



Flathead Nonprofit Development Partnership (NpDP)
2008 Summary of Activities

March, 2009

Our Mission:

NpDP is dedicated to sustaining and enhancing the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations through education and capacity-building activities in the Flathead region.

Supported by The Sustainability Fund

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Testimonials

“What a terrific resource the NpDP is for the nonprofits in our community not only because of the valuable information and resources it provides, but also because of the opportunity for networking and cross fertilization. Presentations on a variety of fundraising strategies have been most useful for the Glacier Symphony and Chorale, some of which we are currently implementing. Offerings regarding volunteers, board members, and working styles were of particular interest and benefit to me and most helpful in my work as a board member of the Glacier Symphony and Chorale.”

Bj Carlson, President of the Board of Directors, Glacier Symphony and Chorale

“Most everyone of good will *talks* about supporting the community’s nonprofits—NpDP actually *does* something about providing that much needed support. Prior to NpDP, our local nonprofits tended to be isolated from one another, each often feeling like it was them alone against the world, and usually lacking the resources to properly get the job done. NpDP has brought local nonprofits together and provided the training and networking that serves as both stimulus and confidence builder to help us be more effective in our work for the Flathead Valley community.”

Gil Jordan, Executive Director, The Museum at Central School

“NpDP consistently helps Swan View Coalition with the nuts and bolts of running a nonprofit. Its Brown Bag and webinar forums provide essential information in a convenient and supportive atmosphere, helping us stay on the job while avoiding the risks and costs of travel. These forums also help us view and refine our conservation work in the context of a broader nonprofit community.”

Keith Hammer, President, Swan View Coalition

“The exceptional presenters along with the remarkable networking opportunities exceeded my expectations of the Nonprofit Development Partnership. There are very few organizations that mirror our mission of providing leadership to promote the vitality of our area through collaboration and communication. NpDP tops the list.”

Sheila Bowen, President/CEO, Whitefish Chamber of Commerce

Anonymous Comments from our Membership Survey in Fall 2008

In response to a survey question about one thing respondents appreciate about NpDP, our participants made the following comments:

“Willingness to include all non-profits, interesting topics, approachability, FREE!, well-done with knowledgeable speakers, my go-to resource”.

“Constant, steady communication and effort to engage. Keep doing what you are doing.”

“I definitely appreciate the opportunities that NpDP provides for non-profits to connect and network, as well as the opportunities for further education of non-profit fundamentals.”

“Support and resources - both peers and consultants brought in have been very helpful. Have made some connections critical to our organization.”

“The topics are varied and interesting. I love the speakers you guys bring in. I find so much of the info so helpful for me on the job.”

2008 Overview- Building the Nonprofit Community

After developing our internal infrastructure and community linkages for the first few years of our work, NpDP reached a level of programming and internal capacity in 2008 that deepened our impact on, and integration with, the nonprofit community of the Flathead. We maximized our connection with various local, state, and national organizations to bring quality programs to the valley.

Programming

- Brown Bag workshops were offered six times in 2008. This year saw greater attendance and a growing connection with the Flathead Trainer and Educator Consortium, a networking and learning group.
- A day-long seminar on Fundraising through Major Gifts was offered, in partnership with Montana Conservation Voters Education Fund. National presenter Andy Robinson presented his perspective and tips for fundraising by small, grassroots organizations.
- We convened select organizations for a special series on campaign-driven fundraising, such as capital acquisition and endowment-building campaigns. We had identified over two dozen such efforts which were either currently underway, or being planned for the near future. We first brought together a panel of local experts on major fundraising, including representation from FVCC and the two hospitals. In June, a special workshop with Billings-based fundraising consultant Dona Hagen discussed the steps to developing and implementing such campaigns.
- Another half-day seminar was offered on “Finding and Keeping Great Volunteers”, with Becky Blumer, Program Director of Hands On Portland. Topics included recruitment of younger volunteers through social networking websites, and policies that will ensure effective management of volunteer programs.
- A third day-long seminar brought the national Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest to Kalispell to focus on nonprofit advocacy, relationships with public officials and media, and coalition-building activities. This seminar was made possible through our partnership with the Montana Nonprofit Association.
- NpDP hosted a Town Hall Meeting with the Montana Nonprofit Association, which was a forum for input into the national Nonprofit Congress. The Congress, held in June, convened leaders from across the sector to find the common voice and purpose of the sector. The Flathead was represented in the Montana delegation by frequent NpDP participant Margie Williams of Immanuel Lutheran Home.
- Webinars from Grassroots Fundraising Journal were offered, specializing in strategies for small organizations with limited resources to raise funds in a sustainable, achievable way.
- The first-ever Summer Garden Party was held at the Bibler Gardens, offering majestic views of the valley and a pleasant venue for networking and socializing. We also held the 2nd annual NpDP December party at the Conrad Mansion with 62 people in attendance.

