

NONPROFIT INSTITUTE

at the  COLLEGE of SOUTHERN MARYLAND

Quarterly Report to Charles County Commissioners April – June 2017

Strategy One: Ensure the value of training provide by the NPI

The NPI offered three continuing education courses. Two courses were cancelled due to weather conditions and our annual conference. A course on fundraising took place, taught by Denise Foster.

Other training offered included a free class on the subject of Social Entrepreneurship, taught by Dr. Carolyn Mattocks, and two free webinars in partnership with Maryland Nonprofits.

The NPI continues to strengthen partnerships with the Community Foundation of Southern Maryland, SCORE, the Charles County Libraries, and Maryland Nonprofits to make traditional classroom and webinar-based training opportunities available to our local nonprofit community.

Strategy Two: Review the Structure of the NPI

The NPI team is working well and we do not anticipate any changes this year. We continue to meet on a regular basis to share information and resources.

Strategy Three: Measure the Effectiveness of the NPI's Marketing Efforts

The data included in this measure appears to be affected by both our annual conference and the beginning of the summer. There was an increase in traffic up until the conference, and then the traffic dropped off in May after the conference. This is similar to the pattern of traffic during this same period in FY 2016.

Key statistics (compared to our previous quarter) are as follows:

- Total page views are down 25.27%
- Unique page views are up 25.56%
- New users are down 29.10%
- Bounce rate is down 16.71%
- The average time on a page is up 4.34%

Regarding the effectiveness of the NPI's regular *E-Blasts*, the open rate percentage is slightly higher than the previous quarter. During the prior quarter, it was 20.3% and during this quarter it was 21.5%. The click-through rate (CTR) has decreased from 6.7% last quarter to 4% during this quarter.

The NPI's unsubscribe rate remains low. The NPI E-Newsletter experienced 11 unsubscribes for the 2nd quarter for a percentage of 0.2%. This is an increase from last quarter's unsubscribe rate of 5 unsubscribes at a percentage of 0.1%.

In addition to our own data, we now have access to *Marketing Metrics and Definitions* for benchmarking our statistics to the nonprofit national level. We intend to explore this data in the near future.

In addition to our website, the reach of the NPI Facebook page and Twitter account is growing and NPI is using these platforms to promote classes and events, to share nonprofits' Facebook postings and Tweets, and to share grant opportunities and articles of interest. These can be found at:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NonprofitInstituteCSM/>
- Twitter: @NonprofitInsCSM

Strategy Four: Measure the Effectiveness of the NPI's Annual Conference

The NPI held its 7th annual conference at the CSM La Plata campus in April.

The conference offered a full slate of breakout sessions and a Ted Talks-style panel discussion to highlight the day. The theme this year was "JumpStart Your Leadership" and included presenters and panelists from throughout Southern Maryland and beyond.

Attendees included 132 executive directors, employees, board members and volunteers of nonprofit organizations throughout Southern Maryland and Prince George's County, as well as owners and employees of companies with an interest in nonprofits.

Summary of Feedback

There was an overall rating of 4.5, with a range of 3.8-5.

Suggestions for topics for future sessions:

- Survival skills for newly created nonprofits
- Social Entrepreneurship/Financial Stability/Hybrid Organizations/ Social Enterprise
- More opportunities to network with people who serve similar populations
- The Soul of Money
- Fundraising in depth
- Engaging and managing volunteers
- Pro Bono services-making a match
- Time management

Feedback on Sessions (137 forms returned for 14 sessions, 1 submitted for panel):

- Strategic Planning. 23 returned. Mostly excellent
- Nonprofit Financial Literacy. Very mixed reviews. Only well received by a few people and feedback was excellent.
- Creative Fundraising. 12 returned. A good deal of feedback was positive, but 2 forms with many fairs.
- Leadership During a Crisis. 14 returned. Mostly excellent with a few goods.
- Board of Directors Role in Advancement. 14 returned over 2 sessions. Mostly excellent with a few goods.
- Content Marketing. 12 returned. Mixed feedback. Excellent and Good for most with 2 forms returned that were mostly fairs.
- Unemployment Insurance. 1 returned. All excellent
- Board Recruitment. 10 returned. All excellent
- Social Media. 5 returned. Split between excellent and good.
- Building a Diverse Board. 9 returned. Mostly excellent
- Cultivating Staff and volunteers for Leadership Roles. 11 returned. Mostly excellent with 2 outliers of mostly good and 2 fairs.
- How to be an effective board member. 3 returned. Mostly excellent. One form included 2 goods with suggestion for more in depth methods for engaging board members.
- Mission Driven Branding. 10 returned. All excellent.
- Panel. 1 returned. All excellent.

Strategy Five: Review and Enhance the Effectiveness of NPI's Current Activities

Executive Director Roundtables

These monthly meetings were held in April, May and June. Attendees expressed interest in continuing through the summer months. Regular participants included:

- The ARC of Southern Maryland
- Friends of Chapman State Park/Mt. Aventine
- Leadership Southern Maryland
- Young Ladies 4 Christ
- Charles County Community Mediation Center

Volunteer Initiatives

The NPI volunteer coordinator affinity group met in May at the Patuxent Habitat for Humanity Restore in Lexington Park. Discussion included approaching the faith-based community with respect to recruiting volunteers and how each organization uses volunteers. The following organizations were represented:

- Patuxent Habitat for Humanity (St. Mary's County)
- Spring Dell Center
- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home
- Lifestyles
- Greenwell Foundation (St. Mary's County)

Faith-based Affinity Group

The faith-based affinity group met in May. A wide-ranging discussion was held and all agreed to reach out to other faith-based organizations to encourage participation. Additionally, attendees expressed interest in partnering with traditional nonprofit organizations to increase reach in the community. The following organizations were represented:

