



Year in Review – 2007

2007 was a momentous year for the Colorado Nonprofit Association. We continued to build core competencies in each of our functional areas (advocacy and communications, membership, educational programs, public policy, resource development, and organizational infrastructure) so as to better serve the sector. We also continued initiatives begun in previous years, like the annual report, public forums on issues of interest to the sector, and the *Leadership Luncheon Series*. And, perhaps most significantly, we began to fully implement the *Colorado Generosity Project*, an initiative designed to increase charitable giving throughout the state.

Advocacy & Communications

Colorado Generosity Project

The Colorado Generosity Project was designed as a comprehensive multi-year program to increase demonstration of accountability by the state's nonprofits, inform the public of the impact and importance of the sector, and ameliorate the serious and complex problem of low charitable giving in the state. In 2007 the Association spent considerable effort on two aspects of the project: 1) developing a set of principles by which nonprofits could demonstrate best practices, and 2) conducting research to determine baseline data from which to move forward with the project.

The Association worked with a steering committee and nonprofit organizations across the state to develop and sanction *Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Colorado*, a guidebook detailing nine principles and 120 practices for nonprofits to consider for adoption. The document was formally endorsed by the attorney general and secretary of state, and lauded by the foundation and nonprofit community. The Association started a series of training programs to help nonprofits understand the principles and practices and how they might implement them.

The Association also commissioned Johns Hopkins University's Center for Civil Society Studies and Corona Research to help complete *The State of Giving: A Profile of Individual Charitable Giving in Colorado*. This study highlighted charitable giving trends throughout Colorado, and the report was released with a very successful media launch and press conference including commentary by Governor Bill Ritter.

Work on other studies moved forward during 2007, including the first-ever economic impact study of the Colorado nonprofit sector and a perception study designed to gauge why Coloradans give to charity – and why not. Work on these important aspects of the Generosity Project will be completed during 2008.

In addition to its efforts surrounding the Colorado Generosity Project, the Association continued and strengthened its ongoing advocacy and communications efforts, including its regular publications (*Nonprofit Colorado*, the annual report, and various electronic communications), toolkits in support of our educational offerings, and educational public forums on health care reform and the outlook for Colorado nonprofits after the short-term relief of Referendum C expires.

Web Site

In 2007 the Association's web site, www.ColoradoNonprofits.org, averaged 2,384 sessions (individual visits) a day. This important number was up more than 26 percent over 2006. The average visitor looked at approximately 4.5 pages per session, resulting in a site-wide total of 10,768 page views a day (up 20 percent). The Nonprofit Job Board remains the most popular feature on the site, receiving 14,588 visits per week.

Over 3,700 jobs were posted to the Nonprofit Job Board over the course of the year, up by nearly 1,000 over 2006. The Nonprofit Events Calendar netted a total of 430 postings in 2007, up by 79 over the previous year.

The Association continued to add value to its web site in 2007 by adding a multitude of new resource materials and the Nonprofit Resume Board. Launched in May, the Resume Board resulted in nearly 60 postings by year's end.

Membership

As a membership-based organization, we strive to meet the needs of our members. Through our educational offerings, membership benefits, support, and leadership, we help our members become more efficient and effective.

A complete review of the membership dues and dues structure was implemented on Sept. 1, 2007. The dues structure was revamped to more closely align with the budget codes used by the State of Colorado, which will enable the Association to better compare our membership statistics with information on nonprofits gathered by the state. Along with the restructure, a dues adjustment was put into effect in August, 2007 which allowed for the creation of a new, more accessible membership level for the smallest nonprofits (those with annual budgets of \$25,000 and less). The dues adjustment also created a new level for the top-tier nonprofits (those with annual budgets of \$20 million and greater) while at the same time more evenly distributing dues rates in relation to organizational budget size.

Plans for two new member benefits were put into place: a *member orientation*, offering our new and renewing members the opportunity to learn about all of the benefits of membership, and a *member roundtable*, a quarterly meeting for nonprofit professionals to share ideas and solutions to challenges they may encounter. Both of these new benefits are being offered to our members at no charge. The first member orientation and membership roundtable will be held in the first quarter of 2008.

As with our nonprofit memberships, the business membership dues and structure were reviewed in 2007. A dues increase was recommended and put into effect in January, 2008. To enhance the value of membership for our business members, we have implemented two new strategies. Each quarter we now send an email to all of our members reminding them to utilize our business member search whenever they need a product or service; also, new business members are now welcomed in the member newsletter, *Nonprofit Colorado*.

