



Generating Nonprofit Solutions

October 2011



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Letter from Trudy Smith

ESC Executive Director

Dear Members of the Nonprofit Community,

Our fall edition of “Generating Solutions” comes to you on the heels of last week’s successful **“Connect To Collaborate”** event, sponsored by Executive Service Corps at the NC Museum of Art. Our event was planned in direct response to our summer Collaboration survey results, in partnership with the NC Center for Nonprofits. We saw the community need, even DEMAND, to gather and talk about ways that Triangle nonprofits can and might collaborate. Thirty five unique nonprofits attended our event to listen to local Collaborative successes and engage in small group discussions. A report on the survey and the event are highlighted here.

I would also like to bring to your attention a new service ESC is offering - **The Nonprofit Management Checkup**. Think of this as a “well check-up” for your organization. This one-on-one analysis compares your nonprofit against best practices for other other nonprofits and allows you to focus on areas where you can improve your effectiveness. If you want to be included in future Collaboration events or learn more about our new Nonprofit Management Checkup, click here www.esctriangle.org, or contact me at escqt@mindspring.com.

Trudy Smith
Executive Director, ESC of the Triangle



“Connect to Collaborate”

Linda Luftig, ESC Board Member and Consultant

Survey Indicates High Interest in Collaborating among Triangle Nonprofits

For many area nonprofits, the buzzword for 2011 is “collaboration.” With increasing demands for services and declining resources in the current economy, nonprofits face enormous challenges. Collaboration is one way to address them.

What is collaboration? It’s a process where “two or more organizations work together to realize shared goals and results that cannot be obtained by working alone”.

During the summer of 2011, the Executive Service Corps of the Triangle, in partnership with the N.C. Center for Nonprofits, undertook a survey of 1,400 area nonprofits. The goal was to determine their interest in collaborating with one another to achieve synergies and savings, to increase their impact and outcomes, and to achieve sustainability.

The survey results showed that interest in some form of collaboration among area nonprofits is relatively high. Forms of collaboration encompassed a range of activities including sharing development, advocacy, programs and services, staffing and locations, all the way up to merging organizations. Most survey respondents seemed most interested in collaboration with a singular focus.

Area funders are also interested in collaboration among the nonprofits they fund. Lori O’ Keefe, Interim COO of the Triangle Community Foundation says, *“More and more, our nonprofit community is coping with the loss of public funding and competing for the same grant dollars, and as grant makers, we are looking for strategic and creative ways to have greater impact with our own funds”*. Collaboration is one way to achieve that goal.

If you are interested in learning more or receiving a copy of the survey results, “Triangle Nonprofits: Collaborating to Build a Stronger Future,” please contact Trudy Smith or Kate Mazza at 919-294—9803 or email info@esctriangle.org.

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Collaboration Summit Highlights Opportunities to Improve Agency Results

As a follow-up to the ESC survey, a Collaboration Summit meeting was held at the North Carolina Museum of Art on September 28, 2011. The by-invitation-only participants in this event included those who had previously taken part in the survey.

Speakers addressed a wide range of collaboration activities:



ESC Consultant Ed Haugh laid out a conceptual framework for

collaboration entitled a "Triangle Nonprofits: Connect to Collaborate." He addressed best practices for collaboration with important do's and don'ts. He noted that "collaboration is a process that takes place over time when two or more agencies decide to work together in good faith to improve the impact of their work". At first, agencies will likely begin by desiring to protect their turf. However, over time, agencies can build trust, which is essential to a successful partnership. He encouraged nonprofits to include collaboration in their strategic plans, annual operating plans, and in employee annual work plans and performance evaluations.

The next segment of the program included two outstanding collaboration success stories and the point of view from a funder:

Leigh Duque, Executive Director of InterAct of Wake County described the circumstances that brought about their heralded model of shared space in downtown Raleigh. At InterAct, nine different collaborative partners are housed together in the same building to provide safety, support, and awareness to victims and survivors of domestic violence and rape/sexual assault.

