



Encore

A Spotlight on Philanthropy in the Performing Arts

Alexander-Haas
TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

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from the desk of
Shelly Manuel
Associate Partner

Adjusting Behaviors for the Neurodiverse Donor & Staff

I live in a house full of neurodiverse thinkers who see, feel, and experience the world differently than those who approach the world through a “neurotypical” lens. My dyslexic and ADHD family is not alone with approximately 20% of the population living with different wiring in their brains in the form of Autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) among others. Because I live in a neurodiverse world, I am fascinated by studies that show we can all benefit in a world more accommodating for those who see things and think differently – especially in the workplace. To take that a step further, shouldn’t we as fundraisers keep in mind that 20% of our donors are probably neurodiverse as well?

Just because an individual falls in this category does not mean that they are less than or disabled. Many have high IQs and are extremely bright. Heightened skills, such as pattern recognition, empathy, interpersonal skills, innovation, creativity, and leadership are prevalent among dyslexic thinkers (of which experts say 15 and up to 20% of the population fall into this group). Because these are such critical business skills, 40% of the world’s greatest innovators and entrepreneurs are dyslexic. With that said, it would be safe to assume that some of your best donors are likely dyslexic as well.

What does this mean for us as development professionals? We need to be mindful in our communication. Lengthy emails are probably not going to be read. Those with ADHD and dyslexia often rely on administrative support to keep them organized and on track. Get to know gatekeepers and make sure that you schedule meetings through the proper channels. In designing printed materials and proposals know that text needs to be concise, have visuals and include summaries that hit the highlights.

Something else to consider are meetings and events. If someone struggles with anxiety, simple steps like those listed below can make the difference in whether someone agrees to meet with you or not. However, isn’t it nice to take these steps regardless?

- Provide detailed parking information and where to go once they arrive.

- Include the appropriate attire (if necessary).
- Personally meet guests as they arrive at the door.
- Take away any other anxiety-inducing stressors.

Along those same lines, if you work in an organization, be mindful of your neurodiverse colleagues and those that you are looking to hire. Accommodations can be simple. Quiet workspaces, understanding that a complex CRM system can be overwhelming for someone with ADHD, so they may need more time with meeting notes or voice-to-text technology, or even some admin support. Try not to get frustrated if a colleague doesn't have the same work schedule as you do. You never know what they are struggling with. Anxiety, depression, OCD, etc. can be crippling at times, and we are not to judge others.

Finally remember, divergent thinking generates multiple ideas or solutions to a problem. Creative problem-solving is a good thing. Ernst & Young did a research study that showed that many of the future workplace skills perfectly align with those that you find in individuals with dyslexia. LinkedIn has added dyslexic thinking as a skill. If we can all see these differences as talents as opposed to disabilities or hindrances, make accommodations, and approach every donor and colleague with grace and understanding, the possibilities are endless.

Please welcome Shelly to our team.

[Read all about our new Partner here.](#)

Our Team

Are Nonprofit Salaries Keeping Up With Inflation?

The median pay for fundraisers grew 6.4% in 2022 – shy of the 8% increase in the cost-of-living last year. According to *Candid's* annual pay report, median compensation for top officials climbed 3.2% in 2021 to \$129,000, up from \$125,000 in 2020. Inflation, meanwhile, climbed 4.7% that year. This ends a long run when pay ran ahead of inflation. From 2017 to 2021, median compensation was up 6% when adjusted for growth in the cost of living over the four years.

Other findings from Candid's report:

- Median executive compensation at the largest groups – those with annual revenues of more than \$50 million – was \$293,000. At the smallest organizations, whose revenues were under \$250,000, median pay was \$43,000.
- Executives in the Northeast earned the highest salaries – a median of \$140,000. Those in the Midwest earned the least, a median of \$111,000.
- Pay for women executives continued its decade-long creep upward. For every dollar men made, women made a median 67 cents in 2011 and 73 cents in 2021.
- Another trend that continued: Women represented the majority of CEOs at smaller organizations but less than one-third of CEOs at the largest groups.

[Our LinkedIn](#)

Filling Jobs Hard for Nonprofits

Nearly three-quarters of nonprofits are finding it hard to fill critical staff positions because of salary competition. A nationwide survey of more than 1,600 nonprofits found that 72% of respondents view salary competition as impeding their ability to recruit and retain employees. Budget constraints (66%) and staff stress/burnout (50%) were also identified as top factors contributing to current job vacancies at 74.6% of nonprofits. More than half (51.7%) of nonprofits had more vacancies in April 2023 than in March 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic. Further complicating the ability of nonprofits to keep up with salary and service demands, 70.5% of survey respondents anticipate charitable giving to their organization will decrease or remain flat this year.

The report, [2023 Nonprofit Workforce Survey Results: Communities Suffer as the Nonprofit Workforce Shortage Crisis Continues](#) can be found [here.](#) (PDF) PND, 8-4

[Our Facebook](#)

4 Facts Everyone Should Know

1 Americans gave **\$24.67 billion** to arts institutions in 2022

2 Giving to the arts is one of the few areas that saw a **real-dollar increase** last year: a growth of 2.9%

3 In the last 3 years (2020-2022), **giving to the arts has grown by 21%**, from \$19.47 million in pandemic year 2020 to \$24.67 million in 2022

4 At Alexander Haas, we start with today's real-world facts to help create a brighter future.



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Customized strategies for: Comprehensive, Capital, Endowment, Acquisition Campaigns, Campaign Strategy Studies, Advancement Assessments, Annual Fund, Major Gifts, Training for Curators, Volunteers and Development Staff

Image credit: Alexander Haas is proud to provide counsel to The Columbus Museum (GA) for the *Reimagining The Columbus Museum* campaign. The expanded Museum, featuring a new Children's Gallery and Garden, opens its doors in 2024.

Data Source: Giving USA 2023, published by the Giving USA Foundation

We Know the Performing Arts

For more than 35 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with leading performing arts and cultural organizations across the country that help communities be a better place to live. Just ask our clients.

Our Arts Client Partners

Face It: Arts Organizations are Different

Our services aren't cookie cutter. We don't operate with a boilerplate, merely changing names and locations. We craft each and every service we provide to match your organization's unique needs, wants and abilities. We work hard and expect you to do the same. Together we can help you transform your arts organization, your fundraising, and the unique community you serve.

Whether your need is in Capital Campaign, Annual Fund Campaign, Major Gifts, Leadership Annual Giving, Planned Giving or all of the above, we take a fresh approach to nonprofit fundraising.

[Our Services](#)



*A*lexander·Haas
TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

www.fundraisingcounsel.com
info@alexanderhaas.com

Piedmont Place | 3520 Piedmont Place NE, Suite 450 |
Atlanta GA 30305-1512 | 404.525.7575