



THE VANNO VOICE

March 2007

Greetings!

We are pleased to bring you the March 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 can also read past issues on the VANNO website at www.vanno.org.

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Update on VANNO Search for Group Health Insurance Plan



In the spring of 2006 the VANNO Board of Directors formed a Health Insurance Work Group to research the health insurance marketplace and identify options for VANNO members to gain access to affordable group health insurance products.

The VANNO Health Insurance Work Group has met three times, interviewed health insurance brokers, employee benefits managers, and a representative of one of the statewide health plans (Anthem), and conducted an online survey of VANNO members and non-members.

The survey results provide a great amount of useful information with which brokers and/or insurance carriers can understand the “bigger picture” of Virginia’s nonprofit organizations relative to the size of their workforce, current benefits, and challenges.

The survey data confirms what all of us know - many small employers, nonprofits included, find it difficult to secure and maintain favorable healthcare benefits for their employees. As a consequence, these employers sometimes look to form associations or band together in an attempt to purchase medical coverage. Their belief is they will have more success with this approach.

Years ago associations could purchase medical coverage for their members. Since that time, it has become more difficult, and now virtually impossible, to get an insurance carrier to accept an association for fully-insured medical coverage.

Visit VANNO’s home page at www.vanno.org to read a complete report from the VANNO Health Insurance Work Group, including: survey results, reasons why a group health plan is not easily obtainable, the effect of recent state legislation, and VANNO’s plans for continuing to advocate for this issue.

Mail Smart! Conference for Nonprofits

Tuesday, March 13, 2007 8:30am -- 4:00pm in Arlington, VA

This one-day event is specifically designed to help nonprofits like yours make the most of your mailing communications, from discovering and acquiring new members to improving fundraising efforts. It is presented by the Center for Nonprofit Advancement, VANNO, the Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers, and Pitney Bowes, Inc.

For more details, visit www.regonline.com/118704 or call 203-351-6393.

2007 VA Conference on Volunteerism and Community Service

April 11-13, Holiday Inn Select Koger South, Richmond

An excellent opportunity to network with peers from across the state and learn how to maximize volunteer involvement in your organization. Complete details and registration now available at www.vaservice.org.

Workshop: Starting a Nonprofit in Virginia

March 15, 4:00 – 6:15 pm in Richmond

Fee: \$25

Presented by the Community Tax Law Project, this workshop will present an overview of items to consider before deciding whether to pursue nonprofit status. Topics covered will include:

- The definition of nonprofit and tax-exempt organizations
- State and federal legal requirements
- Maintaining tax-exempt status
- The benefits and costs of nonprofit status
- How to find out if there are other local organizations doing what you propose to do

For details, contact 804-358-5855 or info@ctlp.org.

Tidewater Classes for Nonprofits



The Academy for Nonprofit Excellence will present the following classes in March:

March 14-15, 9 am-- 4 pm The Public Trust:
Standards and Accountability

March 17, 9 am -- 4 pm Getting Your Financial House in Order

For more information, contact Lillian Bailey at 757-822-1170 or visit www.tcc.edu/wd/academy.

March Philanthropy & Fundraising Classes



Below is the March lineup of classes from the Institute on Philanthropy at the University Richmond. Don't forget that scholarships are available!

- 3/22 How to Effectively Recruit & Retain Board Members
- 3/1 & 3/8 Persuasive Development Writing
- 3/6 & 3/13 Online Fundraising Basics
- 3/14 & 3/21 Event Planning Inside & Out
- 3/20 & 3/27 Direct Mail & Constituent Communication

Call Kathy Powers at 804-287-1290 or check out the website at <http://scs.richmond.edu/philanthropy> for further information and a registration form.

JMU Spring Career Fair- March 26th, 1-5pm

Space is still available for those VANNO members interested in attending the Spring Career Fair on March 26th from 1pm-5pm at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. Non-Profit organizations can attend at 50% off of the registration fee. We have a very active Social Work, Political Science, Sociology, Non-Profit minor students and other majors who are interested in non-profit careers. If you cannot make the event and would like us to collect resumes for positions at your organization please let us know. Please see the registration website for more information, www.jmu.edu/cap/careerfair/fair-spring.htm.

