

# Nonprofit News

## A Service of the Temple NEST

Nonprofit Evaluation Services and Training Center

Temple University Harrisburg

[www.templeneest.org](http://www.templeneest.org)



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### Happy New Year!

### NEST Nonprofit News Changes in 2010 to Serve You Better!!

Welcome to the newly formatted January edition of Temple NEST's Nonprofit News. From all of us here at the NEST, we hope you find this to be a valuable source of up-to-date, vital information for nonprofit management, leadership and growth. Beginning this month, Nonprofit News has added some innovative features to help build the capacity of Pennsylvania nonprofits even more. Now, your nonprofit organization can post job opportunities, trainings, conferences, news and announcements...**at no cost!!** All nonprofit announcements in Nonprofit News are **FREE!** Let the Nonprofit News be a vehicle for your agency to help fill your needs, as well as to bring you the latest news in best practices for nonprofits. Simply submit your announcement, along with a contact person/ information to: Jennifer Melochick, Temple NEST Research Analyst, [jennifer.melochick@temple.edu](mailto:jennifer.melochick@temple.edu).

### In the January 2010 Technology and Nonprofits Issue:

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### Nonprofit Job Announcements:

- **Coordinator of Special Events, American Red Cross of Southeastern PA (Philadelphia, PA)**
  - Manages special events related activities including solicitation support, clerical/ administrative support, desktop publishing, creative communications writing, timeline management, committee and donor and sponsor relations in order to meet Chapter wide fundraising goals. Supports designated boards and volunteer committees to achieve financial development goals through special events, corporate outreach and local disaster relief efforts
  - All interested persons should submit their resume and cover letter, along with salary requirements to: [Jobs@redcross-philly.org](mailto:Jobs@redcross-philly.org). Candidates can also fax their resume and cover letter to: (215) 299-4081.
- **Executive Director Position, Clinical Outcomes Group, Inc.**
  - Clinical Outcomes Group, Inc.(COGI) is a 501(c) (3) health and social service agency in Central Pennsylvania is seeking a full time Executive Director/CEO to oversee all aspects of organizational management. The candidate should have a professional degree and considerable experience in non-profit management and program development. Areas of organizational service delivery focus on substance abuse, violence, public health programming, and workplace wellness initiatives. We are seeking a dynamic director who can work effectively with public and private funders; motivate and assist staff to reach their full professional potential; and work collaboratively with a regional board of directors. The candidate should have vision to work in a collaborative environment with an academic institution. COGI has a strong history of excellence in service delivery and innovativeness to effectively address societal issues.
  - Salary and benefits are based on skills and experiences. Confidential inquiries should be mailed to: Dr. David Zanis, 307 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Pottsville, PA 17901

- **Pennsylvania System of Care Partnership Project Director**
  - Pennsylvania has been awarded a grant to develop a System of Care to serve youth ages 8-18 that have serious mental health needs, and their families. These youth are also involved with child welfare or juvenile justice, and are in or at risk of out of home placement. The \$9 million grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) covers 6 years and will be implemented in fifteen Pennsylvania counties. The System of Care Partnership will build on and enhance efforts that have been underway for several years to integrate and more effectively provide services to youth. Through this grant, Pennsylvania becomes part of the national movement to utilize organized multi-level systems to more effectively serve youth with serious behavioral health challenges, and their families.
  - The Project Director will be specifically responsible for System of Care grant development and implementation functions. This will include:
    - developing and supporting the State Leadership Team,
    - overseeing the creation of the strategic plan,
    - hiring and supervising staff,
    - participating in the identification and selection of partner counties,
    - supporting development of the administrative and organizational structures necessary for implementation in the participating counties,
    - seeking and valuing ongoing input from youth and families
    - in counties where High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) already exists, building upon existing relationships with the director, Youth and Family Training Institute (YFTI), avoiding duplication of effort,
    - in counties where HFW does not exist, facilitating bridges with YFTI so HFW can build upon the SOC initiatives,
    - insuring that core principles such as natural supports and cultural competence are always present,
    - making sure that gaps and barriers across all the three systems in the SOC grant are being addressed,
    - utilizing existing expertise from all those involved in the YFTI, YFTI advisory board, SOC state leadership team, OMHSAS, and the counties,
    - ensuring the smooth functioning and quality of grant activities,
    - implementing sound financial practices to ensure fiscal accountability,
    - developing procedures for bringing together multiple funding resources for state and local systems development,
    - evaluating and continuously improving quality,
    - meeting or exceeding federal grant requirements.
  - A Master's degree or equivalent experience in social work, psychology, or other related human services field is required. The candidate must have at least five years experience in providing mental health and/or family preservation/support services in progressively responsible positions. At least three of these years shall have been served in a supervisory or administrative capacity. Knowledge and familiarity with Child Welfare and/or Juvenile Justice is strongly preferred. Experience raising a child or children with mental health issues is preferred.
  - Apply at [www.upmc.edu](http://www.upmc.edu) by following these steps: click Careers at UPMC, click on the link to continue to search and apply for openings. Select Advance Search and enter **1057589** in the Job Opening ID field. Candidates must apply by January 11, 2010.