Plans to increase outreach to students, the least represented of our membership base, were put in place in 2007. Attendance by our membership staff at events such as student-led nonprofit conferences, nonprofit career and volunteer fairs, and classroom presentations has helped to increase our visibility and membership within this subsector.

To reinforce our position as a statewide membership organization, we began focusing on our statewide outreach to nonprofits. We hired a new staff person tasked with reaching out to nonprofits outside the Denver metro region (where the bulk of our membership currently lies).

Educational Programs

Ever committed to improving the quality of programming and avoiding duplication of services, the Association implemented new efforts in 2007 to better serve the sector. Again we reached our goals of providing advanced levels of programming, giving nonprofit leaders new opportunities for dialogue and information exchange, and increasing education opportunities for those outside of metro Denver.

Leadership Luncheons

The Association's Leadership Luncheon Series, initiated in 2006, was designed to bring nonprofit executives and other leaders together to initiate sector-wide discussions of crucial issues. Structured to encourage dialogue on these issues, the series promotes positive organizational change and enhanced collaboration.

Four luncheons were held in 2007:

1. Social Enterprise: The Business of Earned Income for Nonprofits (Peter Brinckerhoff)
2. New Trends in Giving (Renata Rafferty)
3. Generational Changes (Jan Masaoka)
4. The Growing Income Gap and Its Effects on the Nonprofit Sector (James Lardner)

The second luncheon was the first to be held at the Doubletree Hotel Denver. The new venue allowed us to reduce expenses and provide better parking options to guests. Ratings for the luncheon series was very high. Attendance was strong throughout 2007, averaging 216 per session.

Educational Workshops

In 2007 we offered a total of 53 educational workshops. This number includes an additional 15 workshops we offered statewide related to the Colorado Generosity Project. In an effort to provide additional training resources to nonprofits and

our members statewide, we began hosting training sessions in Grand Junction, Durango, Pueblo and Loveland related to the Colorado Generosity Project and the Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence guidebook.

We saw a 17 percent increase in the number of workshop participants over last year. This significant increase can be attributed to continued strong attendance at the local (metro Denver) workshops coupled with our new statewide efforts.

Training Collaborative

One year after the launch of the Training Collaborative with Metro Volunteers and the Community Resource Center, the partnership continues to grow. We (the Collaborative) continued to meet quarterly to coordinate our programs in order to provide needed programs while preventing duplication of efforts. The Colorado Nonprofit Training Guide, a comprehensive list of the trainings offered by the three organizations, is released quarterly via email to our combined constituent bases. All three organizations observed increased attendance in their education programs following these promotional efforts, and evaluation forms indicated that people were utilizing the Colorado Nonprofit Training Guide to direct them to these classes.

Fall Conference, Denver

The Colorado Nonprofit Association's 2007 Fall Conference & Exhibition was held at the Adam's Mark Denver Hotel on October 26. As in past years we provided training sessions aimed at veteran nonprofit employees as well as those new to the sector, and we again received many expressions of appreciation from attendees for providing this highly educational conference. We were pleased with attendance (820 guests registered for the event) and especially gratified that so many board members and volunteers were able to attend this, our 15th annual conference.

The feedback from attendees and exhibitors (21 exhibiting companies) was excellent. Attendees felt the exhibit hall provided them with a good mix of vendors, and they enjoyed the prize giveaway at the end of the trade show. The conference was sponsored by seven foundations and six businesses.

Eastern Region Conference, Pueblo

The Association's 2007 Eastern Region Conference was held May 7 at the Sangre de Cristo Arts & Conference Center in Pueblo. The topic was "Sufficiency: Creating Resources to Make a Difference." There were eight event sponsors, six companies supporting the conference in lesser ways, and two table sponsors.

Paid attendance was just under 100, somewhat lower than we had hoped. About 150 were present for the luncheon portion of the program, during which the Colorado Generosity Project was introduced. Of the 40 participants who responded, about half gave the conference an overall "excellent" rating.

In light of the Association's decision to begin statewide training in support of the Colorado Generosity Project and *Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Colorado*, the decision was made NOT to hold spring conferences in rural Colorado in the future.

Colorado Nonprofit Week 2007

Colorado Nonprofit Week is a statewide celebration to honor, praise and publicize the broad impact of nonprofits' work in Colorado. It is a time to thank all the board members, volunteers and dedicated staff who work so hard year-round to make a positive difference. The week begins with an honorary proclamation from the Governor and continues with celebratory events around the state, culminating in the Colorado Nonprofit Association Awards Luncheon.

