



E-Newsletter for Nonprofits



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Ecumenical Senior Center to Receive \$5,000 in Research Assistance

By Michelle Sears, Director of Client Relations

Ecumenical Senior Center in Kalamazoo will receive \$5,000 in market research services as the recipient of the 2008 Nonprofit Research Assistance Program offered by Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. The program, in its fourth year, was designed to provide valuable information to a nonprofit organization positively impacting the community.

Joseph Scott, Executive Director at the Ecumenical Senior Center stated, "I am thrilled that we received the Nonprofit Research Assistance grant from Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. Perspectives has an excellent reputation as a market research firm in the nonprofit sector of Southwest Michigan, and I am confident that we will benefit significantly from their assistance. Their professional support will allow us to greatly improve our capacity-building efforts to better serve the senior citizens of the Northside Community and throughout Kalamazoo."



small fee.

Established in 1992, the Ecumenical Senior Center provides low-income, senior residents of the Kalamazoo Northside community with a place that they can share the fellowship of friends and family while enriching their lives through educational, recreational, and spiritual programs. Some of those programs include: the celebration of holidays and birthdays, Wednesday bible study classes, arts and craft projects, monthly fish fries, and daily meals for a

The Ecumenical Senior Center will be working with Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. on research to gauge community awareness and perceptions, identify an effective communication strategy, and to develop benchmarking metrics to



Useful Links

[What Do Your Volunteers Want?](#)

[Fundraising Tips and Tools](#)

[Leadership Development and Planning](#)

[More On Us](#)

Featured Article

[Sacred Cow: Do Boards Really Have to Fundraise?](#)

Nancy Withbroe discusses nonprofit board members and their role in the fundraising process. Are some nonprofits taking this idea too far?

Did You Know?

- 73% of adults between the ages of 44 and 79 volunteered for an organization in the past year

measure the success of those efforts. From the research, the Ecumenical Senior Center hopes to learn how they can increase and improve community awareness and perception, identify new programs that may be needed for the underserved members of the community, and strengthen volunteer and financial support.

What Are Other Nonprofit Professionals Doing to Strengthen their Organization?

By Kaitlyn Smith, Marketing Intern

The success of nonprofit organizations relies solely on the actions and decisions of the staff and board members. It is important for nonprofit managers to be aware of how they are running their organization, in regards to what they could do to strengthen the organization, and who they should hire to nurture the growth of the organization's future. An article based on a recent study that surveyed nonprofit professionals, offers five ideas for how nonprofit organizations can improve management and hiring practices.



1. Be aware of emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence is the combination of skills and personality traits that contribute to the effectiveness of the workplace. Some of these traits and skills include; emotional awareness, self assessment, self confidence, self control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, innovativeness, commitment, initiative, empathy, communication, leadership, collaboration, and conflict management. Not one of these traits is more important than the other, and should be all equally possessed by management, staff members, and new hires.

2. Diversity: The study indicated that nonprofit professionals have very similar characteristics; 55 years old or older, have 16 years of experience or more, college-educated, and Caucasian. The homogeneity of education, life experience, ethnicity, and age supports the probability that many ideas will be similar. A diverse perspective from the workplace staff should be in place to reflect the perspectives of the diverse communities they are serving. In order for nonprofit managers to encourage diversity in the workplace, they should diversify staff recruitment, position descriptions, and performance assessments.

3. Broaden recruitment: According to the survey results, nearly 70 percent of the survey respondents were hired based on a colleague or insider referral. Nonprofit organizations can create a more qualified staff by looking for candidates outside of their inner circle. This can be done by publicizing available positions through the use of the Internet, newspaper, websites, and college recruitment.

4. Provide more staff orientation: About 90 percent of survey respondents indicated that they did not receive a formal orientation to their workplace and job responsibilities. This statistic actually goes back to the idea of diversity in an organization. If new hires are not told exactly what they should be doing for the organization, then they are likely to pick up the habits of the workers they are

- 41% of the survey respondents were very or somewhat likely to increase the amount of time they spend volunteering in next few years
- 70% of respondents said they preferred to volunteer without a regular schedule
- Almost half of the respondents said there was a lack of available information about volunteering opportunities



- 68% of people in this age group who did not volunteer in the past year said they had not been invited to do so
- 42% of those surveyed said that access to group health insurance would be a large or moderate incentive to volunteering
- The rate of volunteering is highest among those who attend religious services regularly, 86% of respondents

Source: Moore, Cassie. "Older Americans Seek New Volunteer Incentives, Report finds." *Philanthropy Journal*, Sept. 2008.

Statistics are based on a survey of more than

shadowing. This takes away the opportunity for new staff members to have diverse thoughts and ideas. Nonprofit managers should provide new hires with an orientation about the organization's effectiveness, strategy, and measurement. It would also be beneficial to explain the organization's history and provide the opportunity for continued education.

5. Use Business Practices: One of the biggest problems highlighted by the survey results is the fact that business practices such as strategic planning, benchmarking, and human resource management are underused in most nonprofit organizations. The most prevalent business practice that for-profit businesses use is strategic planning, which occurred in less than 50 percent of the respondents' organizations. Nonprofit organizations should seek out planning techniques and business practices to allow opportunities for vast organization improvements.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. can provide your nonprofit organization with strategic planning that will establish a common vision and focus for the organization and set benchmarks for measuring outcomes and performance. To learn about how strategic planning can be beneficial to your organization, please visit our website at www.perspec.com, or contact Michelle Sears by phone at (269) 657-5400 or by email at msears@perspec.com.

Source: Wyatt Knowlton, Lisa. "Study Shows Gaps in Nonprofit Management - and Ways to Improve." Society for Nonprofit Organizations. <http://www.snpo.org/samples/v190329.pdf>.

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.

If your nonprofit organization is facing a situation where strategic planning, stakeholder, or community information would allow you to make more informed and effective decisions, give Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. a call at (800) 724-9994, or visit our web site at www.perspec.com for additional information on our services. We would be pleased to share our experiences working with other organizations and discuss how we can help your nonprofit organization make informed decisions and plan for continued success.

Sincerely,

Michelle Sears

Director of Client Relations
Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc.

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1,000 Americans who were between the ages of 44 and 79.

Featured Blog

["My Theory on Nonprofit Leadership"](#)



Posted September 8, 2008
By Heather Carpenter

"In the business world and the volunteer world, each job has certain requirements that must be met in order for that job to be done properly and for that organization to survive and prosper."

-Ron D. Burton

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 or call (800) 724-9994.

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