

Nonprofit VOICE

A Quarterly Publication of The Alliance: The Voice of Community Nonprofits

FALL 2017

*Get Ready for the
2017 Annual
Nonprofit Conference*

from
COLLABORATION
to
COLLECTIVE IMPACT



Gian-Carl Casa
PRESIDENT AND CEO

Kirk Springsted
VICE PRESIDENT, ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Lilian Gutierrez
DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP & CT NONPROFIT
CENTER

Joshua Lipshitz
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Jeffrey Shaw
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY

Dorena Wasik
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Katie Breslin
COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBERSHIP SPECIALIST

Brunilda Ferraj
SENIOR PUBLIC POLICY SPECIALIST

Odessa Lopez
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING SPECIALIST

Donna Lorenzo
CONTRACT SPECIALIST, PREFERRED
PURCHASING PROGRAM

Ben Shaiken
SENIOR PUBLIC POLICY SPECIALIST

Julia Wilcox
SENIOR PUBLIC POLICY SPECIALIST

© 2015 by CT Community Nonprofit Alliance, Inc.
For permission to reprint articles, contact
CT Community Nonprofit Alliance.

Article Submission:

We welcome submissions. Articles should be submitted electronically to kbreslin@ctnonprofitalliance.org for consideration. All articles are subject to review and approval by The Alliance. Submission does not guarantee publication.

Articles should be targeted to nonprofits in general concerning laws, employment/HR practices, best practices, governance, administration, capacity building, etc.; and should be informational rather than commercial in nature.

For more information, please call 860-525-5080 x1021.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 *A Note from the President and CEO*
By Gian-Carl Casa
- 4 *The Collaboration Game: Solving the Puzzle of Nonprofit Partnership*
By Jacob Harold, GuideStar
- 8 *Getting Your Board Engaged in Fundraising and Supporting Your Organization*
By Abbie von Schlegel
- 10 *Team Development: A Resource to Workplace Success!*
By Kenya Rutland
- 11 *Unstable Terrain on Capitol Hill as Congress Faces Multiple Heavy Lifts*
By Tiffany Gourley
- 12 *In Their Own Words: The Importance of Nonprofit Advocacy*
By Melanie Berzins
- 16-17 *Academic Partnerships*
- 18 *Who Thinks Politicizing Charitable Nonprofits is a Good Idea?*
By David L. Thompson
- 20 *About the Board of Directors*
- 22 *Don't Let Others Define the Work of Charities and Foundations*
By David L. Thompson and Jeffrey Shaw
- 23 *State Legislators Need to Hear From You - Year 'Round*
By Jeffrey Shaw
- 24 *For Nonprofit Boards: Your Role in Working with Others*
By Mike Burns
- 27 *Alliance Allies Vendor Program*



Our mission is to advance excellence in community-based nonprofits through advocacy and capacity building

CT Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance) is the statewide for nonprofits in Connecticut. The Alliance lends a powerful, collective voice to nonprofits throughout Connecticut - enhancing their capacity to build economically stable, healthy, and culturally rich communities.

The Alliance provides members with significant cost-saving opportunities through our Alliance Allies Vendor Program, a dedicated public policy team, specialized professional development, as well as information sharing and networking opportunities with your nonprofit peers in our member-only roundtables and forums.

Learn more at www.ctnonprofitalliance.org or call us at 860.525.5080.

A Note from the President and CEO

Gian-Carl Casa

There are many ways to say it – e pluribus unum, it takes a village, united we stand – but they mean the same thing: we may all be different, but we're better off together. Never has that interdependence been more important than now. Community nonprofits face historic challenges in 2017 as they try to meet the needs of families, neighbors and friends.

The theme of this edition of Nonprofit Voice and the upcoming Annual Conference is "From Collaboration to Collective Impact." It's a recognition and reminder of what people, organizations and communities can accomplish when working together.

Connecticut's great quality-of-life was built on groups of people working towards common goals and with common interests. Connecticut is divided into small, distinct municipalities -- and within them are boroughs, districts and neighborhoods, each with its own character and sense of place. Within those are local organizations of all types, trying to improve the lives of the people who live there. This is a state where the success of the whole has clearly

depended on the strength of its many smaller parts.

Nonprofit organizations are part of that success. They are unique and local. Some are big, with hundreds of employees, while others may have just one or two volunteers. Together they form a network that helps individual human beings reach their potential and meet their own needs. The cumulative impact of separate organizations with diverse missions – each helping people in its own way -- means that Connecticut is a better place for everyone.

Our goal at The Alliance is to maximize that impact by giving you the kinds of services, training opportunities, cost savings and advocacy that can't be duplicated when you stand alone. We work every day to get better at that, and we won't stop. Please participate in our programs to the extent you can. The people of Connecticut depend on it.

Gian-Carl Casa joined CT Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance) in 2016 as its first President and CEO.

Member Highlight



"The Alliance is a tremendous resource that provides my agency with legislative access and advocacy that is well beyond what we could ever achieve on our own. Like many nonprofits across Connecticut, Gilead provides cost effective and quality services that represent tremendous value to taxpayers. Not only does the Alliance understand this, but they have made it their mission to communicate the value of the nonprofit sector to Connecticut's lawmakers and leadership. Over the course of this legislative session, when I had the opportunity to talk with legislators and other state leaders, they have echoed the priorities of the non-profit sector. They are able to explain how non-profit agencies could be part of the solution and they speak of concepts like 'conversion' and the 'pressure' that nonprofits are applying on the service system. In my opinion, this is evidence of a profound and significant change that is taking place in our state because of The Alliance."

- Dan Osborne, LCSW, CEO, **Gilead Community Services**

The Collaboration Game: Solving the Puzzle of Nonprofit Partnership

By Jacob Harold, President & CEO, GuideStar USA

Above the desks of many nonprofit executives you will find these words: “If you want to travel quickly, go alone. If you want to travel far, go together.” And yet, nonprofits often act in isolation against complex problems, spinning reinvented wheels.

Nonprofit collaboration is harder than it sounds. Economics, game theory, and behavioral science suggest some lessons on how organizations might collaborate more often and more effectively.

BANG FOR THE BUCK: THE ECONOMICS OF COLLABORATION

Collaboration can help nonprofits achieve greater social impact at lower cost. To understand how, we can cautiously apply three core concepts of microeconomics: division of labor, economies of scale, and network effects.

1. Division of Labor

Over a century after its introduction in 1913, the assembly line—where each worker specializes in a particular task—remains the quintessential example of division of labor. The resulting efficiencies helped drive the Industrial Revolution, with all its positive and negative consequences.

The nonprofit sector would do well to learn from the factory floor. Functional division of labor among nonprofits, where separate organizations serve the same individual in multiple ways, can improve aggregate impact. One organization may be better at providing housing, another at job training. But for this to work, the organizations must have open channels of communication. Otherwise, the client will suffer—think cross-scheduled sessions, contradictory messages, and misaligned timelines. A related set of benefits can arise from the geographic division of labor by mapping to the distribution of need across space. A factory works because common procedures, thorough communication, and a shared goal underlie workers’ coordinated efforts. Nonprofits similarly in sync can reap the benefits of organizational diversity and independence while still protecting the interests of beneficiaries.

2. Economies of Scale

An organization that can rent a large office space pays less per square foot than a small one subletting cubicles. A national network can train employees efficiently with standardized trainings. Economies of scale matter for organizations operating on thin financial margins in tough economic times.

But more importantly, economies of scale matter because they can increase social impact. Teach for America’s national scale, for example, allows cross-site learning and improved training for new teachers, all in the service of better educating students in under-resourced public schools. Large advocacy groups like the Sierra Club or the National Rifle Association can mobilize people quickly and cost-effectively due to their immense size.

In some cases, small is indeed beautiful and scale can bring very real challenges. But often collaboration enables economies of scale that help the nonprofit community advance both margin and mission.

3. Network Effects

Network effects happen when a product or service gains additional value with each new user. Take Wikipedia: One contributor can provide a handful of entries, but as an open platform the site gets 10 edits every second. Nonprofits can similarly benefit from connecting individuals or organizations. For example, VolunteerMatch is an online platform that leverages network effects to connect citizens to causes they care about.

