

HEARN

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many fine young people.

In my first experience with a major donor years ago, I learned what giving means to the giver. My institution had a desperate need for space for teaching the fine arts, and a donor emerged who wanted to build this space. A successful man with no formal education beyond high school, he had as an adult acquired a deep appreciation for the arts. His life had been immensely

enriched by these interests, and he regretted having missed the opportunity to study the arts formally. The building had a deep personal significance for him. It pleased him that young people were being given values and interests he had come to cherish.

As we walked through the building after its dedication, with painters, musicians, dancers and others at work in every room, he thanked me for the opportunity the institution had given him. "Nothing I have ever done has given me so much satisfaction," he said. We

remained friends until his death. It was a satisfying relationship for both of us, grounded in his generosity and pleasure at the meaning of his success for generations of students and faculty.

There are many such stories. Successful people want their achievements to serve values they cherish.

Their values find expression in contributions to the institutions whose programs can make future opportunities for many. Thus do generous people of vision create a better future.

MATTOX

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major fundraising opportunities into minor ones simply because we fail to articulate a vision and strategy that captures the donor's wider interests and imagination. Better strategies will contain (1) multiple requirements that are well integrated; (2) specific means of measuring results; and (3) greater long-term benefits to the recipient institution than the sum of the parts would indicate.

4. Identify and empower the solicitor. James F. Girard of Palo Alto, Calif., a 1959 graduate of Duke's School of Engineering, served as our the solicitor. We worked with Jim and the project champion, Assistant Professor David Overhauser, to identify tangible, achievable goals and begin the strategy to achieve them.

The solicitor is the critical link. Jim served as intermediary between our champion and donors, reconciling their diverse interests. The solicitor structures and shapes the champion's strategy to appeal to the

donor. He or she also identifies the donor's motivation and interest and shapes the university's strategy to satisfy the donor's needs.

The most effective solicitors work closely with prospective donors, and already have relationships with the key executives whose support is necessary to closing the gift.

5. Individual recognition. Every nickel the university invests in carefully targeted ways to recognize donors and volunteers is critical. But while public recognition ensures some good will, it doesn't guarantee the project's overall success.

6. Bypass the bureaucracy. Even the best organizations contain people who simply want to continue doing business as usual. The most creative fundraising strategies can stall out if the champion, solicitor and development staff wait for the bureaucracy. Schools that recognize the partnership matches they need, and the ability to cut red tape to seize opportunities at crucial moments, will reach their goals and build a reputation appreciated by the aggressive corporate world.

To bypass the bureaucracy, however, is not to bypass institutional leaders. The fundraising team — internal champion, outside volunteer solicitor and development staff — that employs our model should cultivate high-level support within the organization. Deans and administrators must see the project as a priority to enable the team to focus on areas of defined importance. Success depends directly on high-level, internal support.

The development team's task is to build consensus between institutional players by creatively linking their diverse institutional goals. Our model will not replace traditional corporate fundraising, but it can work for a specific project in a particular industry. From a development officer's perspective, the return on time invested was well worth the effort — and risk — in securing support on campus for our test case. While our overall approach is new, then, our model still relies on those time-tested elements of all successful fundraising: building relationships and matching interests.

Letters

It's all right to care

While the overall information contained in the *Philanthropy Journal* is most helpful to my work in the nonprofit sector, an article by Stephanie Smith titled "Women Prisoners Search for A Voice" (April 1994) is, for me, the best article published to date.

Besides identifying with her work with criminal offenders (I serve as Director of GAPS — Greater After Prison Support), I appreciate even more the understanding and compassion she shared in her writing.

Regardless of the focus, strategy, needs or population served, Ms. Smith seems to personify the type of dedication to which all in human service work are called.

Though they are very different from herself, she appears to know firsthand the frustrations and hopes of the clients with whom she works. She writes with an obvious display of sharing their frustrations and their hopes.

Yet she handles her own frustrations with those angered by crime and criminals. Though such citizens are also very different from her with regard to solutions, she seems to understand and be non-judgmental of them as well.

Thank you for publishing her article. For me, it reinforced not only that it is OK to feel strongly about what you are trying to accomplish, but in fact, it is exactly how we should feel.

I hope the *Philanthropy Journal* will consider more articles that: 1)

reveal the very human condition of many persons in our state, and 2) challenge us in the field of human service to Keep on caring deeply.

CATHY EPPERSON

Executive Director

GAPS (Greater After Prison Support)
Gastonia

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Ideas

Sharpening the focus

Incoming Independent Sector president looks ahead

Independent Sector, the national organization for nonprofits, has named Sara Melendez to succeed Brian O'Connell as president on Sept. 1. Melendez, a Puerto Rican native who grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y., is president of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington. O'Connell, who founded Independent Sector, will join the Lincoln Filene Center at Tufts University in Boston. Melendez talked with the *Philanthropy Journal* the day after she was named, and the week before national nonprofit leaders met with President Clinton in the White House.

