions
- Shopping for Affordable Health Insurance Coverage for Your Employees?
VANNO to Represent Nonprofit Sector at Public State Budget Hearings
VANNO will be presenting testimony on behalf of Virginia's nonprofit sector at the Virginia House Appropriations and State Senate Finance Committees public hearings in early January. The joint committees will be addressing the amendments to the 2008-2010 state budget and the impact of the current economic downturn. If you are interested joining VANNO in support of the nonprofit community, write to info@vanno.org. Those wishing to speak on behalf of their own organizations may register at each hearing site no earlier than one hour prior to the start of the hearing. For more information, go to the [VANNO](http://vanno.org) website.
- VANNO Members Also Access Benefits with the Society for Nonprofit Organizations
Alexandria
Thursday, January 8, 2009 at 10 am
Northern Virginia Community College – Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall
- You Need It? Surplus Property Just Might Have It
- Free Summit! Managing the Economic Downturn: Strategies for the Nonprofit Community
- Nominations Open for Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards
- Hampton Roads Institute for Nonprofit Leadership Conference
- Seventh Annual Government and Public Service Job Fair February 20 at the University of Richmond
- Feature Article: With Economic Woes Growing, Should Nonprofits Panic?

Newport News
Thursday, January 8, 2009 at 12 noon
Christopher Newport University – Performing Arts Center

Charlottesville
Thursday, January 8, 2009 at 12 noon
Piedmont Virginia Community College
V. Earl Dickenson Humanities and Fine Arts Building

Lynchburg
Friday, January 9, 2009 at 12 noon
Central Virginia Community College

Richmond
Monday, January 19 at 1 pm
General Assembly Building, House Room

Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Free! New Online Mini-Courses on Redesigned Form 990

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.

IRS Offers Tips for Year-End Donations

To find out what types of contributions and donations are eligible for tax deductions, StayExempt.org has organized an online mini-course about charitable giving. [Click here to view the mini-course](#), or learn more about charitable organizations at the [IRS website](#)

Retirement Plans for Public Schools and Exempt Organizations Get Extension on Time to Complete Written Plans

The IRS has issued a notice announcing relief for certain retirement plans that do not have a written plan in place by January 1, 2009. The new guidance is for retirement plans – referred to as 403(b) plans -- covering employees at public schools, colleges and universities, and other tax exempt organizations. The IRS will not treat a 403(b) plan as failing to satisfy the requirements and the final regulations during the 2009 calendar year, provided that: (1) on or before December 31, 2009, the sponsor of the

plan has adopted a written § 403(b) plan that is intended to satisfy the requirements of § 403(b) (including the final regulations) effective as of January 1, 2009; (2) during 2009, the sponsor operates the plan in accordance with a reasonable interpretation of § 403(b), taking into account the final regulations; and (3) before the end of 2009, the sponsor makes its best efforts to retroactively correct any operational failure during the 2009 calendar year to conform to the terms of the written § 403(b) plan.

This extension will give plan sponsors additional time to put their plan documents in place. Read more by downloading this [IRS notice](#).

Public Policy Impacting Nonprofits

Final Regulations Issued Implementing College Loan Forgiveness Provisions for Nonprofit Employees

The Department of Education has published final regulations for the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 ([CCRAA](#)). This Act provides for loan forgiveness for full time employees of "public service organizations," a provision the National Council of Nonprofits successfully lobbied to expand to include all 501(c)(3) nonprofits. Nonprofit full-time employees (at least 30 hours a week) making monthly college loan repayments can count each month of nonprofit employment towards the 120 months of payments needed to qualify for forgiveness of the remaining loan balance, beginning with payments after October 1, 2007. The effective date applies to payments, and thus existing nonprofit employees with outstanding student loans of more than ten years future duration can benefit from this provision. For more information, read a [Q & A](#), contact Nikki Harris at the Department of Education. Telephone: (202)219-7050. Internet: Nikki.Harris@ed.gov.

Serve America Act Gains Momentum for Quick Action in Next Congress

The Act, sponsored by Senators Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Orin Hatch (R-UT), proposes a Commission on Cross-Sector Solutions that would study ways in which the federal government and businesses can more effectively collaborate with nonprofits and foundations to address pressing challenges, and would include study of nonprofit capacity building needs. A Volunteer Generation Fund program would award competitive matching grants to states and nonprofits to increase the availability and capacity of volunteers to address state priorities. The bill also authorizes many other new programs – service-learning for youth; a Community Solutions Funds Pilot Program to replicate or expand proven solutions to specific

community challenges; several fellowship programs; a ServeAmerica Corps to promote clean energy, education, healthy futures, and use of skilled seniors; and a nationwide Call to Service Campaign. Read more about the [Serve America Act](#), and [learn more about VANNO's efforts](#) to support cross-sector collaboration with Virginia's elected officials.

New Resource for Nonprofit Advocacy to Help You Prepare for the 2009 General Assembly Session

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation recently launched "[Effective Advocacy at All Levels of Government](#)," a new online tool to help nonprofits more effectively engage in the public policy process. Developed by the [Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest](#), it is a plain language approach that includes sample strategic plans and case stories from a wide range of charities.