Organizations can intentionally build network effects through standardization. An often-cited example is Strive Partnership—a collaboration of nonprofits, foundations, government agencies, and corporations working to improve education outcomes in the Cincinnati area—which serves as an example for the broader “collective impact” movement. The various organizations track the same indicators and engage in regular, structured communications to inform a dynamic, community-wide strategy.

The Internet can generalize and magnify the power of network effects, especially with the use of data standards. In the nonprofit sector, the Basic Registry of Identified Global Entities (a registry of unique identifiers for nonprofits around the world) and the Philanthropy Classification System (a new taxonomy for nonprofits and grants) offer immense potential for field-level alignment—and thus field-level learning.

Properly harvested, network effects help enable nonprofit communities to achieve scale of reach while still celebrating the diversity of the network.

PRISONERS OF OUR OWN ORGANIZATIONS: GAME THEORY AND NONPROFIT COLLABORATION

These microeconomic effects can help nonprofits achieve more bang for their buck once they've entered into a collaboration, but most organizations face serious structural barriers well before they even get to that point. Nonprofits are not alone in having to manage situations where working with others is difficult. During the Cold War, the US military spent millions hiring mathematicians to parse the dark logic of the nuclear standoff. Thinkers like John Von Neumann built the new discipline of game theory to illuminate the terrible decisions facing political leaders. Nonprofits can similarly benefit from game theory to explain—and potentially avoid—seemingly shortsighted and selfish behavior.

The Prisoner's Dilemma

Consider first the most famous problem in game theory, the "prisoner's dilemma": Two people are held in separate cells and asked to declare the other guilty. If neither defects, each faces a light sentence—30 days. If both defect, they each get a heavy sentence—5 years. If one defects and the other does not, the defector is rewarded with freedom and the other gets the heaviest sentence—10 years. As a pair, the obvious choice is for both to keep mum. But as individuals, the incentive is to defect; no matter what the first prisoner believes the second will do, he sees he will get a better deal through declaring the other guilty.

Potential nonprofit collaborators often find themselves in prisoner's dilemma-type situations. Nonprofits are usually oriented toward the status quo in terms of funding streams, staffing models, programmatic strategies, and organizational culture. Collaboration requires changes to each, and while they may dream of the benefits of

collaboration, nonprofits also know it means risking their relative stability and safety.

For example, imagine two human services organizations: One offers sexual education programs in local high schools and another provides services to teenage mothers. Each receives \$100,000 a year from the same local community foundation. Both nonprofits know the foundation sees opportunity for greater impact through greater collaboration; in fact, it might provide \$300,000 in total funding for a well-designed collaborative effort. But both nonprofits are nervous about losing their existing funding. If the collaboration does not work out, would the community foundation cut their core funding? Might one organization betray the other and tell the community foundation it could provide both types of services on its own for just \$150,000?

To distrust, add uncertainty and short-term costs: Even if the executive directors of two organizations want to collaborate, staff members may resist, saying the partnership will force them to restructure the program, re-do internal systems, abandon their unique culture, or—horror of horrors!—admit the weakness of their organization.

From Two to Many

These dynamics are further complicated when more than two organizations are involved. The mathematician John Nash, famously portrayed in the film *A Beautiful Mind*, formalized a way to think about multi-party prisoner's dilemmas—a concept later called the "Nash equilibrium." When a group of players interacts over time, they are prone to settle into specific behaviors. These behaviors reach equilibrium when no individual wants to unilaterally change given the others' behaviors.

Environmental advocacy groups offer a good example. They use different approaches to achieve similar goals, or what game theory calls "mixed strategies." The large environmental groups—including radical ones like Greenpeace and more mainstream ones like Environmental Defense Fund—share very similar goals, but have settled into a pattern of isolated operation, fractured strategies, and even betrayal. These organizations would almost certainly accomplish more together with aligned strategies that either aggregated power or capitalized on difference (think good cop-bad cop strategies). Unfortunately, no single organization has an incentive to unilaterally change; it might threaten funding or compromise identity.

But there are solutions. Research in game theory has shown that a long-term view (the “repeated game”) can completely change players’ decision-making. Intentional communication can remove the knowledge barriers that cause sub-optimal outcomes, as in the regular “Green Group” meetings of large environmental organizations. Every partnership is evidence that it is possible to transcend the dilemmas that get in the way of collaboration.

SIX STEPS FOR CLIMBING COLLABORATION MOUNTAIN

Collaboration can challenge nonprofit leaders’ sense of identity. We would be wise to respect how emotionally and intellectually difficult it can be for practitioners of social change to acknowledge that they cannot succeed alone. So let us look to behavioral science—and to our own experiences—for insights on how we might find a path to climb Collaboration Mountain.

- 1. Define the community.** It is essential that collaborators find a sense of shared identity. The first step is to identify what the groups have in common: “We are defenders of tropical rainforests” or “we serve the Miami homeless.” Overwhelming evidence suggests that a sense of community plays a central role in human decisions, whether negative (racism) or positive (neighborliness).
- 2. Name the weakness.** Introductions at Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings begin with, “My name is X, and I am an alcoholic.” This statement puts the speaker in a humble frame of mind, making them more receptive to help. Similarly, nonprofits can open themselves to collaboration by acknowledging their limitations as independent actors. Naming the problem need not create a pessimistic atmosphere; indeed, the next phrase at an AA meeting is often something along the lines of, “... and I’ve been sober for five years.” Nonprofits can immediately build on naming the weakness by highlighting the opportunity.
- 3. Identify the Sherpa.** Multi-lateral collaboration greatly benefits from a guide—a person or organization—to manage the process, provide encouragement, and help solidify a shared vision. Without this, the short-term incentives of the individual participants will tend to prevail, and the collaboration will dissolve. Pure top-down management will not work; if nonprofit participants feel a foundation is forcing them to engage, the partnership will not

be authentic. Ideally, the guide comes from the community but is not identified with a single set of interests. Like a Sherpa leading climbers up a mountain, they are both participant and leader, bearing costs and reaping shared rewards.

- 4. Make explicit the implicit division of labor.** Over time, nonprofits tend to differentiate themselves: One organization takes the west side of a town, another the east; or one handles middle-school students, another high-school students. Once potential collaborators acknowledge those differences, they can capitalize on them. It is often necessary to say explicitly what implicit division of labor may have developed over time. Without that openness, participants may hesitate to speak clearly or act decisively, afraid to offend or stereotype.
- 5. Demonstrate proof points.** One powerful human tendency is to do what we see others doing. Nonprofits are far more likely to collaborate if they see relatable examples of other successful collaborations. It can be a step-wise process of sharing simple examples, building confidence, bringing in new data, and making larger steps possible.
- 6. Design collective systems.** Formalized systems for knowledge sharing, governance, and external communications not only create value, but also reinforce collective identity and incentivize organizations to remain in the group. This makes it more likely that the collaboration lasts long enough to achieve the desired change.

This six-step approach is neither linear nor immutable. Some collaborations may skip a step or move through them in a different order, but a trip down this path can name, build, and strengthen new communities of organizations bound together by common purpose.

The challenges the nonprofit sector faces are big and they are complex. Economics reminds us that we need collective action to achieve scale. Game theory reminds us how hard it can be to overcome our narrow interests. But society, again and again, has proven its ability to resolve these dilemmas and shown that we can break these unhealthy equilibria. Surely nonprofits can do the same. The stakes could not be higher.

Jacob Harold (@jacobcharold) is the president and CEO of GuideStar, the world’s largest source of information about nonprofits. Each year more than 8 million users seek answers from GuideStar’s 2.8 billion pieces of data.

Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP): the practical, cost-effective telephone solution for nonprofits

A Proud
Member of
the Alliance
Allies Vendor
Program

AllianceAllies
Vendor Program

**Nonprofits of any size can now have
a flexible and reliable VOIP solution to fit
any budget.**

IP Genie bundles the 'best of the best'
hardware and network resources for a
cost-effective, long-term technology solution
at an affordable monthly usage fee.

See why many non-profit organizations
have switched from traditional telephone
systems to VOIP. Contact IP Genie today.

- **Member-preferred
Pricing & Benefits**
- **Extensive Features**
- **Scalability & Reliability**

IP Genie

Intelligently Bundled Technology as a Service

Learn more!

