



TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

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**NEST SERVICES:**

- Custom Designed Training
- Grant Writing
- Strategic Planning
- Surveys & Needs Assessments
- Program Evaluation
- Evidence-Based Practices
- Outcomes Measures Design
- Database Applications
- Statistical Analysis
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# Non Profit News

Temple NEST (Nonprofit Evaluation and Services Training Center)

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

DECEMBER 2009

## Spotlight on Research: Nonprofit Statistics – Get the Facts

America's nonprofit sector growth is outpacing both the business sector and the government sector. Details about nonprofits in the national economy and trends in wages, employment, private giving, volunteering, and finances are given in the *Nonprofit Almanac 2008*, by Kennard T. Wing, Thomas H. Pollak, and Amy Blackwood. The 270 page monograph is available from the Urban Institute Press for \$39.50, or at Amazon.com for \$29.22 (before shipping).

This current edition of the annual Nonprofit Almanac is an improvement over past editions and is a rich compendium of official data and careful analysis. It assembles information from widely scattered, and sometimes inaccessible, data sources. There are detailed tables (82), graphs (46), and methodological notes. The nonprofit sector is complex, diverse, and robust. The Almanac is essential for anyone wishing to become knowledgeable and able to speak authoritatively about the nonprofit sector.

For those not ready to purchase the book, the authors have prepared a summary, "The Nonprofit Sector in Brief: Facts and Figures from

the *Nonprofit Almanac 2008*." It's available free as a pdf download from the Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) at <http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/kbfiles/797/Almanac2008publicCharities.pdf>



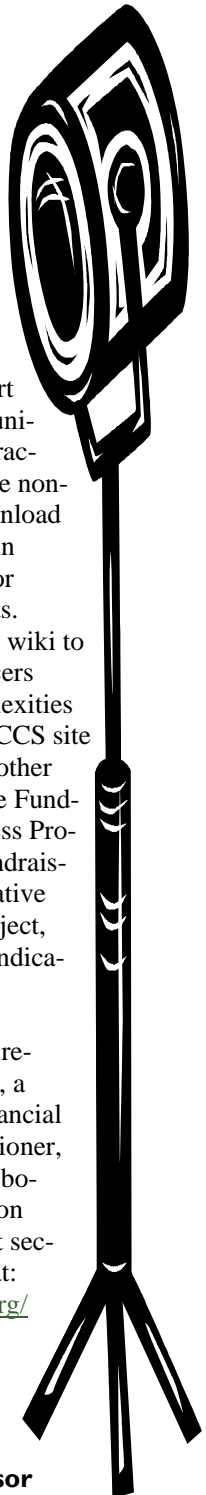
The NCCS also maintains a downloadable nonprofit database compiled from various IRS forms (not just the 990). The contents include current and longitudinal raw data extracts in a variety of formats: dBase, Excel, SAS, SPSS. Table "wizards" allow for generating customized data sets. Panel studies are possible from the longitudinal data sets. All that is required to use this resource is a free registration with the NCCS.

Other resources are available at NCCS such as a national taxonomy of organization types and program types. A Unified Chart of Accounts is set forth to reliably translate financial statements into the

categories required by the Form 990, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and other standard reporting formats. This effort seeks to establish uniform accounting practices throughout the nonprofit sector. Download files are available in QuickBooks files or spreadsheet formats. There is also a 990 wiki to help financial officers navigate the complexities of the 990. The NCCS site hosts a number of other projects such as the Fundraising Effectiveness Project, Nonprofit Fundraising and Administrative Costs, e-Filing Project, and the Outcome Indicators Project.

Whether you are a researcher, a planner, a board member, financial officer, or a practitioner, the NCCS site is a bonanza of information about the nonprofit sector. Visit the site at: <http://nccs.urban.org/index.cfm>

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## From the Director's Desk...

### The Inside Scoop on Grant Reviews

I've had the privilege to review grant applications at the federal, state, local, and foundation levels. I thoroughly enjoy the responsibility of the grant review process.

