

Benevon Sustainability Conference Welcome

Rosen Shingle Creek Resort

July 25, 2008

Introduction by Terry Axelrod, Founder and CEO
Benevon

Welcome by David A. Odahowski, President
Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, Inc

Tonight's "welcome" speaker is a leader in the Foundation world stretching from the frozen tundra of Minnesota to the warm Gulf Stream waters of Florida. David A. Odahowski has a distinguished career in private philanthropy with over 27 years of stewardship and fiduciary obligations to private donors, philanthropic associations, nonprofit publications, and community and faith based organizations in communities in which he and his family have resided. He serves as President, CEO, and Board member of Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, Inc., in Winter Park, Florida. David and I met through our mutual work with the Rollins College Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Center and Central Florida's in seeking sustainable funding for nonprofits.

When I asked David about speaking tonight, he gladly replied in the affirmative. He said, "Yes" because he says he is repaying a debt he will never be able to fully repay. Twenty-seven years ago, a wealthy Minnesota widow selected a newly minted lawyer to run her family office and her philanthropy and David says he has been very blessed to be part of the philanthropic world ever since.

Whenever two or more people in the state of Florida are gathered in the name of philanthropy, one of them will be our speaker, David Odahowski.

Thank you, Terry. Welcome to Orlando, where we put imagination to work; we put imagination to work! Everyone here knows the Orlando global brand of putting imagination to work; Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, and SeaWorld! Orlando is the number one family and meeting destination in the world. This is a place where dreams come true.

Our state and local governments also put imagination to work. Former Governor Bush had the BHAG, BIG HAIRY AUDACIOUS GOAL to make Florida a biotech center. Today, Florida is the east coast headquarters for the Scripps Institute, the Burnham Institute, the Max Planck Institute, and the Torrey Pines Institute! Orlando's BAHG was to use the Burnham Institute as an anchor to attract a new VA Hospital, the new University of Central Florida Medical School, and the new Nemours Children's Hospital, all in the same neighborhood, to create a "medical city", a goal, I might add, that is not only has been achieved, but is receiving national and international attention.

When Charity Navigator names Orlando as the 4th best metro market for fundraising efficiency, you know that Orlando nonprofits have not only put imagination to work, but we have also put the Benevon model to work. In the aftermath of 9/11, in a collaborative effort to kick-start fundraising, the Rollins College Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Center, Venture Philanthropist Group at the Community Foundation of Central Florida, Fannie Landwirth Foundation, Dr.P. Phillips Foundation, Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, and 20 nonprofit organizations worked with Benevon to inspire the donors of Orlando to become philanthropists and to provide sustainable funding to their favorite charities.

This weekend you are in a place that puts imagination to work. You have traveled from far and near because you have the, **BIG HAIRY AUDACIOUS GOAL**, of putting imagination to work in a large banquet room and bringing home those now famous words, “will the table captain please pass out the pledge cards.” Welcome to Orlando, have a great conference and enjoy all that Orlando has to offer!