



CONNECTIONS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH THINK TANK NEWSLETTER JUNE 2016

THE VIEW FROM THE EMERGENCY ROOM

What you are receiving is not so much a new issue of Connections as an explanation as to why there isn't one. A disabling fall made it impossible to finish the lead article planned for this issue. But while the repercussions from the accident did make it impossible for work to proceed, the many interactions with medical personnel, administrative personnel, and fellow patients that followed from the accident did open up a new and fascinating perspective for me on the work we do. I need to note in passing that the first response personnel I encountered—policemen, ambulance attendants, and other emergency personnel—were universally efficient, professional, and sympathetic, and that the same can be said

for the nurses, administrative personnel, and surgeons and their staffs with whom I dealt. The value of that professionalism and commitment is crucial and cannot be overstated. But that is not the subject of this letter.

We carry our work with us, and I found it inevitable that at some point during my conversations with people in the medical field, as well as with fellow patients and their families, that the subject of jobs came up. It was gratifying that some of those with whom I spoke could name one or more local nonprofits with whom they or a family member had interacted. And I found two people (not bad, given that this was such a random sample) who knew about the Heart of South Jersey Directory. But there were also many more who had not heard

of it. I took the opportunity to explain how it provides a first stop for anyone seeking many kinds of assistance in South Jersey. Its 1700 detailed listings can lead people directly to precisely the organizations and services they need. And for many people caught up in a costly, confusing medical issue, being able to speedily find the right and necessary help is vital.

I was also struck by the number of people I encountered who had only a vague idea of the number of active nonprofits in Southern New Jersey, of the extraordinary variety of services they provided, and of the daily impact they had on life in the region. Some of those with whom I spoke weren't simply surprised: they were deeply interested and anxious to pursue the matter

further. I also saw in passing in hospitals and doctor's offices a number of individuals and families who seemed to need precisely the sorts of services that local nonprofits could provide.

The lessons I drew from these encounters aren't especially startling, but they are worth restating. Letting South Jersey residents know what we do isn't simply something we can practice as time permits. It's a crucial part of what we do. And it's an exercise we can never suspend. I was also reminded how large a role a medical emergency can play in plunging an otherwise stable family unit into crisis.

It's not only individual charities that must constantly work at raising their visibility. It's also something that COTT was created, in part, to foster, by helping small nonprofits acquire the skills and toolkits

to be more effective and efficient and by pooling resources to boost the visibility of nonprofits in general in the region. The work to get the word out to those who need us most that we exist is pressing, and perhaps we need to be even more creative in finding ways to do so.

I can't recommend spending time in hospital emergency rooms, or doctor's offices, or pre-op or post-op suites for research, but I am none the less grateful for the chance to be reminded of how greatly nonprofit services are needed, and how much more can and should be done to reach out both to the medical professions and those they serve to remind them of the help available to their patients, as well as to the individuals and families caught up in sudden life-changing medical events.

In future issues of Connections we will be talking about some specific, innovative ways in which we can effectively communicate necessary stories about our missions. We will also be discussing in greater detail additional COTT initiatives. For now, I wanted to share one final observation: there is a special satisfaction in actually seeing someone find the helping hand they need when they need it, and I was fortunate enough to see that happen several times in recent weeks—and to be a beneficiary of an act of generosity myself. That experience, at the heart of what we do, reminds one of the unique satisfactions of nonprofit work.

Richard Nicholls
*People for People
Foundation of GC*

COTT SURVEY

Feedback from its members has shaped the programs and goals of The Community Outreach Think Tank since its inception. The mission of COTT—to aid new and existing small nonprofits gain access to the latest ideas, practices, and resources in the nonprofit field and to provide a venue at which members could meet to network, exchange ideas and news, and explore potential partnerships—emerged from a series of discussions with some of the local nonprofits we routinely interact with. Some of the presentations we have sponsored for COTT members, which have included a workshop on social media for grassroots nonprofits, a discussion on where to find local skilled volunteers, and a seminar on new revenue sources for charities, were inspired in part by queries from member organizations. And many of the new features and activities we will be adding to COTT in coming months (discussed in the March/April issue of **Connections**) were

also influenced by the requests for information we received from members.