860 610-6000 or info@IP-genie.com

Genie Innovations, Inc. (dba IP Genie)
93 Farmstead Lane, Windsor, CT 06095

www.IP-genie.com



Helping Nonprofit Organizations Prosper and Grow Since 1972



GUILMARTIN ■ DIPIRO ■ SOKOLOWSKI LLC
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Our Services

Audited Financial Statements
Compliance Supplements
Accounting Support
Estates, Gifts & Trusts
Tax Matters

Our Partners

Michael J. DiPiro, CPA, CVA
Michael A. Sokolowski, CPA
Teresa J. Opalacz, CPA
Christopher B. Conley, CPA
Rick W. Morin, CPA
Michael J. Kovaleski, CPA

505 MAIN STREET, MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457 TEL 860.347.5689 FAX 860.346.1172 www.gdscpas.com

Getting Your Board Engaged in Fundraising and Supporting Your Organization

By Abbie J. von Schlegell, CFRE, Principal, a. von schlegell & co

TIME
TALENT
TREASURE

Nonprofits have Boards to govern the organization and to ensure the organization is living up to its mission in perpetuity.

Board members provide invaluable direction, insight and oversight. When recruiting a possible new board member, consider his/her expertise, experience and knowledge about your nonprofit, your mission and purpose, and the broader community. Don't forget to consider their contacts and connections. This is vitally important when it comes to fundraising.

Responsibilities of the board include shaping and clarifying the mission and vision, enhancing the reputation of the organization, actively engaging in strategic planning, and making policy decisions. Let's not forget outreach - being a bridge and buffer between the organization and its stakeholders.

To assist your board, here's a list of 10 things they should know about your nonprofit:

1. Activities: who, what, where, for how long?
2. Mission, Theory of change
3. Organization chart & profile of key leaders
4. Revenue mix and trends
5. Key expenses and cost components
6. Board composition and committees
7. Key peers/competitors
8. Other stakeholders
9. Recent events and public profile
10. Results against mission

A high performing board has knowledge about the mission as well as the value their organization brings to the community. Their ability and motivation to give and get money is also at the top of the list.

Getting money. It goes without saying that fundraising is essential and everyone (board, staff and volunteers) should participate in this endeavor. Of course, it's the least favorite activity board members want to do. They will happily commit to serving on the board.

Set the expectation for board members to give. Stress that it's not really about the amount, but

the gift itself. Every board should have 100% giving annually. And when you reach that goal, let everyone know!

Asking for money takes experience and resilience. Make sure you train members how to ask and provide them with the necessary data and materials needed to get the job done. Plan a retreat or training sessions that includes role play and sharing anecdotes on what worked and what didn't.

Here are some ways Board members can help raise money:

1. Board members who own or know owners of retail establishments, restaurants, etc. can arrange to do a "pass-through" or "cause-related marketing" contribution for the group. A specified dollar amount from each sale goes to the organization. This will raise visibility as well as money.
2. Increase organizational membership by setting a goal of recruiting two or more new members a month from individuals in their personal and professional networking groups. One-on-one recruiting is an excellent way to practice soliciting major gifts.
3. Hosting house parties is a wonderful way for board members to fundraise (and friend raise) for your organization. Being in casual, social atmospheres is much less threatening.
4. Become a mentor and role model to new board members.
5. Commit 15-30 minutes of each meeting to sign solicitation, thank you, or memberships letters and write personal notes.

Please remember that your board members are among your most important assets as they can bring you work, wealth and wisdom!

Abbie J. von Schlegell, CFRE has been in the development field for over 40 years. She has held key major gifts positions at Stanford University, The University of Chicago, and was Chief Development Officer for both the Shakespeare Theatre Company and for Enterprise Community Partners. She edited the first book about women's philanthropy, Women as Donors, Women as Philanthropists, published by Jossey Bass; and continues to research and speak about women's giving. Her extensive nonprofit experience includes capital campaigns, major gifts programs and volunteer and staff training. Abbie is a Certified Governance Trainer with BoardSource.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR CAREER AND YOUR MISSION



MS DEGREES *in* NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT & PHILANTHROPY STRATEGIC FUNDRAISING & PHILANTHROPY

Why do students chose Bay Path?

- Classes start every October, February, and June
- Course schedule offered 100% online
- Collaborate with like-minded professionals in a small classroom environment
- Courses are taught by faculty with significant industry experience
- Students are mentored throughout the degree by a trusted program adviser
- Establish the knowledge base for you to earn the CFRE certificate
- Financial Aid is available
- No GRE or GMAT required

ENROLLING NOW!

Learn more at BAYPATH.EDU



FOR A CONSTANTLY CHANGING WORLD

Team Development – A Resource to Workplace Success!

By Kenya Rutland, KJR Consulting

Organizations rely on teams to carry out tasks, tackle projects, and get things done. Not much business happens these days without the use of teams. In fact, without leveraging teams of people who can work together effectively, most organizations would not be able to achieve their goals.

However, simply filling your team with people who have the right skills, knowledge, and experience to complete the required tasks does not guarantee that they will work well together. Unfortunately, an inability to work as a team can have major negative impacts on team productivity, effectiveness, and motivation. Ineffective teams get bogged down by poor communication, confusion about roles and responsibilities, unclear goals, inability to make decisions, and interpersonal problems. Before you know it, what started as a group of talented individuals can quickly devolve into a highly dysfunctional team.

Fortunately, team building activities *can* help remedy these problems. Contrary to the notion of some people that they are silly, irrelevant, and a waste of time, team building exercises have been proven to have a positive impact on group effectiveness. Yes, team building can involve getting out of the office, engaging in novel activities, and even having some fun, but studies have demonstrated that, when done correctly, team building exercises can also garner real measurable results and a significant financial ROI.

Effective team building activities can improve team cohesion, and help teams achieve higher levels of trust, communication, and cooperation. Group problem solving, decision making, and

interpersonal relations can also be improved. But what makes “team building” more than just a silly game?

The difference between effective team building and an afternoon of horse-play lies in the facilitator-lead debriefing and follow up discussion. Engaging in a fun and novel activity elevates team members’ thinking above the daily issues they are struggling with at work. It creates a safe space where they can let their guard down, and allows them to think outside the box.

Natural behavior patterns typically remain consistent across contexts. Whether playing a game or sitting behind their desks, people will reveal their natural tendencies to be assertive or reserved, thoughtful or impulsive, considerate of other viewpoints or certain that they are right. Communication styles and personal attitudes will also be prevalent during a team building exercise.

The difference is that it is much easier and non-threatening to discuss how these factors impact the effectiveness of the team when questions about individuals’ work performance and overall competence are removed from the equation. Team building exercises create a safe forum to explore the impact of individual behavior on team effectiveness while minimizing the emotional risk to the participants involved.

But effective team-building doesn’t stop there. In order for these exercises to have a positive impact on actual work performance, participants must make the connection between what is happening in the activity and what happens on the job. A targeted debrief session is the key ingredient
Continued on Pg. 19



Cost-Effective
IT SERVICE
Call 860-761-2828 Ext. 127



Unstable Terrain on Capitol Hill as Congress Faces Multiple Heavy Lifts

By Tiffany Gourley, State Policy Counsel, National Council of Nonprofits

The already uncertain ground in DC roiled even more the first week of September when Congress returned from its long August recess. With some House Republicans insisting on spending cuts in exchange for their support for a package to increase the debt ceiling and provide hurricane relief funding, President Trump upended things by overruling Republican congressional leaders and [cutting a deal with Democrats](#) on not only those two items, but also a spending measure to keep the federal government open and extending the federal flood control program through December.

The deal on raising the debt ceiling and spending authority expires on December 8, but it provides Congress needed space to work on other issues, including reauthorization of the [children's health insurance program](#) (CHIP) that expired October 1 with most states having carry-over funding for the remainder of the year. Plus, the deal provides two more months to resolve significant differences on appropriations. While the [House went through the motions of passing an omnibus spending bill](#), which included a policy rider weakening the Johnson Amendment, the Senate essentially shrugged, knowing it will develop its own spending bills in the coming months.