This year we were thrilled to engage three of Colorado's highest public officials to speak at our Awards Luncheon: Governor Bill Ritter, Secretary of State Mike Coffman, and Attorney General John W. Suthers. Members of the nonprofit community and many representatives from the worlds of government and business came together on Friday, March 9, at the Adam's Mark Denver Hotel to celebrate the vital contributions made by nonprofits to our communities. Some 970 people attended the luncheon, which is recognized as the premier networking event for Colorado's nonprofit sector. The luncheon drew 14 foundation sponsors, 14 corporate sponsors and 43 nonprofit table sponsors.

In recognition of their exemplary service to their respective organizations and communities, the following persons received awards: Sen. Maryanne "Moe" Keller, 2006 Legislator of the Year; Nan Morehead, Public Service Lifetime Achievement Award; and John Parvensky and Anna Jo Haynes, William Funk Award for Building Stronger Communities. The Association also introduced a new award in memory of Steve Graham, whose untimely death in December 2006 so stunned Colorado's nonprofit community. The first Steve Graham Award for Building Nonprofit Capacity was presented to Steve's wife, Cindy

DaRugna, by Tim Schultz, president and CEO of the Boettcher Foundation. (The Boettcher Foundation, presenting sponsor of the Awards Luncheon, sponsors both the William Funk and the Steve Graham awards.)

Help Desk

In 2007 the Help Desk was improved by streamlining internal processes and eliminating inefficiencies. All nonprofit startup inquiries are now referred directly to the Community Resource Center by Help Desk staff and through a direct link on www.ColoradoNonprofits.org, eliminating a previous duplication of services between the two agencies. The Help Desk responded to 319 questions in 2007; this was fewer than last year, primarily because the Help Desk is no longer tracking nonprofit startup inquiries and because of an increased number of resources available on the web site. The Help Desk continues to publish a Frequently Asked Questions column in *Nonprofit Colorado*.

Public Policy Work on Behalf of the Sector

Working with the Secretary of State's Office, the Colorado Nonprofit Association helped convene the Charities Task Force, an advisory body to review and recommend changes to improve oversight of and public education on behalf of nonprofits. The Task Force, consisting of three subcommittees (Education, Legislation and Rules, and Self-Regulation), produced a report suggesting changes to educational resources, dissemination of self-regulatory resources, including Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Colorado, and legislative changes to improve legal compliance and enforce the law against "bad actors." A bill will be introduced during the 2008 session of the General Assembly to implement legislative changes, and plans to establish a permanent advisory council will be considered.

The Association also convened a forum in the summer on the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care Reform. The purpose of this forum was to inform nonprofits of four comprehensive health care reform proposals under consideration. Over 100 nonprofit professionals attended.

In 2007, the Colorado Nonprofit Association worked to advance public policies that protect and strengthen the ability of nonprofits to secure funding for their operations and programs. We worked on bills and regulations designed to strengthen the ability of nonprofits to help lawfully-present citizens obtain public benefits and access identification. In addition, we worked with lawmakers in an attempt to alleviate the chilling effect of Amendment 4I on nonprofits' legislative advocacy rights. Because the resulting legislation was unsatisfactory, the Association joined litigation which successfully enjoined Amendment 4I until the Colorado Supreme Court could review its constitutionality. The Supreme Court's ruling will be announced in 2008.

Operations and Infrastructure

In 2007 the Association made efforts to improve operations by evaluating and developing strategies to meet organizational performance standards within the approved budget. We monitored our compliance with the standards set forth in the *Principles and Practices* document, making changes when applicable and practical. We completed another successful audit of the previous year's activities, making operational changes according to auditor suggestions. The Association has kept three months operating expenses in reserve, as per the bylaws.

The addition of new software helped to automate the internal registration process for workshops and events, further improving efficiency in the office. Also, we continued to make improvements on the web site in an effort to make online transactions easier for the end-user.

Income Diversification

To meet strategic goals and to show substantive results for Association members and the sector, the Board of Directors has determined that the Association should continue its efforts to diversify its funding base. In 2007 we focused our efforts on increasing earned income and membership revenues to support the general operations of the organization and obtaining new foundation and corporate grants to support special projects. Earned income revenues jumped with the addition of new group purchasing partners, increased attendance at events and conferences, and greater Job Board use. Member revenues climbed with the new member rate increase. Corporate funding increases were the result of publication and event sponsorship. While we were successful in securing all funds required to meet the 2007 budget, we have plans to diminish the percentage of income from grant funds in 2008.