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BOARD BREAK

Online Newsletter for Board Members

January 2007

A publication of the

CENTER FOR NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT

An e-newsletter filled with the latest news and resources
on nonprofit board governance.
Short enough to read on your break!

IN THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER:

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Cinema Culture-Bridging the Racial Divide

In December, presenters Jeremy Solomons, founder/president of Jeremy Solomons & Associates, and Susan Gore, Ph.D., diversity trainer and executive coach, engaged Board Builder participants in a facilitated discussion of the dynamics of ethnic, gender, age and other diversity and discrimination within a variety of contexts, as illustrated by scenes from the Academy Award-winning film *Crash*. After viewing two scenes from the film, small groups identified the difficulties raised by both deliberate and unconscious discriminatory attitudes and behaviors.

One important dynamic noted by participants was the way differences in power and position have significant influence on our behavior and attitudes in many settings, but especially within the context of work. It became clear that those who hold power in a work or service situation convey entitlement and power almost unconsciously. Equally unconscious are the split-second decisions people subject to that power often feel pressured to make in the face of those expectations.

Jeremy and Susan reviewed a "Diversity Awareness Spectrum," depicting the continuum of cultural competency along which most individuals fall, ranging from Naïve Offenders to Perpetuators, Avoiders, Change Agents and Fighters. Discussion centered on the typical behaviors of members in each category, and the relative effectiveness of those behaviors in the context of bridging the racial divide.

Jeremy and Susan also covered the "3-H" process that occurs when effectively addressing issues of race and discrimination. This process involves honoring the responses of the heart (reacting, emoting and cooling down), engaging the abilities of the head (analyzing, thinking and planning), and deploying one's hands, one's ability to act on behalf of positive change (approaching, initiating dialogue, and following up).

Join us for the next Board Builder session, ***Leadership Transition: Large Challenge / Large Opportunity*** on Thursday, February 15 from 11:30 to 1 p.m.

Read on to learn more about this session.

Leadership Transition: What Every Board Member Should Know

Executive transitions at nonprofits are accelerating as the statistically large cohort of baby boomers approach retirement. The challenge presented to an organization and its board when an executive director departs can be daunting. Although an infrequent occurrence, it is time-consuming and has serious implications for the nonprofit's health and momentum. Even so, organizations need not settle for a safe choice or mediocre candidates. Managed properly, the transition has the potential to revitalize and strengthen an organization. On Thursday, February 15, join nonprofit executive search consultant Jim Chambers, Vice President, TNS Partners, Inc., for the Center's next Board Builder lunch program. Following are just a few of the succession-planning topics Jim will cover.

- Change is coming, be prepared
- Risks of failure
- Effective Search Committee practices
- Interim Executive Director: internal or external?
- Retaining a Search Consultant

February Board Builder session:

[Leadership Transition: Large Challenge / Large Opportunity](#)

Thursday, February 15 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Members pay just \$25, and non-members \$35 and lunch is included.

To learn more and to register, [click here](#).

IN LOCAL NEWS

Reframing Governance: Observations of Changes In Board Influence and The Larger Community

David Renz, Director of the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership at the University of Missouri, reports on changes he has observed in board influence within their context in the larger community. In a recent article published by *The Nonprofit Quarterly*, Renz details his realization that nonprofit governance has been recreated at a different level within our communities, although few have noticed this shift due to our focus on what he terms "the artifact" that we know as the board.

Renz argues that governance has moved to a higher level than that of nonprofit board leadership, and believes that nonprofit organizational boards are only one piece of a larger effort, and no longer the primary "home" of the governance process. The true governance function has been most actively evolving in agencies that use a variety of meta-processes such as networking and collaboration, both formal and informal.

While Renz asserts that boards remain critically important to the work and position of organizations, he also makes the claim that these alliances play the major governance role.

"Governance really is not about organization, it's a function that is essential to addressing a particular issue or need in our community. For so long, it has been the individual organization that has been the appropriate unit to address our problems", says Renz. "However, for the most critical and substantive of our community issues and problems, the single organization is no longer an appropriate match to the scale of these issues and problems. We've found it increasingly essential to develop alliances and coalitions' extraorganizational entities to address the multi-faceted complexity of these critical needs and issues.

