

The Colorado Nonprofit Association was among many organizations that were able to weather the storm of the recession in 2009. Like other nonprofits, though we had obstacles, we were successful by demonstrating flexibility, resiliency and creativity. We adjusted our annual operating plan, did experience shifts or diminished return for many of our sources of revenue, and held off on much expenditure we hoped to make during the year. We also took the time to plan very carefully for 2010, ensure that our policies and procedures were firmly in place and utilized to maximize our effectiveness, and re-evaluated our programs.

Sharon Knight acted as interim president and CEO until March when Renny Fagan began as president and CEO. Amy Humble joined the Association in August to support new programs designed to help nonprofits access greater opportunities through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). All progress made in 2009 is directly linked to the staff and the incredible dedication they showed throughout the year.

Advocacy & Communications

Charitable Giving in Colorado

In 2009, the Association began further development of the **Colorado Generosity Project**. The Association's Board of Directors, in reviewing its strategic plan, once again identified the need to increase charitable giving to the nonprofit sector as one of its top priorities.

GenerousColorado.org was created one year ago. We updated and remodeled the web site to make it more informative and easier to navigate. Visitors can now easily find a cause or nonprofit to support as well as links to other sites that accept donations. An event calendar listing fundraising and benefit events is available for people to identify different ways to get involved with nonprofits. With emphasis on building a tradition of philanthropy, there is a section for kids of all ages – highlighting how they and their families can increase generosity. Individuals and nonprofits are able to discuss philanthropy in Colorado on the Generous Colorado Blog accessible through the Web site. In its inaugural year of operation, the site averaged 416 sessions (individual visits) a week. The average visitor looked at approximately 2 pages per session, resulting in a site-wide total of 803 page views a week.

The Generous Colorado campaign received public recognition when the two televised Generous Colorado PSAs launched in December 2008 received the 2009 Colorado American Marketing Association PEAK Award. The PSAs appear on GenerousColorado.org and YouTube. Comcast began airing them extensively at the end of 2008 and 2009. Channel 4 and Channel 9 provided in-kind airings through the latter half of 2009.

The Association, the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, and *The Denver Post's* Season to Share collaborated to establish a Web site, www.ChecktheCharity.com, providing Coloradans with an additional way to find information about nonprofits when individuals and businesses want to make a donation. This partnership is one further step by the Association to increase giving in Colorado to all nonprofits.

Economic Recovery

The Association was extremely responsive to the needs of nonprofits arising from the economy. The Association worked in conjunction with the Community Resource Center (CRC) in early 2009 to produce a survey report – *Weathering the Storm: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Colorado Nonprofits During Recession* – to highlight the impact of Colorado’s economy on the demand for programs and the fundraising to support those programs. This report provides greater understanding of what nonprofits were facing at the beginning of the year, what they had done in response to the declining economy, what they need in order to be most successful.

The Our3 Economic Summit in March and the release of Weathering the Storm data gave impetus for a broad array of media stories to highlight the needs of the sector. We secured television, print and radio coverage from across the nation.

To learn how the economic downturn has affected Colorado’s nonprofits since the beginning of 2009 when the original Weathering the Storm survey was distributed and used for the survey report, the Association and CRC administered a second round of the survey in November. The new survey’s findings were released in December, and published in the 2009 Update of the Weathering the Storm report.

Web site

The Association’s Web site, www.ColoradoNonprofits.org, increasingly demonstrated its role as a central location for critical information and resources to support the nonprofit sector. In 2009, the Association’s site averaged 3,765 sessions (individual visits) a day. This number was up more than 34 percent over 2008. The average visitor looked at approximately 4 pages per session, resulting in a site-wide total of 15,885 page views a day (up more than 17 percent).

With more than a 28 percent increase in visits per week (25,432) over last year, the Nonprofit Job Board remained the most viewed page on the site; although the number of jobs posted decreased to 2,598 at year-end (down more than 25 percent from 2008). Listings on the Nonprofit Events Calendar (564), and Resume (100) and Internship (161) boards remained steady with slight increases over 2008.

The Association’s efforts in distributing information about American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding included adding and maintaining a new page on the Web site containing information and resources about federal stimulus opportunities under the categories of workforce, new energy economy, health care, education, family and community, housing, public lands, and the arts.

