

VIEWPOINT

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Spotlight Feature

Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital. . 4



Among the final components of Marianjoy's Legacy Project is the new Aquatic Therapy Center, which will be unveiled at the Grand Opening on November 13.

WSPN mission:

Offering support to development professionals and advancing philanthropy since 1986.

Perils of Commission-Based Grant Writing

By Nathan Medina, MPS, GPC

Grant professionals are often asked to consider commission-based grant writing, a highly debated issue also known as “contingency-based billing,” “commissioned services,” and other phrases that are synonymous with receiving payment only if a grant is awarded.

With the increased use of discussion forums and social media, this topic frequently arises. Various professionals express and defend their viewpoints, which sometimes turn into debates that go awry, and then the thread eventually vanishes until the topic is brought up again within a different context in another discussion.

The general consensus of most grant professionals is that commission-based grant writing is unethical. Professional associations, including the Grant Professionals Association and the Association of Fundraising Professionals, include in their code of ethics that “commission or percentage compensation based on grants” is not acceptable.¹

However, there are those within the grant field who assert that commission-based grant writing is acceptable within certain parameters. Therein lies the dilemma. Upon defining these parameters, one quickly finds there are a great number



of complicated contingencies that lead to many different conclusions.

What's the Big Deal?

Many nonprofits are attempting to meet pressing needs within their communities with limited resources. As a result, some nonprofit executives incorporate for-profit thinking: “Why can't I pay someone a percentage of what they bring in? After all, many people receive commission by selling cars, houses, clothes, insurance, and various commodities and services. This way, we don't have to pay all that money for a grant proposal to be written and they are incentivized to work harder for us.” Entering into a mutual business agreement doesn't appear to hurt anyone and seems beneficial for everyone. But is it?

Salespeople who work on commission do so because it is their job to close the deal. They don't create the product or

(continued on page 11)

2014-15 Nominations/Slate of Officers

WSPN's nominating committee is pleased to announce
the 2014-15 slate of officers:

Ann E. Spehar, President
Monica Bucek, Vice President
Thomas V. Bednar, Treasurer
Sarah Pluth, Secretary

Immediate past president is Chrissie Howorth.

WSPN mission:

Offering support to development professionals and advancing philanthropy.

WSPN core services:

education, networking and advocacy

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Managing editor and designer

Jill McWilliams

Elmhurst College

190 Prospect Avenue

Elmhurst, IL 60126-3296

jillm@elmhurst.edu

We invite your membership. Annual dues to join WSPN are \$40. Register online or make checks payable to West Suburban Philanthropic Network and mail to:

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Executive Director

Naperville Education Foundation

(630) 420-3086

aspehar@naperville203.org

Vice President

Monica Bucek

Director of Major and Planned Gifts

Elgin Community College Foundation

(847) 214-7258

mbucek@elgin.edu

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Thomas V. Bednar

President

St. Francis High School

(630) 668-5800 ext. 1102

tbednar@sfhscollgeprep.org

Secretary

Sarah Pluth

Director of Development

Teen Parent Connection

(630) 790.8433, ext. 232

sarahp@teenparentconnection.org

Immediate Past President

Chrissie Howorth

Associate Vice President of Development

VNA Health Care

(630) 482-8132

choworth@vnahealth.com

President's Message

When I moved from downtown Chicago to the western suburbs six years ago, I thought to myself, "Where will I find my professional home, a stimulating network of colleagues and a place to give back to the industry I love?"

I found all of that and more when I joined WSPN.

Then in 2011, Lora Vitek invited me to join the WSPN board as membership committee chair, and last year, Chrissie Howorth asked me to serve as vice president. A huge, heartfelt thank you to both of them for so warmly welcoming me into WSPN service.

As former chairs, Lora and Chrissie have set a high bar for commitment, innovation and just plain smarts. Their enthusiasm and love for our profession is inspirational. Luckily, Chrissie will remain on the board as our immediate past president, and I have Lora on speed dial, so we're all good.

A huge thank you to our outgoing board members, secretary Tim Traynor and programs chair Mary Miller. WSPN is indebted to you both!

