

NOTEBOOK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

NCexChange nabs telecom grant

The North Carolina nonprofit, NCexChange, which works with nonprofits on telecommunications issues, has received a \$543,000 grant from the Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Terry Grunwald, project director at NCexChange, says the grant will allow the organization to launch a demonstration of its community information broker model, where computer savvy workers assist local groups with using information technology and telecommunications to address local problems.

The information brokers will work with nonprofits, local agencies and small businesses. NCexChange will work with host organizations throughout North Carolina. Those groups are: Center for Community Self-Help, Greensboro; BMW Community Development Corporation, Northeastern North Carolina; Downeast Partnership for Children, Rocky Mount; N.C. Cooperative Extension Service, Swain County.

Visit <http://www.ntia.gov/otia-home/tiiap/frames.htm> for information at the Commerce Department's telecommunications grant program.

Service offers address search

SearchAmerica is a fee-based address search database available on the World Wide Web. Searching also can be done by phone number. For information, visit: <http://searchamerica.com>.

Win free software from Droege

Looking for a customized database for your nonprofit? You might check out an offer from Droege Computing Services.

Over the next 12 months, the Durham firm will host four regional software developers competitions that produce a customized database for a selected nonprofit with challenging database needs.

It works like this: Nonprofits submit applications detailing their problem. One nonprofit is selected for each competition; there will be four competitions in the next year in Chicago, San Jose, Boston and Raleigh/Durham.

Teams of software developers gather in one place, receive the nonprofit's problem and then create the software package to solve the problem. Up to five people from the nonprofit evaluate the software and select the winner. The nonprofit gets to take home the package, valued at \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Droege soon is expected to announce the name of the nonprofit whose database needs will be the challenge of Chicago competition Dec. 10-12.

Nonprofits throughout the U.S. still have time to submit their applications for consideration for the other Droege competitions scheduled for the next 12 months.

For more information, contact Tom Droege at (919)403-9459. Or visit Droege's Web site: <http://www2.interpath.net/dev-comp>.

UNREST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

when we joined the company, and we accept it as a way of business in the professional services and consulting world. The company has a flexible work schedule arrangement that allows its personnel to adjust their work hours accordingly."

Clients and former employees also emphasize that Capital Consortium does a good job for its clients.

"All along the way, their counsel has been second to none," says Greg Kirkpatrick, executive director of the Food Bank of North Carolina. Capital Consortium is advising the Food Bank on a \$1.7 million capital campaign that is only \$200,000 shy of its goal and has a trust fund worth another \$1 million that was made possible through the planned gift of a building to house the Food Bank's operations.

Kirkpatrick says Capital Consortium has done more than simply help the Food Bank raise money. The firm, he says, also has helped the Food Bank build its organizational capacity and strengthen its board, leadership and staff.

At a daily rate of \$1,100, Capital Consortium will receive about \$127,500 for its work for the Food Bank - a fee that Kirkpatrick says is well-deserved and "very reasonable."

Still, people who have worked for or with Capital Consortium, say its own organizational capacity could use some strengthening. While they concede that most organizations face grumbling from employees, they also say that Bennett's management style has contributed to internal unrest.

"There are three things that motivate John - money and making money as a businessman, politics and maintaining the political network he grew up with, and control of projects, clients and his staff," says Mark Rountree, formerly a senior staff member at Capital Consortium and now director of development at the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Louisville. Before starting Capital Consortium, Bennett was a political fundraiser for Gov. Jim Hunt.

By comparison, Rountree says, Bennett's staff is motivated not by money, politics or control but by a desire to serve the nonprofit sector. As a result, Rountree says, Bennett has worked his staff hard and

stretched staff members' ability to serve clients.

Some former employees, speaking on the condition that they not be identified, say an overriding concern of Capital Consortium's staff has been that working conditions do not reduce the services being delivered to clients.

In addition to long working hours, these former employees says, Bennett's strategy has been to shift his professional staff among clients, unsettling employees and creating unnecessary change for clients.

That strategy, says one former staffer, is based on "expediency...John's bottom line is financial."

At a retreat of the Capital Consortium staff last winter, a consultant presented the results of a survey on employee and client satisfaction. The results, says the former employee, were mixed, but indicated some dissatisfaction on the part of clients.

Bennett says client dissatisfaction "is not an issue at all in our company," although he concedes that the company three years ago faced a "much, much more serious problem."

"We had a concern [three years

ago] about clients about whether they were receiving service to their satisfaction," he says.

One concern at that time, he says, was that staff members were being shifted among clients. But he says he ended the practice three years ago "because some of the shifting was not to the benefit of our clients. We have not done that in the past couple of years."

He also acknowledges that employees are expected to work hard, but says that is in keeping with his goal of serving clients.

"Inevitably, in any company, particularly in a company our size, with the client load we have, where the number one priority is client satisfaction, you're going to have employees who feel at times they have more on their plate than they should," Bennett says.

Indeed, he says, he reiterated at the staff meeting last month that employees are expected to work hard to serve Capital Consortium's clients.

"I think we have explained again to the people in the company that the priority in the company is the client and what that means and what they should expect in terms of their workload to satisfy the client," he says.

AFTER OPENING SO MANY DOORS FOR FUNDRAISERS, THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING LEFT FOR US TO DO.

OPEN WINDOWS™



Non-profit organizations of all sizes have already made Donor II the nation's most talked about - and asked for - fundraising software. And if you run Windows, you can run your fundraising program more efficiently than ever before with the latest addition to our line of software: our Windows version.

Call us today for more information about Donor II for Windows, our DOS version, or any of our other accounting modules.

You'll see that when it comes to giving you powerful yet efficient and user-friendly fundraising management, we're very good at opening new doors.

DONOR II

The Power Tool for Fundraising Professionals™

Systems Support Services 8848-B Red Oak Blvd. Charlotte, NC 28217-5518 1-800-548-6708

Windows is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation

Subscribe to the Journal.

Call (919) 899-3742.