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from the coastal-desk of
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What's it All About?

I have been giving a good deal of thought lately about the state of our fundraising profession amid a myriad of reports about such things as the increasing number of folks who are planning to leave the nonprofit sector, an upsurge in those pushing for unions, and analyses for why this is all happening.

One of those analyses by Lisa Pilar Cowen and Michele Flores titled *'Let's address the real reason great fundraisers are in short supply'* appeared recently in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* as an opinion piece. It's a thoughtful essay well worth the read but I must say I was greatly turned off by how the Chronicle introduced the article:

Too often, nonprofits force development officers to grovel for donations from the rich, rather than emphasizing how to connect people in a community to support an organization's mission.

Groveling? I don't think so even though I entered the field more than 50 years ago with a misguided impression of fundraisers as folks going around with a tin cup begging for money. Fortunately, an extraordinary volunteer recognized the depth of my ignorance and took me on a call to show me what it's all about. I sat quaking in my boots as he invited a prospective donor to join him in supporting the cause by considering a gift of \$100,000. After what seemed like infinite silence the gentleman responded: 'We know your enthusiasm for this project and believe in it as well. We expected you would be calling and have decided to give \$150,000.' Needless to say, I was stunned. And to compound it as we left the gentleman put his arms around both of us and thanked us for letting him and his wife be a part of it.

When I expressed my incredulity at a gift larger than our ask and a thank you for involving the couple, my mentor simply replied: 'You dunderhead, all we are doing is inviting good people to do a good thing for a good cause. What could be nobler than that?' Indeed. That lesson changed my life and made me love what we do.

More recently we noted the passing of Burt Bacharach at 94 and I recalled one of his songs from 1966 that sticks in your mind, *What's it all about, Alfie?*

*What's it all about, Alfie?
Is it just for the moment we live?
What's it all about when you sort it out, Alfie?
Are we meant to take more than we give
Or are we meant to be kind?*

*And if only fools are kind, Alfie
Then I guess it's wise to be cruel
And if life belongs only to the strong, Alfie
What will you lend on an old golden rule?
As sure as I believe there's a heaven above, Alfie
I know there's something much more
Something even non-believers can believe in
I believe in love, Alfie
Without true love we just exist, Alfie
Until you find the love you've missed you're nothing, Alfie
When you walk let your heart lead the way
And you'll find love any day, Alfie*

Songwriters: Burt Bacharach, Hal David. For non-commercial use only.

I have highlighted a couple of lines that speak to me. If my etymology is correct, the roots of philanthropy are the love of humankind. That's what it's all about and if we say that loud and clear I think we will be able to attract and retain good folks to our work. And recall the words of John R. Mott, the legendary YMCA leader: *'Blessed are the money-raisers. For in heaven they shall stand next to the martyrs.'*

[Our Team](#)

How's Your Bracket?

For the first time in program history, and just three years after its one-win season, our Alumni Client Partner **Kennesaw State University** headed to the men's NCAA basketball tournament. They beat Liberty University by one point to win the Atlantic Sun tournament. Reaching the NCAA tournament is an incredible feat for Kennesaw State. Looking at where the program was a few years ago makes that accomplishment even more impressive. Sadly, they fell to Xavier, 67-72. Congratulations on this terrific endeavor.

It's been a dismal season on brackets nationwide. But we feel really good about our standing. Here's how our Current* & Alumni Partner (and one current) Bracket is faring.

Men's

Alabama beat **Texas A&M-CC**, wins second and advances to Sweet 16.

Florida Atlantic overcame **Memphis**, wins next game and advances to Sweet 16.

Tennessee showed up and advances to Sweet 16. Will Play **Florida Atlantic** (torn here).

Texas and **Michigan State** both advance to Sweet 16.

U Conn and **Saint Mary's** both advance to second game. **U Conn** beats **Saint Mary's** and advances to Sweet 16.

Kentucky and **Auburn** both win first games to fall off on second appearance.

Indiana beat **Kent State** to fall on second game.

West Virginia, **Furman**, **NC State**, **Purdue**, **Arizona State**, **Pittsburgh**, **Kennesaw State**, **Texas A&M**, **Illinois**, all out after first game.

Women's

South Carolina beat Norfolk St, advancing to meet and defeat South Florida and advance to Sweet 16.

Louisville wins first to go on to beat Texas advancing to Sweet 16 where they will meet Ole Miss (torn here).

Ole Miss, LSU*, Tennessee, UConn all advance to Sweet 16.

Georgia beat Florida State then fall in second game.

Indiana beat Tennessee Tech in first game, then both fall in second.

