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MW&A e-News

Spring 2023

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Are we in a recession? Expecting one?
Are we back in the office? Hybrid? Never going
back?

So many COVID policies and protocols
established out of necessity are now being
evaluated, which means the nonprofit sector has
some choices to make.



- **Hiring:** Your future fundraising team is expecting to work (at least) partially from home. With an entire generation of development professionals retiring and mid-career fundraisers leaving the industry in record numbers, it is critical for NPOs to retain the flexibility they developed over the past few years.
- **Events:** It's time to mingle in person. The virtual event served its purpose, but now we must have that face-to-face experience once again. Consider utilizing some of the virtual technologies you've used over the past three years to vary your approach to reach specific donors.
- **Foundations:** While our institutional giving partners truly stepped up during the most challenging period of the pandemic, I am afraid it's back to "business as usual." In fact, many foundations have pulled back as the economy remains uncertain. We have a looming recession that never seems to arrive, inflation driving up costs, and foundation funding getting much tighter. They want their potential grantees to be in better shape. Organizations need strong financials, impact statements, and the ability to make a strong case for support.

Now more than ever, it's time to ensure your organization puts forward a compelling case and demonstrates results. How much impact do donor dollars really have? What are the true costs of your program, and how many people are you serving? How will you spend *and* leverage any funding you receive?

MW&A can help you create a case for support that anticipates and answers all your donors' questions. [Let us know](#) how we may help you in your endeavors.

NEW FUNDING
MW&A has raised over
\$400,000 in grant funding for
our clients in 2023!

MW&A secured the following grants for clients from January 1 through April 2023, through [foundation outreach and proposal development](#). Parenthetical information indicates the location of the client recipient.

\$75,000 (Los Angeles)
The Capital Group Companies

\$50,000 (Los Angeles)
Fidelity Charitable

\$50,000 (Los Angeles)
Ralph M. Parsons Foundation

\$50,000 (Los Angeles)
S. Mark Taper Foundation

\$35,000 (D.C.)
*Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz
Foundation*

\$30,000 (So Cal)

Larry and Helen Hoag Foundation

Warmest Regards,

*\$30,000 (So Cal)
Sisters of St. Joseph Healthcare
Foundation*

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

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

*\$20,000 (Los Angeles)
Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation*

*\$20,000 (New York)
Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation*

Click below for a complete history of the grants we have secured for our clients since 1994. [Contact MW&A](#) if you would like us assess your current grants program, introduce your organization to new potential foundation funders, or create compelling proposals.

[Click Here for Full MW&A Grants Awarded List](#)



**Looking for more Foundation Funding?
MW&A can help you prepare.**

MW&A assists two non-profits as they look to expand their funding from foundations

CEO Leadership Alliance of Orange County Looks to Expand its Funding Base



Access to a talented and prepared workforce, especially at the entry-level, is a major challenge for businesses across the country. In Orange County alone, nearly 50 percent of the jobs in the tech industry remain unfilled. The **CEO Leadership Alliance of Orange County (CLAOC)** has developed employer-led programs to provide hundreds of work-based learning experiences annually, especially for diverse, underserved students at the high school, community college, and 4-year university levels. The nonprofit is also helping to organize the OC Talent Collaborative (OCTC), made up of over 35 workforce stakeholders across all sectors, to take on the monumental task of creating a talent development ecosystem.

According to Mark Percy, president of CLAOC, thousands of students are leaving high school and college without the skills to enter the workforce. They may have a degree but are unprepared for a digitally driven business world, especially one being transformed by artificial intelligence. CLAOC is part of a collaborative effort between businesses, community organizations, and education to change the trend.

“We are developing an innovation talent pipeline that will keep businesses in Orange County by providing them with the talent they need,” said Mark. “Through real-world exposure to the modern workforce setting along with valuable mentoring for students, especially those who are underserved and underrepresented, we are building a smoother transition from education to the business world.”

“We’ve always had strong member funding and recently received a generous government grant from the OC Department of Education. We also know a large group of foundations align with our mission,” said Mark. “We turned to MW&A to find out who those foundations are and how to reach them. One of the benefits of the first phase of working with Michelle was determining which foundations to approach and what would resonate with each prospective foundation.”



