GDNRC NEWS

Strong Organizations Solid Impact

Volume 1, Issue 111 June 2008

New Solutions for Finding Funders

Greater Danbury nonprofits gain access to Foundation Center's online database of United States grant-makers

In tough economic times, finding new funding sources can be even more difficult for area nonprofits.

Now finding new funders is just a click away.

The GDNRC and participating agencies are benefiting from the Foundation Center's online directory of U.S. grant-makers right from their own offices. Participating agencies are accessing the directory through the GDNRC's website, **www.gdnrc.org.**

Agencies were assigned usernames and passwords and are now able to search the Foundation Center directory at no cost to participating agencies.

> ***"We are benefiting from this resource that otherwise would not have been available to us. The online directory is very useful in identifying appropriate funders to approach."***
>
> ***Terri Nackid, Regional Hospice***

Currently, 28 agencies are using this online resource. The GDNRC was able to negotiate a substantially reduced "group" rate for community agencies who were interested in this service.

The Foundation Center online directory provides the most comprehensive and accurate information on U.S. grant-makers and their funding activities.

Inside this issue:

Volunteer Impact 2

Volunteer Helps Shelter 2

Focus on Results 3

Management Transition 3

Tackling Technology 4

Upcoming Education and Training 5

Governing for What Matters

Upcoming workshop teaches boards how to govern for creating long-term impact in the community

Why do board members join nonprofit boards?

The most common answer is that board members care about the cause of the organization and want to make a difference.

What do active board members spend the most time doing on nonprofit boards?

The focus of most board members is on doing the work of the board, fundraising, legal and financial oversight, selecting executive directors, etc.

While the board work must get done, doing this work in the context of how the organization is improving the community is the topic of an upcoming workshop sponsored by the GDNRC and the United Way of Western CT.

Help4Nonprofits, a nonprofit consulting firm out of Arizona, is presenting "Governing for What Matters" in September. The aim of the workshop is to show boards HOW to govern for creating extraordinary, visionary, long-term impact in their communities.

Hildy Gottlieb, President of Help4Nonprofits, will lead the workshop. The workshop will guide boards back to the reason board members signed on in the first place - inspired passion for the cause - and will provide a way for that passion to guide the rest of their work.

Volunteer Impact

News from Casey our Volunteer Coordinator

The Skilled Volunteer Program continues to build. Since July, 16 volunteers have helped 13 agencies in the Greater Danbury area. These volunteers have helped agencies with marketing and communications projects, IT planning and support, and public relations projects.

I would like to thank the agencies who have utilized this service and also thank the volunteers who have stepped forward to help in our nonprofit community.

We continue to recruit volunteers from our local business community, our corporate and retired professional communities as well as our local religious community.

If you have not availed yourself of this service, consider defining a project that we may help you with. I would be happy to meet with you to further discuss the type of work we are doing. You may also place a request for a volunteer project directly on our website at **www.gdnrc.org**.

For more information, go to www.gdnrc.org

- To request a GDNRC volunteer - click on volunteer in the navigation bar and select agency application in the drop-down menu.
- To view current volunteer opportunities - click on volunteer in the navigation bar and select view opportunities in the drop-down menu.

Volunteer Helps Shelter of the Cross with Annual Report

Lori Capri, Executive Director of Shelter of the Cross, and Volunteer, Aleta Stephen, show off the Shelter's new annual report.

Lori Capri was looking for some help with producing the Shelter's annual report. Fortunately, the GDNRC was able to match the Shelter with an outstanding, qualified volunteer, Aleta Stephen.

Aleta came to the GDNRC by registering on our website, highlighting her skills in marketing and communications. Aleta is an independent consultant who was looking to do volunteer work in the non-profit community. Utilizing her skills as a feature article writer, digital photographer and production specialist she was able to help produce an annual report for the shelter.

Lori Capri was very pleased with the work that Aleta did for the Shelter. Aleta is also helping the shelter with a brochure and a future mailing for the organization.