Pushing the debt ceiling and appropriations deadlines to December 8 also gives Republican majorities more time to develop their comprehensive tax reform package. Congressional, tax and White House leaders released the tax reform framework the last week of September, with provisions that would have [significant consequences on the work of](#)

[nonprofits](#). However, for Republicans to pass a major tax bill without a filibuster in the Senate, they first must pass a budget resolution for Fiscal Year 2018 with budget reconciliation instructions for tax reform.



Accomplishing that task has proven elusive so far, having been postponed multiple times because House conservatives have been wary of voting for

an unseen tax package.

The surprising upheavals continued, when President Trump initially decided to [terminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals](#) (DACA) immigration policy, yet [kicked it over to Congress](#) to solve within six months, and then [reportedly struck another deal with Democratic leaders](#) to extend protection to those covered by DACA.

With all of the shaky grounds, no leveling out is foreseen in the near future.

EXPERTISE DIVERSITY OFFICE TECHNOLOGY

Some things are just better when they're connected for you. KÔTA makes sure each aspect of your office technology, from product selection through service, is a perfect fit.

TRY US ON FOR SIZE
860.862.6401
kotasolutions.com

A Certified Minority Business Enterprise



In Their Own Words: The Importance of Nonprofit Advocacy

By Melanie Berzins, Public Policy Intern, The Alliance

For some Alliance members, advocacy feels like a peripheral priority when stacked against the day-to-day obligations of providing services and maintaining operations. For others, advocacy work can seem intimidating and foreign. And some want to get involved, but simply aren't sure how to get started.

All nonprofit staff have seen how state and federal policy changes impact every aspect of the services provided to consumers, from program growth to staff morale. Budget cuts have devastated organizations' abilities to provide vital services to consumers, while eligibility or procedural modifications have hindered consumers' access to services and benefits, increasing the burden on nonprofits who serve them.

But advocacy should be viewed as requisite, common, and fun! The Alliance frequently calls for staff and consumers to take part in rallies at the Capitol, or to make phone calls and send emails to legislators. If we don't show up, we won't be heard, and the needs of our organizations and those we serve will not be met.

So how can nonprofits and their staff foster a culture of advocacy engagement that energizes, inspires and empowers staff and constituents to have a voice in the policy decisions that affect their lives? To help answer this question, the Alliance interviewed three members who are deeply engaged in advocacy efforts for their organizations. **Tony Corso of Family ReEntry, Ben Davies of MARC Community Services, and Emily Granelli of BHcare**, shared their experiences about their engagement with nonprofit advocacy, how it has furthered the interests of their organizations and the individuals they serve, and how others can get involved.

What did you find challenging about policy advocacy work when you first started?

Tony Corso, Program Director/Compliance Coordinator, Mental Health Residential, Family ReEntry: After doing it once, each time after that

got much easier. It's [only] been about the last 6 months that I've been actively involved. And what I learned from that is that it's not such a scary thing to do. It's actually kind of fun to get out there and be a part of the process.

Ben Davies, Advocacy and Outreach Director, MARC: Something that I found challenging was getting legislators to recognize me, and I've found that the more that I've been up there, the legislators in MARC's area, they recognize me now and come up to me. In the beginning, I didn't know names, I didn't know faces, I had to look people up. It was a pretty complicated process and I'm happy to have learned it.



Emily Granelli, Chief Business Development Officer, BHCare: When I first started the challenge was trying to educate the legislators about what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. What I've learned is that it's really about the personal connection – having them meet the clients who live in their district. That's what sticks with them; it's those personal stories. Once they meet with them and get to know the folks that come here... those are the things that they don't forget. So then they go up and continue to fight for us.

What lessons have you learned about what works when it comes to policy advocacy?

Tony Corso: The biggest lesson is to show up! There weren't a lot of Community Justice folks represented for this latest budget situation. So, the fact of me just showing up - it's a "complacency is the enemy" kind of thing – if you don't show up, you don't know what's going on.

Ben Davies: The big lesson I've learned is that

it's really a numbers game. Legislators respond better or more when more people rally behind a cause. So really, we've learned that what works is rallying our people and getting up there in numbers when we do different email campaigns, sending out emails in bulk, that all of our staff would send stuff. That, specifically, *does* work.



Can you share a story of a memorable success or rewarding experience related to policy advocacy?

Tony Corso: The most recent rally was a great event to be a part of. I heard the number of attendees was 750 at the big rally at the Capitol last month. It was just impressive to see that crowd of people there to get all their voices heard. One of the gentlemen from my agency, Fred Hodges, was asked to speak at the Rally, and it was great just to be standing there by his side and watch him talk to that crowd and get everybody excited about doing something about this budget and bringing some meaning to the work that all these organizations are doing. That was a great memory.

Emily Granelli: When we were up in Hartford in the Spring/Summer of 2016 fighting for the budget, I came up with this little postcard. I think it was like 4x6, and all it did was show a difference in cost between outpatient behavioral health services and jail, an ER visit or a hospital stay, and Sen. Ted Kennedy, Jr. (D-Branford) took my whole stack and went into the Senate chamber and passed them out. So that was great. And then the following year, he said, "Are you going to have those cards for me?" And I said, "Absolutely! Whatever you need!"

Ben Davies: I have a young lady that's part of our self-advocates program called Guardian Angels. We meet on a monthly basis to teach different skills, from voting rights, to learning how to budget, to learning how to take public transportation.. One of the young ladies has been

with MARC since she graduated high school, and she is a regular attendee at the Capitol. She's testified twice with the Appropriations Committee this past session and basically through the skills she's learned through MARC's day program and self-advocacy program, she has a job now working as a receptionist at MARC, and this past year was able to get her own apartment and live on her own for the very first time, basically from the skills she's learned all the way through.

How has the Alliance helped you to better advocate for your organization and your consumers?

Ben Davies: They basically spearheaded what we want to say. It helps us have a voice for ourselves on a bigger level than we would have doing it ourselves. [The Alliance's work] spearheads what we're trying to do. It puts more faces to our cause. That in itself, but also, the resources that we can come for trainings at The Alliance and the different rallies that they host – we've had really great exposure to the legislators in a way that we wouldn't otherwise.



Emily Granelli: The information provided at the Public Policy Committee meetings is unlike anything else you can get anywhere. The insight provided by [Alliance staff] are irreplaceable. You just don't get that level of detail anywhere else. And as far as making it easier, I love the website – that I can send that link to our board members and to our staff and they can email their legislators, and even sometimes Congress, in 30 seconds or less. The easier we can make it for them, the better.

Tony Corso: The information we get from The Alliance helps us create an impact in the community. With the Alliance looking at the budgets, they're staying up late at night when those sessions go forever and then they're going back on their computers and putting together the key points of what was said, and then they're

helping us compare and contrast. That piece [of the Alliance's work] is incredible. It helps us educate board members, it helps us to educate our staff.



Why do you feel nonprofit advocacy work is important?

Emily Granelli: If we don't do it, who will? Every year, our services are on the chopping block, whether it's the Mental Health and Addiction Services, the DDS Services, or DSS - every year, we're on the chopping block. If we don't get up there and stand up for our services and the people we take care of, those services very easily go away.

Tony Corso: The Community Justice sector's voice is severely underrepresented. About a year ago, our agency decided that we needed to see how we could change that - how we can create an impact; how we can focus in on the needs of the family, and the children, and the youth. Advocacy is the only way it's going to get there, and the only way that's going to happen is if we show up. We've just been doing this for a year and we can't believe the kind of impact we've had in just one year. It's amazing for us to think about.

Ben Davies: In my position, I'm just passionate and driven to make sure that people with disabilities are respected and their voices are acknowledged. Otherwise, it's easy to sweep this population under a rug. It's a very vulnerable population - not only people with disabilities, but people with mental health issues.

What advice do you have to members who are reluctant to get involved in advocacy or have no experience but want to get involved?

Tony Corso: Just show up! Just get up out of your office and go to Hartford! Hartford is where our state government sits; it's where the meeting of the minds is happening. It's a power center in the state, so get up there and show up. The Alliance is going to give you the tools, and you can use those tools to do your thing. And once you get there and you realize that you've done it, you can do it over and over again.