Labor Shortage Still Haunts The Non-Profit Sector

While workforce shortages nationwide continue to plague businesses and government agencies, the non-profit sector is being hit especially hard. According to a recent survey conducted by the National Council of Nonprofits, more than one-quarter of nonprofits had job openings "for 20-29 percent of their positions."

Vacancies appear at all levels, from operations and program administrators to executive leadership. This impact is felt in the organization’s ability to serve its community through its programs and in acquiring funds for operational and capital expenditures.

A whole generation of fundraisers is leaving, citing burnout, retirement, or a career change. There are no solid strategies to replace them, nor are there long lines of individuals waiting to enter the profession.

Development is hard work and requires strong board members and volunteer leaders who will partner with fundraising

“Michelle is very practical and brings years of experience to the table. She doesn’t offer pie-in-the-sky strategies; she is very sound and realistic,” said Mark. “We have a small staff but a big agenda and a big mission. We needed someone to help get us where we wanted to be fast and efficiently. MW&A helped us strategically package what we do, making the case for support.”

“We aren’t just trying to improve the lives of tens of students; we want to impact tens of thousands. The system must change, and it will be expensive,” said Mark. “Talent can be the key differentiator in whether a company stays or leaves OC. Without a diverse innovation talent pipeline connecting to higher paying jobs, we will not keep our young people – they will not be able to afford to live here. I think we can agree that we want a thriving OC for all, not just some. It has been well worth hiring **MW&A** to help us put a strategy in place to accomplish this goal.”



Helping to Grow the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden

San Luis Obispo Botanical Gardens (SLOBG) spans 150 acres on the Central Coast of California and has

turned to MW&A to help them grow. Following the strategic plan adopted by the Board of Directors in 2021, SLOBG is expanding its aspirations. The organization recently hired a development director and contracted with MW&A as the catalyst to get them to bloom fully.

“We are maturing from a volunteer-based organization into a much larger entity,” said Executive Director Chenda Lor. “We have doubled in size and scope every year and need a boost to get us to the next stage. That is why we reached out to Michelle.”

MW&A recently completed a potential funders report for SLOBG, connecting them with foundations that are a good match for the garden's need for operational support and expanding their donor base beyond a few local foundations, businesses, and member support.

“Michelle is helping bridge the gap between our needs and those of the foundations,” said Chenda. “Carefully assessing our budget, getting an annual review of our financials, and developing a list of selling points to use for the proposals are all in process.”

One key objective in the strategic plan is to achieve financial stability for operations. Several new staff positions are proposed. This alone necessitates a broader audience of funders in addition to those they currently approach for capital funds.

“Working with MW&A over the past few months, we’ve reaped a multitude of benefits,” Chenda explained. “We have a greater understanding of the foundation fundraising process. This is just the beginning of a long relationship for the garden and its community, not only with Michelle but a host of new foundation funders.”

professionals. A 26-year-old who has been in fundraising for two years can’t be expected to come into the job with a deep knowledge of the leading philanthropists, foundations, and corporations likely to support your mission. In fact, no development professional, no matter the length of their career, should be expected to have a Rolodex of wealthy prospects they can approach—they are not peers with these people. This dilemma is not going away; it is here for the long term. But there are ways to meet these challenges.

Raising funds: A good board is the best tool for solid fund development. Boards and executive leadership must understand that when they hire a fundraiser, the funding challenges aren’t over. Effective boards can no longer be worker-bee boards. Boards must focus on raising funds. It’s a hard reality to accept, but it is the truth.

Be realistic: It isn’t only about how long it may take to find a qualified development professional; it is also what you can expect from that employee. Most new hires will require more training, a longer runway, a steeper learning curve, more board support, and leadership direction.

Consider Interim Support: MW&A has been contracted to help organizations bridge the development gap through the lean years. MW&A can assist in several ways, from executive recruiting to finding the right development professional, development assessments to determine the best direction for funding efforts, grant development, and potential funder reports.

We have learned that when a challenge arises, even across the entire nonprofit sector, there are ways to pivot that will allow an organization to survive and thrive. Turn to **MW&A** as a partner to get you through.

MW&A

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