Outreach and Infrastructure Development Activities:

- Two new members joined the Steering Committee: Business owner and frequent NpDP presenter Kristin Donahue of Employment Dimensions, a local consulting and training practice; and Mora McCarthy, Business Resource Consultant for the Flathead Job Service, which provides education and technical assistance to employers.
- A partnership was formed with the Flathead County Library System to be designated as a Cooperating Collection of the national Foundation Center. This relationship brought a number of new information resources to the Flathead, including a database of foundation and corporate

granting programs, and a set of books on grant-related topics. The collection debuted in May 2008.

- Steering Committee members and contracted staff participated in a planning retreat in October to plan activities and revisit our vision for the future of NpDP.
- NpDP received positive media coverage in both major newspapers in the Flathead. An October article ran in the Flathead Beacon, covering the workshop presented by the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest. In December, an article in the Daily Inter Lake dealt with the economic impact and breadth of services of our local and statewide nonprofit sector.
- We finalized and signed a memorandum of understanding between the NpDP Steering Committee, Flathead Valley Community College and the FVCC Foundation. With the retirement of long-time director Ruth Ackroyd, such a formal agreement helps to ensure NpDP's place within the college structure.
- Our email list grew to 289 individual board members, volunteers, staff, and supporters (an increase from 200 in 2007), building a communications infrastructure that allows for rapid, low-cost communication to nonprofits throughout the region.

The Need for Nonprofit Development

Nonprofit organizations in Montana demonstrate their value, and their strengths, every day.

- The nonprofit sector plays important roles in Montana, building healthy communities, attracting economic investment, maintaining beautiful landscapes, delivering cultural experiences, and providing a social safety net.
- The nonprofit sector is a critical part of the state's economy with over \$4.9 billion in assets and \$2.8 billion in expenditures. The sector was the third largest employer in the state during 2005-2006 with over 36,000 employees and \$1.1 billion in wages paid during 2005-2006. (Source: Montana Nonprofit Association, Montana Nonprofit Sector Report, January 2007).
- In the Flathead, 147 organizations (those filing the IRS form 990) held assets of over \$265 million and \$167 million in expenditures. Over 2,700 employees of Flathead nonprofits were paid wages exceeding \$85 million in 2005-2006, an average wage of over \$31,000. (Source: Montana Nonprofit Association, Montana Nonprofit Sector Report, January 2007).
- Nonprofits are uniquely positioned to leverage resources from out-of-state foundations, donors, corporations, and the federal government, in addition to attracting funding from in-state donors and foundations.

Nonprofit organizations in the Flathead region face challenges to ensuring their missions are achieved efficiently and effectively.

- The Flathead's nonprofit sector is comprised primarily of small, under-resourced organizations, especially in the fields of natural resource conservation, human services, education, and arts/culture.
- The majority of funding from foundation and government sources is program-focused and usually does not cover staff or organizational development or provide for adequate infrastructure.
- Especially in a rural state like Montana, there is a lack of locally-based resources for training and consultation in the areas of leadership, governance, administration, planning and fundraising. These kinds of resources are sometimes available in larger urban areas (Spokane, Seattle, and Billings) but are expensive and time-intensive to access from the Flathead region.
- Few nonprofit leaders are the products of formal training and education in the field of nonprofit management. Instead, a majority of nonprofit CEO's come up through the ranks of program staff, or are managers who have "crossed over" to the nonprofit sector from another line of work such as for-profit business or public service.

