

The Nonprofit Institute at the College of Southern Maryland

Quarterly Report to St. Mary's County

January-March 2018

The first quarter of the year was very productive, in that the NPI sponsored the 2018 annual conference and introduced the region to new resources and connections

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

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

- **Record Keeping Imperative:** Cathy Askey, local business owner and accountant, presented this essential managerial skill for any successful organization. The course included the fundamentals of nonprofit finances, such as accounting systems and the importance of systems for tracking cash, accounts receivable, pledges, furniture and equipment, accounts payable, credit card payables and reconciliation, and loans. Cathy also discussed payroll and accompanying requirements, management reporting, critical success factors, timeliness and accuracy of reports, implementing the reporting system, and business insurance as it relates to identifying and managing
- **Social Media, Beyond the Basics:** Local business owner and marketing expert, **Chris Ripley**, 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. He also covered creating custom reports , creating a dashboard, and integrating social media into an organizations overall marketing plan.

Strategy Two: Review the Structure of the NPI

The current structure continues to be working well, with no changes anticipated. We continue to meet on a regular basis to share information and resources, and plan training courses and NPI's annual conference.

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 more recently, LinkedIn. Social media platforms are used to promote 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%.

NPI staff interpret these results as excellent, as all numbers indicate an increased engagement in our marketing efforts. The conference information posted on the website likely added to this increased activity and certainly increased the number of people who registered to be on the NPI mailing list. The distribution of our E-News has grown as a result of a larger list, but we may consider reducing the number of times that it is published so that we do not saturate our target audience.

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

Nonprofit Institute sponsored a successful 2018 Annual Conference annual conference on February 22, 2018 at the College of Southern Maryland, La Plata campus. 150 people attended, representing all three Southern MD counties. 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 many of the presentations for attendees who wish to review topic areas.

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 Learning Circles-** The January and February meetings included the following organizations:

- Leadership Southern MD
- Tri County Council
- Historic Sotterley Plantation
- The Patuxent Partnership
- The St. Mary's Mediation Center
- Southern Maryland Community Resources
- The Garvey Center Council
- St. Mary's Animal Welfare League
- The Arc of Southern Maryland
- Southern Maryland Independent Living Center
- St. Mary's Historical Society
- Walden
- Greenwell Foundation
- The Promise Center

- **Volunteer Initiatives**

The volunteer coordinators met on January 23rd at the Hospice of St Mary's County. The following organizations were represented:

- Accokeek
- Lifestyles
- Bay Community Support Services
- Patuxent River Naval Air Museum
- Sagepoint
- Southern MD Tri County Community Action Committee
- Southern MD Community Resources
- Historic St Mary's City

- Hospice of St Mary's County
- Circle of Angels
- Historic Sotterley Plantation
- TCYB
- Habitat for Humanity
- NPI staff

- **Faith Based Affinity Group**

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.

- **Veterans Group**

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**

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

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 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
- SMAWL

Supporting/Assisting Nonprofits

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

- Met with a networking group consisting of Leadership Southern MD Graduates of St Mary's County. The members of this group of business professionals serve on various nonprofit boards in the county. They sought advice about how best to help these organizations
- Provided planning assistance to a gentleman who is starting a new nonprofit in St Mary's County. The organization will host a yearly Rugby Tournament.

- Provided assistance to members of the Calvert Chamber's Nonprofit Alliance
- NPI continued to provide support and promote nonprofit organization events and fundraisers through its biweekly e-blasts, web site and social media
- 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 included St Mary's Caring and the Patuxent Naval Air Museum.

Strategy Six: New Initiatives

NPI partnered with the North Point HS PTSO to help expand and grow its annual Volunteer Fair. Although held in the next quarter of the year, the bulk of the preparation took place during the quarter encompassed by this report. 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.