Training and Networking Opportunities

2009 Nonprofit Congress Registration Open: VANNO to Schedule Regional Town Hall Meetings Across Virginia

The 2009 Nonprofit Congress is coming up in just a few short months! From May 14-16, 2009, nonprofit leaders from across the country will gather in New Orleans to exchange knowledge, plan for action, and celebrate our collective strength. To learn more and register for this fantastic gathering, visit the National Council of Nonprofits [website](#). Need funding to attend? [Check out and download](#) a sample funding proposal to assist you in seeking grant funding.

In addition, VANNO will be planning and organizing a series of town hall meetings in March and April 2009 to coincide with the Nonprofit Congress. Stay tuned for more information!

Nonprofit Tools: Who to Consult for What Decisions

From the Fieldstone Alliance

The new issue of Tools focuses on one aspect of decision-making: involving the right people, including when and how to involve outsiders. VANNO members receive a 20% discount on Fieldstone Alliance Publications. [Read more...](#)

Earn a CVA – Certified in Volunteer Administration

Do you mobilize and manage volunteers? Are you looking for a way to strengthen your professional credibility? If so,

now is the time to consider earning the CVA (Certified in Volunteer Administration) credential, originally developed by the Association for Volunteer Administration and now sponsored by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration. The deadline for registering for the next cycle is March 1, 2009. Learn more at www.CVAcert.org

Year-End Fundraising Tools – Upcoming Idealware Seminars

The election is finally over...but year-end fundraising has yet to begin! 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 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:

[Choosing Broadcast Email Software](#) -- Wednesday, 1/7, 1:00 - 2:30 EST.

[Building An Effective Email List](#) -- Thursday, 1/8, 1:00 - 2:30 EST.

[How to Build or Edit a Website without Technical Skills](#) -- (Introduction to Content Management Systems) -- Thursday, 1/15, 1:00 - 2:30 EST.

[Considering Social Media for Your Organization](#) -- Wednesday, 1/21, 1:00 - 2:30 EST

[Choosing a Low Cost Constituent Database](#) -- Thursday, 1/22, 1:00 - 2:30 EST.

VANNO Services and Benefits

As members of VANNO, you can receive discounted benefits and services through our partnership with the National Council of Nonprofits.

[NTEN](#)

NTEN Technology makes a critical difference in a nonprofit's success. NTEN connects members with the information and resources they need to effectively use technology in their work. Benefits include online trainings, local affinity groups, and connections to top nonprofit technology vendors.

[PR Newswire](#)

Looking to gain more visibility for your state organization? Would you like to see your press releases automatically appear on Yahoo! News, AOL News, and many more? How about tracking of coverage of your press release? Through

your membership in NCNA, you can access all of these services at 15% off the regular prices with PRNewswire.

FREE Delivery of The NonProfit Times!

Get a FREE subscription of The NonProfit Times for one year. The NonProfit Times is the most respected source for news and editorial in the nonprofit community. It provides insightful special reporting that has been hailed by industry leaders as “a great resource.” With huge financial reform looming on the horizon, isn’t it about time YOU received The NonProfit Times? The Nonprofit Times is offering a free, one year subscription to eligible VANNO members. With your subscription you will receive:

- 22 issues delivered the way you like them – print or online.
- Notices of upcoming events and webinars that you can view from the comfort of your own office, avoiding a costly trip to a seminar.

[Click Here](#). Get Your Subscription to The NonProfit Times Today!

Shopping for Affordable Health Insurance Coverage for Your Employees? Contact VANNO at 804-565-9871 or info@vanno.org to learn about the providers and plans in its group health insurance program.

VANNO Members Also Access Benefits with the Society for Nonprofit Organizations

As a part of your VANNO membership, member organizations receive a free subscription to the bi-monthly newsletter *Nonprofit World* (a \$59 value), monthly issues of *Funding Alert*, a subscription to the on-line funding database GrantStation (a \$599 value) and a weekly email newsletter, *Grantsation Insider*, discounts for the Learning Institute and many additional online archival resources and recruitment tools.

Resources and Opportunities

You Need It? Surplus Property Just Might Have It

Is your organization in desperate need of office furniture, chairs for a meeting or office equipment? Or how about a vehicle, refrigerator or storage shelves? You may be eligible to access these items and other surplus property through the **Virginia Office of Surplus Property Management**.

The Federal Surplus Property Program is available to “donee members” only. A donee member includes some

qualified (tax-exempt) nonprofit organizations. The only cost to your organization is a service and handling fee. The cost for property is generally 10-35% of its original cost. A complete list of available property, including some with color pictures and descriptions, can be found on the [Surplus website](#). The website also has downloadable application forms. Once your application is approved, most property can be viewed in person at 2 convenient distribution centers located in Richmond or Wytheville (Southwest Virginia).

To find out if your organization is eligible to become a "donee", submit an application or contact our offices at statesurplus@dgs.virginia.gov or call 804-236-3662. Applications and other information are available online at <http://surplus.dgs.virginia.gov>.

