

Nonprofit Institute
at the College of Southern Maryland
Quarterly Report to Charles County Commissioners
January – March 2018

The Nonprofit Institute (NPI) was very productive during the January-March quarter. The NPI held its annual conference and introduced both nonprofit organizations and the community at large to new resources and connections.

Strategy One: Ensure value of training provided by the Nonprofit Institute

Course offerings during this quarter featured new subjects and instructors. These included:

- **Record-Keeping Imperative:** Cathy Askey of Askey, Askey & Associates (local accounting firm), presented this essential managerial skill for any successful organization. The course included the fundamentals of nonprofit finances, including accounting systems, payroll, management reporting, and business insurance.
- **Social Media, Beyond the Basics:** Chris Ripley of Strategic Marketing Group (local marketing firm), presented a more advanced session on social media effectiveness, including proven techniques for various markets, tracking and analyzing results, and what to do with data that is generated.

The Nonprofit Institute also partnered with the Taproot Foundation to offer a free customized webinar in January for area nonprofit organizations - "Craft a Project Ask to Find the Right Skilled Volunteer." The Taproot Foundation connects nonprofit organizations with passionate, skilled volunteers who share their expertise pro bono. Several area nonprofits participated in this webinar.

NPI also connected regional nonprofits with the following free webinars:

- "How the New Federal Tax Law Impacts Charitable Nonprofits"
- "Leverage your Volunteer Program with Volunteer Maryland"

The Southern Maryland Heritage Areas Consortium held a grant proposal workshop to assist organizations with applying for the statewide Maryland Heritage Areas grants. Cara Fogarty of NPI attended this to better assist nonprofit organizations.

Planning meetings for the annual grants training have begun. This effort, originally hosted by CSM and the Charles County Government, has expanded in recent years to include the Nonprofit Institute and the Charles County Public Library. The training will be held in September this year. Meetings are held every month.

Strategy Two: Review the Structure of the Nonprofit Institute

The Nonprofit Institute team works well, and no changes are anticipated. We continue to meet on a regular basis to share information and resources, and plan training courses and the annual conference. The Nonprofit Institute's Charles County Advisory Council's next meeting is in May.

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

Content on the Nonprofit Institute's web pages and social media accounts is updated and refreshed on a

regular basis. Social media includes Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Social media platforms are used to promote the e-newsletter, classes and events, to share nonprofits' Facebook postings and Tweets, and to share grant opportunities and articles of interest. These can be found at:

- www.facebook.com/NonprofitInstituteCSM/
- www.facebook.com/VolunteerSouthernMaryland/
- Twitter: @NonprofitInsCSM
- www.linkedin.com/company/nonprofit-institute-at-csm/

Compared to the previous quarter, usage of the website has increased as follows:

- total pageviews are up by 55.86%
- unique pageviews are up 76.17%
- new users are up 59.42%
- bounce rate is down 16.51%
- average time on page is up 23%

Nonprofit Institute staff participates in area events to be engaged and to increase awareness in the Southern Maryland community. Events during this quarter included the Charles County Economic Development Department's Quarterly (January) Meeting; the Charles County Chamber of Commerce's Network at Noon in February and the winter meeting of the Charles County Service and Advocacy Network.

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

The Nonprofit Institute held its annual conference on February 22, 2018 at the College of Southern Maryland, La Plata campus. This year's theme was "Fostering Relationships." Morning breakout sessions included topics within focus areas of leadership, marketing, fundraising, strategic planning, and management. Examples of sessions include Relationships with Elected Officials, Social Media Planning, and Fostering Relationships with Stakeholders. A full listing of the breakout sessions is available: <https://www.csmd.edu/community/institutes/nonprofit-institute/conference-information/breakout-presentations>

A panel discussion featured three nonprofit executives and their board presidents who spoke about the importance of the relationship between executive directors and board leadership. An analysis of the feedback forms indicated that most individuals ranked each session as either excellent or good. The NPI website also includes slides from the presentations for attendees who wish to review topic areas.