I'm truly pleased to announce that Monica Bucek will serve as vice president, Tom Bednar as treasurer and Sarah Pluth as secretary. I am so grateful Mark Dyer will continue as membership chair, Sam Madan as communications chair, Jill McWilliams as VIEWPOINT editor and Maeven Sipes as annual luncheon chair. Thank you all so much for continuing your WSPN service!

Just like you, your board is dedicated to fostering a strong culture of philanthropy in the western suburbs. Please take a moment to congratulate your board and committee chairs—send them an email, give them a call or snail mail them a note. Let them know they're on the right track and that you appreciate their work toward fulfilling WSPN's mission of offering support to development professionals and advancing philanthropy.

On behalf of your new board members, thank you for your vote of confidence. Please don't hesitate to offer your comments and ideas to any one of us at any time. We welcome your engagement!

Looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely yours,

Ann E. Spehar



Philanthropy Collection News

Trends and Data Sources

By Christine Kickels, Librarian
College of DuPage's Philanthropy
Collection

How many nonprofits are in DuPage County? What are the trends in giving to human services nonprofits? Who are my competitors for funding? These questions are easy when you know where to look. Here are the ones I turn to first. Most are free online sources which makes it even better!

- **Giving USA 2014, givingusareports.org:** Longest running, most comprehensive report on philanthropy in the United States. Highlights are available for free online, but the comprehensive report is available in the Philanthropy Collection.
- **Foundation Center, foundation-center.org:** Free access to national, state, and metropolitan area data on U.S. foundations and their grants. Source for free access to the online Giving in Illinois 2014 report.
- **National Center for Charitable Statistics, nccs.urban.org:** Clearinghouse of data on the nonprofit sector in the United States. Great source for state and county data. I use the options under NCCS Database and Tools to conduct searches.
- **Philanthropy In/Sight®, philanthropyinsight.org:** Interactive mapping tool to reveal patterns of giving and funding nationwide. Searches can be refined for county level information.



The Philanthropy Collection is growing as well. These books are available for four-week loans and can be renewed. Some of the latest additions include:

- **Fundraising with Businesses: 40 New (and Improved!) Strategies for Nonprofits** by Waters
- **Creating Value in Nonprofit-Business Collaborations: New Thinking and Practice** by Austin and Seitanidi
- **The Nonprofit Fundraising Solution: Powerful Revenue Strategies to Take You to the Next Level** by Pagnoni and Solomon
- **Donor Cultivation and the Donor Lifecycle Map: A New Framework for Fundraising** by Polivy

If you haven't visited us lately, you should. Our renovations are done and the campus is beautiful. All are welcome and anyone who works or lives in District 502 is eligible for a COD library card.

If I can help you become more familiar with our non-profit resources, please contact me at (630) 942-2313 or kickels@cod.edu. ●

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nonprofits.** Visit us at www.donorsforum.org



Committee Chairs

Awards Luncheon co-chair

Maeven Sipes

Director of Individual Giving
Northern Illinois Food Bank
(630) 443-6910, ext. 116
msipes@northernillfoodbank.org

Awards Luncheon co-chair

Chrissie Howorth

Associate Vice President of Development
VNA Health Care
(630) 482-8132
choworth@vnahealth.com

Communications chair

Sam Madan

Director of Special Events
and External Relations
Pillars
(630) 606-2920
sam.r.madan@gmail.com

Membership chair

Mark Dyer

Community Outreach Specialist
Mayslake Peabody Estate
Forest Preserve District DuPage County
(630) 206-9568
mdyer@dupageforest.com

Programs chair

Mary Miller

Development Director
Northern Kane Educational Corp.
(630) 922-5280
millermary30@gmail.com

VIEWPOINT editor and designer

Jill McWilliams

Director of Foundation and
Government Relations
Elmhurst College
(630) 617-6470
jillm@elmhurst.edu

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Editor's Note

Dear VIEWPOINT readers:

The 12th Annual Awards Luncheon at Eaglewood Resort and Spa in Itasca was a wonderful success.