"I am thrilled that the GDNRC thought of us when Aleta called looking for a way to volunteer and use her skills! She is very knowledgeable and easy to work with. I love our annual report and look forward to having her help with other projects!"

Lori Capri, Shelter of the Cross

Focus on Results

Community organizations learn to set goals to improve results

Representatives from over 40 community organizations immersed themselves in outcome thinking on January 10th of this year.

John LaRocca, of the Rensselaerville Institute, presented a full-day workshop on Outcome Management and Thinking to a large group of community organizations.

John explained that the point of an outcome framework is to enable an organization to perform at the highest level possible by providing a focus on the results an organization wants to achieve.

The workshop was highly interactive and gave organizations a chance to develop their own outcome framework for a particular program.

After the workshop, the GDNRC offered follow-up consultations for individual organizations that attended the session. Eight organizations participated in these follow-up sessions. These organizations had the opportunity to work with John separately on their outcome framework.

Grace Weber, Director of Founders Hall in Ridgefield, met with John LaRocca after the session. Grace felt that this follow-up session was very beneficial for her organization.

John LaRocca, of the Rensselaerville Institute, lends his expertise to Mary Arconti-Gregory, of Danbury Schools and Business Collaborative.

"The seminar introduction with the one-on-one follow-up was quite helpful. In addition to the follow-up allowing us to discuss our particular situation, it also gave us a very specific timeline which pushed us to put the concepts into practice right away!", **Grace commented after the session.**

Planning for Management Transition

GDNRC to host roundtable discussion in fall

After you, who? How many executive directors, development directors or chief financial officers think about how their own career plans affect the prospects of those around them and the future of their agency?

The nonprofit grows because there is a leader and key support staff with experience, motivation and ability. Without proper succession planning, the future success of the agency is left to chance when key individuals retire or leave the agency. Under such circumstances, if it succeeds, it is by default rather than planned. Pro-active succession planning ensures that a non-profit agency has a plan in place for the smooth transition of key leadership positions.

In addition to better preparing agencies for potential leadership departures, succession planning encourages the development of agency staff. With an effective succession plan in place, a nonprofit remains well positioned for continued vitality and growth.

In the fall, the GDNRC will host a roundtable discussion on succession planning.

"We want to develop a culture of succession in our nonprofit agencies so that they plan for future leaders much the same way they plan for business operations."

Maureen Moore, GDNRC advisory council

Maureen Moore, a member of the GDNRC advisory council and recently retired as Executive Director of Regional Hospice, is helping to plan the discussion. The session will be facilitated by Sally Arconti, a HR consultant.

Tackling Technology

New committee explores technology standards and options for area nonprofits

Back-ups, firewalls, network security, servers, hardware, software, email, websites, it's enough to make your head spin!

Keeping up with technology and making it work for your organization is a full-time job. Unfortunately, most nonprofit organizations do not have full-time IT staff. Many nonprofits experience problems with their technology systems and put their organization at risk.

Recently, a committee was formed to explore ways to help organizations use technology to its fullest potential. The Committee resulted from a collaboration among the Danbury Area Computer Society (DACS), the Greater Danbury Funders Group and the GDNRC.

The main purpose of the committee is to develop and implement standards and recommendations to simplify and reduce the cost of selecting, acquiring, installing, using and maintaining technology by greater Danbury nonprofit agencies. Furthermore, the committee aims to develop and implement resources to provide technology assistance to agencies in the form of education and training, implementation, maintenance, and migration services.

The committee is headed up by Sandra Rankin, who recently retired from a 30-year career with IBM. Committee members include: Howie Berger, Visual Access Technology & DACS; Michael Shea, Pitney Bowes; Clem Taeuber, Wellspring Technologies; Dana Rawding, TWC; Bruce Moore, Retired IBM Volunteer; Bill Starbuck and Jim Kennedy, Network Support Company; Karl Epple, Greater Danbury Funders Group; Elaine Mintz, Casey Levene and Mary-Jane Wood of the GDNRC.