### **Research Publication Books & Resources for Nonprofits:**

- Ross, H. (ed.), Verclas, K. (ed.), & Levine, A. (ed.), (2009). *Managing technology to meet your mission: A strategic guide for nonprofit leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Cortes, M. (ed.), Rafter, K.M. (ed.), 2007. *Nonprofits & technology: Emerging research for usable knowledge*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.
- Jones, J., (2004). In-house or outsource? IT questions are the toughest. *Nonprofit Times*, 18, p. 1, 10, 27.

## **New RFPs and Funding Opportunities for Nonprofits in Pennsylvania:**

### **National Endowment for the Humanities Invites Applications for Digital Humanities Start-Up Grants Deadline: March 23, 2010**

**<http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/digitalhumanitiesstartup.html>**

This program is designed to encourage innovations in the digital humanities. The goal is to identify projects that are particularly innovative and have potential to make a positive impact on the humanities.

Proposals should be in the planning or initial stages of digital initiatives in any area of the humanities. All applicants must propose an innovative approach, method, tool or idea that has not been used before in the humanities. Start-up grants should result in plans, prototypes or proofs of concept for long term digital humanities projects prior to implementation.

Two levels of awards are available: Level I are small grants (\$5,000 - \$25,000) for brainstorming sessions, workshops, early alpha-level prototypes and initial planning. Level II are larger grants (\$25,001-\$50,000) for more fully-formed projects that are ready to start the first stage of implementation or the creation of working prototypes.

US nonprofit 501(c)(3), tax exempt organizations are eligible.

## **NEST Focus: Nonprofits & Technology**

### **Yes, You Do Need a Website!**

In this first edition of NEST's non-profit website tip sheet, I wanted to address those non-profits who have not invested in a website. A modern, well presented website is now expected from most businesses and organizations.

A website is like an enhanced yellow pages ad from people can get information on how to find you, where you are located, what you have to offer, why your service is unique. It is also a convenient way your clients can communicate to you with questions and concerns.

Much company time and effort is often wasted by repeatedly providing the same information either by phone or in-person. A good website helps minimize this by providing easy answers for frequently asked questions, contact information and directions.

So, if you are a non-profit, you should have a website. Period. If you do not have a website, you're losing to other non-profits that do. Secondly, your website should be well designed with the initial guidance/consult of a web professional. With a well-designed site, your operation can project your service to the widest audience possible. Temple NEST is providing a seminar in February where I will discuss in detail what every non-profit needs in a website. My name is Chad Harnish and I have been developing websites for over a decade. I am currently employed by Temple University and provide technical consultation to NEST.