Montana's Evolving Nonprofit Landscape

Montana's nonprofit sector continued to experience an exciting period of transformation during most of 2008. Several organizations are active in their efforts to build the capacity of the statewide sector, and innovative projects moved from conception to reality.

However, as 2008 drew to a close, the global economic downturn and subsequent loss of assets in the stock market caused some foundations and individual donors to pull back on their funding, and many more to indicate that support would likely decrease in 2009. The full implication of the economic downturn is not yet clear for the nonprofit sector. Current funding levels from government and foundation sources are usually based on the prior year's tax revenue and stock market performance. It is possible that the overall economy and financial markets could begin to recover in 2009, but still be followed by a dip in nonprofit revenue in 2010 due to this "lag time". This has led to a high level of uncertainty and anxiety in local and statewide nonprofit board members and staff. While the future is uncertain, there is still a glimmer of hope and optimism, and recognition that the current situation provides an opportunity to rethink assumptions and consider new programmatic and fundraising strategies.

- The **Montana Nonprofit Association (MNA)** now serves over 550 members statewide, and has been recognized as the fastest-growing nonprofit state association in the nation. Through increased earned revenue and foundation support, MNA has grown to a scale that allows it to expand its efforts to promote a stronger nonprofit sector in Montana. An education director was added in 2007 to expand learning opportunities, and 2008 saw the addition of a communications director and a public policy director. A major undertaking in 2008 was the development and publication of the *Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Montana*, which lays out legal requirements and recommended means to support organizational capacity and transparency. Additionally, the first-ever *Wage and Benefit Survey Report* was completed, giving board members and staff the opportunity to compare their wages to a wider market, including regional and sub-sector data. **MNA is completing a major strategic planning effort this year and considering a more active role with local networks like NpDP, which is recognized as the most developed and effective effort of its kind in Montana.** For more information, visit mtnonprofit.org
- The **Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits (BSI)** made great progress this year on several initiatives to develop the state's nonprofit sector. The Montana Nonprofit Connections program launched its demonstration phase in 2008. This program is a collaboration between private, in-state and regional funders to pool their resources to make assessment and capacity-building grants to nonprofits. The program made its first round of awards which matched 7 organizations with consultants to conduct a thorough organizational assessment process. Project grants will be made in 2009 to engage consultants to address organizational needs identified through the assessment process. BSI also continues its work with the Indian community, serving as the organizational umbrella for the Indian Nonprofit Association, which is designed to connect Indian-serving organizations with philanthropic leadership and capacity-building resources. For more information, visit bigskyinstitute.org
- The **Montana Community Foundation** completed a study of the inter-generational transfer of wealth in Montana, estimating that \$8.8 billion will change hands over the next decade. The

study was intended to promote the idea that retaining just five percent of that amount for philanthropic purposes could generate \$22 million in annual earnings, resulting in a higher level of grantmaking. The Foundation also continued its focus on developing and networking local and county-wide community foundations through increased training, peer learning, and technical assistance. As a vehicle for philanthropy “close to home”, community foundations are uniquely positioned to appeal to residents in their area to support local causes. *For more information, visit mtcf.org*

- **Philanthropy Northwest**, a regional association of grantmakers, continued to increase their presence in Montana by convening foundations from Montana and Wyoming on a regular basis. Plans are also underway to conduct a Funders’ Tour, based on a successful model from Alaska, which will bring national and regional funders to the state for an in-depth look at Montana’s strengths and challenges. *For more information, visit philanthropyNW.org*

NpDP is unique in the state in terms of its level of development and capacity to deliver consistent, quality education and technical assistance to the region’s nonprofits. With the statewide and national focus on development of the nonprofit sector and increasing attention to organizational capacity, ethical practices, and board governance, we are fortunate to have a local resource for nonprofits through the generous support of the Sustainability Fund.

