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MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE

Expansion - At Last!

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The slow recovery of our economy is real. Depending on your audience and attitude, you may already be re-calibrating your operations for what comes next, after many quarters of contraction. If you're not re-thinking yet, you should be. The facts and trends are clear. [See here](#) what the Chronicle of Philanthropy reports on the rise in applications for tax exempt status, and more news from national non-profit financial consultants [here](#) citing surveys indicating that 72% of non-profits plan to grow in 2013.

My advice: Think big.

No matter what community your non-profit serves, shedding survival mode and planning for an expanded future is critical. In conversations with clients across the country and closer to home in Los Angeles and Orange County, I am being asked (with cautious optimism) about how to grow now, after



NEW CLENTS

Southern California Aquarium of the Pacific:
Grants funding program assessment and growth plan

With a mission to instill a sense of wonder, respect, and stewardship for the Pacific Ocean, its inhabitants, and ecosystems, the Aquarium has become a key voice and storyteller for the Pacific Ocean. The Aquarium of the Pacific is one of Southern California's most visited destinations with 1.5 million visitors each year.

Regional Ballet West:
Executive Search- Executive Director

Fast becoming one of the most artistically respected companies internationally, the visibility has

adjusting to a new normal of stasis. The short answer is: take the path that works for your organization, but map it out thoughtfully in great detail. Be optimistic, and aware that your routes from A to B will surely deviate. But knowing where you want to go, and when you want to get there matters.

Two of MW&A's clients, **Orange County Alzheimer's Association** and the **Voice of OC** are growing significantly in the first half of this year. Different stories, different paths, both worth illuminating because the ideas can be applied broadly.

Keep reading. And start rethinking!

All my best,



MW&A is happy to announce expansion, too! Journalist Jody Becker joins us as newsletter editor. Jody is a veteran reporter who got her start at the LA Times in Orange County. Her current projects include contributions to KCRW, The Huffington Post and the PBS documentary film, Autistic-Like.

IN THIS ISSUE

It's all about growth

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Alzheimer's Association OC: The Transformational Gift

alzheimer's  association

Orange County Alzheimer's Association CEO Jim McAleer on The Transformational Gift: An unanticipated \$27+ million gift changes everything for a non-profit.

"What changes, when and why, are decisions that must be made intelligently and strategically," says Jim McAleer CEO of the [Orange Country Alzheimer's Association](#). He learned about the gift in September last year, and has been working with MW&A since to identify how to leverage the windfall wisely.

grown through the BBC produced and CW network aired "Breaking Pointe," the docudrama set inside Salt Lake City's Ballet West. Coupled with a successful capital campaign, and the excellent reputation of the Academy of Dance, this position will propel Ballet West to a new level of excellence.

International Watts Gallery:

UK Individual Giving Plan

Watts Gallery is a purpose-built art gallery created for the display of works by the great Victorian artist George Frederic Watts OM, RA (1817-1904).

RETURNING CLIENTS

Southern California

Caterina's Club:

Foundations Relations, Grant writing and stewarding the 501c3 process

Alzheimer's Association

Orange County:

Foundation relations and outreach

Long Beach Cinematheque:

Donor Development for the Frida Art Theater opening September 2013

ProCon.org:

Foundation Relations and grants development

Pretend City Children's

Museum:

Executive Search-- Major Gifts Officer

Orange Children & Parents

Together:

Foundation Relations and outreach

Voice of OC/ Voice of SoCal:

"Clearly for us it's not just about expanding the current scope of our work," says McAleer, who's been running non-profits for more than 20 years. Instead, he says the first and most basic task facing him, his board and employees, is to step back and assess what the organization would most like to be doing in education, advocacy and outreach, now that resources are there.

That kind of internal organizational audit requires a shift in approach. MW&A was brought in to guide this multi-stream process, beginning with an organizational growth plan, including a needs assessment for staffing, departmental consulting and outsourcing strategies.

McAleer says the assistance was critical to re-aligning his organization in preparation for programmatic growth. "Our questions were very fundamental: we spent 30 years chasing money, now we have it, what do we do first?" Not to mention second and third.

Raising money will remain a priority, and MW&A has also helped identify partners wanting to assist AAOC in leveraging their growth. But having money makes it possible to evaluate all of the organizations systems, reallocate internal resources, grow infrastructure, hire new people, and create greater visibility and presence in Orange County with a building. The goal: serving more families. "We see ourselves targeting a 65% market share with our services," says McAleer.

He thinks how his organization is responding to the windfall has broad applicability. McAleer says he believes the kind of thinking he is doing now, thanks to the gift, is a kind of thinking all non-profits can benefit from as our economy emerges from the economic doldrums. His advice: Revisit your best case scenarios.

