



THE VANNO VOICE

Virginia Network of Nonprofit Organizations (VANNO)
*Providing affordable information, resources and advocacy for
nonprofit organizations throughout Virginia.*

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June 2007

We are pleased to bring you the June 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.

Northern Virginia Grant Opportunity

The Temple Rodef Shalom Fund for the Community announces its third annual grant competition. The purpose of the Fund is to meet high priority community needs, by providing modest resources, in the range of \$1,000 to \$5,000, to non-profit 501c3 organizations in Northern Virginia. The Fund will make grants to help organizations build capacity, leadership skills and experience that they can apply to developing new programs, funding sources, members, and partnerships. These activities are intended to embody the principles of *Tikkun Olam*, repairing the world. Grants will not be made to support ongoing programs. Grant applications are due **June 15**, and awards will be announced in October. Application information can be found at www.templerodefshalom.org/trsfund/.

Please follow the instructions under how to apply. If you have questions, please email Margery Leveen Sher, Chair, TRS Fund for the Community at mlsher@verizon.net.

June Classes & Training Opportunities



Portsmouth: **Successful Nonprofit Startup**
June 16, 9:00 am - Noon

Marketing and Communication
June 16, 9:00 am - Noon

How to Get Grants
June 23, 12:30 - 3:00 pm

**Program Development and
Implementation**
June 23, 12:30 - 3:00 pm

Nonprofit Boot Camp, the Pheobe Group
Contact: 757-673-8686 or
nonprofitboot@aol.com

Falls Church: **Working Effectively with the Middle
Eastern Client: A Multicultural Perspective
on
Mental Health and Social Services**

June 8, 2:00 - 4:00 pm
Center for Multicultural Human Services
Contact: Sarah Beglarbegui
703-533-3302, x. 2210 or www.cmhs.org

Norfolk: **Start a Nonprofit: Part 1**
June 5, 9:00 am - Noon

Start a Nonprofit: Part II
June 12, 9:00 am - Noon

Making the Successful Ask
June 19, 9:00 am - Noon

Board Builders: The Fundraising Board
June 21, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

Volunteer Hampton Roads
Contact Kristen Nelson, 757-624-2400
or knelson@volunteerhr.org
www.volunteerhr.org

Fairfax: **Ethics in Volunteer Administration**
June 20, 2007, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm
Volunteer Fairfax
Contact Emily Gibbs, 703-246.3460, ext.0

www.volunteerfairfax.org

VA Beach: **The Public Trust: Standards and Accountability, Part II**

June 13 & 14, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Academy for Nonprofit Excellence
Tidewater Community College
Contact Lillian Bailey, 757-822-1170
www.tcc.edu/wd/academy

Hopewell: **Strategic Planning and Nonprofit Lifecycle Stages**

June 5, 12, 19, 26, 5:30 - 7:30 pm
Focus INC Series, The Cameron Foundation
Contact 804-957-5913

Norfolk: **Constructive Conflict Resolution**

June 26, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Academy for Nonprofit Excellence
Tidewater Community College
Contact Lillian Bailey, 757-822-1170
www.tcc.edu/wd/academy

Washington, DC **Earned Income: Assessing Your Revenue Options**

June 6, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
The Foundation Center
Contact: Caroline Herbert
800-424-9836 or
cs@foundationcenter.org

ALSO: Check the [training calendar](#) on VANNO's website for more upcoming events.

Ready to Try Online Fundraising?



Network for Good powered by Groundspring offers several services to help you raise money online and engage your constituency. This comprehensive website offers a number of easy, practical and affordable tools which enable you to:

- Design giving pages to look like your web site and send personalized gift receipts to your donors.
 - Accept online donations with no monthly costs.
 - Reach out to your supporters through email newsletters and online fundraising appeals.

- Learn best practices of online fundraising and donor communications in our workshops and online courses.

Visit www.networkforgood.org and make it happen!

Nonprofit Congress Update

Remember the large national gathering of nonprofit representatives in Washington, DC last October? The momentum is continuing with several national level initiatives in response to the 3 national priorities identified at the Nonprofit Congress.