- Southern Region Strategist for Baltimore-Washington Conference
- Servants of Christ
- Patuxent Habitat for Humanity

Veterans Group

This NPI affinity group is developing a comprehensive network of veteran support organizations and promotes collaborative information sessions to support each other's missions and needs. This highly active veteran support coalition is crafting a functionality chart designed to be a one-stop shop for veterans seeking help in southern Maryland. The chart is a work in progress. The following organizations attended the June meeting:

- Warfighter Advance
- Operation Warrior Refuge
- Southern MD Battle Buddies
- Gaia WRX
- St. Mary's County Government

Fundraising Professionals

This affinity group met in May and a wide-ranging discussion focused on the need to collaborate and share information about needs, resources, and events. The meeting included representatives of the following organizations:

- Walden Sierra Corp
- Sagepoint Senior Living Services
- The Arc of Southern MD
- Tri-County Youth Services Bureau
- Community Foundation of Southern Maryland
- Center for Children

Public Relations/Marketing Professionals

The inaugural meeting of this affinity group was held in June. Originally scheduled to be held quarterly, attendees strongly expressed interest in meeting on a monthly basis. Discussion centered on marketing analytics, free and/or low-cost avenues of promotion, availability of pro bono services and guest speakers.

Organizations in attendance included (several others expressed interest in attending future meetings):

- Community Foundation of Southern Maryland
- Spring Dell Center
- Young Ladies for Christ
- Hospice of Charles County
- Charles County Community Mediation Center
- Accokeek Foundation
- Center for Children

Southern Maryland Gives (https://southernmarylandgives.razoo.com/giving_events/smg/home)

Cara Fogarty of the NPI team is attending a #GivingTuesday conference in Baltimore in July to help plan for the annual #GivingTuesday event in November in Charles and St. Mary's counties. Nonprofit fundraising events are regularly shared on the Southern Maryland Gives Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernMarylandGives/>

Volunteer Southern Maryland (<https://vsmd.csmd.edu>)

Several issues with this online portal are now resolved and NPI is contacting organizations to encourage participation -- adding new volunteer opportunities. Opportunities are also shared on the Volunteer Southern Maryland Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/VolunteerSouthernMaryland/>

Supporting/Assisting Nonprofits

During this quarter, the NPI team provided support and assistance to several Charles County-based nonprofit organizations, including:

- Assisted Health Partners with finding sign language interpretation services
- Met with Friends of Chapman's State Park to assist with social media strategy
- Assisted ARC of Southern Maryland with web site redesign feedback
- Shared ZipTrip information and application with NPI list of nonprofits
- Met with Charles County Community Mediation Center to discuss social media, staffing and NPI offerings
- Assistance was provided to 10 nonprofits either on the phone or through face-to-face meetings. Topics covered starting a new nonprofit, and grants/funding opportunities as well as questions about the NPI Conference.
- Michelle Sullivan of the NPI team attended the People and Places Conference, by invitation of Ron Hantz, Board President of Network for Developing Conscious Communities (one of the sponsors of the conference).
- Ms. Sullivan spoke to CSM's Social Entrepreneurship class and helped students as they prepared presentations for participating nonprofit organizations.
- Provided feedback to the Maryland Transfer of Wealth Opportunity Project.
- Ms. Sullivan also she spoke at the Women Moving Forward Reentry Conference at the request of Roseanna Vogt of the Charles County-based Circle of Angels Initiative and helped develop a list of important resources to add to a flash drive that will be given to each woman upon her release.

Strategy Six: New Initiatives

The NPI is using the new CSM Campus in Hughesville to host affinity group meetings and plans to offer classes at this central location. The location has been well received.

Based on feedback from nonprofit organizations throughout Southern Maryland, the NPI initiated a new affinity group – PR/Marketing Professionals.

NPI continues to partner with organizations to enhance offerings and opportunities for nonprofits. Members of the NPI team held an introductory conference call with Steven McAdams, Executive Director of the Governor’s Office on Community Initiatives and several other members of the office. An in-person meeting is being planned to explore partnership opportunities.

The NPI, in partnership with the Community Foundation of Southern Maryland and the Charles County Public Library, held a “Meet the Media” event in April. This initial event was very well attended (55+ attendees). Panelists from local media and promotional venues included the Maryland Independent, SOMAR Communications (local radio stations), “Southern Maryland, This is Living” magazine, CSM-TV (public access/community channel), Macaroni Kid and the Playful Parent, the latter being free, subscription-based online/newsletter services that collate and promote family-friendly events. Attendees learned firsthand what types of information to submit and how to submit their events and press releases to the various media outlets, thus receiving free publicity. A second event will be held at the Lexington Park Library in September.

The NPI’s continuous effort to partner with other organizations has also led to the planning for a Nonprofit Community Networking Fair. This will be held in collaboration with the Charles County Public Library and will be held at the CSM La Plata campus. Representatives of organizations with resources available to nonprofits will be in attendance. NPI is exploring the possibility of repeating the event on the CSM Leonardtown campus.

Cara Fogarty of the NPI team is part of the group creating and sponsoring the annual Grants Training program held every August at the CSM La Plata campus.

Cara Fogarty of the NPI team also participated on the project team formed to create the economic and social impact survey being conducted by Maryland Nonprofits and the Charles County Charitable Trust.

Strategy Seven: Enhance Board Development Activities

The NPI focused on Board Leadership and Development during the April 2017 Conference. Harriet Yaffe, NPI’s St. Mary’s County Coordinator, has sought feedback from the regional nonprofit executive directors regarding their needs with respect to board development. The feedback is being synthesized in order to determine how best to proceed. In a few instances, the coordinator was able to match a pro bono consultant to a specific request for assistance.