To make COTT as efficient and effective as possible, we need to make member input a regular feature of our work. To do so we will be inaugurating a series of short online surveys we will be asking members to take. We have given the link below for the first of these, a five question survey which will help COTT rank its members priorities for the remainder of 2016. We are also providing contact information (on the back page of this issue) to enable members to get directly in touch with a COTT staff member with questions about its programs or suggestions for new features.

The more responsive COTT can be to its members, the more impact it can have on their success. The Community Outreach Think Tank is at its heart about nonprofits joining together to multiply their impact by sharing ideas and

experiences and by gaining unique access to free or low-cost information on new ideas and best practices in the field. COTT has been shaped by its members, and in a very real sense belongs to them. We hope that you will join us in making the Community Outreach Think Tank an even stronger vehicle for change by participating in our first member survey.

To take the survey please go to

http://pfpfoundation.org/?gf_page=preview&id=55

Richard Nicholls
*People for People
Foundation of GC*

NOTES & RESOURCES

Our efforts to gather a timely, thorough portrait of the nonprofit landscape in South Jersey continue to yield fascinating details. We recently uncovered some statistics on the specifics of giving in southern New Jersey in 2014, and while a more in depth exploration of the data will have to wait we thought that it was worth sharing at least some of the more interesting stats without delay.

ATLANTIC COUNTY

Giving ratio (percentage of income given by an individual to charity): 2.11%

Total charitable contributions in the county: \$98,411,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$4,666,806,000

Median adjusted gross income per individual: \$70,979

Median contribution: \$2,054

BURLINGTON COUNTY

Giving ratio: 2.21%

Total charitable contributions: \$275,300,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$12,436,492,000

Median adjusted gross income: \$84,143

Median contribution: \$2,528

CAMDEN COUNTY

Giving ratio: 2.33%

Total charitable contributions: \$254,102,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$10,003,163,000

Median adjusted gross income: \$86,758

Median contribution: \$2,337

CAPE MAY COUNTY

Giving ratio: 2.20%

Total charitable contributions: \$42,446,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$1,933,146,000

Median adjusted gross income: \$76,621

Median charitable contribution: \$2,232

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Giving ratio: 2.70%

Total charitable contributions: \$44,875,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$1,662,660,000

Median adjusted gross income: \$68,717

Median charitable contribution: \$2,603

GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Giving ratio: 2.064%

Total charitable contributions: \$140,519,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$6,808,323,000

Median adjusted gross income: \$88,265

Median contribution: \$2,282

OCEAN COUNTY

Giving ratio: 2.65%

Total charitable contributions: \$316,320,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$11,935,648,800

Median adjusted gross income: \$78,818

Median contribution: \$2,041

SALEM COUNTY

Giving ratio: 2.43%

Total charitable contributions: \$26,585,000

Total adjusted gross income: \$1,016,180,000

Median adjusted gross income: \$82,924

Median contribution: \$2,598

These figures, coupled with our ongoing efforts to identify the number and functions of nonprofits operating in South Jersey (and there are some

2000 registered charities in Gloucester County alone) underline the fact that philanthropy is a crucial element in South Jersey life, and that nonprofits compose an essential element in the regional economy. We will be sharing additional statistics drawn from this study in upcoming issues of Connections.

Richard Nicholls
People for People
Foundation of GC



For more information about membership in **COTT**, please contact **Paul Blackstock** by emailing paul@pfpfoundation.org or by phoning the People for People Foundation at [856-579-7561](tel:856-579-7561). For questions regarding the content of the newsletter, please email **Richard Nicholls** at ricknichollspfpf@gmail.com

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