Public Policy

In 2009, the Association’s public policy program engaged in key public policy debates for nonprofits to a greater degree than in previous years. While the program continued to identify and respond to issues that have a substantial impact on Colorado’s nonprofit sector, it also took advantage of several opportunities to put forth policy changes and educational resources for the benefit of nonprofits. The Association’s public policy communications included email action alerts

and information and resources on the Web site to encourage nonprofit involvement in key policy issues.

The Association worked with the State Department of Personnel and Administration and several members of the legislature to pass HB 09-1088, allowing nonprofits to make purchases from the state procurement system. The Governor signed this bill at a ceremony at the Colorado Nonprofit Association Awards Luncheon.

The Association supported several additional bills to help nonprofits carry out their missions including:

- HB 09-1064: Setting up an interim committee to examine comprehensive solutions to address poverty;
- HB 09-1293: Assessing a fee on hospitals providing Medicaid services to leverage federal matching funds;
- HB 09-1012: Allowing insurance carriers to offer incentives to employees and employers for participation in health and wellness programs; and
- HB 09-1248: Bringing further clarity to laws allowing nonprofit boards to take action without a meeting

In addition to supporting state bills, the Association actively monitored the 2008–09 state budget process to ensure that budget cuts did not include the sales tax exemptions for purchases by nonprofits. Active around the state, we held meetings in various areas of Colorado during and after the 2009 legislative session to encourage feedback on proposed bills for 2010, state fiscal policy, and other issues for the Association to consider. We worked with the public policy committee and state lawmakers to develop 2010 legislative proposals to strengthen incentives for charitable giving, job creation by nonprofits, and flexibility in state contracting.

At the national level, the Association worked with the National Council of Nonprofits to develop the Nonprofit Capacity Building Program, which became part of the Serve America Act, and supported passage of the Serve America Act. The Association lobbied our Congressional delegation to ensure that health care reform bills included financial support for nonprofits providing health insurance to their employees. We also aided Independent Sector's efforts to make the IRA Rollover permanent and to ensure its availability in 2010.

Three Association staff members were appointed to important policy-related positions in 2009. Renny Fagan, president and CEO, began serving on the state Fiscal Stability Commission, Mark Turner, manager of public policy, was appointed to the Colorado Complete Count Committee to support outreach efforts for the 2010 Census, and Sharon Knight was appointed to the Judicial Review Commission for Jefferson County.

Membership and Group Purchase Program

Membership remained strong with 85 percent retention of current members and growth in the number of new member organizations. Individual and student membership grew significantly, as did business membership.

We were a sponsor for *Power, Pride & Passion*, an event at Metropolitan State College of Denver for students, showcasing the various career options in the nonprofit sector. The event was well attended and featured our own members speaking to students. Additionally, we attended speaking events and career events at Regis University.

A top priority for the membership team is to offer a great variety resources and cost-saving programs for member organizations. We added the **Pro Bono Legal program** for nonprofits to access free legal advice in 2009. A fledgling program, the response from nonprofits and participating lawyers has been excellent.

The Association's wholly-owned subsidiary insurance company, **Nonprofit Resources**, maintained their excellent service to members, and also began offering online individual insurance products for nonprofit employees and their families as new resources.

We added two more group purchase programs in 2009: **Cause Planet** and **Mountain Avenue**. Cause Planet enhances our members' educational opportunities while Mountain Avenue increases members' opportunity to raise funds.

Educational Programs and Events

Building capacity of nonprofits, individually and collectively, remained an important objective throughout the year. We truncated our regular educational programming, in order to respond to critical needs of the sector quickly and professionally. We also increased the number of webinars utilized for classes, enabling registrations by organizations across the state and to provide ultimate flexibility in participation.

Economic Recovery

In March, the Association hosted the **Our3 Economic Summit** with several other partners in the Denver Metro area. The event provided opportunity to launch new information about the effects of the economy on nonprofits, included trainings to strengthen nonprofits' ability to respond to the changing demands on them, and initiated communications and liaison options for collaboration between nonprofits.

We hosted a **Recovery Act Forum** in April to be proactive in bringing nonprofits the information they needed to participate more fully in ARRA. A full capacity crowd of more than 300 nonprofit professionals attended the forum in an overview discussion and eight sessions providing detailed information about specific programs featured in ARRA.

