



MW&A eNews | Spring/Summer 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are living in unprecedented and troubling times, navigating our nonprofits through financial turbulence and social unrest that will change the way we operate moving forward.



COVID-19 has impacted program operations, increased the need for health and human services, transformed education program delivery, and pushed visual and performing arts into darkness.

Even before this pandemic, charitable giving was at a new low in this country. Over the past 12 months, the share of Americans who gave to a charity dropped to only 73 percent, even less than during the Great Recession. With giving already on a downward trend, how will nonprofits survive this latest hit? Many questions remain unanswered. To emerge from this crisis strong and stable, it is time to take action.

**What to Do:**

- Lean in hard on fundraising. Don't be timid. Let your donors know you need them now more than ever.
- Rethink your reliance on events. It may be a year or more before large gatherings are prudent. Can you re-tailor into smaller events, take your auction online, or gather virtually? Get creative.
- Encourage Giving from Donor Advised Funds. The use of donor advised funds is growing but still constitutes a small percentage of giving relative to the assets available. See who among your donors has given using this vehicle in the past and encourage them to make additional gifts during these difficult times.
- Turn to Foundations. Many foundations are stepping

**NEW FUNDING**

MW&A raises over \$600K in grant funding so far in 2020!

Here's a look at what we have achieved from January - June 2020.

**MW&A obtained** the following grants for clients through [Foundation outreach and grant proposal development.](#)

**\$100,000 (NYC)**

*Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Trust*

**\$75,000 (NYC)**

*JP Morgan Chase Foundation*

**\$75,000 (Los Angeles)**

*Weingart Foundation*

**\$50,000 (Los Angeles)**

*California Wellness Foundation*

**\$50,000 (Los Angeles)**

*Capital Group Companies*

**\$50,000 (Cincinnati)**

*Zero Hunger Waste Foundation*

up with increased grant-making for general operating support, emergency funding, and increased payouts. Share your organization's plan for moving your programs forward in the post-pandemic world and seek their partnership.

### What Not to Do:

- Don't be afraid to embrace technology. Use it in place of face-to-face engagement. In the short-term, digital platforms may be more comfortable for many donors. Explore options that allow for personal connection without in-person contact.
- Steer your board toward fundraising solutions, not cost-cutting measures. Budget cuts may need to happen, but this is the job of executive leadership. The board should set their sights on the organization's future strength and securing the resources to get there.

Now is not the time to panic or take drastic measures. What will happen in the next few months is still unknown. Calm, creative minds will prevail and discover opportunities in the chaos.

Since 1994, MW&A's experience and expertise have guided our nonprofit clients through many challenging times. Reach out to us now to discover potential foundation funders, increase your grant-making capabilities, and assess your current development efforts. We are here to help you pivot from survival to success in this new normal.

Warmest regards,



## MW&A Executive Placements:

### *Two Talented Placements Pivot to Address the New Reality*

Over the past few months, while the entire world was turned upside down by COVID-19, two of MW&A's recent executive placements unexpectedly found themselves in the middle of a career transition, uncertain as to what lies before them.

Josh Chan, the first Chief Development Officer at [Liberty in North Korea \(LiNK\)](#) and Amanda Keady [Think Together's](#) new Senior Director of Philanthropy, were interviewed before the start of the pandemic and accepted their positions just as social interaction shifted drastically and the economy was brought to its knees. Both Amanda and Josh are adapting and creating opportunities out of the challenges presented by the global pandemic.

Since its founding in 2004, LiNK has rescued more than 1,200 North Korean refugees, helping them reach freedom, resettle, and reunite with their families. MW&A began the search for its Chief Development Officer in

**\$30,000 (Los Angeles)**  
*S. Mark Taper Foundation*

**\$30,000 (Orange County)**  
*The Allergan Foundation*

**\$25,000 (Orange County)**  
*Argyros Family Foundation*

**\$25,000 (Anaheim)**  
*Anaheim Community Foundation*

**\$20,000 (Orange County)**  
*Orange County Resilience Fund*

**\$20,000 (Orange County)**  
*The Ueberroth Family Foundation*

**\$15,000 (Los Angeles)**  
*The Green Foundation*

**\$15,000 (Orange County)**  
*Curci Foundation*

**\$10,000 (Orange County)**  
*SEMPRA Energy Foundation*

**\$10,000 (Orange County)**  
*Linda Irvine Smith Foundation*

Foundation Outreach:  
MW&A's successful strategy to increase grant funding.