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

Executive Director Roundtables

These monthly meetings were held in January, February and March. Regular participants included:

- The Arc of Southern Maryland
- Leadership Southern Maryland
- Charles County Community Mediation Center
- Friends of Chapman's State Park
- VConnections
- H.O.P.E. Financial

Volunteer Initiatives

The NPI volunteer coordinator affinity group met in February at Hospice of St. Mary's. They shared resources and learned about Hospice's volunteer program. The following organizations from Charles County were represented:

- Lifestyles
- Sagepoint
- Southern MD Tri County Community Action Committee
- Bay Community Support Services
- Tri-County Youth Services Bureau

Southern Maryland Veterans Support Coalition

This NPI affinity group met in February. This group promotes collaborative information sessions to support each other's missions and needs. One result thus far is the development of a comprehensive network of veteran support organizations. The resulting functionality matrix is available on the NPI web site: <https://www.csmd.edu/community/institutes/nonprofit-institute/affinity-groups/>

Fundraising Professionals Network Meeting

This group opted to attend the Nonprofit Funding Matters Forum held by the Community Foundation of Southern Maryland. This event was scheduled at the same time as the affinity group meeting. The event brought representatives from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, and the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission to the area to speak with nonprofits about their grant programs.

Public Relations/Marketing Professionals

This group, comprised of individuals who work at nonprofit organizations throughout Southern Maryland, is thriving and continues to meet monthly. The group suggested having an occasional guest presentation would be helpful. Diane Hicks of Community Bank of the Chesapeake was the guest at the March meeting. She shared how nonprofit organizations can utilize the bank's publicity resources such as Friday Focus, a community calendar, social media connections, Cash Mob, and 12 Days of Giving.

More speakers will be invited in 2018. Regular participants include:

- Charles County Community Mediation Center
- Sagepoint Senior Living Services
- Charles County Public Library
- Center for Children

Faith-based Community

We continue to explore the interest for such a group, as there are existing active, ecumenical groups in the region and individual church groups may not see the need to belong to an affinity group.

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

Outreach continues in earnest to encourage and assist more nonprofit organizations with posting volunteer opportunities on this web-based portal. Several organizations report successfully finding volunteers. There are now more than two dozen active volunteer opportunities posted to the portal. Organizations in Charles County actively participating include:

- Relay for Life/American Cancer Society
- Center for Children
- Port Tobacco River Conservancy
- H.O.P.E. Financial
- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home
- Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust

- United Way of Charles County
- Bay Community Support Services
- University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center Auxiliary
- Girl Scouts

Supporting/Assisting Nonprofits

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

- American Cancer Society/Relay for Life
- Butler Farm
- Rebuilding Together Charles County
- Friends of Chapman State Park/Mount Aventine
- Kids into Discovering Science
- Meals on Wheels Charles County

The NPI team arranged for eight area nonprofit organizations to participate in the Project Management Day of Service at the University of Maryland, College Park on MLK Day, January 15, 2018. This event is hosted by the Points of Light Foundation and connects professional project managers with nonprofits in need of pro bono help. Participating nonprofits from Charles County included:

- Our Place Waldorf
- Charles County Fair
- Health Partners

Strategy Six: New Initiatives

NPI partnered with the North Point HS PTSO to help expand and grow its annual Volunteer Fair to be held on April 5. The fair attracted 45 nonprofit organizations to participate as exhibitors. A report on this activity will be included in the next quarterly report.

Nonprofit Institute staff is working on scheduling training to learn how to run webinars. This will allow NPI to offer remote-based training courses in addition to a classroom-based format. NPI continues to partner with organizations to enhance offerings and opportunities for nonprofits.

NPI staff is exploring models for “Return on Investment” that can be shared with nonprofits; continues to explore partnerships to build community awareness and value offered opportunities; and undertaking efforts to increase awareness of NPI activities among the community, county leaders and government officials.