He identifies the following characteristics of these meta-governance structures:

- **Segmentary** - The systems are comprised of multiple groups and organizations,

each of which is one segment of the overall whole working to address the common issue or goal.

- **Polycentric** - They have multiple centers of activity and influence that help to advance progress towards the common goal, yet each participating entity operates individually.
- **Networked** - The multiple centers of activity within the system are linked via a web of strategic relationships. An important source of organizational power within this web comes from the informal relationships that exist among the various people playing leadership roles in the various centers of activity.
- **Integrated** Their alliances are connected through networked individuals and integrated by a core but evolving ideology that crosses organizational boundaries. Those who work to address the issue go wherever is necessary to engage in their work. In fact, it is not unusual to find that some of the integration is achieved by people who hold a formal position in one organization (e.g., a staff position) while also serving in leadership roles in other organizations (e.g., a board member). In this system, no single entity is actually in charge.

For more information on Renz's thoughts and to see the complete article, [click here](#).

Dallas Blueprint for Leadership: Developing Today's Diverse Leaders

The Center for Nonprofit Management is now accepting applications for the 2007 class of the Dallas Blueprint for Leadership program. The mission of the **Dallas Blueprint for Leadership** program is to accelerate the involvement of ethnic minorities on the board of directors, committees and panels of the Center for Nonprofit Management member agencies. The program consists of 42 hours of classroom training and group activities designed to train and place qualified, committed, skilled, high caliber minority board members.

Program Benefits for Participants:

- A curriculum of quality training in board leadership taught by expert faculty
- Graduates are matched with nonprofit boards which complement their interests and skills
- Recognition by the nonprofit community as leaders and examples of good corporate citizenship
- An increased exposure to the support and ongoing training of the Center for Nonprofit Management
- Long-term networking and camaraderie opportunities through the Blueprint Alumni Association

Professionals who are of an ethnic minority origin and have a passion for community leadership are invited to apply. The deadline for applications is March 23, 2007.

To learn more about Blueprint, visit <http://www.cnmdallas.org/blueprint.aspx> or join us for a **Free Meet & Greet** information session, Thursday, March 1 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Center for Nonprofit Management, 2902 Floyd Street in Dallas. [Click here](#) to register now.

Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership: Support Professional Development for Your Nonprofit's Leadership

One of the most important roles of the nonprofit board is to develop the capacity of professional staff within the organization. Not only must staff expand their knowledge and skills to be in tune with current strategies and best practices, they must also develop and strengthen their leadership capabilities in order to effectively advance the mission of the agency.

If you know an executive director or other executive-level staff member who is looking for advanced professional development, consider supporting participation in the [Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership](#) at SMU.

A new, flexible format makes it easier than ever for busy nonprofit executives and senior staff to participate in this unique and valuable program.

To learn more about the program, click below:

- [Who Should Attend?](#)
- [FREE Information Session Jan. 25 - Register now!](#)
- Learn about the [New Format](#) and review the [Course Schedule](#)
- [Course Fees](#)
- [How to Register](#)

Visit <http://www.cnmdallas.org/smu.aspx> for more information.



On the Board Member's Nightstand

Books recommended for interesting insight at our December Board Builder session:

Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking
By: Malcolm Gladwell

Blink is a book about rapid cognition -- the kind of thinking that happens in a blink of an eye. *Blink* is a book about those two seconds and the instant conclusions we reach that are powerful, important and, occasionally, accurate. Including a chapter that exposes the "dark side of blink," Gladwell's provocative and engaging collection of case studies raises questions about how critical decisions get made, exploring the relative value of processing prodigious amounts of information vs. small amounts of the **right** information.

To order this book or for more information, [click here](#).

Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden side of
By: Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner

Which is more dangerous, a gun or a swimming pool? What do school teachers and sumo wrestlers have in common? Why do drug dealers still live with their moms? How much do parents really matter? What kind of impact did *Roe v. Wade* have on violent crime? These may not sound like typical questions for an economist to ask. But Steven D. Levitt is not a typical economist. He is a much-heralded young scholar who studies the riddles of everyday life --from cheating and crime to sports and child-rearing — and whose conclusions regularly turn conventional wisdom on its head. He usually begins with a mountain of data and a simple, unasked question. Some of these questions concern life-and-death issues; others have an admittedly freakish quality. Thus the new field of study contained in this book: *Freakonomics*.