Recently I received a letter from a federal department that a grant which my team at Temple submitted was not funded. While disappointing, I was eager to learn why the application did not get funded. The federal agency that reviewed the proposal did not provide either written comments or a score for the application. After inquiring about feedback as to why the application wasn't funded, I was told that I would need to forward a written request for the information. When the written report came, I was dismayed to learn that there were only three minor identified weaknesses with the application, and each was very arbitrary. Even more disappointing was that no score was provided. When I called again to ask about the score I was told that applicants are not given scores because they do not represent the final reason as to how applicants are funded. When I asked for the funding criteria, I was told that that information could not be shared. I then asked to speak with various supervi-

sory staff and finally contacted federal elected officials to ascertain some level of information, all to no avail.

Based on this and previous experiences, I would like to advocate for a basic set of guidelines that all funders should adopt as part of ethical grant review procedures. Since many of us serve in dual roles (both receive and give out grants), we need to set good examples.

1. All applicants should be provided written feedback including both strengths and weaknesses.
2. All applications should be given a funding score and each applicant should be informed as to the cut-off levels for funding.
3. Disclosure of who is funded should be made available and published on the funder's website.
4. Decision making criteria should be discussed and made available.
5. Disclosure of who reviewed the applications and their experience should be provided.

The goal of funders is to build capacity. When funders assume a defensive or negative posture, it does not promote collaboration and partnership to address the cause.

Transparency is an oft used word these days, however when public funds are used, we need to be accountable. Open review procedures in which the funder discloses the grant review process is necessary to build our capacity to address societal issues.

Federal, state, and local legislation is needed to overhaul public funding disbursements that are based on merit, not political favoritism. Our elected officials can do better.

At the private foundation level, we need to advocate for openness and fairness in grant reviews by competent individuals. Our expectation is that all funders will adopt a fair grant review doctrine that operationalizes how their organization reviews proposals and how that information is shared with applicants.

We are currently compiling data on how organizations have been rejected without cause for well designed proposals. If you have a story to share, please contact us, we would like to hear your story!

## Funding Opportunities, News & Notices

### Welcome Back Award Program Extends Deadline to Nominate Those Dedicated to the Depression Community

<http://www.lilly.com/responsibility/servingpatients/outcomes/>

**Deadline: December 16, 2009**

The deadline to submit nominations for this year's Welcome Back Awards, a national awards program that honors outstanding individuals in the depression community, has been extended. The Welcome Back Awards is a program established by the Eli Lilly and Company to recognize outstanding achievements in the fight against depression and the stigma associated with the illness. An independent panel of experts will select honorees in 5 categories: lifetime achievement, destigmatization, community service, primary care, and psychiatry. Winners will share a total of \$55,000 to be donated to the nonprofit organizations of their choice. Complete guidelines & nominations forms available at the Lilly website.

### Fiskars Project Orange Thumb Grant Program to Provide Gardening Grants to Groups across the United States

[http://www.fiskars.com/content/garden\\_en\\_us/Garden/ProjectOrangeThumb](http://www.fiskars.com/content/garden_en_us/Garden/ProjectOrangeThumb)

**Deadline: February 19, 2010**

Community groups across the US are invited to apply for the 2010 Fiskars Orange Thumb Grant Program. Fiskars, a leading manufacturer of scissors and garden tools, will award grants up to \$2,000 each in garden tools and green goods through the Orange Thumb program. In 2009, the program provided grants to twenty groups for gardening projects that supplies thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to local foodbanks, educated community members on sustainable agriculture, and provided places of beauty and rest for entire communities. This program is open to any community group with a gardening project. Past recipients have included school and church groups, master gardener groups, and community organizations. Eligible programs include garden projects geared toward community involvement, neighborhood beautification, sustainable agriculture and/ or horticultural education. Complete guidelines and applications are available on the Project Orange Thumb website.

### Big Read Program Offers Grants to Support Community Reading Projects

[http://neabigread.org/application\\_process.php](http://neabigread.org/application_process.php)

**Deadline: February 2, 2010**

The Big read, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in cooperation with Arts Midwest is accepting applications from nonprofit organizations to conduct month-long community-wide reads between September 2010 and June 2011. The Big read is a national program designed to revitalize the role of literature in American culture. Organizations selected to participate will receive a grant ranging from \$2,500 to \$20,000 each, access to online training resources, educational and promotional materials, and the prestige of a highly visible National program. Approximately 75 organizations from across the US will be selected. Grants must be matched at least one-to-one with non-federal funds. Grants funds may be used for expenses such as book purchases, speaker fees and travel, salaries, advertising and venue rental. Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; a division of state, local or tribal government; or a tax-exempt public library. Eligible applicants include such organizations as literacy centers, libraries, museums, colleges and universities, art centers, historical societies, arts councils, tribal governments, humanities councils, literacy festivals and arts organizations. Applicants must partner with a library (if the applicant itself is not a library). Applicants can select one of the thirty-one available reading choices. Visit the Big Read website for more information.