Britt Thomas, VP External Affairs, Marbles Kids Museum, described the process that brought about a merger between PlaySpace and Exploris, creating a children's museum in Raleigh that was bigger and better than the sum of its parts.

Lori O' Keefe, Interim Chief Operating Officer of the Triangle Community Foundation, spoke of her enthusiasm for collaboration from a funder's perspective. She noted that collaboration does not necessarily mean merger. But, bringing a project to a funder that demonstrates the cooperation between two or more organizations delivers a lot more "bang for the buck."



Small group break-out sessions followed the presentations. Facilitated by ESC consultants, they included:

- Sharing fundraising activities
- Sharing projects, programs and services
- Sharing training and staffing
- Forming a new organization/merging
- Forming a partnership
- Sharing advocacy

Participants generated "real world" ideas on how their agencies could accomplish their goals through collaboration. To sum up the group's feeling about the program, one participant said, "*This was the best use of a small amount of time I have ever spent.*"

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Is Your Organization at Its Best?

Dave Gettles, ESC Consultant and Board Vice Chair

Take the "Nonprofit Management Checkup" and Find Out

Identify your organization's strengths and challenges in meeting nonprofit best practices and develop a plan to improve.

Nonprofit leadership and management teams often ask themselves, or are asked by donors and key stakeholders, about the state of their policies and practices. Especially for smaller organizations, the time is rarely available to research best practices, assess the organization's current status and develop a plan to make improvements.

The Executive Service Corps of the Triangle is offering a new service called the Nonprofit Management Checkup. This will provide your organization with one-on-one time with an ESC Consultant to determine your position relative to a set of best practices and offer specific recommendations. With these recommendations in hand, you can create a practical plan to improve your accountability in essential areas of nonprofit business management.

The checkup covers six areas:

Board Governance	Financial Support
Planning	Human Resources
Financial Control	Operations & Quality

There is a nominal fee for this service. If you choose to use additional ESC services in the future, this fee will be deducted from the cost of that service.

To sign up for the Nonprofit Management Checkup, contact Trudy Smith at 919-294-9803 or

escqt@mindspring.com.

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Community Outreach

October 12: 11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m. National Association of Hospital Hospitality Houses (NAHHH: www.nahhh.org): Don Tiedeman, ESC Consultant, presents on the value of the Strategic Planning process and lessons to be learned. Sheraton Chapel Hill.

November 16: 8:45-9:45 a.m. Trudy Smith, ESC Executive Director, will lead a workshop on Nonprofit Board Involvement for Leadership Chapel Hill-Carrboro). This year, the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber will partner with the Foundation for a Sustainable Community for the 27th annual Leadership Chapel Hill-Carrboro program. This session, for Leadership participants, will highlight the importance of selecting the RIGHT nonprofit when considering Board participation.

December 13: 8:15-9:15 a.m. Trudy Smith, ESC Executive Director, will participate in a panel on the

Boardmanship and Volunteerism in our community. Other speakers include Lori O'Keefe, the COO of Triangle Community Foundation and David Heinen, the Director of Public Policy for the NC Center for Nonprofits. Raleigh Chamber of Commerce. www.raleighchamber.org

December 13: Leadership Cary presentation by Kate Mazza, ESC Associate Director, for the Cary Chamber of Commerce as a part of Nonprofit Day. Kate will share the mission of ESC and present on the importance of capacity building to strengthen a nonprofit Board of Directors. Time and place to be announced.

www.carychamber.com

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ESC News



New Office Location

ESC has moved to a new office at 3211 Shannon Drive, Suite #410 in Durham. Stop by and learn more about how we can help your nonprofit thrive.

2010 Report to the Community

Our 2010 Report to the Community highlights the solutions we provided to Triangle nonprofits. If you would like a copy, write Trudy Smith at escqt@mindspring.com, or click here to see it online at www.esctriangle.org.

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Feedback

Thank your for taking the time to read our eNewsletter. We'd love to make this a two-way conversation.

If you have any comments or questions please write to us at escqt@mindspring.com and let us know what's on your mind.

Thanks in advance for sending your feedback.

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