To order this book or for more information, [click here](#).



Great Web Links

Below are Web site links that provide information on Nonprofit governance:

- Reframing Governance by David Renz: <http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/section/853.html>;
<http://www.philanthropyjournal.org/lu.cfm?lu=22109>

- Conference on Nonprofit Governance: Kansas City: April 26-27:
<http://bsbpa.umkc.edu/mwcnl/Conferences/Governance2007/Introduction.htm>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

[The Board's Role in Fundraising](#)

Monday, January 29, 1 pm to 4 pm

Speaker: Donna Miller, Principal, Miller Consulting

Today more than ever board involvement in funding support is essential to the nonprofits they serve. Simply knowing this doesn't make it happen! This session explores areas critical to agency survival in today's tough times. Participants will leave understanding not just the legal obligations of board members for their agency's financial stability, but will understand effective methods for getting them involved. Content covers the board's role in all aspects the fund development process, from setting goals and asking for major gifts, to participating in capital and annual campaigns and the agency's planned giving strategies.

Fee: \$60 members / \$90 non-members

Location: [Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church](#), 1808 W. Camp Wisdom Road, Dallas.

To register, [click here.](#)

["Let's Form a Committee...Right?"](#)

Tuesday, January 30, 1 pm to 4 pm

Speaker: Jonathan D. Schick, M. Ed., Director, The Goal Project

Committees are formed to solve problems, but more often than we like, they create them. Governance expert Jonathan D. Schick explores what frequently goes wrong with board committees, and how to avoid those common pitfalls. Participants will learn the latest wisdom about structuring committees, the "when" and "how" of forming task-forces, and best practices to ensure strategic and effective committee work.

Fee: \$60 members / \$90 non-members

Location: [Center for Nonprofit Management](#), 2902 Floyd Street, Dallas.

To register, [click here.](#)
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[Creating Effective Nonprofit Programs Two Day Clinic: An Introduction to Program Planning & Evaluation](#)

Wednesday and Thursday, February 28 - March 1

Speaker: Marcus Martin, M.A., PhD, MPH, Director, J. McDonald Williams Institute

Need experts to help staff AND board members understand the importance of program evaluation? This session was designed with your team in mind! This fast-paced, hands-on workshop teaches the fundamentals of how to employ effective program planning and program evaluation. Participants will learn the basics of program planning and outcomes evaluation. In addition, participants will be taught a variety of applied research techniques (both qualitative and quantitative) that can greatly increase their chances of achieving desired program outcomes.

Fee: \$60 members / \$90 non-members

Early-Bird Special: Register and pay by February 15 and pay just \$300 (a savings of \$99)!

Location: [Center for Nonprofit Management](#), 2902 Floyd Street, Dallas.

To register, [click here.](#)

Related Center Services

Not only can board and staff learn effective techniques for program planning and evaluation at the two-day clinic, the Center also provides expert consultants to work with you to move the project forward to completion. For more information on how a consultant can help you, call Charlotte Keany at 214-826-3470, ext. 244 or e-mail keany@cnmdallas.org.

Board Builder Luncheon

[Leadership Transition: Large Challenge / Large Opportunity](#)

Thursday, February 15, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Speaker: James H. (Jim) Chambers, Partner, TNS Partners

Fee: \$25 for members, \$35 for non-members. Lunch is included.
Location: [Center for Nonprofit Management](#), 2902 Floyd Street, Dallas.
To register, [click here](#).

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Save the Date!

Get on Board! Fair
Thursday, May 17, 2007, 4:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Cityplace Conference Center, 2711 N. Haskell Avenue, Dallas

Get on Board is a unique opportunity where 100 nonprofit organizations needing qualified board members and volunteers visit with more than 500 people who are interested in getting more involved in their community.

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information on this annual event.

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In Coming Newsletters

Don't miss these upcoming topics...

- Tips on Leading Change in your organization

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Share the Wealth! Tell other Board Members about *Board Break!*

Do you know someone who would be interested in receiving **Board Break?**
E-mail Yvonne Kyle kyle@cnmdallas.org with e-mails to add or [click here to sign up now!](#)

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Editors: Sally Lutz, Center Consultant & Sharon G. Bailey, Director of Education

Send comments and questions to lutz@cnmdallas.org.
For more information, visit our Web site at www.cnmdallas.org.

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