Emily Granelli: I think something that people don't realize is that your legislators actually do want to hear from you. They don't come into the organizations begrudgingly. They're interested to learn and to hear from the people that you serve. I've never had an unpleasant meeting.

Ben Davies: Get involved, whether you know what you're doing or not - you can learn by experience. Experience is the best teacher.

Register for The Alliance Nonprofit Advocacy Training!

Every nonprofit can develop their capacity for advocacy and hone their advocacy skills. That's why the Alliance will be hosting a **Nonprofit Policy Advocacy Training** for members this January.

Whether you're already engaged or looking to get started, we encourage staff from all levels of member organizations to register for this training to develop the tools to advocate for your organizations and the individuals you serve.

Session 1: Wed., January 24 from 9am-3pm
35 Cold Spring Road, Suite 522, Rocky Hill, CT

Session 2: Wed., January 31 from 9am-3pm
RYASAP, 2470 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, CT

Contact Brunilda at bferraj@ctnonprofitalliance.org for more information.



**Click here to learn how SaveAround
helped Nonprofits raise over
\$40 million last year.**

Don't miss this year's Annual Nonprofit Conference!

from
COLLABORATION
to
COLLECTIVE IMPACT

2017 Annual Nonprofit Conference

November 30, 2017
CT Convention Center, Hartford

REGISTER TODAY!

Member Highlight



"The Alliance is an important resource for advocacy and keeping tabs on the state budget and public hearings. As part of the CT Arts Alliance's advocacy panel this past CT Arts Day, Gian-Carl Casa contributed a valuable perspective, offering frank, honest viewpoints about how the arts sector must position itself. Alliance staff are extremely responsive to our requests for information, assistance and advice, and they proactively reach out to include the arts and culture sector in their efforts to strengthen the voice of Connecticut's nonprofits."

Amy Wynn, Executive Director, **Northwest Connecticut Arts Council** &
President, CT Arts Alliance

THE RIGHT CANDIDATE IS EASY TO FIND!
Instantly Access Active and Passive Job Seekers
Click Here to Get Started!

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT: ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE ALLIANCE

The Alliance is proud to offer our valued members the opportunity to increase the capacity of their workforce through our Academic Partnership Program. Through these partnerships, we provide the resources to strengthen our nonprofits statewide. As nonprofits continue to fulfill their missions and serve their communities, The Alliance wants to ensure that member employees continue to develop academically and professionally.

Membership with the Alliance entitles member employees and their immediate family members to discounted tuition at each of the participating colleges.

Gain access to accredited colleges and universities that offer quality education and discounted tuition rates for Alliance member employees and their immediate family members. Our participating schools offer the following discounts:

- Albertus Magnus College: 15% tuition reduction
- Penn State University World Campus: 5% tuition reduction
- Post University: 20% tuition reduction



ALBERTUS MAGNUS COLLEGE

Albertus Magnus College is proud to collaborate with CT Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance) to offer a **15% tuition discount** to all Alliance member employees, and their immediate family members, who wish to return to school for their associate's, bachelor's or graduate degrees.

As a Catholic College founded by the Dominican Sisters in 1925, Albertus Magnus College has a long-standing tradition of serving the community. In 1985, the College started the Accelerated Degree Program for adults returning to school who needed an innovative way to complete their studies while balancing the responsibilities of work and family life.

Today, the Accelerated Degree Program offers 14 undergraduate majors and 11 graduate programs including its newest addition, a Master of Science in Clinical Counseling. Most degree programs are offered in accelerated, eight-week classes. The FLEX program, started in 2016, allows students to be fully online or choose between taking their classes online and on campus in the evenings. Evening classes are offered both in New Haven and East Hartford (only minutes away from The Alliance's CT Nonprofit Center in Hartford).

Learn more about the education opportunities available to you by contacting Admissions through the Albertus Magnus Member [Landing page](#). You can also call their office at 800.394.9982. Don't forget to mention your membership with the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance!

One Great Team, Double the Benefits!

eBenefits Group and ABS have proudly served the nonprofit community for more than 25 years. By creating a wide variety of plan designs and utilizing pre-tax programs, we have helped nonprofits and their employees save money. **That's a complete WIN-WIN.**



Stephen J Repka II, 800-827-4227
Your Nonprofit Benefits Specialist





Penn State University World Campus

Penn State World Campus, the online learning platform of Penn State, is excited to announce that The Alliance member organization employees, their spouses, and legal dependents are eligible to receive a **5% tuition reduction** on all World Campus degrees and certificate programs, as well as access to academic advising, career counseling, and a financial literacy staff that specializes in serving working professionals.

When you pursue your education through Penn State World Campus, you invest in yourself and your future. Choose from more than 125 programs at the associate, bachelor's, and graduate level to help you further your career or finish a degree you previously started.

As a Penn State World Campus student, you'll experience the same courses that are taught on campus by our world-renowned faculty. And you'll enjoy the flexibility of taking your classes online — when you want, from almost anywhere.

The knowledge and skills you acquire through your online course work can help you in your career, and upon your graduation, you'll receive a degree identical to one earned by an on-campus student.

Connect with the admissions team to learn about student services, payment options, and claim your tuition reduction benefit through the [Alliance Academic Partnership web page](#) dedicated to member organizations of The Alliance. Student enrollments through this new Education Alliance are set to begin in the spring 2018 semester.



POST UNIVERSITY

Post University is delighted to provide a variety of educational programming to The Alliance staff, member employees, and their immediate family members. Corporate Learning activities include webinars, professional development throughout the state, and a **20% tuition discount** for all academic programs.

Alliance member employees and their immediate family members receive a discount on all undergraduate and graduate courses and programs of study. Program formats vary from on-campus courses to the university's Accelerated Degree Program offered 100% online. Also included in the discounted tuition are the Non-Profit Management certificate and Masters of Science in the Human Services degree program with a concentration in Non-Profit Management.

The educational experiences designed by Post University will enable participants and organizations to continue to provide valuable services to the public while developing advanced knowledge and skills needed to advance personally and professionally. Courses offer students the opportunity to develop or enhance skills in grant writing, planning and managing of people, preparing program budgets, and implementing information systems.

For more information about the MS in Human Services, with a concentration in Non-Profit Management or any of Post University's undergraduate or graduate programs of study please contact Admissions at: 800.660.6615 and mention your membership in the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance to receive the **20% tuition discount**.

Who Thinks Politicizing Charitable Nonprofits is a Good Idea?

By David L. Thompson, Vice President of Public Policy, National Council of Nonprofits

Who thinks politicizing charitable nonprofits is a good idea? Quite a few politicians and some people in the nonprofit world who believe any opportunity not used to push a partisan agenda is an opportunity lost.

And who's against the idea of nonprofit human service providers, houses of worship, and private foundations



endorsing candidates for public office and diverting charitable assets to campaign coffers. Just about everyone else. But almost all of us are fighting what may be a losing battle to maintain nonpartisanship in the face of aggressive tactics from the President and some in Congress. That is, unless nonprofits in Connecticut and throughout the country loudly, consistently, and persuasively say **No**.

The Issue:

Proposals in Congress would repeal or significantly weaken the last clause of Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code (known as the Johnson Amendment), which provides that in exchange for tax-exempt status and the ability to receive tax-deductible contributions, a charitable nonprofit, religious organization, or foundation may “not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.” For 63 years, that provision has been a valuable protection that keeps charitable nonprofits, religious institutions, and foundations focused on their missions rather than diverting their time, money, and other resources to engage in partisan electioneering.

The Consequences:

If enacted, the legislative proposals would politicize 501(c)(3) organizations, plunging them into the caustic partisanship that bedevils our country. It would hurt the public and damage the capacity of organizations in a wide variety of ways, including:

- Insistence on endorsements by candidates and their operatives when “no” no longer means no.
- Donors “buying” endorsements from charitable nonprofits for favored candidates.
- Pressure on nonprofits when foundations endorse candidates and let awardees know.
- Board turmoil when members or donors insist on endorsement of family members, business colleagues, friends. Politics supplant mission!

