

The Nonprofit Institute at the College of Southern Maryland  
Quarterly Report to St. Mary's County  
October -December 2016

The NPI team has grown to four people, resulting in an increased ability to generate new programs and be more responsive to our regional stakeholders.

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

The NPI's 7 Fall courses began in September 2016. We have been pleased with our growing attendance. The courses that took place were:

- The importance of vision in Fundraising-Linda Gottfried
- Fundraising Fundamentals-Linda Gottfried
- Building Your Organization by Building Leadership-Matt Scassero
- Managing in Today's Changing World-Nancy Hall and Deb Jung
- Putting Polish into Your Marketing Program-Monique Melton
- New Perspectives on Strategic Planning-Jim Wilson

Winter and Spring Offerings are listed in the CSM catalogue and will be promoted in upcoming E-News

**Strategy Two: Review the Structure of the NPI**

The NPI's new team is presented on the NPI website. We are very pleased to have people of this caliber on our team! We continue to meet on a regular basis to share information and resources.

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

Our readership continues to grow, resulting in an increase in requests for information, consultation, and the development of new affinity groups. Specifically, the NPI website page views increased by 3.93% during this quarter. Our unique page views are up by 12.56%, and our new users are up by 6.2%. In addition to this data, users are staying on our pages longer, with a bounce rate that has been reduced by 303.82% and an increase of 21.5% average time on the page. CSM's web master commented that

“These are all good signs. ... the people visiting your website are going straight to the content they're looking for, which is normal and healthy considering the increasing trend overall of users searching on Google and other search engines instead of typing out a URL.”

With respect to our E-Blasts, there has been an increase in requests to join the NPI mailing list and an increase in activity in general. We now have access to very specific information about “click rates” and are able to compare them over time, by subject, and by viewer.

The CSM Marketing Department has recently provided us with information and suggestions that we can use as we move forward. The information is too extensive to include in this report; however, the NPI team will review and use it to make even further improvements.

We have also made progress on the new items that were added to our Strategic Directions plan:

Participate in county events to increase NPI awareness in the Southern Maryland community:

- We have sponsored 2 community events to celebrate Giving Tuesday. This will be further described below.
- We have attended a meeting of the Community Youth Mapping (CYM) Project for a potential community center in Lexington Park
- The NPI co-sponsored an event at CSM with Catholic Charities

Identify at least 3 new nonprofits to the NPI and its resources and support:

- Several new organizations have been identified, including Girls on the Run, Knock Your Socks Off for the Homeless, and New Community Church.

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

The NPI's annual conference will take place on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017. A committee has been formed to determine the format and content of this year's event. We have also queried our stakeholders. The theme of the conference was determined to be : Jumpstart Your Leadership. Potential break out sessions discussed were:

- How to engage branding in your organization's mission and work
- How to be a good board member
- Board member roles

- The how-to on Board Recruitment
- Financial Literacy in Nonprofit Leadership
- Cultivating volunteers and staff for leadership in your organization
- Mission-driven branding
- Building diversity in your organization
- Board's role in Advancement and Development
- Training opportunities for further board education and development (NPI, SCORE, cert?)

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

- **Executive Director Learning Circles-** The October, November, and December meetings included the following organizations:
  - Leadership Southern MD
  - Tri County Council
  - Historic Sotterley Plantation
  - The Patuxent Partnership
  - The St Mary's Mediation Center
  - Community Resources of St Mary's County
  - The Garvey Center Council
  - Tri County Council
  - St Mary's Animal Welfare League
  - The Arc of Southern Maryland

- **Volunteer Initiatives**

The volunteer coordinators met on November 15<sup>th</sup> at Accokeek. The group had a productive time, sharing resources and ideas. The next meeting will take place in January.

- **Southern Maryland Gives**

- Southern Maryland Gives is an online fundraising portal sponsored by the Nonprofit Institute at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM). It was created to foster the spirit of giving back to the Southern Maryland community. The portal easily connects donors to participating local nonprofit organizations. It also highlights several featured fundraiser projects each month that are looking for immediate support.

- The portal was launched in 2015 with nearly a dozen nonprofit organizations participating. Participation has grown to 68 active organizations and 34 featured fundraiser projects, with 224 donations (157 individual donors) raising \$18,275.00.
- St. Mary's nonprofits – 17
- Tri-County nonprofits – 15
- (Charles nonprofits - 28; nonprofits based in Calvert or Prince George's with reach into Southern Maryland: 7)
- The Nonprofit Institute held a celebration of social impact in honor of #GivingTuesday on Nov. 29. Similar to last year, two events were held in Charles and St. Mary's Counties. In St. Mary's County, representatives from six nonprofits gathered at the Olde Town Pub in Leonardtown. In Charles County, two dozen people representing 20 nonprofit organizations spent an evening socializing and networking at the Red Oak Bistro in La Plata.
- In the spirit of giving locally, both businesses donated a portion of the day's proceeds. These were split among three nonprofits respectively. The organizations were selected by a random drawing of business cards. United Way of Charles County, Lifestyles of Maryland Foundation and St. Mary's Adult Medical Day Care took home the proceeds in Charles County, and Leadership Southern Maryland, Community Mediation of St. Mary's County and Southern Maryland Community Resources received the donation in St. Mary's.
- In the past few months, several nonprofits have joined Southern Maryland Gives, adding their project pages to the online giving portal. More organizations are planning to join in the new year.
- Southern Maryland Gives on the web:  
[www.southernmarylandgives.org](http://www.southernmarylandgives.org)
- Like Southern Maryland Gives on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/SouthernMarylandGives/](http://www.facebook.com/SouthernMarylandGives/)
- Follow Southern Maryland Gives on Twitter @SoMDGives

**Strategy Six: New Initiatives**

The newly formed regional affinity groups met during the past quarter. These included Fundraising Professionals, Faith Based Organizations, and Veterans Organizations. Each group concentrated on activities that would best serve their needs. The groups are scheduled to meet again in January. The NPI now sponsors 6 Affinity Groups, including the two groups of Executive Directors and the Volunteer Coordinators.

The NPI team is currently working with representatives from SCORE, the Small Business Development Center, and the local libraries to explore how best to collaborate with respect to regional training and technical assistance. We have developed some initial plans to jointly offer local training and webinars.

The NPI is also developing a list of consultants who are willing to provide assistance to local nonprofits on a pro bono or reduced fee basis. The list currently includes people who focus on Management, Board Leadership, Marketing, Fundraising, and Strategic Planning.

### **Strategy Seven: Enhance Board Development Activities**

The NPI will focus on Board Leadership and Development during the April 2017 Conference. We also continue to offer a course devoted to this topic. Throughout the past quarter, the St Mary's Coordinator has met with board members from several organizations, offering assistance about how to be a good board member and providing information about the primary responsibilities of board members.