

MICHELLE &
WHITING
ASSOCIATES

1994-2014
20th
Anniversary

MW&A

smart decision making for your advancement programs

eNews | Nonprofit Quarterly | Winter 2014

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Collaboration, Strategic Partnerships, Collective Impact.... One funder I know jokingly says that she 'fines' people who use the latter term in her presence. Why? This jargon is overused, misused, and often sometimes works better in theory than in practice.



Too often nonprofits seek partnerships with other mission- like organizations, where different philosophies--and competition for donors--mire progress. But we are seeing great success with organizations trying a different strategy: partners offering totally different services, but with an aligned philosophy. And to take it a step further, *partners that are eager and willing to share not just ideas, but donors and resources.*

A brilliant example is two former MW&A clients, **Project Hope Alliance** and **Art & Creativity for Healing**. These two nonprofits serve very different missions. Project Hope Alliance, is dedicated to improving the lives of homeless children living in Orange County motels. Art & Creativity for Healing is all about using paint, canvas and imagination to heal emotional trauma in children and adults.

Working on projects with Art & Creativity for Healing instructors, the children served by Project Hope Alliance have revealed some specific emotional health needs. Now that those needs are identified, appropriate services can be delivered.

NEW FUNDING

California

Caterina's Club: \$117,000
from the Fresh Produce and
Floral Council

NEW CLIENTS

California

**Gay & Lesbian Community
Services Center of Orange
County (The Center OC)**
Development Assessment

RETURNING CLIENTS

Southern California

Caterina's Club
Foundations Relations, Grant
writing and stewarding the
501c3 process

National

Common Threads
Strategic Foundation outreach
and grants development for
Los Angeles, Palo Alto,
Chicago, Miami and
Washington DC program sites

**Central Pennsylvania Youth
Ballet** Executive Search
Director of Development

More evidence: follow the money. These two organizations jointly applied for and won grants for after school programming. Now they're heading into a second cycle. Funders like the synergy. Another bonus: some of the expertise has migrated across the borders, as Project Hope Alliance's child case-worker is now a trained Art for Creativity and Healing facilitator.

Not-so-obvious partnerships are successful because the complementary missions extend, rather than duplicate. The more is *more*, there is no redundancy, and clients benefit. It's found synergy, and, we are seeing daily that it works.

My Very Best,



IN THIS ISSUE

- **New Executive Placements at THINK Together**
- **Common Threads National Expansion**
- **MW&A Celebrates 20 years!**

New Executive Placements



MW&A recently completed two executive searches for state-wide educational non-profit **THINK Together**. While many highly qualified candidates were considered for two posts, Tonia Collinske joined the team as Grants Administrator in January, and Susan Williamson (pictured)

came on board in December as the Director of Development. Here's what Susan says about her experience in the process:

What a pleasure to work with Michelle Whiting, a master match-maker, to land my dream job! Michelle is disarming, engaging and a leading expert in the national nonprofit arena and working with her through this process was a fantastic growth experience for me.

I am truly honored to join the amazing THINKers, carefully assembled by founder, CEO and visionary Randy Barth and Orange County fundraising legend and maverick, CDO, Tim

Foundation Relations and proposal development

Ballet West

Executive Search for Director of Advancement and National and Regional Donor development

The Frida Cinema: Ready for their close-up!

The Frida has Arrived!

Santa Ana Art House Cinema Opens This Month

When the **South East European Film Festival** (SEEFest) sweeps into to Santa Ana this month, it will mark the momentous opening of **The Frida Cinema**, a brand new cultural institution in one of Orange County's most diverse cities.

Logan Crow, the visionary arts advocate who founded the Long Beach Cinematheque is branching out -- into Santa Ana-- opening this 600-seat theater with the same energy and passion for the cinematic arts that's made the Cinematheque such a success for So Cal film lovers. **MW&A** is a huge fan, and so happy to be part of the effort to establish **The Frida Cinema** as a vital part of Santa Ana's booming arts scene.

Santa Ana's expanding cultural landscape already features many independent galleries, the historic Yost theater and neighboring Bowers Museum. Now the timing is right for a nonprofit arthouse cinema, says Crow. "The arts scene here is good and just keeps getting better.

Shaw. I'm already deeply engaged creating and implementing a statewide individual giving and event strategy.

National Expansion on the Front-Burner



COMMON THREADS

Common Threads Expands National Scope & Programs

Chicago-born **Common Threads** launched just over a decade ago as the brainchild of celebrity chef Art Smith. He wanted to teach low-income kids how to cook and eat nutritiously. He's done a delicious job of it, and the successes mean a continuous expansion of the work. Here's how they've done it.