The Proposed Change Is Not Needed:

Political candidates want endorsements from popular organizations, so their rationale for wanting to change the law is obvious. Some people at a few nonprofits – frequently churches – argue that limiting the ability of preachers to endorse candidates from the pulpit restricts their free-speech rights. However, nonprofits and houses of worship – and their individual leaders – already can legally speak out on moral and policy issues such as abortion, immigration, and social justice. In their personal capacity, nonprofit board members, volunteers, and staff –including clergy – can freely speak out on partisan issues, make campaign contributions, and even run for office. They just cannot carry out these partisan, election-related activities on behalf of the 501(c)(3) organizations with which they are associated.

What Does the Public Think?

The vast majority of Americans firmly believe that 501(c)(3) organizations should remain dedicated solely to the public good and should stay away from raw partisan politics. The law favoring nonpartisanship has broad-based support from nearly [one hundred religious denominations and organizations](#), more than [4,000 religious leaders](#), [89 percent of evangelical pastors](#), more

than **5,500 charitable nonprofits and foundations** (including 150 Connecticut organizations), and **72 percent of American voters** want nonprofits to stay focused on their communities, not political candidates.

The views of people on the front lines of the debate are even more impressive. A pastor in Oklahoma put the issue in frank perspective: "When you combine religion and politics, the result is politics." A nonprofit serving Connecticut children is even more instructive: "Leave the Johnson Amendment alone and go stick your fingers and noses in something that isn't so important and good!"

So What Can Nonprofits Do?

A loud message must be sent to Congress to protect a fundamental part of our sector's identity. Nonprofit leaders need to learn more about the **importance of nonprofit nonpartisanship**. Tell the Connecticut congressional delegation how you feel, and then spread the word to nonprofit and for-profit colleagues *outside* of the state, and tell your faith leader, relatives, and anyone else who will listen, "The Johnson Amendment must be preserved; keep politics out of my nonprofit!"

David L. Thompson is Vice President of Public Policy for the National Council of Nonprofits in Washington, DC.

Continued from Pg. 10 Teambuilding

that helps participants generate relevant insights and develop strategies for improving team effectiveness within the context of their daily work.

While you could engage in team building exercises on your own, both the team building activity and debriefing session are typically more effective when they are facilitated by an external consultant. This is because an external consultant can act as a neutral third party, thus leveling the playing field between participants, provide an objective view, and can also help diffuse pre-existing tensions and dynamics that may exist within the team. The use of an external facilitator is especially important when the team significantly lacks trust and communication skills.



EVERY DONOR MATTERS.

Develop and grow your most valuable relationships for free at donorperfect.com/CTAN.

dp | donorperfect
fundraising growth platform

2017 FrontRunners LEADER
Gartner Software Advice

TEN Most Awarded Fundraising Solutions 2017

ENERGY resources

Reduce your energy usage and save \$.

To request a free consultation call 860-880-8300 and mention Alliance.

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Alliance's Board of Directors meets monthly throughout the year to guide the work of the organization. The bylaws give the Board a variety of important roles and responsibilities, chiefly the "care, control and disposition of the property and funds... and the general management" of the Alliance. The members serve for staggered three-year terms and sit on any of four standing committees of the Board: the Executive, Finance, Audit and Governance committees. Board members also serve (or chair) many of the divisions and committees of the Alliance.

Elected each winter at the Annual Meeting, the Board is in its second iteration. Serving his second year as chair is Peter DeBiasi, President and CEO of the Access Community Action Agency of Willimantic. Andrea Ferrucci of Mosaic continues as Vice Chair, Michael Sandner, of the Hartford Seminary is in a new role as Treasurer, as is Josie Robles of Hartford Behavioral Health, who is Secretary.

Other members of the Board are Andrea Barton-Reeves, HARC; Eric Dillner, Shoreline Arts Alliance; Robert Francis, RYASAP; Heather Gates, Community Health Resources; Steve Girelli, Klingberg Family Centers; Denise Hornbecker,

Channel 3 Kids Camp; Mary Beth O'Neill, Key Human Services; Luis Perez, Mental Health Connecticut; Marilyn Rossetti, Open Hearth; Ann Ruwet, CCARC; and Barry Simon, Oak Hill. Robles, Hornbecker, O'Neill, Rosetti and Ruwet were newly elected to their terms this March.

In its first year the Board undertook many important and necessary tasks associated with the newly merged organization, including hiring a President and CEO, creating an administrative structure and adopting a budget. They've worked together and with staff to develop a strategic plan, an operational plan and set goals for the organization for the next year.

No discussion of the Board would be complete without stating the debt of gratitude the Alliance owes four Alliance members who were charter members of the Board and left in February. They are Alice Forrester of Clifford Beers Clinic, Denis Geary of the Jewish Association for Community Living along with two members who also retired from their nonprofit posts, Deb Ullman of the YWCA Hartford Region and Joseph Sullivan of MCCA, who also served as treasurer during the important first year. We thank them for their dedication and hard work in creating and leading the Alliance.

Member Highlight



Since becoming Executive Director of the Community Child Guidance Clinic, Inc. of Manchester last June, The Alliance has been an invaluable resource. From their comprehensive array of trainings to the online tools they provide, our agency utilizes their services multiple times per week. Most recently, however, I have come to appreciate The Alliance's role in legislative advocacy. Their arrangement of "visibility shifts" has helped myself and the employees better understand our role in the legislative process. As the budget crisis continues, so does The Alliance's hard work advocating on behalf of nonprofits. Without their guidance and support, it would not be half as easy as it is currently to reach out to our legislators, visit the LOB and Capitol, and help people understand why the work nonprofits do in CT is invaluable. I cannot say how much I appreciate the tight-knit community of nonprofit providers The Alliance has worked to cultivate!

- Jaime Bellenoit, President & CEO,
Community Child Guidance Clinic

Forward Thinking Healthcare Solutions

It's What We Do



HEALTHCARE
LAW



Joan W. Feldman, Health Law Practice Group Chair

jfeldman@goodwin.com

www.shipmangoodwin.com/health_law



GREENWICH | HARTFORD | NEW HAVEN | NEW YORK | STAMFORD | WASHINGTON, DC

Don't Let Others Define the Work of Charities and Foundations

By David L. Thompson, National Council of Nonprofits and Jeff Shaw, The Alliance

Federal wage and hour rules are in play once again, and if nonprofits don't speak up, others will decide their fate.

The U.S. Department of Labor published a Request for Information (RFI) in the Federal Register seeking comments from the public about how the white-collar exemption from overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act should be updated. Specifically, the Labor Department was requesting what changes, if any, should be made to the federal exemption for employees working in a "bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity," the so-called "white-collar exemption."

The Obama Administration had sought to revise the same regulations, but that effort was blocked by a federal court in late 2016. This spring, the Labor Department opted not to defend the Obama overtime rule and announced it would press reset to come up with another set of rules.

Under current federal law, employees working in bona fide white-collar jobs are not eligible for overtime pay. Federal regulations determine which employees fall within those categories. In most cases, employees will be considered exempt from overtime pay if (1) the employee is paid on a salary basis ("salary basis test"); (2) the employee's job primarily involves executive, administrative, or professional duties as defined by the regulations ("duties test"); and (3) the employee receives at least a minimum specified salary amount ("salary level test"), currently set at \$455/week, which is below the poverty level for a family of four.

Do Nonprofits Want to be the Employers of Last Resort?

Barely two weeks after the RFI was published, the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) submitted comments that it asserted represent the views of the "nonprofit community," including 501(c)(3) organizations. One of its recommendation calls for the DOL to create a substandard salary threshold for nonprofits and small businesses.

The views of ASAE surely are not the conventional thinking of individuals and organizations committed to advancing the missions of their organizations. Most nonprofits

are deeply concerned that treating nonprofit employees under the law as less valuable than their for-profit or government counterparts would turn nonprofits into employers of last resort. Yet, unless charitable nonprofits in large numbers submit comments to the Labor Department, the views of one association could set damaging public policy.

It is equally clear that one answer to any of the 30 questions posed by the Department of Labor cannot reflect the diversity and complexity in the nonprofit community. Nonprofit hospitals and institutions of higher education have very different workforces than frontline human services and arts organizations. Inner city and suburban nonprofits face different sets of challenges than their counterparts in rural parts of the country.