Our honorees were exceptional, our presenters were eloquent and our Outstanding Volunteers represented the backbone of much of the work that is accomplished throughout the western suburbs.

See all the luncheon photos on Facebook. Like us while you visit.

As a reminder, electronic versions of VIEWPOINT are found at www.wspnonline.org.

Sincerely,



Jill McWilliams

Advertising in VIEWPOINT

A limited number of business-card size (3.5 x 2 inches) advertising spaces are available in VIEWPOINT.

\$190 - four issues

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Spotlight

Featuring a WSPN Member Organization



MARIANJOY

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare

New Marianjoy Facilities Champion Rehabilitation through Innovation

On November 13, Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital in Wheaton will open the doors to a new Aquatic Therapy and Fitness Center, the Assistive Rehabilitation Technology Institute, and an expanded Conference and Education Center.

These new facilities are the finishing touches in the Legacy Project, a donor-funded campaign which led to the construction of Marianjoy's state-of-the-art replacement hospital in 2006 and a renovated Outpatient Pavilion in 2007.

As the only physical medicine and rehabilitation specialty hospital in the Chicago suburbs, Marianjoy is confident that the Legacy Project is affirming the availability of exceptional rehabilitation in the community for generations to come.

"When we welcome patients to Marianjoy, we promise to be their partner for a lifetime of healing," said Kathleen Yosko, president and CEO. "The improvements we have made over the past decade are confirmation that we plan to fulfill that promise."

The latest enhancements are aimed at harnessing new technology and innovations to meet the needs of a growing population of patients requiring physical rehabilitation. The three components in the final phase of the Legacy Project include:

- a new Aquatic Therapy and Fitness Center that is designed to provide a totally accessible pool environment where patients of all ages and ability levels will benefit from warm water therapy;
- the Assistive Rehabilitation and Technology Institute, where clinicians will introduce advancements in equipment, technology and resources to individuals with disabilities;
- the expanded Conference and



The Assistive Rehabilitation Technology Institute will be a space where Marianjoy's expert clinicians can work with patients to find innovative solutions that will increase independence for individuals with disabilities.

Education Center that will serve as a hub for clinicians and researchers throughout the Midwest to share knowledge and best practices that will improve the quality of life for patients.

Through appeals to individual donors, community businesses and public and private foundations, the Marianjoy Foundation has raised nearly \$22 million of the \$23.5 million needed to complete the capital project.

"We are eternally grateful for the support of our donors," Yosko said. "It is their generous spirit that has turned our vision for the future of rehabilitation into a reality."

Marianjoy will welcome the community to their Grand Opening on November 13 for tours of the new facility, demonstrations of new equipment and exciting news about the future programs of Marianjoy.

Marianjoy annually serves over 2,400 individuals for inpatient rehabilitation care and annually provides an additional 45,000 outpatient treatments for programs in stroke, brain and spinal cord injury, developmental, musculoskeletal and neuromuscular disorders. Marianjoy also provides outpatient therapy and medical direction at its network facilities in Oakbrook Terrace, Elmhurst, Downers Grove, Palos Heights and Oak Park.

For more information, please visit www.marianjoy.org.

Outstanding Volunteers recognized at WSPN's Annual Awards Luncheon on May 21

Photography by LeVern Danley, LAD4 Creations, Inc., www.LeVernDanley.com.



First row (on ground) L to R: Judy Wolthausen, People's Resource Center; Annette Day, Easter Seals of DuPage & Fox River Valley; Edie Hard, VNA Health Care; Judy Wardzala, Tri-Town YMCA; Bonnie Heydorn, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation; Pearl Owczarek, Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital; Alica Chan, Easter Seals of DuPage & Fox Valley; Carol Bulfer, Loaves & Fishes Community Pantry; Gail Lindner, Northern Illinois Food Bank; Milissa Goeden, Naperville CARES
Second row (first step): Roger Libman, People's Resource Center; Jack Sahr, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Jon Baker, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Susan Murdock, Northern Illinois Food Bank; Mary Koopman, Giving DuPage; Pat Green, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Pat Shehorn, People's Resource Center