JOURNAL: What are your top priorities?

MELLENDEZ: Two major issues are the role of the Independent Sector, meaning both grantors and nonprofit organizations, as we move into the next century. And, as we look at changing demographics in the United States, the changing nature of work, and the implications of increased needs for services that government cannot and probably in some cases should not provide. What does that mean for the kinds of nonprofit organizations we have? Does it mean we have new ones, with new visions and new strategies, or just that the ones we have need to incorporate new visions and new strategies? That's a very important dialogue and I think that Independent Sector should be at the forefront of that dialogue.

We still have work to do in

strengthening public perception about the nonprofit world, and that is a two-way process. Those organizations that have been having difficulty need help in improving their management and governance. Some organizations that have had difficulty with their image may need to work on improving their management and governance. Some of them may need to do a better job of getting out the story about their good work. So Independent Sector could play a double role — one in helping organizations improving accountability procedures, improve their decision-making that uses the values and ethics that the sector has been talking about.

The other side of what the Independent Sector could do about perceptions and image is to get out the story more. The good story. The good organizations that are doing good work all the time with the highest standards of values and ethics and of accountability.

Also, there is a lot of work to be done in terms of increasing the awareness among Americans of the importance of their contributing both their funds and their time to volunteer work. That is a major part of what Independent Sector does, and I continue to see that being a major part of its work.

JOURNAL: What specific tactics will you use to put those strategies into effect?

MELLENDEZ: The organization has been doing some work in ethics and values and developing some tools that organizations can use in self-assessment. They have been doing some work in evaluation models that organizations can do to evaluate the effectiveness of their work. Obviously

Q & A

a strategy is to disseminate this information as broadly as possible and perhaps to provide some technical assistance to organizations to improve their own organizational processes.

JOURNAL: Partnerships are becoming increasingly important to bring about social change. What do you see as nonprofits' role in forming partnerships? How can you increase partnerships while at the same time avoiding turf problems?

MELLENDEZ: That is one of the roles that Independent Sector can legitimately play, being a forum for bringing together people from all the sectors to talk about how we can best leverage one another's resources. How can we combine resources to put together collaborative partnership to do the things that each one of us can not do alone, to avoid any possible duplication or reinventing the wheel? Also, I think that that is a way to make sure that we are not working at cross purposes.

So we need to have an ongoing conversation between government, the nonprofit world and the private sector so that we can understand one another's needs, and the limits of the resources of each sector. So that when we devise a joint strategy, it's one that we all understand, we all understand our role in it and our piece of it, and we reduce any possibility of both waste and a strategy that may benefit one sector at the expense of the other.

For example, some nonprofits do job skills training. They really need to be talking on a constant basis with

people in the private sector to make sure that the job skills they are providing are what the private sector needs. We also need to be talking with the private sector on an ongoing basis to ensure that if they are teaching technology, they have access to state-of-the-art technology.



Sara Melendez

And we also need an ongoing conversation between the private and nonprofit sector and government, and one topic, for example, that I think that conversation might deal with is the desirability of a nonprofit sector that can engage in advocacy. In Congress at the moment, there are proposals to require what the sector feels is excessive and unnecessary reporting on advocacy activities.

There seems to be a desire on some people in Congress to limit the amount of advocacy that nonprofit people engage in. Think about it. Look at what advocacy achieved for us in terms of the civil rights movement and civil rights legislation. And think of how the rights and status of women have changed as a result of the women's movement. And we need to have advocacy for the arts and the humanities because they don't have many champions. So I think our society needs organizations that can play an advocacy role as well as render services.

And without tax exemption, it becomes almost impossible, because

these organizations depend on contributions.

JOURNAL: You mentioned the role of government. Under the current administrations in Washington and Raleigh, there's a new role for the nonprofit sector. What are the challenges and opportunities in that new relationship?

MELLENDEZ: I have a sense that that is still being worked out, but there is a definite role for, at the very least, a lot of cross-pollination among these sectors. For example, the White House has invited a group of leaders in the nonprofit sector for a meeting [April 12]. That's the result of work among many people in nonprofit sector to make that happen for a while.

Part of what the nonprofit sector is looking for is more exposure for the sector to the administration, and vice versa. There is an incredible amount of expertise and knowledge and experience of the people who work in the nonprofit sector. So when they are looking at designing new policy and looking for new legislation, there is this great collection of people who could be a resource to them. Part of what people in the nonprofit sector hope will happen is they will be called on more for information and advice for policies in which they have this experience.

Part of what's been in papers recently is welfare reform. I don't know to what extent the administration has reached out to groups that have worked in welfare issues. And health care, education, the arts and housing. There are nonprofit organizations working in almost every single issue that the administration has to deal with from a legislation and policy perspective.