



THE ROME GROUP
insights, strategies, solutions

INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER | A QUARTERLY RESOURCE FROM THE ROME GROUP

CEO Message

Many organizations will tell you that they couldn't do what they do without volunteers, and it's true! Nonprofit volunteers possess many gifts, most significantly the gifts of time and talent. Board members, gala and capital campaign committee members, episodic and "tried-and-true every Tuesday at 2" volunteers enable organizations to multiply their impact. Simply put, volunteers are a vital asset of every successful nonprofit.

Like any relationship, however, volunteers need time and attention too. The reality of most volunteers is that they are working full-time jobs in addition to the role they play for your organization. Time is a premium for all of us, but this is especially true when the time you are giving is discretionary, meaning it could be spent somewhere else.



Dayna M. Stock, Ph.D.
The Rome Group CEO

April is **Volunteer Appreciation Month**, so here are a few reminders of how you can show volunteers your appreciation. And no, I don't mean sending them logoed mousepads, flash drives, or even KN95 masks! Instead, making good use of their time is the best thanks you can show them:

- **If you want volunteers to review materials, provide them well in advance.** Most board by-laws require that materials be sent a week to 10 days before a board meeting. Try to use that same standard for all your meetings so that volunteers can dedicate the time to prepare thoughtfully.
- **Be very specific with your asks.** Volunteers want to know how they can help you. Often, we throw out vague requests and put the responsibility of following up on the volunteer (how many times have we put a list of donors in front of our board and said, "let us know if you know anyone on this list?"). Busy people respond best to very specific requests.

- **Help them help you.** If someone offers to reach out on your behalf, you can make that process easier by drafting an email that they can personalize and send. Want a volunteer to report on something? Send them a few key points to cover and let them build from there. It may seem small, but you are in the details every day, and they are not. Nine times out of 10, they will appreciate the head start.

Finally, remember that volunteers are human. The past few years have been stressful for everyone, making grace the most valuable currency available. **This article** is a good reminder that while in-person gatherings are picking up and masks – once ubiquitous – are now hiding in your car seats somewhere, things are not yet standard. Show your volunteers the love!

Featured News

New Retained Donors up 26%

This is true despite the overall number of donors having dropped 5.7%. As nonprofits enter Q2 of 2022 and plan their fundraising strategies for this year, the FEP *Fourth Quarter Fundraising Report* shows that charities can leverage opportunities to inspire more giving in 2022.

FEP 2021 Fourth Quarter Fundraising Report Key Takeaways

- Overall dollars donated rose 3.5% in 2021. That's significant since giving levels were anomalously high in 2020
- Results show donor levels are nearly flat, but dollars have increased 11% compared to 2019
- Donor retention among new donors is up 26%. This contrasts with the number of donors, which could not keep pace with 2020, and is down 5.7%

Charitable giving, its effectiveness, and more are discussed in this AFP article.



[Access the FEP Dashboard](#)

Pony Bird and NextStep for Life are joining forces!

Effective June 30, 2022, NextStep for Life and Pony Bird will officially merge. The merge will provide more resources and services to the community and will go by one name, Pony Bird, Inc.



Visit Pony Bird, Inc.

The Giving Environment: Understanding Pre-Pandemic Trends in Charitable Giving

In ongoing research on giving trends, researchers conduct a series of focus groups to understand the pre-pandemic trends in charitable giving compared to post-pandemic giving. This second body of research within the series includes donor focus groups, a donor communication experiment, and a donor survey, providing new insights about demonstrating donor impact, fostering empathy, and the relative strength of competing donor communications channels. **Read more about these three recent reports based on the research funded by the Bill & Miranda Gates Foundation.**

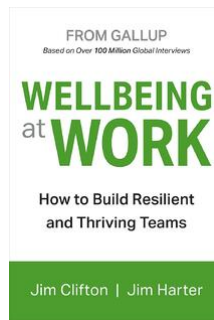
Advancing Equity with General Operating Grants

Foundation and nonprofit leaders made a case for the need to reduce red tape and place more trust in nonprofits. **The article explores the connection between grantmakers' need for greater flexibility during a crisis, and general operating grants and advancing equity.**

Read on for highlights of the discussion, or watch the video to get all the insights.

What We're Reading

Wellbeing at Work: How to Build Resilient and Thriving Teams, by Jim Clifton and Jim Harter



Upcoming Events

St. Louis Council of Charitable Gift Planners (SLCCGP) Annual Conference

May 17, 2022 at the Missouri Athletic Club West

Sign up today for this half-day conference on fundraising strategies for success, winning techniques to find suitable donors and more.

The SLCCGP offers a special discounted rate of \$75 to registrants from nonprofits with an annual budget of \$600,000 or less.

Register today using promo code: **WELCOME**

Elevate 2022 - Gateway Conference on Philanthropy

Early bird registration opens May 2

Missouri's largest regional AFP Conference is in-person this Summer 2022!

Take advantage of early bird rates through Friday, June 24, 2022!

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Email sponsorship@afpstl.org for more information.

Save the Date: Philanthropic Landscape 2022

When: August 25, 2022

Where: COCA - Center of Creative Arts

More details on the event will be shared soon!

The People Section

If you're finding it challenging to keep up with the ever-changing roles in nonprofits, see who's where in the STL community with our brief updated list of nonprofit new hires.

Nonprofits have always inspired transformation in the communities they serve. In a space

often underfunded and understaffed, nonprofits continued to thrive despite the obstacles and uncertainty since the pandemic's start.

Congratulations, and best wishes to these nonprofit professionals in their new assignments.

- Gabe Angieri, Executive Director, Arch Grants
- Tim Eby, Executive Director, Special Education Fund
- Danyelle Little, Director of Marketing and Communications, Rung for Women
- Janelle Jenkins, Chief Operating Officer for the National Council of Jewish Women
- Ed Clay, Executive Director, Alzheimer's Association
- Suzy Feakes, Director of Strategic Initiatives for SSM Health
- Kasey Lucas, Senior Associate Director of Donor Experiences, Principal Gifts, for Washington University
- Roy Richardson, Operations Director, Thomas Dunn Learning Center
- Casey Stinemetz, Development Director, Thomas Dunn Learning Center
- Dwight Scott, Dana Brown President, and CEO, St. Louis Zoo
- Amber Withycombe, Director of Donor Communications and Recognition, University Advancement

Do you have news about a job opening, new hire, promotion, or other happenings? If so, **send us your news** and we'll consider including it in our next issue of Insights.

Nonprofit Job Openings

See the latest opportunities to serve your community.

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