Chad Harnish, [chad.harnish@temple.edu](mailto:chad.harnish@temple.edu)  
Network Administrator and Web Developer

## **Upcoming NEST Events & Trainings:**

- **January 19, 26, & February 2, 2010:** Advanced Grant Writing Workshop Series, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Temple University Harrisburg; Instructor: David A. Zanis, Ph.D.; \$50 (series)
- **January 23 & 30; and February 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2010:** Microsoft Excel Workshops, 10:00AM – 12:00PM, Temple University Harrisburg; Instructor: Barry Nazar, Ph.D.; \$20 per workshop or \$60 for the full 6 workshop series
- **February 16, 2009:** Essentials of a Nonprofit Website Workshop, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Temple University Harrisburg; Instructor: Chad Harnish, Network Administrator and Web Developer; \$????
- **March 16, 2009:** Board Development Workshop, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Temple University Harrisburg; Instructor: David A. Zanis, Ph.D.; \$25
- **March 18, 2009:** Demystifying State Charity Laws WEBINAR, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM (login details will soon be available at [www.templenest.org](http://www.templenest.org))
- **March 27; April 3, 10, 17, 24; & May 1, 2010:** Microsoft Access Instructional Workshops, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Temple University Harrisburg; Instructor: Barry Nazar, Ph.D.; \$20 per workshop or \$60 for the full 6 workshop series

For more information about any of the Temple NEST trainings visit [www.templenest.org](http://www.templenest.org); or to register, please contact Tia Gilbert-Beverly at [tia@temple.edu](mailto:tia@temple.edu) or call 1.866.769.1860.

## **From the Director's Desk...**

### **A Technology Resolution: 2010**

Technology has changed the world. Basic technologic improvements such as an effective website, email, and financial software are necessary to do business on local, national, and international level.

However, it is easy to get caught up in purchasing new technologies that promise to change our organizational capacity. The benefits of technology exist at our fingertips, although organizational leadership must understand how technology will affect our constituents, and at what cost. All too often, I have evaluated organizations and found that they have invested significant resources in software, hardware, novel media campaigns, etc., only to find that these new approaches have yielded little return, and in some cases cost the organization time, money, and capacity to meet client needs.

A few basic decision making items to consider before investing in major technology initiatives: (1) form a technology committee comprised of end users, administrators, board members, and other key staff persons; (2) conduct an external audit of other organizations that have used the technological initiative and assess the strengths and limitations as applied to your organization; (3) weigh all options, including competing products, cost-benefit ratios; and immediate short term and long term consequences for selection; and (4) consider technical assistance from a well respected technology consultant.

Most of all, ask yourself if the investment is worthwhile. When you get down to the basics, is the nonprofit fulfilling its intended mission? Are you providing food to the hungry? Do you provide housing to the homeless? Do you help provide support and guidance to children? Do you offer hope to those who need assistance. Yes, technology can do many things, but it can also remove us from our local community and the people we serve if we allow it. After all, how many apps can there be for a shelter?

Happy New Year to all!

Dave Zanis, [dzanis@temple.edu](mailto:dzanis@temple.edu)  
Director, Temple NEST

## **Nonprofit Research:**

### **Information Technology and Nonprofits: Mixed Effects on Performance**

As we noted in last month's NEST Newsletter, the adoption of information technology (IT) by nonprofits is practically indispensable. Vast portions of information are conveyed electronically and the rigor of data reporting for accountability to funders is similarly more demanding. Amid the hype, there are also presumed expectations that IT can and will improve performance of nonprofit agencies.

A recent study reviews these claims about IT and measures its influence on specific aspects of performance for nonprofits engaged in human services (Mano, 2009). In a survey of nonprofits, the investigator examined two measures of performance; viz., Innovation and Adaptation. She also measured the extent of digital communication and database infrastructure to learn whether these factors predict performance on the two domains.

Innovation is defined in the study as the generation and implementation of a management practice, process, structure, or technique that is intended to advance or further an organizational goal. Adaptation, on the other hand, refers to those strategies that enable an organization to operate in synchronicity with the environment. Innovation and Adaptation both pertain to performance in connection with ability to effect change. While pressures for change come partly from an agency's environment, nonprofits engaged in human services have a markedly greater preponderance of "social" elements in their relevant environment.