Announcements

Free Summit! Managing the Economic Downtown: Strategies for the Nonprofit Community

...incorporating perspectives and advice from the foundation, fundraising, IT, finance, human resource, and legal communities.

Thursday, December 18
8:00 am - 12:30 pm
George Washington University Marvin Center

Who Should Attend:
CEOs, CFOs, EDs, COOs, Board Members, Development Officers, HR, and others

To register, go to:
<http://ga0.org/ct/Op28AYn1gL28/>

Nominations Open for Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards

On behalf of Governor Tim Kaine, the Governor's Advisory Board on National and Community Service, Virginia Corps, and the Office on Volunteerism and Community Service are working together to recognize the significant contributions of Virginia citizens to the life and welfare of the Commonwealth and its people. In April during National Volunteer Service Week, awards to recognize these exceptional contributions will be made at a reception in Richmond. Awards will be presented to organizations, businesses, families, and individuals whose volunteer and

community service efforts focus on building and strengthening the Commonwealth of Virginia.

For more information or to nominate a person or group, visit <http://www.vaservice.org/go/volunteer/award/>, call 1-800-638-3839 or e-mail info@vaservice.org. The nomination period ends at 5 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 2.

Hampton Roads Institute for Nonprofit Leadership Conference

The Hampton Roads Institute for Nonprofit Leadership Conference will be hosted VOLUNTEER Hampton Roads on February 6 in Norfolk in partnership with local foundations and leadership organizations. This conference brings the caliber of speakers and sessions offered at a national convention with the economy and convenience of a local symposium. The goal of the conference is to deliver knowledge and tools to assist nonprofits in better serving their organizations and community. Learn more and register by [clicking here](#)

Seventh Annual Government and Public Service Job Fair February 20 at the University of Richmond

Government and public interest legal employers are invited to participate in the **7th Annual Government and Public Interest Job Fair**, to be held at the University of Richmond campus on Friday, February 20, 2009. You will be able to interview first- and second-year law students from the University of Richmond, The College of William & Mary and Washington and Lee University for summer 2009 positions, and May 2009 graduates for entry-level positions. [Click here](#) for more information.

Feature Article

With Economic Woes growing, Should Nonprofits Panic?

By Keith Curtis, President & CEO, The Curtis Group

This is a question that we here at The Curtis Group have been getting a lot lately from our nonprofit clients. However, as the turmoil on Wall Street worsens our challenged economy, a new report may alleviate your fears.

As the only Virginia-based member of the Giving Institute: Leading Consultants to Nonprofits, (www.givinginstitute.org) we have encouraging news to share. A recently published report from the Giving USA Foundation, established in 1985 by the Giving Institute,

looks at the effects of economic distress on philanthropy, going all the way back to 1969.

In the report, "Giving During Recessions and Economic Slowdowns," the chair of Giving Institute and past chair of Giving USA Foundation, George C. Ruotolo, Jr., assures us that "if history is our guide, overall giving may once again grow in 2008."

The report found that in every year but one, total giving in current dollars has risen. (The exception was 1987, when a tax change law the previous year prompted some people to give early, so they could maximize the value of tax deductions they could claim.)

Here are three steps to ensure successful fundraising during these challenging economic times:

- Work closely with your board to make sure each member is a current donor and advocate for your organization.
- Develop and follow a fundraising, communications, and stewardship plan to maintain momentum.
- Focus on renewing gifts from current donors, and let them know what their gifts have made possible.

It is important that nonprofits not listen to those who claim the sky is falling. The Curtis Group can attest that charities with a clear and compelling case and an established donor base will continue to succeed, even in difficult times.

If you would like more information on this report, please don't hesitate to contact us at (757) 496-2224 or info@curtisgroupconsultants.com.

The Curtis Group is a consultant member of the Virginia Network of Nonprofit Organizations (VANNO)

From Principle to Practice

Virginia Has a Lobbyist Registration Requirement . . . Does It Apply To You?

Virginia's General Assembly convenes on January 14, 2009. Prior to engaging in lobbying, individuals must register with the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. A lobbyist is any individual who is employed in any manner or who is reimbursed for expenses, or who represents an organization, association or other group for the purpose of influencing or attempting

to influence executive or legislative action through oral or written communication with an executive or legislative official; this includes anyone who solicits others to influence an executive or legislative official. There are some exemptions from registration set forth in statute. The exemptions generally apply to individuals who are only providing public testimony, who are compensated less than \$500 annually, and for whom lobbying is not a significant portion of their job duties.

To register, one must complete a registration form available at www.commonwealth.virginia.gov and pay a \$50 registration fee. You must register for each organization on whose behalf you will be lobbying. All lobbyist registrations are required annually and expire April 30. Lobbyist disclosure forms must be filed with the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth by July 1 for the twelve-month period beginning May 1 and ending April 30.

VANNO believes in the power of its growing and diverse membership that includes nonprofits throughout Virginia. VANNO makes available a wide range of benefits to Virginia's nonprofit sector including group purchasing discounts, technical assistance, news, research, and advocacy. If your organization is not a member, JOIN NOW at www.vanno.org!