Many of the grants we have secured for our clients resulted from MW&A's unique services in [foundation outreach](#).

Through our long-term and vast network of professional connections with foundations locally, regionally, and nationally, we identify potential new funders, speak with program officers, and gain entrée for clients to apply.

Our Potential Funders Report summarizes program

January, but then the pandemic changed everything. Interviews became virtual, and candidates had to revise their thinking about how to meet the original job objectives. Josh believes the situation allowed him to show the strategic and nimble leader he would be.



*Josh Chan, Chief Development Officer at Liberty in North Korea*

"When I began the selection process, social distancing was becoming a reality," Josh said. "The potential effect on traditional development strategies, such as fundraising events and face-to-face donor engagement, surfaced. I had time to think this through and present ways to address these challenges during my interviews."

Josh feels that working with MW&A during this unprecedented climate was an asset. "Michelle was with me all along the way. She and I discussed the new issues the pandemic created and how my strengths could address them. I demonstrated my ability to react to dramatic change, show what I could bring to this new table, and not simply rest on my laurels."

Josh now oversees a team of six though he has yet to meet them in person. "The office has been closed since I started. LiNK has a great on-boarding process, and my days have been full of training, staff meetings, and planning. I look forward to the time when I can work with my new colleagues face-to-face," he said.

When Amanda Keady joined Think Together, one of California's foremost education support programs, she found herself having to alter her initial plans. "As part of our new major gifts program, we intended to host intimate home salons to introduce potential donors to Think Together," said Amanda. "We must now communicate our mission and vision differently. We are using a virtual network to offer potential donors the opportunity to connect and be a part of the conversation."

Despite these challenges, Amanda is confident in what she brings to her new position and credits MW&A. "Michelle has been an incredible partner. Through her extensive experience, transparency, and integrity, she gained my complete trust. She believed that I was the right person with the right skill set for this amazing organization, so I felt totally comfortable moving forward and not looking back, even in these strange times."



*Amanda Keady, Senior Director of Philanthropy, Think Together*

Think Together's Chief Development Officer Joel Wyatt agrees that Amanda is the right fit. Joel was recruited to Think Together by MW&A over a year ago. When faced with building his development staff, he called Michelle.

"It was a logical move. Michelle has an incredible national network, and I knew she would find someone perfect for the job. Amanda is going to be a rock star fundraiser, especially in this brave new world. She is a smart, experienced, and collaborative leader. She will help me elevate our entire development effort."

officers' feedback, including key areas of interest, suitable request amounts, and optimal timing for submitting an LOI or proposal.

Over the last 18 months, MW&A has conducted foundation outreach for seven clients. In total, we identified 94 foundations willing to accept their proposals, with request amounts totaling between \$2.3 million and \$5.25 million.

Contact MW&A if you would like us to introduce your organization to new potential foundation funders.

## The MW&A Team

Michelle Whiting started MW&A in 1994 after a decade of working with nonprofits in Southern California. Now in her 26th year running MW&A, Michelle has formed a team of skilled professionals to provide the highest quality service to MW&A clients.



### **Laura Hardy, Senior Development Consultant**

joined MW&A in 2018 after a successful career at the C-suite level for several nationally-recognized nonprofits, including Wayfinder Family Services and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, (LACMA).

## Operating Successfully in the New Normal

Both Amanda and Joel feel fortunate to be at an organization like Think Together because they are at the forefront of working with digital platforms. "We have a visionary CEO in Randy Barth," said Joel. "Where others see calamity and despair, he sees solutions. He was already ahead of the curve in solving the digital divide in our programming efforts, and we will utilize these platforms to connect with our donors."

At LiNK, Josh, too, will rely heavily on technology. "This situation is testing the metal of the nonprofit world. Fortunately, one of LiNK's strong points is their presence on social media, branding, and reach. LiNK's staff uses technology very effectively to engage with our audiences. I hope to build upon this technologically-savvy, forward-thinking strategy, and take it one step further, challenging our followers with calls to action. It's a very entrepreneurial way to engage donors."

With experience, knowledge, and connections accumulated over nearly three decades, MW&A is uniquely positioned to help our nonprofit clients navigate these challenging times. Contact us to learn more about our Executive Search, Development Assessment, Grant Development, and Foundation Relations services.

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Assisting with the marketing side of the MW&A is **Stephanie Christian** who coordinates e-communications and IT.



Rounding out the all-female team is **Carol van Ahlers, Senior Editor and Executive Search Associate**. Carol provides support for candidate interviews, reference follow-up, and edits MW&A's e-news.