Third row: John McGleam, People's Resource Center; Dee Peart, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Rose Ashby, Pillars (zebra-print top); Cecilia Ambutas, Metropolitan Family Services; Marcie Peterson, Metropolitan Family Services; Rob Murdock, Northern Illinois Food Bank; Barb Burken, Naperville CARES; Rich Dickson, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Marty Dettmer, DuPage Habitat for Humanity

Fourth row: Patrick Whiteside, Metropolitan Family Services; Bill Moore, People's Resource Center; Connie Bailey, Giving DuPage; Nelson Koopman, Giving DuPage; Ken Lindner, Northern Illinois Food Bank; Erik Anderson, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Paul Jarosz, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; John Perry, Metropolitan Family Services

Not pictured: Ted Craft, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Mike Hillenbrand, DuPage Habitat for Humanity; Chad Choban, Easter Seals of DuPage & Fox Valley; Mary Richter, Giving DuPage; Maria Curry-Nkansah, Illinois Friends of ACT-SO; Susan Sakash, Metropolitan Family Services; Barbara Deli, People's Resource Center; Linda Whitlock, People's Resource Center

"May God bless you with the foolishness that you can make a difference in the world, so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done." – Franciscan Benediction

On May 21, it was our pleasure to honor 42 Outstanding Volunteers, who live that benediction within our community. Every year at the Annual Awards Luncheon, WSPN recognizes Outstanding Volunteers serving area nonprofits. These volunteers have foolishly gone about the task of doing those things that others believe cannot be done.

Through their service, these volunteers touch all facets of our society, and their cumulative efforts make a huge difference in our lives. When these Outstanding Volunteers devote their time, they make it easier for: the hungry to receive a meal; equal access to mental, physical and oral healthcare; a single mom to

move into her first home; children with disabilities to receive the developmental services they desperately need; students with leadership opportunities to become college ready or attend an after-school program; a working family with financial need to thrive or survive a financial crisis; and adults to learn English.

These ordinary folks figure out how to be doers, roll up their sleeves and give selflessly. Their accomplishments are vast and their contributions are immeasurable. Because of their devotion to a cause, we have a stronger, better and more kind community. We thank these Outstanding Volunteers for being generosity personified, and we are blessed with their volunteerism.

"In a nation of millions, in a world of billions, the individual is still the first and basic agent of change." – Lyndon B. Johnson

2014 WSPN 12th Annual Awards Luncheon

The luncheon took place at Eaglewood Resort and Spa in Itasca.

Photography by LeVern Danley, LAD4 Creations, Inc., www.LeVernDanley.com. See all the photos on Facebook.



Philanthropists of the Year: Dr. S. Alan Ray, president of Elmhurst College; Spencer Wegner; honorees Julie and Ken (not present) Wegner; Gavin Wegner; and Chrissie Howorth, WSPN president



Philanthropic Leadership Award: Leanne Vos, executive director of Donka; honoree Joyce Van Der Molen; and Chrissie Howorth



Humanitarian of the Year: Chrissie Howorth; honoree Mark Milligan, co-founder and president of Bridge Communities; and Mary Ellyn Durbin, past executive director of Peoples Resource Center



Nonprofit Executive of the Year: Mari Pierce, board chairman of CASA Kane County; honoree Gloria Bunce, executive director of CASA Kane County; and Chrissie Howorth



Corporate Philanthropic Award: Ann E. Spehar, exec. director of Naperville Education Foundation; award accepted by Lisa Hartenberger, director of corporate communications and community relations of Navistar; and Chrissie Howorth



Foundation Philanthropic Award: Chrissie Howorth; award accepted by Peri Todd, director of DuPage Medical Group Charitable Fund; and David M. McGowan, president of The DuPage Community Foundation



Service Club Philanthropic Award: Chrissie Howorth; award accepted by Joe White, president of Kane County Farm Bureau; and Steve Ericson, director of food procurement of Northern Illinois Food Bank



Grantmaker of the Year: Hester Bury, director of corporate and foundation giving of Northern Illinois Food Bank; honoree Deborah Kustra, grants manager of Community Memorial Foundation; and Chrissie Howorth



Nonprofit Volunteer of the Year: Kim Perez, executive director of People's Resource Center; honoree Bill Archer; and Chrissie Howorth



WSPN Distinguished Service Award: Chrissie Howorth, and honoree Lora Vitek



Ken Bartels serving as master of ceremonies.

