

# “Seek and Ye Shall Find”

Getting Started:  
Building Capacity and Partnerships  
Breakout Session

The Governor’s Faith-Based Conference  
Royal Pacific Resort, Universal Studios  
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We’ve spent the better portion of the day together in good fellowship, celebration, and enthusiasm for a renewed and awakened interest by Washington, D.C. and Tallahassee in the difficult yet outstanding work that faith based organizations performs across America and the Sunshine State.

Let me add my appreciation to our Governor, Jeb Bush for assembling Federal and State decision makers, and all of us, because the State of Florida has great needs, but together we can meet the needs, we can move mountains. I also want to thank the organizers of this conference...and the supporters of this conference, Universal Orlando, Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation,...

So let’s Get Started: Building Capacity and Partnerships!

To paraphrase George Kirstein, apart for God and the ballot box, philanthropy represents the single most direct way a person can make a difference in our society. In the time I have allotted I’ll focus on three key points:

1. The reality of nonprofit organizations in Florida.
2. A suggested process for thinking about building capacity and partnerships.
3. Where to find the resources to make your ideas happen.

The cold hard reality today in Florida is that there are billions of dollars in Washington, D.C., millions of dollars in Tallahassee, and as our speakers have indicated, a renewed interest in removing the barriers to faith based organizations, to help assist and lead the way to meeting the needs of Floridians from Tallahassee to the Keys and from Tampa to Daytona. But the number of charitable nonprofits in America is 600,000 and growing. In Florida, according to the first economic impact statement of nonprofit organizations in the State of Florida, conducted by the Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Center at Rollins College, there are 38,000 charitable nonprofit organizations competing for private, corporate and government funding. These organizations have:

- Number more than 50,000
- Employ directly approximately 430,000 people
- Generate an additional 360,000 jobs as a result of spending by the organizations and their employees
- Comprise the state's sixth largest source of employment among all industry sectors
- Hold assets exceeding \$63 billion
- Receive more than \$43 billion in annual income
- Generate more than \$22 billion in total personal income
- Generate more than \$61 billion in total economic activity
- Have grown faster than the state's overall economy (an increase in expenditures of approximately 140 percent from 1988 to 1998 compared to an 87 percent increase in Florida personal income)
- Attract 88 million hours of volunteer time, equal to the work of more than 42,000 full-time employees

In light of September 11<sup>th</sup> and the economy, new faith based organizations will find it challenging to attract funding as established faith based and secular organizations will seek a preferred position in the allocation of funds---and who could blame them?

But don't despair, ye of little faith, for from the tiny mustard seed grows a tree. The greatness of the nonprofit sector in America is that each nonprofit represents an experiment; an experiment in how to improve our neighborhoods, our cities, state and nation. Some succeed and some fail. The Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, the Girls Scouts, Habitat for Humanity, Samantha's Purse, and the Salvation Army all started out with the idea that a single person could make a difference

We have not solved all of our social, educational, health and community concerns, and maybe we never will, but there will always be room for one more good nonprofit, faith based or secular to help solve the challenges of the past, present and the future.

Well what about a process to think about building the capacity and partnerships of your faith based idea or organization, just remember the 6 P's---Possibilities and Prayer, Partnerships, People, Principled Leadership, Philanthropy and funding, Prayer and Pragmatism.

Possibilities and Prayer---You are closer to the real problems facing Florida than any city council member, county commissioner, state official or foundation executive! Identify the problem, think about it, and pray about it. Do you have the inspiration and energy to move forward?

Partnerships---Not every human need deserves a new nonprofit. Look across your community for partners, in your house of worship, in its affiliated nonprofit, in a secular nonprofit or some organization that might be willing to accept a helping hand. But the ocean is so large and your boat is so small, you are just one person or a few people, what could you bring to a partnership?

People---No one can do it alone, but as people of faith, you have the ability to mobilize volunteers; never doubt what a coffee fellowship, church bulletin, pot luck supper, or church meeting can do to access caring congregations and unleash an army of compassion.

Principle Leadership---Some people lead, some people follow and some people are good at governing. Good board members and mentors are found in the pews of churches, synagogues and temples. In light of Enron, Arthur Anderson, Tyco, and WorldCom, good principled leaders who can govern are harder to find and even harder to keep.

Philanthropy and Funding---Faith based funding is all the rage, so capitalize on it! Funders, who read proposals for a living, relying on the scientific method for solving problems, are ready for a little faith based twist to current proposals and the problems they hope to solve.

Prayer and Pragmatism---If after exploring partnerships, pray about the starting a new nonprofit and be pragmatic about what it will take to start, build and maintain a nonprofit organization and keep in mind, that there is always room for one more good and caring nonprofit.

So where do we find the resources and leadership, especially out side the Florida metropolitan areas, to help us?

Houses of Worship

Associated Religious Nonprofits---i.e. Catholic Charities, Jewish Federation

Independent Faith Based nonprofits---i.e. Metropolitan Ministries, House of Hope

Independent Secular Nonprofits---hospitals, community centers

Or independent nonprofit organizations whose mission it is to help nonprofit organizations better perform and accomplish their goals for an improved community, these organizations are:

Florida Management Support Organizations and Community Foundations, as intermediaries. Be prepared to know some of the basics before you contact them. A good exercise would be to answer the questions in the Common Grant Application Form and Evaluation, found in your materials. And you can tell them that David A. Odahowski said that they are some of the most creative and resourceful people in their profession and if anyone can find a way to encourage faith based funding and community problem solving it's community foundations and management support organizations---besides, it's their job!

And finally, the use of the internet for identifying private resources to help you solve community problems, found on the Gold sheet in your materials.

Faith based organizations have always been part of meeting the needs of our citizens across America and the State of Florida, we need to encourage this renewed interest, and through conferences like this Florida will be well positioned to address the growing needs of it citizens and be a recognized leader in the faith based solutions movement. Thank you Governor Bush, the organizers and supporters of, this conference, and most of all thank you, for continuing to do the Lord's work here on earth, whatever you faith tradition---as long as there are hungry, homeless, those in need of education, social service or those who just need a caring, helping hand, faith based work will always be with us.