Under the guidance of Founding CEO, Linda Novick O'Keefe, Common Threads began growing impressively in Chicago, with solid partnerships between the city's public schools and local chefs.

Since 2007, MW&A has provided organizational development and foundation relations and grants development consulting to Common Threads, resulting in over \$500,000 in new funders throughout the country.

Most recently, a **generous \$1million grant from WalMart Foundation** has taken the program from 28 schools to now over 120 schools. The majority of these schools and program partners sites are in Chicago, but other Common Threads programs have been growing in four additional locales: Miami, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and Palo Alto.

MW&A committed to leveraging relationships in every major US city where Common Threads is growing. Novick O'Keefe says Common Threads' five-year plan includes strategies to extend the reach of the message and mission beyond the classroom. "With a goal to get 1 million kids cooking, we are ready to take the program into more schools, summer programs, and even into homes, with webcasts that show families how-to."

Making a strategic shift to a national scope is ambitious and

The Frida will bring so many films that are too often inaccessible to American audiences. Our first festival-South East European Film speaks to that and makes it so clear the cinema will be a cultural institution, not just a movie theater."

Crow says working with **MW&A** is an enormous help in meeting both fundraising goals that are measurable in dollars and data, and also in on-going "friendraising" for The Frida. "Michelle is such an impassioned advocate for the arts," says Crow. "I honestly feel in our work together seeking support for **The Frida**, reaching the milestones is very meaningful to Michelle. I can completely trust her vision and style as we cultivate our donors."

Ready for your close up? Check out the options for on screen recognition for support of the new [Frida Cinema here](#).

Caterina's Club is awarded their 501 c3!

Caterina's Club, the nationally lauded program that serves 800 meals every night to homeless kids living in motels in OC, was awarded 501c3 status in December! For one year, MW&A had been stewarding the IRS application process along with the generous pro bono services of attorneys at Latham and Watkins Los Angeles offices.

Founded by Chef Bruno Serato, and based at his award winning gourmet restaurant

the challenges are very real. We're pleased to be a part of scaling these programs, honoring what matters most in each city where **Common Threads** is growing, and making authentic connections with local people and concerns to get kids cooking.

In February of 2014, MW&A hosted CEO Linda Novick O'Keefe in Los Angeles for meetings with THINK Together, The Creative Artists Agency (CAA) Foundation and the Milken Institute.

MW&A 20th Anniversary! 1994-2004

An interview with one of MW&A's first clients in 1994, Lynne Tsuda, Director of Institutional Giving at Girls Incorporated National



"When I was starting with Girls Inc., we crossed paths and just immediately clicked. Michelle is strategic minded, realistic and relationship oriented. She develops and cultivates relationships way beyond the traditional dynamics."

"Michelle is astute and zeros in on exactly what is needed. She simply has a great mind and is not driven by current trends, or how organizations feel they need to react to what the funders want. She assesses the client needs, works on that, and they are always grateful to her."

"Girls Inc. has been shaped with Michelle Whiting's help in many ways. She was very influential in helping us grow, using her network of connections in Los Angeles when it was time to expand. Because of Michelle, we were welcomed there as a new organization, even in a crowded landscape. And when it was time to build our board, she knew how to do that, too."

"It always amazes me to see the relationships Michelle has kept. She likes linking clients and funders and figuring out how to maximize resources. I think for all of these reasons, Michelle has been well connected with the most cutting edge funders like, Orange County Community Foundation from the start, and there is on-going respect for her work."

Michelle Whiting & Associates

The Anaheim White House, Caterina's Club had been operating with a fiscal sponsor, according to Sylvano Ibay, Vice President. "There's a fee with that sponsorship, meaning 8-10% of any funds raised were going towards those administrative costs. Now, 100% of the money donors give goes to meals for the kids, and permanent housing for their families" says Ibay. "MW&A worked with the legal team, and saw us through the entire process, even contacting our congresswoman, Loretta Sanchez, to move the process along. Michelle's just been a huge help every step of the way as we grow."

MW&A's eNews Quarterly Editor

Editor Jody Becker

Jody Becker is MW&A's newsletter and publications editor. Jody is a seasoned journalist and award winning documentary filmmaker in Santa Monica, California. She works as a producer and editor for National Public Radio, most recently contributing to "All Things Considered Weekend."

Her work has also appeared on The New York Times.com, The Atlantic.com, Huffington Post, on PBS, and in several other websites and print publications.