The goal of The Primary Project is to engage the 2008 presidential candidates with the sector, about the sector. New Hampshire was selected as the pilot site for this project, largely because of its history as the first state to hold primary elections. The NH Association of Nonprofits is conducting sessions for nonprofit leaders to equip them with information about the scope and impact of the sector, and to help them become comfortable with talking to candidates. All presidential candidates are then being invited to small "living room" conversations with nonprofits. These conversations will focus on 3 questions for candidates: *What has been your personal interaction/experience with nonprofits? How would you strengthen the capacity of nonprofits to meet community needs? How would you partner with nonprofits to reach your vision for this country?* The results of the New Hampshire pilot will then be made available for replication in other states.

The Nonprofit Voter Engagement Project is based on the belief that the clients served by many nonprofit organizations are the "sleeping giant" of our democratic process: they are often the most affected by public policy decisions, yet are the least likely to vote. Because these nonprofit service providers already have a trusting relationship with these individuals, they are in a great position to encourage them to get involved. The project is now working in 7 states, developing materials and tools and strategies for getting these citizens excited about voting. Next year additional states will be encouraged to become involved. More details are now available at www.nonprofitvote.org.

A third project focuses on the issue of nonprofit leadership transition. A diverse committee has formed with the goal of supporting emerging leaders in the nonprofit sector, and facilitating the intergenerational knowledge transfer from existing leaders. The committee includes representatives of American Humanics, Young Professionals Network, United Way, funders, and nonprofit executives. They are collecting examples, program models and ideas related to encouraging

and mentoring individuals who want to move into nonprofit leadership roles, while also capturing and sharing the knowledge and expertise of current leaders. This material will then be posted on the Nonprofit Congress website for use at the state and local levels.

The next Nonprofit Congress will be held in Washington, DC on June 4-6, 2008. Watch for more details, or visit www.nonprofitcongress.org.

Volunteer - and Live a Healthier Life



Scientific research during the past 20 years supports a number of health benefits for those who become involved with charitable efforts. The Corporation for National and community Service has compiled the results of numerous studies into a 17-page report which demonstrates the connection between altruism, community involvement and good health.

"The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research", is available free online at www.nationalservice.org. (Why not weave some of these facts into your next volunteer recruitment speech?!)

Succession Planning for Founders & Execs

Next Steps Workshop: July 12-13, 2007
Annie E. Casey Foundation,
Baltimore, MD

Next Steps is a two-day workshop designed for founders or long-term executives of nonprofit organizations planning to leave or considering leaving their position within the next 1-6 years. The workshop includes an overview of succession and transition planning processes, mini working sessions addressing your role through a transition, organizational assessment, succession planning, and building organizational capacity and sustainability. Participants will gain insight from a panel of executives who have made successful transitions and have an opportunity to hear from and network with executives who are actively involved in leadership succession and/or transition planning.

This unique workshop provides a confidential place to reflect and discuss specific succession and transition concerns with peers and resource consultants while understanding techniques for managing succession and transition in ways that enhance agency capacity, whether departure is 12

months or 6 years away. Participants benefit from lessons and best practices from 10 years of practice and research in succession planning and leadership transitions.

For more information, to register for the Next Steps workshop and to join us in a free Webinar for an in-depth overview of the Next Steps workshop, visit our website at www.transitionguides.com/events/next_steps.htm.

Declare "Out-of-the-Box" Week

By Susan J. Ellis, Energize, Inc.
Energize Volunteer Management Update, May 2007, www.energizeinc.com

Many years ago I was consulting with a small arts group that was many thousand dollars in debt. During a board retreat, I asked everyone to go around and answer the following question: "What skill do you have that this organization has never asked you to use on its behalf?" With some embarrassment, two board members said "grantwriting." After the president picked herself off the ground, she asked the obvious: "Why didn't you ever say so?" Each answered: "I wasn't on that committee."

I share this true story because it crystallized some critical points for me:

- After interviewing a volunteer initially and selecting a matching assignment, we rarely review the person's application to revisit the answers given to questions about skills and interests.
- As time passes, we think we "know" long-term volunteers and don't re-interview them to update our information about their lives. So we may know a lot about some volunteers, but others may (unknown to us) have earned a graduate degree, changed employers and received new training, gained different experience in another volunteer role with another agency, etc.
- It is very easy to "typecast" volunteers - and paid staff - into the roles in which they started. And, in turn, people come to assume that the organization only needs them in the roles they are in.
- People tend to downplay their own talents and assume the organization already has others with similar skills.