Blasts from the Past

Program Highlights

By Jill McWilliams

Funders Panel



Left to right: Dave McGowan, Carrol Roark, Heather Higgins Alderman, and Ronald L. McDaniel

On June 19 at Wheaton College, Dave McGowan, president of The DuPage Community Foundation, shared his insights and moderated a funders panel consisting of Heather Higgins Alderman, president of Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation; Ronald L. McDaniel of the Ronald L. McDaniel

Foundation; and Carrol Roark, administrator of community development of DuPage County Community Services.

With more than 2,000 nonprofits in DuPage, competition for funding dollars is increasing. Here are some of their top tips for navigating the funding process:

1. Relationships are key, but board contacts don't necessarily work. An application must stand on its own.
2. Get some kind of green light prior to submitting. The proposal should be concise and well written, focused on impact, and include all of the requirements stated in the RFP. If you have questions, call.
3. Have someone without knowledge of your program read the application and provide feedback.
4. Funding agencies look at organizations' strengths, leadership and their 990s, including salaries. Organizations should know what their 990s say.
5. Sustainability is an important factor, and organizations should list other sources of revenue.
6. Collaborations are key and should be highlighted.
7. It's hard to give if 100 percent of an organization's board isn't already giving.
8. Although anecdotal evidence and stories create an emotional draw, funders are requiring more data-driven metrics and evaluation. Measure outcomes, not outputs.
9. Know and honor the funding agencies' preferences for recognition and press releases. ●

Resource Round-up

The Gospel of Listening

By Jerold Panas, www.panaslinzy.com

If you've read anything I've written or heard me at a seminar, you know the importance I give to the art of listening. It's the gospel I preach. I consider it the single most powerful ammunition in your arsenal of fundraising skills. Best of all, it's a talent that can be learned and acquired.

Here are some observations I want to pass on. If you listen carefully, very carefully—you will hear a gift.

1. It often shows an extraordinary command of the language to say nothing.
2. There's no greater compliment to a person than by showing a keen interest in them. You do this by listening intently.
3. We are blessed with two ears and one mouth—a constant reminder we should listen twice as much as we talk.
4. It's essential to maintain positive eye contact.
5. Tilting your head slightly when listening demonstrates interest.
6. Probe and ask questions. You do this to gain information and better understanding.
7. What should you listen for? The little things. Everything.
8. Listen with your eyes.
9. Listen with your entire being.
10. Smile! It dramatically affects how people respond to you.
11. Unless you know what you're listening for, it may be difficult to know if you have the information you need when you hear it. Prepare carefully before your meeting.
12. You don't listen to respond. You listen to gain information.
13. The better you listen, the smarter you get.
14. What you don't know or you don't find out by asking might hurt you if you don't probe and listen.
15. The better you listen, the more you realize how little you know.
16. You will not get the right answer if you don't ask the right questions.
17. When you talk too much, it is hard to remember all you said—and harder still to remember what they said.
18. Open questions (How? Why? What? When?) allow the respondent an opportunity to provide a full and revealing answer.
19. If you talk more than twenty-five percent of the time, there's a good chance you will never hear the necessary information. Listen seventy-five percent of the time.

Listen as if you're hard of hearing.

Do you have favorite resources you would like to share with VIEWPOINT readers? Please send them to jillm@elmhurst.edu. ●

Building Our Membership

WSPN is proud to be a member-driven organization run by volunteers and supporting the suburban philanthropic community. As such, we are a vibrant organization that needs to continually grow and add to our membership roster.