The study's findings suggest that IT affects both Innovation and Adaptation, but not in the same way. Greater IT use appears to have positive influences on Innovation, but negative influences on Adaptation.

The findings present a dilemma for human service type nonprofits. It would seem that gains in Innovation wrought by IT come at the expense of Adaptation, where Adaptation reflects responsiveness to the milieu (the community) in which they operate. The author explains this in light of the social and interpersonal ingredients necessary for Adaptive performance.

In an earlier study, Seshadri & Carstenson (2007) examined the perils of email communication in nonprofits. While email is quick, far reaching, and low cost, it is lacking in important cues that accompany effective communication; e.g. body language, voice intonation, social distance, etc. The likelihood for misunderstanding is far greater than most of us realize, especially if there are cultural differences among communicants. The authors presented a specific case study of a critical incident between two academicians who began as good friends and

ended up coldly estranged by an exchange of emails fraught with mutual misinterpretations.

Consider briefly, you receive an email message from someone. At the outset, you must determine whether the message is a command, a suggestion, a concern, or simply a comment for consideration. In a face to face exchange, it is pretty easy to figure this out and reply accordingly. In an email message, unless it is carefully constructed, this is not always so clear and can lead to a reply that further amplifies the misunderstanding.

The very convenience of email contributes to the problem. Few of us bother to craft our messages carefully so as to compensate for the missing ingredients in person to person communication. The use of “emoticons;” ☺ is an attempt to help, but still a weak substitute for the real thing. As IT is applied to more and more aspects of organization life, greater care is necessary to accommodate a proper socio-technical balance in these applications. Unfortunately, IT applications tend to be driven by “geeky” programmers and these individuals tend to be the least social among us. Even if this were not true, designing machines to be compatible with human needs is a science of the highest order and still far too rare.

In an earlier generation, Peters and Waterman gave warning in their acclaimed book *In Search of Excellence*. Tom Peters proclaimed, “Soft is hard, and hard is soft.” What he meant is that the quantitative aspects of management are relatively easy – once one overcomes their fear of mathematics. On the other hand, dealing with the mushy, interpersonal, side of management is difficult in any event. And, he notes, the hard side of management cannot overcome deficiencies in the soft side. If people do not interact in mutually responsive ways, no amount of money, planning, projections, monitoring, etc. will sustain an organization in the long run. It will ultimately come apart egregiously.

The mission of the Temple NEST is to promote the capacities of nonprofit organizations. Advancing the use of IT is an inevitable and indispensable part of that initiative. Given the proclivities of IT influences, however, the Temple NEST is alert to studying ways of applying technology without denigrating the personal responsiveness that is uniquely central to the delivery of human services.

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#### References:

- Mano, R., (2009). Information technology, adaptation and innovation in nonprofit human service organizations. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 27(3), 227-234.
- Peters, T.J. & Waterman Jr., R.H., (1982). *In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Seshardi, S. & Carstenson, L., (2007). The person of e-mail communications in nonprofits. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 18(1), 77-99.

### **About the NEST:**

Temple NEST provides nonprofit organizations with an independent, research-based approach toward increasing program effectiveness and organizational capacity. Based in Temple University Harrisburg, the NEST serves Eastern and Central Pennsylvania.

The Temple NEST is designed to assist nonprofit and governmental human services in developing the capacity to effectively serve their communities through best practices in management, research and training. NEST brings together the expertise and skills of Temple University's faculty, staff and students with local service providers thus enabling them to better serve their clients through innovative and research supported intervention approaches.

NEST services are customized to meet the needs of individual agencies and community groups. The NEST can assist agency staff and/or board members in assessing their community needs, grant writing, management and board training, program design and outcomes evaluations.

Visit the NEST on the web at [www.templenest.org](http://www.templenest.org) or call 1.866.769.1860

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