The DOL needs to hear about the diverse experiences of many different nonprofits or it will set standards that don't fit nonprofit workplace realities. In short, no one organization can pretend to speak for all. That's why each needs to speak up for itself.

Mission-Based Analysis

In considering responses to the questions in the Request for Information, the National Council of Nonprofits and The Alliance encourages all nonprofits to conduct a mission-based analysis. That means answering questions about how an increase in the minimum salary levels would affect the nonprofit's operations, resources, and staffing, as well as what impact changed regulations would have on individuals relying on the services and the mission of the nonprofit.

For more information, including background on current law and annotations that explain several of the questions presented in the RFI, see the National Council of Nonprofits analysis, [Labor Department Reopens White-Collar Salary Exemption for Comments](#).

The deadline for submitting comments to the Department of Labor was September 25, 2017.

David L. Thompson is the Vice President of Public Policy for the National Council of Nonprofits in Washington, DC, and Jeff Shaw is the Director of Public Policy for The Alliance.

State Legislators Need to Hear from You - Year 'Round

By Jeff Shaw, The Alliance

As this article goes to print, Connecticut is the only state without a final state budget for fiscal year 2018. The resulting spending reductions are harming community nonprofits and the individuals they serve. We need you, your staff, Board members, volunteers, funders, families and self-advocates to keep stressing to legislators how harmful the [Governor's Executive Order](#) is to communities and that we need a whole-year budget that protects essential services. We encourage you to talk to your legislators directly – it's easy to do! Our [Contact Your Legislator](#) page is a simple way to email your legislator with [messages that you can edit and send](#). You can call their offices or invite them to tour your facility to see what you do. You can even share your story with the media or come to the Capitol during a session day.

State legislators need to hear from you. As the legislative session gets busier, more complicated and consistently unpredictable - due to the ongoing state budget crisis - their undivided attention can get lost.

Scheduling meetings in your home district with legislators is an effective way to help them better understand your work and the people you serve. Local meetings mean less travel time, making it more convenient for everyone to participate. This gives organizers the time and opportunity to bring the right people – board members, friends of the elected official, experts, self- and family advocates, and others who can help deliver [your message](#).

While the budget crisis is currently dominating legislative discussions, the Fall months are when the Governor's budget office prepares for the next year's state budget and reviews state-

agency legislative proposals. It is also a time for legislators to identify key priorities for the next legislative session. Engaging policymakers throughout the Fall is important and gives them time to work on your issue.

Here are a few examples of ways to engage legislators during the non-session:

- **Invite legislators to a tour.** Legislators need to understand what you do and how the state budget impacts that work – so show them! A short tour followed by a community conversation with staff, family advocates and Board members is a great way for legislators to hear multiple perspectives to service delivery.
- **Invite legislators to special events.** If you have a major event – Annual Meeting, Gala, Awards night, etc. – make sure to invite your local legislators. These events, social in nature, may help you and your colleagues get to know them better while providing photo opportunities that cannot be missed!
- **Host a regional legislative meeting.** Prior to the start of the legislative session, The Alliance coordinates regional meetings with legislators to discuss the public policy agenda. This gives legislators an opportunity to share their legislative priorities, and a chance to hear from you.

As an extension of your team, the Alliance is here to help. There are 187 state legislators and we have the network to engage each and every one of them. Join us this Fall.

Jeff Shaw is Director of Public Policy for the Alliance.



APICELLA, TESTA & COMPANY, P.C.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
& CONSULTANTS

ACCOUNTING, AUDITING, TAX & ADVISORY SERVICES
FOR PROVIDERS OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND
OTHER NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS



James E. Traester, CPA, Partner

680 Bridgeport Avenue, Shelton CT 06484 tel: 203-925-9494 www.ctcpa.com

For Nonprofit Boards: Your Role in Working With Others

By Mike Burns, Partner, BWB Solutions

Question: What, if any, role can or should the board play in establishing, managing and evaluating alliances, partnerships, and, mergers?

Answer: Alliances, partnerships and/or mergers/acquisitions have one primary purpose: to empower those who would work together (possibly even as a first step to becoming one organization but not necessarily) or who would be “married”, to capitalize on mutual strengths, increase efficiencies and/or produce better results/outcomes; in other words, pursue mission better.

Mergers or acquisitions may be inspired when two or more nonprofits identify an opportunity to produce better outcomes for one or more communities that both may currently or could serve. Prospective partners may also identify opportunities to seek improved economies of scale (lower costs, maximizing resources) like sharing administrative functions e.g. bookkeeping or technology or even space. The reality is that a challenging funding environment may place demands that a nonprofit just can't escape and

the only way mission can be pursued is through a partnership. Before going any further, let's look at two definitions.

According to the National Council on Nonprofits:

A strategic alliance is any collaboration that a nonprofit enters with another party, often intentionally designed to leverage the strengths of each party to achieve a common goal. Strategic alliances are sometimes loosely referred to as “partnerships” – but “Partnerships” is a term that can imply the parties have accepted certain legal obligations so we recommend that nonprofits only use “partnership” when a truly equitable relationship exists, in which both sides have agreed to bear equal responsibility for liabilities, as well as share equally in any positive outcomes. If that's not the case, then “strategic alliance” is a term that expresses that the parties recognize they have a mutually useful relationship.

One other definition: mergers or acquisitions




Ruby Electronic Docs
The progress note software

Best customer service...
designed by a provider for providers


RUBY ELECTRONIC DOCS
The simplified **electronic documentation system** for agencies serving individuals with intellectual, developmental, and mental health disabilities.

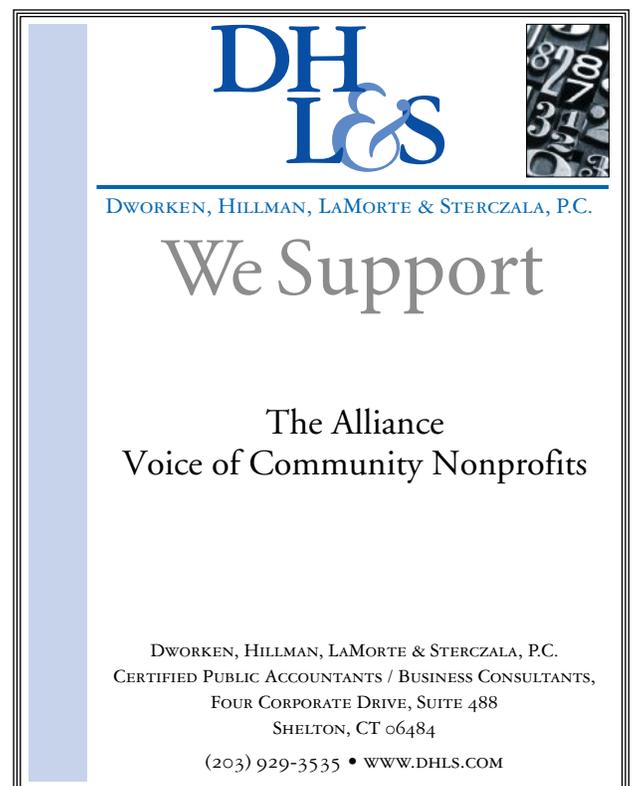
easy to use app • simple training
desktop • laptop • tablet

FREE DEMO/TRAINING VIDEO ON OUR WEBSITE

 @RubyDocs
 www.facebook.com/RubyRedDocs/

CONTACT: Sales@rubyelectronicdocs.com
or 860-519-7077 / toll free: 888-782-9161

www.rubyelectronicdocs.com




DWORKEN, HILLMAN, LAMORTE & STERCZALA, P.C.

We Support

The Alliance
Voice of Community Nonprofits

DWORKEN, HILLMAN, LAMORTE & STERCZALA, P.C.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS / BUSINESS CONSULTANTS,
FOUR CORPORATE DRIVE, SUITE 488
SHELTON, CT 06484
(203) 929-3535 • WWW.DHLS.COM

result in a change and specifically alter the “ownership” by one or both (or more) of the nonprofits involved in the transaction.