I'd like all of our members to think back to the WSPN awards luncheon in May or any of the monthly programs from this year—did you bring a guest to any of these events? Did they join WSPN? If they haven't registered yet, please encourage them to sign up. At only \$40, membership in WSPN is the best value for a development professional in the western suburbs!

Thank you,
Mark Dyer, membership chair, mdyer@dupageforest.com

Become a member:

Check out www.wspnonline.org to learn more about WSPN benefits including our monthly educational events, listing of job opportunities and scholarship information.



Scan to join WSPN.

Join online or by downloading a membership application.

Non-transferable dues are \$40 per year.



twitter.com/WSPNOnline



tinyurl.com/WSPNFacebook

Attention members:

We want to keep in touch!

Have you changed jobs or received a new title?

Do you have a new email or mailing address?

Simply log into your profile on www.wspnonline.org with your email and password and update your contact information.

You can request a new password if you've forgotten yours.

Also, join WSPN on LinkedIn to extend your networking possibilities and be a part of the dialog.

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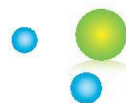
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Member News



In collaboration with Elmhurst Memorial Health Care, Elmhurst College opened the **Elmhurst College Simulation Center at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital** in August. The facility, a 4,600-square-foot laboratory and classroom space, enables Elmhurst College's nursing students (baccalaureate and graduate programs including the new Master's Nursing Entry program) to practice and build clinical knowledge and skills in safety and without risk to patients.

With its location inside the lower level of the hospital, the Simulation Center gives nursing students more opportunities to meet professionals in their field and a real-time understanding of health care trends and changing technologies. The experience will contribute to better patient care. The facility ultimately will serve not only nursing students but also hospital staff and, potentially, first responders and other health care providers from across the Chicago area.

Elmhurst College, elmhurst.edu, is a leading liberal arts college. Its mission is to prepare students for meaningful and ethical work in a multicultural, global society. More than 3,200 full- and part-time students are enrolled in its 24 undergraduate academic departments and more than 15 graduate degree programs.



In June, **Loaves & Fishes** kicked off its thirtieth anniversary at its seventh annual "Day Without Hunger" celebration by changing its name from Loaves & Fishes Community Pantry to Loaves & Fishes Community Services.

At the same time, the organization was recognized at the United Way of Metropolitan Chicago Community Celebration at the Spertus Institute in Chicago as a Top Agency Partner in the area of Safety Net. The event was a celebration of successful community collaborations that are making measurable change in increasing high school graduation rates, building financial stability, improving health and meeting basic needs.



museum.

In July, the Naperville Heritage Society and the Naper Settlement Museum boards appointed **Macarena (Rena) Tamayo-Calabrese** as their president and CEO. Tamayo-Calabrese will work closely with the boards to bring about visionary and strategic leadership for the

Tamayo-Calabrese is an attorney with over two decades of experience in both the practice of law and association management. She previously served as executive director of National Association of Women Lawyers. Prior to this role, she directed several departments at the American Bar Association in Chicago. During her 15-year tenure with ABA, she turned around two failing programs and grew them into the Africa and Asia Law Initiative Councils. She also started similar programs in Latin America and the Caribbean, where with \$20,000 in seed funding, she turned the project into an entire department, which grew operationally to more than \$10 million.

Tamayo-Calabrese received a Juris Doctor from Hofstra University School of Law in New York and a bachelor's from Loyola University.

Naper Settlement is a nationally accredited outdoor history museum featuring 12 acres of learning and interactive opportunities for all ages. With a commitment to the community and a focus on the future, the mission of the Naperville Heritage Society, administrator of Naper Settlement, is to collect, document, preserve and support the history of Naperville's past and present. For more information, visit www.napersettlement.org or call (630) 420-6010.



Julie Yurko was named president and CEO at Northern Illinois Food Bank in May. Yurko spent the past four years as the Food Bank's vice president of philanthropy and communications and has more than 20 years of experience at a variety of nonprofit organizations. Since her arrival at the Food Bank, contributed revenue has doubled.

