



# E-Newsletter for Nonprofits



March 2008

## In This Issue

[Generous Hands, INC. Benefits from Nonprofit Research Assistance Program](#)  
[Strategic Planning - Why it is Important for your Nonprofit](#)

### Generous Hands, INC. Benefits from Nonprofit Research Assistance Program

In 2007, [Generous Hands, INC.](#) was the proud recipient of \$5,000 in market research as part of the Nonprofit Research Assistance Program offered by Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. The research wrapped up earlier this month with Gary Goscenski, Director of Consulting Services, presenting the results from the research to Generous Hands, INC. board members and staff.



"I really appreciated Gary's interpretation of the data, as well as his suggestions for application of the results", said Paula Schriemer, President of Generous Hands, INC. "His suggestions that we develop a "Generous Hands" phrase and employ the concept of ambassadors to promote Generous Hands will be key public relations elements as we move ahead."

Generous Hands, INC.'s mission is to provide children at risk of hunger over the weekends with supplemental food assistance by means of a Friday Pack. Friday Packs are ordinary backpacks filled with kid-friendly, nutritional food items that enable children to "help themselves" to food over the weekend. The organization, a nonprofit located in Vicksburg, began its work in 2004 at Sunset Lake Elementary School; has since grown from 20 Friday Packs in one year to 160 Friday Packs in 2006.

Generous Hands, INC. worked with Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. on research to understand community awareness, to identify additional needs of children besides hunger, and to maximize their resources to better allow them to contribute substantially to the quality of life in the Vicksburg community.

## Useful Links

[NPower Michigan](#)  
Putting technology know-how in the hands of nonprofits

[Board Source](#)  
Increases the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations by strengthening boards of directors

[Independent Sector](#)  
A leadership forum for charities, foundations, and corporate giving programs committed to advancing the common good in America and around the world.

[More On Us](#)

## Featured Article

[How to Steal From a Nonprofit: Who Does It and How Do You Prevent It](#)

Researchers have speculated that an atmosphere of trust, the difficulty in verifying certain revenue streams, weaker internal controls, a lack of business and financial expertise, and a reliance on volunteer boards all contribute to increased nonprofit vulnerability.

## Did You Know?

Two surveys were conducted, a Community Survey and a Teacher Survey. As a result of the research, Generous Hands, INC. was able to receive suggestions from teachers and the community about additional services that could be provided to improve the lives of students. Some common suggestions for the Friday Packs were basic cooking and nutritional skills, and hygiene kits. The Friday Packs now include hygiene packs filled with toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, and soap on a quarterly basis.

"It has been a wonderful service we could of otherwise never had afforded. Thank you for your encouragement to our very young organization," said Schriemer.

The Nonprofit Research Assistance Program is in its fourth year and is designed to provide valuable information to a nonprofit organization positively impacting the community. Past recipients include: Allegan Crisis Center, Kingman Museum, and Generous Hands. We will be accepting applications for the 2008 Nonprofit Assistance Program starting in July 2008. [Click here](#) for more information.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc., specialists in nonprofit market research, has been serving nonprofit organizations since 1987. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. clients have experienced first-hand how market research can enable them to meet their goals, and deliver quality services to the community in the most efficient and effective manner. For more information, contact Michelle Sears at [msears@perspec.com](mailto:msears@perspec.com), or by phone toll-free at (800) PCG-9994.

## Strategic Planning - Why it is Important for your Nonprofit



It has been said that those who fail to plan, plan to fail. When traveling to an unknown destination, how often would someone navigate without a roadmap or set of directions? In the same way a roadmap serves to navigate the trip to its destination, a strategic plan can serve to navigate an organization to reaching its future goals.

Strategic planning is the process of determining the direction of the organization for the future, and creating a plan of action to accomplish these goals. Developing a strategic plan involves many decisions, from determining the mission of the organization, to committing the resources required to succeed. A strategic plan must be a *shared* vision for the organization, not just the ideas of key leaders.

The development of a strategic plan can open up many avenues for improvement within an organization. As a disciplined effort by everyone in the organization, strategic planning can help guide what an organization is and will become, and provide a set of actions to shape the organization's future. Strategic planning can be used to identify the key issues in the organization. A collective analysis of various internal and external issues of the organization can help guide the plan for the future, as well as open up the lines of communication. Strategic planning is used to define what the organization will do in the future, and motivate staff and board members about the work to be done.

Before embarking on a plan for the future, it is essential to understand the organization's present situation. An outside source can be beneficial to the strategic planning process by providing an unbiased view of the current situation, and a realistic view of the future.

There are more than 2 million professionals in the U.S. who have the skills needed to help nonprofits with their strategic planning.

Of more than 200,000 small to midsized nonprofits; about half have strategic plans.



Shepard Jr., James W. "MBA's Gone Wild." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Spring 2008.

Hourly workers volunteer less than non-hourly workers do.

Almost 60 percent of the U.S. workforce is paid by the hour.

"The Stingy Hour." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Winter 2008.

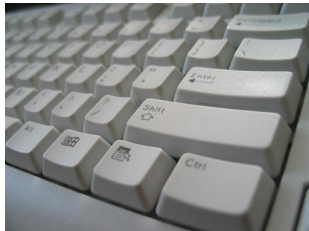
### Featured Nonprofit

Would you like your nonprofit highlighted in a future issue? Send information about your organization, accomplishments, and/or goals to [msears@perspec.com](mailto:msears@perspec.com) to reserve a spot!

### Featured Blog

To read more about how Perspectives can help nonprofit organizations develop a strategic plan, visit our [website](#).

## We want your Feedback!



Was this newsletter helpful? Let us know what your thoughts are and what we can do to improve our newsletter. We appreciate your opinions. Contact [msears@perspec.com](mailto:msears@perspec.com).

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

### [Nonprofits Need to Bridge Leadership Gap](#)

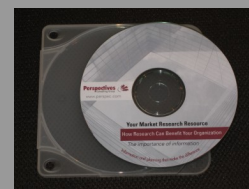


Posted March 10, 2008

Develop success from failures. Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.

-Dale Carnegie

### Nonprofit CD-ROM



A resource developed especially for nonprofits. The CD-ROM includes all the information about Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc.: who we are, and what we do. Request a copy of our Nonprofit CD-ROM by e-mailing [msears@perspec.com](mailto:msears@perspec.com) or call (800) 724-9994.

#### [Forward email](#)

Perspectives Consulting Group | P.O. Box 496 | Paw Paw | MI | 49079