Workshop: Working with Volunteer Boards



March 29, 2007, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Reston, VA
Fee is \$25

This workshop will focus on strategies for developing a high impact, effective governing board that works in partnership with the executive and senior staff to forward the organizational mission and strategic directions. This session is designed for Executive Directors and Development Officers.

To register, contact Emily Gibbs at Volunteer Fairfax, 703-246.3460, ext.0 www.volunteerfairfax.org.

Nonprofit Symposium in Alexandria

March 22, 8:30 am – 1:00 pm

Sponsored by Halt, Buzas & Powell, this semi-annual event will provide nonprofit staff and leaders with information about Audits and Taxes, Board Governance and Accountability, Investment and Retirement Solutions, and Employment Litigation. Attendance is free. For more details, contact Jennifer Arce at 703-836-1350 or visit www.cpas4you.com.

Professional Development for Volunteer Administrators

March 22, 8:30 am – 2:30 pm

Sponsored by the Greater Williamsburg Association for Volunteer Administrators (GWAVA), this annual professional development workshop will feature two presentations:

- “Authentic Leadership” - how to weave purpose, passion and who you are into the workplace
- “Six Thinking Hats”: - this model teaches participants to recognize and understand distinct modes of thinking to improve communication, efficiency and cooperation.

Both sessions are idea for anyone working with volunteers, co-workers, clients and the public in general. Lunch will be provided. To register, visit www.gwava.org or contact Benjamin Goldberg at 757-259-4042.

Volunteer Partners

By Susan
J. Ellis,
Energize,
Inc.

It always fascinates me how often volunteer program managers mention problems of various sorts without thinking about how volunteers might be a solution. We are so focused on recruiting volunteers to help others in our organizations that somehow we overlook the volunteer resources office itself as a great assignment for the right people. This oversight extends as well to professional meetings, workshops, and conferences.

- Bring a volunteer partner to any professional meeting or workshop you attend. Not only will this swell attendance for invited speakers, but you can then have a discussion that adds the perspective of the people we usually speak “about.” And afterwards, the guest volunteer might be interested in helping you to apply whatever was learned at the meeting. For DOVIAs and other professional associations who bemoan poor turnout at regular meetings, this idea could totally change expectations

about what the sessions might cover.

It's important to note that I do not necessarily mean inviting any volunteer at random to partner with you -- though that method has benefits in offering a wide range of perspectives and might just uncover unexpected new skills among volunteers "typecast" into their assigned roles. I'm focusing here, however, on volunteers who already carry some leadership responsibility and therefore should be viewed as part of your extended management team: shift leaders, project coordinators, members of your advisory council, etc.

- Wish you had time to read the volunteer management book you just bought or the new issue of *e-Volunteerism*? Maybe if you saw this as an opportunity for special training for leadership volunteers, you might form a reading circle, select materials you all want to read and then schedule time regularly to discuss what you've read. Or, share the reading -- everyone studies one chapter or article and tells the others about it. You can invite a range of folks to this book club as well as key volunteers: other paid staff in your organization or colleagues from other organizations - and their leadership volunteers.
- Partner volunteers can subscribe to different listservs and online discussion forums than you do (or actually read and respond to core exchanges such as CyberVPM, OzVPM, or UKVPMs) and report back any news or ideas they learn about.
- Partner volunteers can do site visits to other volunteer programs, both being an ambassador for your organization and also learning new things to bring back.
- Conference planners in our field need to plan strategically for volunteer involvement -- particularly to encourage registrations from unpaid colleagues in the all-volunteer world. This means scheduling some workshop sessions in the evenings or on the weekend. It also means making sure that the language used to describe sessions is inclusive. For example, it's easy to say "volunteer recruitment and membership development," or "learn to encourage volunteer/member follow-through on commitments."
- If you have a number of community groups or civic clubs who provide service to your organization, periodically meet with the presidents and other officers, specifically to discuss mutual challenges of recruitment, retention, and recognition. You will strengthen their loyalty to you and you may also discover some new resources not generally publicized in the agency-related volunteer world.