Northern Illinois Food Bank leads the northern Illinois community in solving hunger by providing nutritious meals to 71,000 hungry neighbors each week through innovative programs and partnerships. That commitment provided 50 million meals last year to those in need.

Find out how you can Volunteer – Donate – Get Involved at www.SolveHungerToday.org.

Share your Member News:

Tell us about your job change, promotion, professional development, awards and honors. Please email your news and photo to Jill McWilliams, VIEWPOINT editor, at jillm@elmhurst.edu. ●



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Perils of Commission-Based Grant Writing (continued from page 1)

service to be sold or get involved with other details unrelated to the sale. For example, a car salesman neither designs, engineers, builds or transports the cars, nor does he oversee the overall operations of a dealership (although this may be the case in some instances). His sole purpose is to close the deal and move on to the next customer.

A grant professional, however, is not the one who “closes the deal.” Many grant professionals are involved with ancillary professional responsibilities including researching prospective opportunities, conducting feasibility analyses, assisting with program development, defining roles, clarifying expectations, ensuring compliance with grantor expectations, developing a budget justification, refining outcomes, explaining evaluation procedures, coalescing team members, ensuring that all collaborative partners are involved, and carrying out responsibilities that require a high degree of professionalism, expertise and finesse. To equate this position with one who “closes the deal” is an insult at best and a business practice with potentially negative consequences.

Factors to Consider

When faced with any decision that can have ethical repercussions, it can be a good idea to “play out” the scenario to see if various circumstances and variables would result in the decision being ethical or unethical.

Scenario 1: If the grant is not awarded and the grant professional is not paid, whose “property” is the grant proposal after the declination? Since the nonprofit never actually paid for the proposal, can they use elements from that proposal to submit a similar proposal? If they use the proposal or various elements thereof, should the grant professional be remunerated for his/her work?

Scenario 2: If the grant is awarded:

a. Who completes the progress report? If a progress report is not submitted due to no fault of the grant professional and the organization is not eligible to submit the next grant, then the grant professional essentially would be penalized due to no fault of his/her own.

b. What about pre-existing grants? In some cases, a foundation may have a history of funding the organization. If a commission-based grant professional writes this grant, should the full commission be allocated?

c. What about grants that come after the commission-based arrangement is terminated? Some foundation, corporate and other organizational relationships can take years to cultivate. If a commission-based grant professional develops a new relationship that results in ongoing grant support, would commission continue after the arrangement between the grant professional and the nonprofit is terminated?

d. What if the grant professional worked on a smaller portion of the grant? Most grants require a great deal of teamwork and communication with various colleagues including program directors, program staff, management, quality assurance, human resources, finance, clients, and partnering agencies. In some situations, a grant professional might do most of the legwork while at other times, the team might put in a great deal of effort and the grant professional’s workload is significantly diminished. In cases like this, would commission be reduced? If so, by how much?

Scenario 3: How do you determine what is fair?

a. Since there are no industry standards for grant commissions, what would be considered fair? Would larger grants be given a smaller amount of commission? If the same commission is used for all grants then the grant professional might put off some grants that are less profitable (for the grant professional), thus affecting the company’s revenue stream.

b. If larger grants were more profitable, would the grant professional have the freedom to accept or decline which grants he/she would consider writing?

Scenario 4: What about large grants that could be considered an excessive benefit for the consultant? Some argue that commission-based grant writing is illegal because it violates the statutory requirements of their granted tax-exempt status and, as a result, creates a for-profit joint venture that inures to an individual. If the compensation is excessive, this may jeopardize

the nonprofit status of the entity by taking a profit from the venture.

Scenario 5: If an organization cannot afford to pay a grant professional out of its general fund, where would the “commission” come from? Many funding agencies do not consider grant writing an allowable expense. In these cases, the nonprofit would be lying (or at least deceiving the donor) if a percentage of the grant funds are actually given to the grant professional instead of used for the proposed services.