So here's a suggestion. Declare an "Out-of-the-Box Week." To prepare, *at least one month before* ask everyone - volunteers and employees, top execs and custodians, *everyone* - the key question: ***What skill do you have that you've never had the chance to use on behalf of our organization but would be willing to use if the opportunity arose?*** You may need to give them some ideas to generate more creativity. For example, it's ok to identify things like:

- Education that seems unrelated (at least on the surface) to the work at hand
- Performing arts talent
- Hobbies and special interests (cooking, gardening, photography)
- Languages spoken

Expect to get a very eclectic list! With an Out-of-the-Box leadership team, group the skills into clusters. Then brainstorm how each of them might be applied to a real need. Note that it is very important to use at least one talent of *every* person submitting a response! Nothing is worse than offering a skill that then gets overlooked.

What kinds of things can you do with such a wide range of skills? The possibilities are limitless. For example:

- Ask volunteers/employees to consult for a few hours with other departments or programs that might need their unexpected talents.
- Barter a few hours of people's skills to community groups that may want them in exchange for a similar number of hours of their special skills.
- Depending on the clients you serve, let volunteers/employees share their talents one-to-one as a special treat (for both sides!) for a few hours.
- Ask some people to offer mini-seminars on their skill area for everyone else.

Out-of-the-Box Week takes planning. But the pay-offs can be direct and enormous: some work will get done in new ways; unexpected opportunities will materialize; people will get to know one another in different ways; and everyone will feel refreshed by the break in routine. (Please let Energize know if you try this idea and we'll report back to everyone else! Contact us at: info@energizeinc.com)

Books Worth Reading

Asking: A 59-Minute Guide to Everything Board Members, Volunteers, and Staff Must Know to Secure the Gift by Jerold Panas. An easy-to-read but savvy little book about how to ask for money. Perfect reading for board members - consider purchasing a copy for everyone and using it as a topic for discussion at your board meetings! Available from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Nonprofits Made Easy by David H. Bangs, Jr. A basic guide for small or new nonprofit organizations, this book provides information about starting a charity, hiring staff, strategic

planning, fiscal management, legal considerations and fundraising. Includes sample forms, checklists and even a sample executive-director evaluation form. Available from Entrepreneur Press, www.entrepreneurpress.com or 949-261-2325.

Nonprofit Survey: Tell Us Your Priorities

If you haven't already done so, please go to:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=148471536657>

and complete this brief survey about what you think should be the priorities for action to support nonprofits here in Virginia.

As mentioned in the April issue of this newsletter, VANNO and the individuals who served as Virginia's delegates at the Nonprofit Congress last fall invite your participation in a brief on-line survey to determine the most critical specific actions to undertake in the year ahead.

This survey builds on input gathered during 7 "town hall" meetings held throughout Virginia in September 2006. At these meetings nonprofit leaders discussed challenges they face and the types of resources and strategies that are needed in order to help nonprofit organizations in Virginia operate more effectively and efficiently. The comments from these town hall meetings was then carried to the first national Nonprofit Congress in Washington, DC, where delegates from throughout the country reached consensus on major focus areas for the sector.

12 Questions a Board Should Ask and Understand

1. Where do our revenues come from?
2. What is our cash flow?
3. What could really hurt (or kill) our organization in the next few years?
4. How are we doing relative to other organizations similar to ours?
5. If our chief executive were hit by a bus or won the lottery tomorrow, who would run the organization?
6. How are we going to improve, grow and move forward?
7. Are we living within our means?
8. How much does our staff (and others) get paid?
9. How does bad news get to the top?
10. What are our internal controls?



11. Do we understand what our auditors are telling us?
12. Do I really understand the answers to questions 1-11?

Source: Nonprofit Leadership Initiative, University of Kentucky.

Publicize Your Training Events Here

Remember to use VANNO's website calendar and monthly newsletter as a way to publicize training events you are offering. Many nonprofit staff and volunteers are willing to travel 1-2 hours in search of high quality professional development, so you may very well attract attendees from beyond your local community. Send your announcements to info@vanno.org, or call 804-794-8689.

Email: info@vanno.org
Phone: 804-794-8689
Web: www.vanno.org