Throughout 2009, the Association helped to distribute information about ARRA funding by advocating that state and local government agencies consider nonprofits when designing programs with the new federal dollars; by providing information sessions around the state; by updating our Recovery Act webpage with information and resources; and by working with El Pomar Foundation, area funders and government to facilitate partnerships for matching grants to organizations applying directly for ARRA funded grants.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded the Association a **Strengthening Communities Fund** grant funded through ARRA in late September, with complementary

matching grants from area funders. During the last quarter of the year, staff completed a pre-assessment survey of the state's nonprofits, created curriculum for three new classes, which we offered in seven regions of the state, and worked with government to improve opportunities for nonprofits to participate in ARRA grants and contracts. We partnered with the Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships, who in turn offered grant-related services to nonprofits in the metro area.

Colorado Nonprofit Help Desk

In 2009, the Help Desk received more than 400 direct requests via email, phone or the Web site for assistance from nonprofits across Colorado, and even from some beyond our borders. While our whole team fields questions and requests for information, the Help Desk offers a central hub of resources for both members and nonmembers of the Association. The broad range of questions answered relate to nonprofit operations, anything from board members' responsibilities to legal requirements of nonprofits to financial oversight to human resource concerns.

Leadership Luncheons

The fourth year of our Leadership Series – continuing to engage nonprofit, business, government, and community leaders in meaningful conversations on topics vital to the future of the nonprofit sector – remained well received and well attended.

We hosted four Leadership Series events:

- **Critical Connections During Economic Turmoil** – featuring Barbara Levy and a conversation on leveraging existing relationships and making strategic decisions about these critical connections.
- **Mergers, Partnership and Collaboration** – featuring Tom McLaughlin and a conversation on the opportunities, drawbacks, landmines and best practices of joining forces to achieve nonprofits' missions.
- **Social Media and Online Giving** – featuring Holly Ross and a conversation on fundraising and friend-raising capabilities of social media and how nonprofits can cause them to strengthen their organizations.
- **Building a Tradition of Philanthropy** – featuring Susan Crites Price and a conversation on building a culture of giving by involving young people and their families in the work of nonprofits to build lasting relationships and stronger communities.

Colorado Nonprofit Association Awards Luncheon

The 14th annual Colorado Nonprofit Association Awards Luncheon, hosted in March at the end of Colorado Nonprofit at the Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center, attracted 719 attendees, including state legislators. While this was a smaller crowd than last year, attendees recognized that in challenging times it is more important than ever to come together with colleagues, boards, funders and donors to celebrate the work nonprofits do every day and a time to honor the achievements of the nonprofit community.

State Treasurer Cary Kennedy, Attorney General John Suthers, Secretary of State Bernie Beuscher, and Governor Bill Ritter spoke at the event. The Awards Luncheon also featured a bill signing ceremony in which Governor Ritter signed into law HB 09-1088, Certification of Nonprofits as Local Public Procurement Units.

Betty Lehman, Autism Society of Colorado and Jay Fetcher, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust each received the William Funk Award for Building Stronger Communities; Senator

Betty Boyd and Representative David Balmer each received Legislator of the Year Award; Bob Jackson received the Public Service Lifetime Achievement Award; and Jeff Pryor received the Steve Graham Award for Building Nonprofit Capacity.

Fall Conference and Exhibition

We hosted our newly expanded two-day Fall Conference and Exhibition in October. Despite inclement weather affecting the first day's attendance, the 17th annual event was a great success. Approximately 760 sponsors, registrants, exhibitors, presenters and consultants participated. We expect that if we repeat the two-day format in future years, the event will draw increasing numbers of attendees from outside the Denver area. Across the board, evaluation results were higher in 2009 than 2008.

While all of our 2009 events were successful and well received, compared to 2008, we experienced decreased registration but increased sponsor and exhibitor (Fall Conference) participation. We believe this was due to the continuing economic climate.

Fiscal Strength

The Association adopted a new budget for the last three quarters of 2009, reducing and shifting expectations for revenues and expenditures for the year. We were able to maintain strong cash position and a balanced budget to the end.