A Better Option

Grant professionals provide a valuable service and, as a result, ought to be paid for the services that are provided. Rather than working on commission, grant professionals can receive compensation in other ways that are commonly acceptable within the industry including: charging an hourly rate, charging a flat rate per project, working on a retainer (flat ongoing fee for specified services).

In conclusion, some will argue the ethicality or legality of commission-based grant writing. Therefore, grant professionals who are asked to do their work based on commission should consider these arguments, defend their position and promote fair business practices within the field.

¹ See GPA’s Code of Ethics #19 at www.grantprofessionals.org/about/ethics and AFP’s Code of Ethical Principles and Standards #24 at www.afpnet.org.



Nathan Medina, MPS, GPC, is director of foundation relations for Lydia Home Association, a Chicago-based child welfare agency. He is a Grant Professional Association national board member and currently serves as president of the GPA Chicago Area Chapter. He also served as a federal peer reviewer for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Medina received a master’s in Public Services Management with a concentration in Nonprofit Administration from DePaul University. ●

Save These Dates . . .

West Suburban Philanthropic Network Programs

Please save these dates . . . and join us for the exciting events we have planned.



WSPN programs are free to WSPN members and \$20 for non-members.

Programs are usually held on the third Thursday of each month.

Registration and refreshments begin at 8 a.m. and the program begins at 8:30 a.m., unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, Sept. 18 **Topic:** Engaging Professional Advisors in the Fundraising Process
Speakers: Brett Dale, chairman of Huck Bouma PC's Estate Planning Group
Nancy Hermann, senior vice president and managing director of The Private Client Reserve of US Bank
Randy Fox, insurance agent and principal with The Fox Agency
John Kaiser, CPA and principal with Cray Kaiser Ltd.
Location: ArtfulIMPACT! at School of Performing Arts in historic 5th Avenue Station, 200 East Fifth Ave., Suite 132, Naperville, IL 60563

Thursday, Oct. 16 **Topic:** **Half Day Workshop with Breakfast—7:30 to 11:30 a.m.**
Speaker: **Advanced Moves Management™: From Cultivation to Asking**
William T. Sturtevant, Sturtevant Fundraising
Location: Hamburger University, 2715 Jorie Blvd, Oak Brook, IL 60523

Thursday, Nov. 20 **Topic:** ABCs of Planned Giving
Speaker: David Terrill, Terrill Consulting
Location: Outreach Community Center, 345 S. President St, Carol Stream, IL 60188

For more information or to register, visit www.wspnonline.org.

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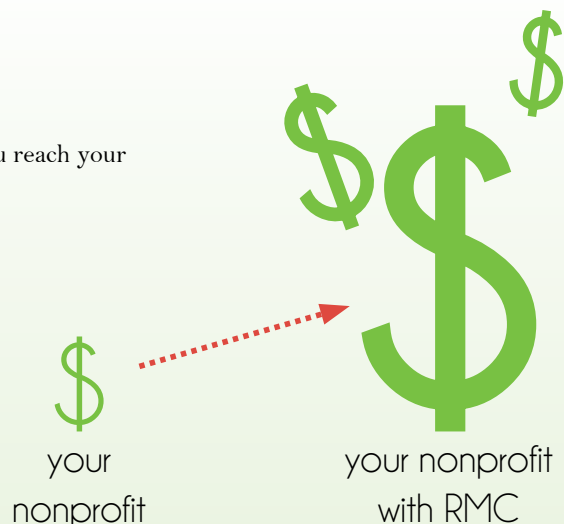
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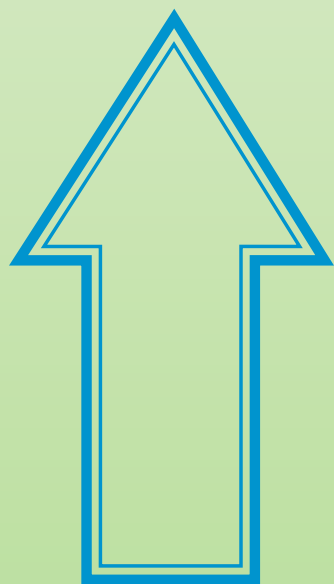
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