Southern Utah, Middle Tennessee, NC State, Chattanooga, James Madison, Alabama fall in first.

Alumni Client Partner Recent Gifts

UNCF plans to partner with Deloitte Digital for a new online platform tailored to historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) for community learning. Supported by more than \$10 million in funding from several foundations, the HBCUv platform will provide remote education, community engagement, and career pathways to students seeking an HBCU education. To date, UNCF has partnered with nine HBCUs. As the platform grows, UNCF plans to include more HBCU students and institutions. *PND, 3-22*

Florida Atlantic University (FAU) received a \$2.8 million gift from Builders Initiative to help the university's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute establish a queen conch hatchery in Grand Bahama. The largest gift from a private funder to FAU Harbor Branch's queen conch program will enable it to develop a conceptual master plan for a 25-acre innovation hub on Grand Bahama for researchers working to solve issues of island sustainability. *PND, 3-19*

Texas A&M University received a \$20 million lead gift from alumni Linda and Dennis Clark through the Texas A&M Foundation to construct a new small animal teaching and research hospital. The facility will replace the current Small Animal Teaching Hospital, which opened in 1981. *PND, 3-9-23*

[Our Facebook](#)

Fundraising Consultants Speak for Their Clients

An online survey of fundraising consultancies that collectively represent hundreds of nonprofits, found that nearly two-thirds (65.64%) of respondents indicate their nonprofit clients met or exceeded projections for 2022. However, an even more significant number (68.75%) said the results fell short of 2021's outcomes and nearly half (43.75%) said their clients have lowered their expectations further for 2023.

More findings

- 37.5% of respondents have clients who expect to match last year's results, and 18.75% expect to exceed them.
- As for the biggest fundraising challenges they believe their clients will face in 2023, respondents overwhelmingly identified inflation (84.85%), new donor acquisition (78.79%), and donor retention (63.64%).

[The 2022-2023 ADRFCO Survey: Compiling Insights into the Nonprofit Sector](#) also reports:

Nonprofits will likely utilize email fundraising methods versus direct mail or telemarketing.

- Most respondents expect their clients to do either the same amount of (53.13%) or less (40.63%) direct mail fundraising this year compared with last year.

A majority also report their clients will be doing the same amount of (71.43%) or less (21.43%) telemarketing, while nearly half (43.75%) indicated that clients intend to increase their volume or frequency of fundraising emails, with the remaining 56.25% expected to do the same as last year.

[More here.](#) *NPT, 3-13*

Our LinkedIn

Economy Shows Positive Signs, Nonprofits Still Weary

Inflation rates have slowed, and consumer confidence has made gains. Despite those positive trends many nonprofits are still struggling to cope with a major increase in demand for their services. With most Covid-era relief funding already used up, many groups are continuing to adapt.

Here's a closer look at some of the economic data experts say nonprofit officials should be watching.

Inflation

Inflation has continued to show signs of easing, registering a 6.6% growth rate in January 2022. While that was a slight increase over the previous month, it reflects a marked decline from last year's high rates. However, the impact of those slower rates hasn't trickled down to everyday Americans – or most nonprofits. Even as inflation cools, human-service nonprofits are still seeing heightened demand from people struggling to keep up with the costs of basic necessities.

Unemployment

The national unemployment rate of 3.4% is the lowest level since 1969. However, hiring employees is more difficult for nonprofits in the economy because nonprofits' revenue comes largely from donations, grants, and contracts that often don't keep pace with rising costs.

Consumer Sentiment

Consumer confidence rose 8.7% in January from the previous month. Despite positive signs, some nonprofits are still struggling to attract donations from individuals. Even as some large nonprofits reported successful year-end giving campaigns, many small charities have had trouble gaining traction with donors who still haven't found their footing in an uncertain economy.

Stock Market

The stock market remains volatile. Even so, one benchmark equities index, the S&P 500, ended the month up 6.2% in January. The gains marked the S&P 500's best January since 2019, driven by optimism that the Federal Reserve would continue to slow down the pace of its interest-rate hikes. However, uncertainty about future Federal Reserve action and disappointing earnings from major retailers have continued to make stocks volatile in recent weeks. *COP, 2-28*

Welcome Returning Client Partner



Louisiana State University

We Know College & Universities

For more than 35 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with so many large and small college and universities; both public and private institutions, across the country. These schools that help mold today's young adults into tomorrow's leaders. Take a look at our list of higher education clients, past and present.

[Our Client Partners](#)

A Fresh Approach to Fundraising

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 institution, your fundraising, and the 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](#)



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