The main point here is to stop perceiving yourself as working *for* volunteers and instead approach everything as working *with* volunteers. Ask their opinions often. Give them drafts of forms, surveys, and other materials early in the development stage and ask for input.

Share the details of obstacles you're trying to overcome and see what they might do to solve the problems. Again, you can choose which volunteers are most likely to enjoy this partnership with you, but remember that the highest form of recognition is to ask someone what they think -- and then to use their idea.

Source: February 2007, **Energize Volunteer Management Website Update**, energizeinc.com.

New Resource: "Let's Have Lunch Together"

According to this new book, 8 out of 10 development professionals and executives lack strong enough relationships with the right people. Author Marshall Howard asserts: "With stronger relationships you could increase funding by 25-50%. So stop chasing the money and start chasing the relationship!"

Based on actual experiences, real people and over 24 years of nonprofit relationship coaching, this "learning novel" is rich in the secrets and practical how-to's about great relationship building. Easy to read and apply immediately.

2007 National Salary Survey Data Released

The Nonprofit Times has released the results of its annual salary survey. Highlights include:

- Staff salaries will keep pace with last year's average rate of inflation (up 3.35%)
- Executive salaries will rise at a lower rate (up 1.25%)
- The largest changes were for director of volunteers (up 6.17%) and chief of direct marketing (down 4%)
- The average salary for a female Executive Director will be \$96,698 in 2007, or 76.7% of the average male director's salary of \$126,014. This is a slightly wider gap than in 2006.

More detailed results, including salary figures for various sizes of nonprofits and geographical regions, visit www.nptimes.com

New Record-Keeping Rules for Monetary Gifts



The Pension Protection Act of 2006 modifies record-keeping requirements for cash, check or other gifts of money.

Regardless of the amount, individuals must maintain a reliable written record of any contribution in order to claim a charitable donation -- beginning with gifts made during or after January 2007. This applies to anyone completing the long-form tax statement and itemizes deductions. The old rules required records only for donations of \$250 or more.

To meet the record-keeping requirements, a written communication from the charity must contain the name of the group, the date of the contribution and the amount. Is your organization providing this documentation to all its donors?

More information can be found in IRS Publication 1771 at www.irs.gov.

Federal Policy Updates

CFC Drops Anti-Advocacy Requirement

The Combined Federal Campaign -- the workplace- giving program for federal employees -- has removed a requirement that many nonprofits have interpreted as discouraging legally permissible advocacy. New regulations do not include the previous requirement that participating organizations have "no expenses connected with lobbying and attempts to influence voting or legislation at the local, state, or federal level."

Increase in Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement Proposed

Senator Feingold (D-WI) has introduced a bill (S. 403) that would raise the mileage reimbursement rate for volunteers who use their vehicles for charitable purposes from 14 cents to 40.5 cents per mile. The proposal would make the volunteer rate equal to that of businesses.

The IRS has posted a **Good Governance Practices for 501(c)(3) Organizations**, stressing that the document is a "preliminary discussion draft." Read it at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/good_governance_practices.pdf.

New Website for Tracking Virginia Legislation

To stay informed about specific legislation affecting nonprofits in Virginia, check out www.nonprofitwatchdog.org. Updated daily, it's a great new resource for monitoring activity by the General Assembly.

Nonprofit Guide to Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

NPower NY has compiled a free publication to help nonprofit executives assess the adequacy of their organization's disaster preparedness. Rather than attempt to present a comprehensive look at all aspects, this guide offers a more general overview of key areas for nonprofits to consider. It is a tool to assess your organization's preparedness on a number of critical fronts – a way to benchmark your readiness against what could be considered best practice.