Now, back to the question: what role does the board need to play in establishing, managing and evaluating partnerships and alliances? Very little in my opinion. As long as risks are not created or compliance with “bodies” is not threatened or breached, the CEO is empowered to establish, manage and evaluate partnerships and alliances. The board may want to establish a dashboard indicator to measure the impact of these partnerships as one vehicle for measuring CEO performance as part of fulfilling this function but beyond this, not so much with the possible exception that one or more board members may be an entre’ to a CEO-identified opportunity. The board may also want to be kept abreast and reassured that no formal agreement changes, without their authorization, the status of who owns and is responsible for the well-being of the organization and its services and resources.

Mergers and acquisitions are a different story than alliances and partnerships. Mergers and acquisitions, while similar in goal (increased ability to pursue mission), results in changing the ownership of one or more of the nonprofits. A board’s fiduciary duty requires that a nonprofit board formally consider all matters that could affect ownership; could have an impact on mission and resources; and likely, could not be

completed according to by-laws. Additionally, there are state and federal laws that require reviews to ensure that restricted assets are managed appropriately.

In reality, mergers and acquisitions are processes that involve the full board (or at least a committee) from the beginning. Mergers and acquisitions are as much relational as they are transactional and even if it is likely that CEO’s will identify opportunities for mergers, acquisitions or even being acquired, it is their duty to bring the opportunity back to their respective boards. They do not have the authority to finalize the “marriage” but a marriage can certainly not be executed without the full engagement of the CEO and particularly in supporting coordination and logistical matters once both boards have reach an agreement. So, towards conducting the analysis and creating the “deal” the board and its members must be fully engaged internally and with the “opportunity” board (again, initially in committees but at least once with all the members) to clearly understand each other’s and their own interests, financial resources and condition, mission and theory of change, programs and activities, staffing and management, and reputation and expected outcomes of a future relationship.

In summary, partnerships that do not change or have an impact on “ownership” are opportunities that I believe staff have the full authority to pursue without board action; again, presuming that these arrangements do not pose a fiduciary or compliance risk. In reporting, it is the CEO who should have researched and should emphasize this fact. At the same time, where ownership will be affected, the board cannot be uninvolved. A nonprofit board’s fiduciary duty of care demands that it be fully included in a merger/ acquisition process.



Your Mission Is Our Business

JMT is the only Sage Intacct partner dedicated exclusively to Nonprofits!

Over 2,000 nonprofits trust JMT Consulting Group with their back office automation. Shouldn't you?

JMT
CONSULTING

Contact us to learn more!
www.jmtconsulting.com/contact-us

*Mike Burns is a partner in BWB Solutions. He writes the **Nonprofit Board Crisis** blog and is adept at helping nonprofits develop solutions to internal challenges (especially board/CEO) and assess their readiness for mergers and revenue generating ventures.*



Don't miss this year's Annual Nonprofit Conference!

from COLLABORATION to COLLECTIVE IMPACT

2017 Annual Nonprofit Conference

November 30, 2017

CT Convention Center, Hartford

The Annual Nonprofit Conference is the only statewide conference by and for nonprofit organizations of all types. This year's theme, *From Collaboration to Collective Impact*, focuses on ways in which nonprofits can bring together people and other organizations to achieve their missions during tough economic times -- for the improvement of their communities and the state.

Take advantage of this once-a-year opportunity to connect and network with your nonprofit peers, and learn from nationally recognized experts in the field!

We've scheduled a full-day that will provide you with the resources you need to set your organization up for success, including:

- Inspiring breakout sessions relevant to all nonprofits with diverse and dynamic presenters providing vital tools and perspectives.
- Featured Keynote Speaker, Jacob Harold, President and CEO of GuideStar - the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. Mr. Harold is a leading expert in philanthropic and nonprofit strategies and has written extensively on new and creative ways for nonprofits to partner to maximize opportunities and impact.

- Morning Keynote Speaker, Tim Delaney, President and CEO of the National Council of Nonprofits – the nation's largest network of nonprofits, with 25,000-plus members and a powerful network of State Associations – including The Alliance.
- Approximately 55 vendors that specialize in affordable and unique services for nonprofits.

Please join us!

It's an event you won't want to miss!



EVER WONDER
**WHERE THE
PEOPLE WITH
ALL THE
ANSWERS,
GET ALL THE
ANSWERS?**

**ASK
MARCUM**

MARCUM
ACCOUNTANTS • ADVISORS
marcumllp.com

Alliance Allies

Vendor Program

Introducing the Alliance Allies Vendor Program!

Designed with our diverse members in mind, this program will connect you with businesses, consultants, and service providers who will provide you with exclusive member only discounts and opportunities.

- Do business with partners that have experience and expertise working with nonprofits
- Find vendors that understand the unique challenges nonprofits face.
- Special member-only discounts, pricing, and other cost saving opportunities.

Our goal is to provide you with great service, products, and pricing that allows you to spend more of your time, money and resources serving your community and fulfilling your mission.

Please visit our online [Member Marketplace](#) to see a list of participating Alliance Allies! New businesses are added regularly - check back often!

Contact Joshua Lipshitz, Director of Business Development, with any questions or for more information at: jlipshitz@ctnonprofitalliance.org or 860.525.5080 x1014.

Welcome to our new Allies!

Car and Fleet Leasing & Management

[Motorlease](#)

Copy Machines

[KOTA](#)

Accounting/CPA

[Accounting Resources, Inc.](#)
[Apicella, Testa & Company, P.C.](#)
[CohnReznick](#)
[Dworken, Hillman, LaMorte & Sterczala, P.C.](#)
[Guilmartin, DiPiro & Sokolowski, LLC](#)

Electronic Health Records

[Ruby Docs](#)

Insurance

[UST - Unemployment Services Trust](#)
[Workers Compensation Trust](#)

Energy

[Energy Resources](#)
[Power Options](#)

Human Resources

[Alliance Nonprofit Career Center](#)

Managed Services & Consulting

[JMT Consulting](#)
[JRG Consulting](#)

Resource Development/Fundraising

[DonorPerfect: Fundraising Growth Platform](#)
[Harbor Compliance](#)
[Little Green Light](#)
[SaveAround](#)

Telecommunications

[Genie Innovations \(IP Genie\)](#)



Professional Development Calendar

September

20 | Collective Impact

9:30am - 12:30pm | University of Bridgeport, Waterbury

22 & 29 | Mental Health First Aid (Members Only)

9:00am - 3:00pm | CT Nonprofit Center, Hartford

25 | Suicide Assessment and Intervention for Mental Health Professionals

9:00am - 4:30pm | CT Nonprofit Center, Hartford

27 | Attract Your Next Generation of Donors

9:00am - 12:00pm | Clifford Beers Guidance Clinic, New Haven

October

4 | The Psychology of Giving

9:00am - 12:00pm | Clifford Beers Clinic, New Haven

11 | Maximize Your Fundraising

9:00am - 12:00pm | Clifford Beers Clinic, New Haven

18 | Current Trends in Street Drugs & Prescription Medications

9:00am - 4:00pm | Alliance Offices, Rocky Hill

19 | Nonprofit Business Writing

9:00am - 12:00pm | Teach for America, New Haven

20 | Stress Management for the Nonprofit Professional

8:30am - 12:30pm | CT Nonprofit Center, Hartford

November

1 | Sexual Harassment Prevention

9:00am - 12:00pm | CT Nonprofit Center, Hartford

3 | Public Speaking & Presentation Skills

9:00am - 12:00pm | CT Nonprofit Center, Hartford

8, 9, & 15 | Managing People 3-Part Certificate Series

8:30am - 4:30pm | Alliance Offices, Rocky Hill

16 | Changing Systems and Moving Theories in to Practice

9:30am - 12:30pm | CT Nonprofit Center, Hartford

30 | Annual Nonprofit Conference

8:30 - 4:00 | CT Convention Center

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!

[www.ctnonprofitalliance.org/
education-training](http://www.ctnonprofitalliance.org/education-training)

For questions or inquiries regarding any of our upcoming Professional Development opportunities, please contact Odessa Lopez, Professional Training Specialist, at: olopez@ctnonprofitalliance.org or 860.525.5080 ext. 1020

CT Community Nonprofit Alliance

Hartford: 75 Charter Oak Ave,
Ste 1-100, Hartford CT
Rocky Hill: 35 Cold Spring Rd,
Ste 522, Rocky Hill, CT

www.ctnonprofitalliance.org