McAleer says he takes the congratulations of non-profit leader peers in stride. "I'd hardly say it's the case that now that we have this money, there is nothing left to worry about. Spending and growing this money makes me feel like I have more responsibility now than ever before."

ProCon.org: a million page views a month... Now What?



ProCon.org leverages visibility with MW&A boost

When tens of thousands of people visit your no-fee for service website every day, where's the added value for your non-profit?

Foundation Relations and Development Planning

Achievement Institute of Scientific Studies:
Foundation Relations

International
American Friends of the Tate Britain
UK: New Acquisition campaign

BALLET WEST

On Pointe for Ballet West: MW&A Leads Executive Search

MW & A is honored to be working with the esteemed [Ballet West](#) in its search for a new Executive Director.

Ballet West's home in Salt Lake City is undergoing an exciting expansion-as the company and acclaimed academy will open a brand new state of the art 45,000 foot facility in 2014.

The world class dancers of Ballet West have been featured for two seasons on "Breaking Pointe" the BBC's beautifully shot reality series illuminating the inner workings of the ballet world.

Artistic Director Adam Sklute and Ballet West's board of directors enjoy sold out seasons given the regional, national and international kudos their company earns. Ballet West looks forward to working with MW&A to find the leadership that can grow this outstanding arts organization with roots deep in the community, cultivated over 50 seasons. Please be in touch if you have a candidate in mind!

MW&A is working closely with the [ProCon.org's](http://ProCon.org) Founder and Board Chair Steven Markoff and President and Managing Editor Kamy Akhavan to turn the public visibility into funder support.

ProCon.org is the only website online offering concise, up to the minute, fully researched arguments on both sides of 47 critical public policy issues, including gun control, gay marriage, abortion and climate change.

Visitor engagement with the site is deep. During the run-up to the 2012 presidential election, not only did 121,500 people visit the site just within the last week before the election, but 65,000 people spent at least a half an hour on the ProCon.org site answering a 75 question quiz about the presidential candidates.

"That is a real testament that many Americans really want to understand who they are voting for." Lots of students use the site - about 45% of the traffic is from 12-25 year olds. That's in part because high school and college educators are big fans of the site, says Akhavan. "The mandate to teach critical thinking and persuasive writing in the common core curriculum means more reasons why more teachers need ProCon, especially while their resources are cut."

Perhaps more surprisingly, 25% of the site's visits come from people ages 25- 65. Markoff believes that's because the site presents unbiased information and an approach that's not easy for people to find in a shifting media landscape. Other committed users include national foundation staff and journalists from the most prestigious periodicals in the country.

Today those clicks are being converted into conversations with a range of potential donors. "We're in positive discussions with several funders at this point," says Markoff. "Because everybody realizes that critical thinking is important. Michelle is instrumental because what we do takes more than one phone call with a funder to explain. It's a conversation with a trusted advisor. When people do understand it they get very excited and see us as filling a vital need."

Voice of OC: Responding to the Call



**Voice of OC Editor-in-Chief Norberto Santana
on Responding to the Call**

When the [Voice of OC](http://VoiceofOC.com) began covering the LA mayoral race in mid-April, the questions came. Naturally. Why cross the county line? Just one reason: public demand, says Norberto Santana, the Voice's Founder and Editor-in-Chief. Since it's 2009 launch, the

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- Board & Leadership Development
- Reinvigorating your stalled campaign
- Creatively Enhancing Your Annual Fund Drive

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lean independent, non-profit investigative news agency has covered more than 3,000 stories, focusing its slim resources on Orange County issues mostly ignored or under-reported by the local media: iffy city and county politics, immigration, affordable housing, San Onofre, transportation -- and other tough public policy issues that are often hard for the public to understand.

"There's no shortage of stories for us," says Santana. And, he says, "These are the stories people need to understand most, so they can make decisions." His team of veteran reporters and editors --mostly shed from jobs at the Los Angeles Times and the OC Register-- translate the complex into readable stories with ample context. Readers all over the region began to notice the Voice of OC's smart coverage online, and call out for the same treatment of politics and pols in LA.

The decision to expand wasn't easy, says Santana. Part of the Voice's power lies in how they spend the time and resources with just four reporters on hand; Santana wasn't sure how they could do more. He decided the answer was to stick with m.o. that guides the Voice's journalism.

"We just do it," says Santana We just jump in and do that aggressive reporting. We don't take six months. Moving into LA, he says, is a leap of faith fueled with commitment and some additional funding, thanks to fund development services with MW&A. "We're just going to move in," says Santana. "We want to be able to dig into questions about safety, pensions, infrastructure and spending. All of these questions matter during the election, and will continue to matter. That's why we should be there, and we're ready to demonstrate our capacities."

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