Titled "Communications, Protection, Readiness (CPR)", the guidebook walks you through the steps of Getting Started, Completion of the Benchmark Instrument, CPR Planning and Implementation, Institutionalization, and Comprehensive Disaster Recovery Planning. It is easy to follow with useful checklists, specific

recommendations, and additional resources.

This publication is available as a free download from www.NPower.org or upon request from Information@NPowerNY.org.

Twelve Tips for a Dynamic PowerPoint (PPT) Presentation

Submitted
by Julia
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Design



Posted on 1/29/2007 at www.NonprofitPR.com

A recent caller asked: "We have a wonderful and worthy cause, but whenever I give a presentation on it, I don't get the enthusiastic response I've expected. How can I improve my PowerPoint presentation to engage my audience and communicate my organization's work more effectively?"

Your mission is so strong and exciting – wouldn't it be great if people just recognized its inherent value? But conveying that excitement through a PowerPoint presentation is not easy and requires a strategy. We've all sat through terribly boring slide shows; is it possible yours is suffering from some common problems?

If, whenever you give a presentation, your audience looks less than rapt, take a look at the following twelve DO and DO NOT tips to help you increase audience interest. Some of these are culled from *Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes*, by Andy Goodman of Cause Communications, as well as from Julia Reich Design's own design and marketing experience for nonprofits:

Twelve Tips:

1. DO NOT simply re-write everything you're saying aloud in the PowerPoint (PPT) slides.
2. DO use lots of visuals accompanied by only a few key words; streamline your use of text to one word per bullet point.
3. DO replace bland and predictable stock photography with more visually intriguing and authentic documentary-style imagery containing emotional appeal.
4. DO use this imagery as large as possible.
5. DO replace the over-utilized and undistinguished white background with a black one which fills up the entire screen, thus avoiding the deadly box-within-a-box syndrome.
6. DO choose black and white photography over color, which can distract the viewer from the story.
7. DO strive to present complex material with structure and clarity. For instance, create a website-like navigation bar on the side, which helps viewers locate their spot within the larger presentation.
8. DO NOT use PPT's animation or audio effects just because you can. Random wipes and dissolves across the screen are meaningless eye candy.
9. DO use subtle fades in a consistent manner for appealing transitions.
10. DO use animation when it makes sense to lead the viewer through a

series of bullet points, or to gradually build on a complicated schematic. For instance, only one point is in view as you are discussing it. Otherwise viewers read ahead, or view the entire diagram, and can get distracted.

11. DO avoid visual clutter by prioritizing what's on the slide (title, bullets, pictures, captions, etc.) with a hierarchy of importance. Not everything should get the same "visual weight". Make one image the dominant element; the text should be secondary.
12. DO NOT put your logo on every slide, since it takes up valuable slide real estate (If the audience does not know what organization is presenting to them, you are already in a deeper hole than any logo can fill).

New Online Course in Volunteer Management!

The University of North Texas is pleased to offer its first continuing education course in volunteer management entitled, **Are You REALLY Ready for Volunteers?** Both first-time volunteer managers and seasoned professionals can benefit by learning what nonprofits need to know when incorporating or revising a volunteer program. Topics include strategic programmatic considerations, best practices, and program assessment techniques.

The 2 1/2 hour self-paced course is now available. Participants have one month from enrollment to complete the course. Best news of all: it is only \$20 USD!

For details, contact: lead@unt.edu.

Social Enterprise Alliance Conference

April 17-19, Long Beach, California

The annual conference of the Social Enterprise Alliance is the largest gathering of mission-based organizations, foundations and management assistance providers committed to pursuing financial sustainability through "social enterprise" -- earned income ventures that advance social missions. Join us at this premier event of the year to learn from nonprofits that have successfully diversified their income streams, meet interesting people who are developing the field and benefit from the most workshops ever on financing strategies. This is one conference you don't want to miss if you are seeking ways to make your nonprofit more sustainable in today's competitive environment (and you can't beat the location!) For more information, visit www.se-alliance.org. Register now while space is available.

