

# Connections

Nonprofit World focuses on Internet

## National online conference scheduled for Charlotte

Nonprofit World, a national series of conferences on nonprofits and the Internet, will be held Oct. 29-30 in Charlotte.

The Charlotte event, to be held at the Adam's Mark hotel, will be part of Philanthropy '98, the fifth annual conference for North Carolina's nonprofit sector. Both Nonprofit World and

Philanthropy '98 are services of The Philanthropy Journal, which publishes the *Philanthropy Journal of North Carolina*.

Nonprofit World will examine online tools and techniques nonprofits can use to raise money, market their ideas and deliver services. Speakers include regional and national online

experts and nonprofit leaders.

More than 500 people from 40 states attended the *Philanthropy Journal's* first national conference on nonprofits and the Internet, which was held in Washington, D.C., in January. The *Journal* also will present Nonprofit World this year in Boston, Chicago, Dallas and Los

Angeles, and in 1999 in Atlanta, Denver, Miami, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York, the San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle and Washington, D.C.

The A.J. Fletcher Foundation in Raleigh, which has launched an initiative to support nonprofits' use of technology and last year sponsored an Internet session at Philanthropy '97,

will be a sponsor of Nonprofit World in Charlotte.

The theme of Philanthropy '98, which initially was scheduled for May 12-13 in Greensboro, will be nonprofits as entrepreneurial organizations.

Call Shannon Leskin, director of event services and development for the *Journal*, at (919) 899-3758.

### 'Giving Voice to Your Heart'

## Nonprofits get media relations boost

A national group offers media assistance to nonprofits.

By PATTY COURTRIGHT

Nonprofit organizations that want a stronger voice in communicating the value of what they do have a new tool available to them.

The "Giving Voice to Your Heart" initiative, sponsored by Independent Sector in Washington, D.C., provides core press releases, speeches, op-ed pieces and the like that organizations can tailor for specific uses.

"Organizations can use all or part of our material and amend it to their needs," says Peter Shiras, vice president of programs for Independent Sector. "The program really comes alive when people take the basic concepts and adapt them to their own area and issues."

The result of extensive research with leaders of nonprofits, the public, the media and legislative representatives, the "Giving Voice to Your Heart" program evolved as part of Independent Sector's long-term strategy to strengthen the understanding of nonprofit organizations across the country, Shiras says.

Through in-depth interviews, focus groups and a national survey, the group was able to assess public, legislative and media perceptions of nonprofits as well as to identify what the leaders of nonprofits believed to be their most important messages.

Three key themes evolved from the research: Nonprofit organizations make a difference in the lives of people locally, nationally and internationally; the nonprofit sector puts shared values, such as compassion and altruism, into action; and the nonprofit sector is successful because of citizen involvement.

While the program is too new to show any measurable results, Shiras says, many groups and indi-

viduals have requested information about it.

Donors Forum, a Chicago-based membership association of foundations, has decided to put "Giving Voice to Your Heart" to work for them.

A couple of years ago, Donors Forum worked with United Way of Chicago and other groups to research nonprofit issues, such as what nonprofit leaders were thinking, how policy makers

felt toward nonprofits and why the organizations were not seeing large increases in

donations. The result was a need to educate the public about what nonprofits are and how they operate.

These all are areas the "Giving Voice to Your Heart" campaign targets, says Valerie Lies, Donors Forum president.

"We chose to participate in the 'Voice' campaign so we could take advantage of Independent Sector's message research, then tailor the message to the Chicago area and apply it to our needs," she says. "We want to empower all the nonprofits in the Chicago area to use the key messages provided."

When Donors Forum initiates its campaign in June, the biggest challenge the group expects to face is changing the attitudes and perceptions of a diverse population, Lies says. For instance, people often don't think of organizations they deal with every day — such as churches and day-care centers — as nonprofits, she says.

"Through the communications campaign, we must build connections to organizations that impact people, not only as volunteers but as prospective donors," Lies says.

Another nonprofit, the

Children's Alliance of Seattle, an advocacy organization for children and families, plans to use the "Giving Voice to Your Heart" program to help local groups tell their stories more effectively.

Because nonprofits as a rule are inexperienced in using communication tools for advocacy purposes and in explaining what they do, the "Voice" campaign will help spread the word, says Steve Lansing,

Children's Alliance project organizer.

"Many times, nonprofits are taken for granted in their communities," Lansing says.

The "Giving Voice to Your Heart" material will highlight nonprofit organizations in various areas and remind people that nonprofits are in need of care, he says.

"Anything you can do — even a small thing — is a positive step," Lansing says.

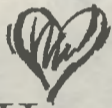
The "Voice" campaign is not limited to members of Independent Sector, Shiras says. In fact, the group will work on a one-on-one basis with any interested nonprofit organization. Every two months, participants will receive new materials geared for that particular season. For instance, current materials offer tax tips to coincide with the April 15 tax deadline.

