

10/13/2016

Ideas & Info Luncheon & Annual Meeting Corporate Funding

*Nonprofit Prince George's County 10201 Martin Luther King Jr.
2nd Floor Conference Rm. A Bowie, MD 20720*

Maryland United for Peace and Justice
MUPJ www.mupj.org



Ideas & Info Luncheon & Annual Meeting Corporate Funding

**Nonprofit Prince George's County 10201 Martin Luther King Jr.
2nd Floor Conference Rm. A Bowie, MD 20720**

The Nonprofit Prince George's County hosted the workshop entitled "Ideas & Info Luncheon & Meeting Corporate Funding on October the 12th 2016 at the Vista Garden's Market Place in Bowie, MD. The Nonprofit Prince Georges which has as its goals 'to improve the effectiveness of nonprofits serving Prince George's County by providing information and training, advocacy, networking and collaboration opportunities', hosted the workshop in order to provide ideas and resources to nonprofit leaders on ways to approach funding.

The luncheon and Ideas workshop room was packed with several nonprofit professionals and nonprofit leaders who were keen to hear and learn about best practices in fund-raising from the two presenters: **Tracye Funn**, Corporate Contributions Manager for *Washington Gas* and **Tami Watkins**, Senior External Affairs Specialist at *PEPCO*.





*The presenters were **Tracye Funn**, Manager, Corporate Contributions, **Washington Gas** and **Tami Watkins**, Senior External Affairs Specialist, **PEPCO**.*



Whilst a lot of nonprofit funding comes from the donations of individuals, it is also true that private funding and private partnerships can also help tremendously in supporting the work and efforts of organizational fundraising and program goals.

Both Fun and Walkins discussed several strategies for private funding proposals, whilst each panelist shared specific insights on the various ways their Companies provide charitable giving opportunities to non-profits in search of funding opportunity.

Funn suggested that when Non-profits are looking for funding and considering submitting application for Washington Gas, an organization should "consider the current economic trends because we want immediate impact with community concerns." She also maintained that 'organizations must send specific pages as requested or needed, and so it is important to make research of the web, and also call the grant giving company or organization beforehand'. She emphasized the need for organizations to "call the Grant Manager ahead of time and send a one page concept papers". She asked the question; "What are the greatest barriers to securing funding"? and engaged the participants in an interactive session on challenges to secure funding.

One participant raised the concern for ‘time constrains’ as it can be a barrier, whilst another suggested that ‘programmatic areas’ or areas of focus of the funding can often be a barrier to funding. Andrew Greene from MUPJ suggested also that ‘eligibility criteria can be a barrier to getting grants as grants can have specific geographical scope or specific areas of focus’.

The presenter Funn also suggested that ‘reading all the criteria to make sure your organization is a fit is important’. She goes on to say that ‘Knowing the timeframe and your community you wish to support is vital for seeking support as well as the audience you plan to reach’. She further emphasized that ‘when writing proposals applicants should know that dollar amount must be commensurate to your work’ and they ‘encourage volunteers in organizations’. She encouraged participants to present proposals with volunteer efforts in mind. ‘Organizations should ensure that volunteers have to be within specific budget when writing grants as we value volunteer efforts in grant requests. Project leaders should therefore submit something that covers volunteers’.

In answer to MUPJ’s representative Andrew’s questions about bringing in new ideas, Funn affirmed that their funding is not just restricted to their own ideas and she turned to her colleague panelist Waltkins nodding and saying “we also look for new ideas. New for us will be good.”

They are interested in Public private partnership, and the idea of a partnership was a new concept. ‘New ideas are great but for immediate funding needs, the new idea will take some time for the company to familiarize with it, so it is better to understand what the company funds if organizations are looking for a quicker and immediate path to funding’. She expressed.

Funn added that ‘organization leaders need to be in search of and know where the people who give funding are and so go for it and research. It is also important to know what is critical for your organization’.

She asked the question “What is your pitch?”, and suggests that your pitch is “the way you connect with people, the way you say it, and so be mindful of what you say, know your worth and value, and be authentic. And this will pay off”.

She expressed the great need for organizations to take a bold step and reach-out to private and public funders and to make use of several resources such as volunteers, which can help in cutting down cost on workload and to value the work of volunteers and include their services and needs in budgets when writing grants. She said ‘some resources that seem even small are vital like individuals who provide access to printing materials for the organizations work’. She ask that leaders should know where to go to see the changes being made by corporate funding bodies and charitable giving companies or groups, and evaluate your program so that way you can raise more cash.

Tami Watkins from the company Pepco, shared other benefits their company PEPCO offers, which include free use of the PEPCO Edison Gallery for workshops, Board meetings and events in their office in DC. Both presenters noted that their websites provide excellent resources for

funding and grants applications can be sent online. Tami emphasized that organizations meet the 501c 3 criteria and have to be registered in the MD, DC area. Watkins encouraged nonprofit leaders to ‘always ask PEPCO for what you need’ and says that ‘corporate dollars are the bigger funding at the excellent level’. She also gave a background about their companies and encouraged participants to check their website which deals with ‘Energy Efficiency’ where they have million customers. Their company also encourages organizations to show how they have benefited from their company by acknowledging them in their activities as sponsors, their logos on their flyers and postal and websites as well as social media to indicate that they don’t just give cash but build relationship with organizations.

Whilst the proposal format for funding request from the two companies will vary, both speakers from Washington Gas and PEPCO shared the following similar tips to assist with organizations and non-profit meet their funding goals.

- 1) Look at the website for proposal guidelines.
- 2) Put in the request in advance.
- 3) Be creative and flexible about the request.
- 4) If your request is denied, contact the program manager to learn why.
- 5) Be authentic
- 6) Build relationship with the funding partners and corporate bodies.

www.MUPJ.org