"The committee is very aware of the problems that agencies have in managing their IT needs and we are dedicated to removing their IT pains as much as possible. We are excited about the opportunity to propose ways to take the burden of IT off of their plates. We expect to deliver our first set of recommendations and standards in the near future and we look forward to working with the agencies to start implementing the recommendations," said Sandra Rankin, committee chair.

Sandra Rankin, with 30 years of experience at IBM, chairs the technology committee.

Without You, Our Work Would Not Be Possible

The Greater Danbury Funder's Group
Boehringer Ingleheim
City of Danbury - CDBG
Danbury Hospital
Fairfield County Bank Corp.
Fairfield County Community Foundation
GE Capital Solutions
Greater Danbury Fund
JP Morgan Chase Foundation
Meserve Memorial Fund
Newtown Savings Bank
Patrick Foundation
Pepsi Bottling Group Foundation
Perrin Family Foundation
Pitney Bowes
Savings Bank of Danbury
The Network Support Company
Union Savings Bank
United Way of Western Connecticut

GDNRC Advisory Council

Mary Jane Wood, Chair of Council
LouAnn Bloomer, TBICO
Sam Carpenter, Pitney Bowes
Karl Epple, Meserve Memorial Fund
Elizabeth Goehring, United Way of Western CT
Casey Levene, GDNRC
Betsy McDonough, Western CT State University
Elaine Mintz, GDNRC
Maureen Moore, Volunteer
June Renzulli, United Way of Western CT
Bruce Smith, Volunteer
Bill Starbuck, Jr., The Network Support Company

Upcoming Education and Training Workshops 2008

Governing for What Matters—September 2008

When a board is "Governing for What Matters", it addresses its accountability for the means within the context of the only thing that matters—creating significant results to improve the community's quality of life. (see page one article for more information)

Hildy Gottlieb, Help4Nonprofits

Annual Reports—September 2008

What are the key components of an annual report? What is the most effective way to use an annual report? Does your organization even need one? This workshop will teach you the basics of producing an annual report.

Board Roles, Responsibilities, Liabilities and Protections—October 14th, 2008

What are the roles, responsibilities and proper activities of the board of directors of a nonprofit organization? What are the potential liabilities of board members? What role should the board play in the day-to-day operations of the organization? What legal protections exist for board members? This workshop will address these and other topics relating to the legal and fiduciary obligations of a board of directors.

Maurice Segall, Pro Bono Partnership.

Employee Retention—October 23rd, 2008

How do we build workplaces that attract and keep talent? What is the magnetic core that generates engagement and connection to our mission, purpose, vision, values, organization and clients? We can inspire commitment. Meaningful conversations that lead to productive results can be had if managers pay attention. Employees that are heard, last longer. In this workshop we will look at your workplaces, discuss generational tensions, mundane tasks, economic concerns, conduct a progressive audit and identify the practices that must stop and the communication messages that must be reinforced.

Scott Gassman, IdeaJuice

Roundtable Discussion: Planning for Management Transition - November 2008

Would your agency continue to operate without missing a beat if your Executive Director, Development Director, Program Director or other key manager retired or left? Do you have a plan that can ensure that your agency remains viable with effective leadership for the long term? Executive Directors and Board Members are invited to this discussion on Succession Planning that will be facilitated by Sally Arconti, a consultant with expertise on this topic. At this roundtable, we will discuss the benefits of succession planning, how to talk about succession planning within agency leadership and boards and how it can be part of your overall business planning process. You will be introduced to an approach that can be easily implemented in your agency.

Sally Arconti, HR Consultant

Coming up in Spring 2009

Developing and Monitoring Internal Controls, Developing Effective Surveys for Nonprofits, Website Design—How to Attract Business, Improving your Board Through Evaluation.

For more information contact:

Greater Danbury
Nonprofit Resource Center
P.O. Box 2353
Danbury, CT 06813

Elaine Mintz, Director
Phone: (203) 240-1971
elaine@gdnrc.org

Casey Levene, Volunteer Coordinator
Phone: (203) 241-4444
casey@gdnrc.org

www.gdnrc.org