"The materials have both a public policy and public education angle and are intended to be flexible and adaptable for both uses," Shiras says. "The success of the 'Giving Voice to Your Heart' program will be determined by the extent to which the nonprofits pick it up and use it."

For information about the program, contact Independent Sector at (202) 223-8100, e-mail <givingvoice@indepsec.org> or on the Web at <www.indepsec.org>

Giving Voice  
to Your Heart

America's Nonprofit Organizations



### Nonprofit surfers

## Survey shows online readers politically active, wired

By SEAN BAILEY

Philanthropy Journal Online readers make up a wired crowd, using laptops, home computers, cell phones, pagers and personal digital assistants, according to a recent online survey of more than 1,200 readers.

More than 84 percent of the respondents have a home computer, 48 percent use cell phones, 45 percent use laptop computers, 17 percent have pagers and 5.5 percent have personal digital assistants.

In addition to being technically savvy, Philanthropy Journal Online readers are politically active. More than 93 percent of those who responded have voted in at least one of the last two elections.

The Philanthropy Journal Online conducted the survey during a three-week period in January. More than 10,000 readers were e-mailed the survey and 1,202 responded.

The survey largely focused on demographics and technology use. Here are some highlights:

Philanthropy Journal Online readers are fairly heavy Internet users, many spending some time every day checking their e-mail and visiting Web sites. More than 90 percent check their e-mail at least once a day — 70.4 percent check their e-mail

more than once daily. And more than 89 percent visit Web sites several times a week.

Sixty percent of survey respondents access the Web both at home and work. Only 15.6 percent access the Web only from home and 24 percent only access the Web from work.

In the battle between Netscape and Microsoft for Web browser market share, Netscape appears to have a commanding lead. More than 70 percent of survey respondents use some version of the Netscape browser and more than 21 percent use a version of Microsoft's Internet Explorer. The America Online browser accounted for 5.8 percent.

When it comes to operating systems, however, Microsoft's Windows 95 is used by 65.3 percent and the Macintosh operating system is used by only 12 percent. Microsoft's Windows 3.1 and 3.11 operating systems are used by another 11 percent of users.

Philanthropy Journal Online readers travel the Internet at a speedy clip. More than 16 percent use high speed access (ISDN or T1 lines) and another 16 percent use the latest 56K speed modem. More than 57 percent use 28.8K or 33.6K modems.

For complete results of the survey, visit Philanthropy Journal Online <<http://www.pj.org>>.

### Britt leaving as nonprofit adviser

Robin Britt, adviser to Gov. Jim Hunt for children, families and nonprofits, is leaving his job at the end of May. Britt expects either to head a nonprofit in Greensboro or to begin a new nonprofit there.

He hopes to focus efforts on an initiative to prevent child abuse and neglect and to boost brain development among children through age three through the use of nurses working with families.

Hunt created the position of

adviser for children, families and nonprofits in 1997 and named Britt to fill it. Britt previously had served as secretary of human resources and in that job was instrumental in the creation of Hunt's Smart Start initiative. Britt in 1987 founded Uplift Inc., a Greensboro nonprofit that works with low-income children and their families.

Sean Walsh, Hunt's press secretary, says Hunt has not decided what to do about replacing Britt.

### Online fundraising

## Service puts nonprofit Web donations on phone bills

By SEAN BAILEY

This is the year of "e-commerce" on the World Wide Web and the nonprofit world is beginning to receive the attention of entrepreneurial organizations that figure it won't be long before people routinely make charitable donations online.

One new entrant to the field is eCHARGE, a Seattle-based organization that hopes to become ubiquitous on nonprofit Web sites, offering its eCHARGE button as a safe and easy way for people to make donations.

"When it comes to the nonprofit sector, we want to stand out as providing the easiest solution for some-

one to make a donation to the nonprofit," says Michael Maddy, an eCHARGE representative.

For the end user, Maddy says, the process is simple. You visit a nonprofit Web site. It delivers information and services. When it's time to make a donation, buy a product or acquire a membership, the visitor simply clicks on the eCHARGE button.

At that point, the eCHARGE software takes over. It directs the user's computer modem to sign off. The modem then dials a special AT&T/eCHARGE phone number and charges the payment to the user's

phone bill. Then the computer signs off and redials the user's original Internet access number, thus allowing the user to continue with his or her Web session.

The entire transaction takes less than two minutes, says Maddy.

Maddy believes people and organizations will sign up to use eCHARGE because it is fast, safe and puts all the charges in one spot, the phone bill.

eCHARGE offers an option for people who prefer not to use their credit card numbers online.

"It allows people to use something

they are already comfortable using to make donations," Maddy says.

Maddy says eCHARGE anticipates offering the billing option beyond phone companies. The eCHARGE button could be configured, for instance, to charge any utility bill such as gas, electric or cable, he says.

E-charge hopes nonprofits will find the system attractive because it will be more cost-effective than other fundraising programs. eCHARGE expects costs to be less than 7 per-

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