Historical Summary of NpDP

- **2003-2004—Forming the Partnership:** NpDP was launched as the result of the vision of Lex Blood, Managing Director of the Sustainability Fund, and Kathy Hughes, FVCC Director of Continuing Education. The Steering Committee was formed as a core group for planning and developing the programs of NpDP, and an Advisory Committee was recruited to provide broad input from the community. Program research and planning continued.
- **2005—Launching the Partnership:** NpDP was formally introduced to the nonprofit community. Six workshops were offered, and the organizational assessments and consultations were provided to individual nonprofits.
- **2006—Enhancing the Partnership:** Two contracted staff positions were created to ensure consistency of programs. A full year's worth of workshops were offered. Two committees were created to develop communications and programs. Network groups were developed for fundraisers and executive directors.
- **2007—Sustaining the Partnership:** Quality programming continued throughout the year, with new trainers and topics. A website was launched with the capability to communicate with our constituents through a bulk e-mail system. A partnership was formed to establish a nonprofit library at the Flathead County Main Library.
- **2008—Building the Nonprofit Community:** After developing our internal infrastructure and community linkages for the first few years of our work, NpDP reached a level of programming and internal capacity in 2008 that deepened our impact on, and integration with, the nonprofit community of the Flathead. We maximized our connection with various local, state, and national organizations to bring quality programs to the valley.

Nonprofit and other organizations represented at NpDP Events

The following 85 organizations, public agencies, and businesses were represented at one or more NpDP Brown Bag, Seminar or Networking event, by at least one staff member or volunteer in 2008.

Alpine Theatre Project	Kalispell Chamber of Commerce
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Kalispell Grand Hotel
Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation	Literacy Volunteers
Boy Scouts of America	Montana Community Foundation
CASA of Flathead County	Montana Conservation Corps
Center for Restorative Youth Justice	Montana West Economic Development
Citizens for a Better Flathead	Montana Wilderness Association
City of Kalispell	Mountain Works Communications
Conrad Mansion Museum	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill -Flathead
Discovery Developmental Center	National Parks Conservation Association
Domestic Violence Action Team	National Wildlife Federation
Employment Dimensions	New Directions Coaching
Evergreen Community Development	North Valley Hospital Foundation
First Best Place Task Force	North Valley Music School
Flathead CARE	Northwest Health Care Foundation
Flathead Community Foundation	Northwest Montana Historical Society
Flathead Contra Dancers	Northwest Montana Human Resources
Flathead County Library Foundation	Northwest Montana Wedding & Event Professionals
Flathead County Library System	Nurturing Center
Flathead Food Bank	Performance Solutions
Flathead Job Service	PLUK
Flathead Lakers	Polson Community Foundation
Flathead Land Trust	Polson Museum
Flathead Valley Chemical Dependency Clinic	Ravenwood
Flathead Valley Community College Foundation	River Rock Resources
Flathead Youth Court	Samaritan House
Flathead Youth Homes	Soroptimist International - Kalispell
Foys to Blacktail Trail	Soul-Felt Words
Friendship House	Special Friends Advocacy Program
Glacier Assistance	Summit Prep School
Glacier Institute	Swan View Coalition
Glacier National Park Fund	Tamarack Grief Resource Center
Glacier Pilot Club	The Museum at Central School
Glacier Symphony & Chorale	The Salvation Army
Griffin Associates	The Sustainability Fund
Habitat for Humanity of Flathead Valley	Northwest Montana Veteran's Food Pantry
Headwaters Montana	Violence Free Crisis Line
Hockaday Museum of Art	WAG (Whitefish Animal Park)
Hope Pregnancy Ministries	Whitefish Chamber of Commerce
Humane Society of Northwest Montana	World Food Program
Immanuel Lutheran	Youth Service Network
Home Interior Outfitting	