### Help us make a healthier nation. Be part of the National dialog.

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/hp2020/comments/>

The US Department of Health and Human Services invites you to comment on the DRAFT set of objectives for Healthy People 2020. For three decades Healthy People has provided a set of national 10-year health promotion and disease prevention objectives aimed at improving the health of all Americans. Your comments will help ensure issues important to you are included in Healthy People 2020. Establishing objectives and providing benchmarks to track progress motivates, guides and focuses action. Be a part of the change. Comments accepted through December 31, 2009.

### National Needs Assessment Survey Now Online

<https://www.ovcttac.gov/NAS/>

The National Training and Technical Assistance Needs Assessment Survey was developed to assess the needs of the victim services community. OVC encourages all victim service professionals to complete the online survey. Your input is vital in developing and designing new training opportunities. Register now and receive resources to help meet your identified needs.

# Temple NEST Meets Your Needs

## Nonprofit "Accidental Techies"

The speed of recent technology advance is mindboggling. Consider that only 10 years ago (the 1990's), only a small percentage of people had an email address. Access to the internet was usually some kind of dial up telephone connection. Most organizations did not have a website. And, many agencies had, maybe, one computer -- usually for the fiscal office, and the printer was a noisy dot matrix machine fed from a box of perforated continuous sheets. Today, on the other hand, many people are checking their email from a wireless Blackberry™ and navigating the highways with GIS satellite guidance.

Most employees of today's nonprofit sector went to school prior to the technology tsunami and even recent graduates only got exposure to the consumer side of this technology, not the developer side. Nevertheless, keeping pace with and applying technology is indispensable for an agency's survival. One

cannot even apply for a grant without access to the internet, and scanning signed documents into Adobe™ pdf files, etc. A website is now as essential as a yellow page ad used to be. Compliance and reporting mandates have increased beyond what paper systems can handle with any efficiency.

What has happened as a result of this rapid change is that most small and medium size nonprofits have resorted to "accidental techies." An accidental techie is someone who was not formally trained in information technology (IT). Through personal proclivity and independent study, these people fill the technology demands as best they can. It's an upstream swim, however, because most small and medium nonprofits fail to adequately plan, manage, and/or budget for technology. Such functions involve board members, top managers, and expertise outside the agency.

Fortunately, there is help on the way. For starters, a book by Sue Bennett and colleagues entitled *The Accidental Te-*

*chie: Supporting, Managing, and Maximizing Your Nonprofit's Technology* (2005) addresses this issue head on. It's available at Amazon.com \$34.95. In addition, there are a number of websites that aim to assist nonprofit agencies regarding technology issues:

- <http://home.techsoup.org>
- <http://www.nten.org/>
- <http://help.com/http://www.grassroots.org/http://www.idealware.org/>

In January 2010, the TempleNEST will begin offering a series of workshops on Excel™, Access™, Visual Basic for Applications (VBA), networking, and website design. The workshops will be conducted in the computer labs at Temple Harrisburg, Strawberry Square. The workshops will include a combination of tutorials and technical assistance. The cost is \$20 per session or \$60 for an entire 6 session series (Excel or Access - see calendar below for dates). If there are particular topics or problems you wish to see addressed, write to Barry Nazar at [nazar@temple.edu](mailto:nazar@temple.edu).



## Upcoming NEST Events

December 2009						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2010						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2010						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						



January 19, 26 and February 2, 2010:

**Advanced Grant Writing Workshop Series**  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Temple University Harrisburg

January 23 & 30, 2010

**Excel Workshop 10AM-12PM**  
Temple University Harrisburg

February 6, 13, 20, & 27, 2010

**Excel Workshop 10AM-12PM**  
Temple University Harrisburg

February 16, 2010

**Essentials for a Nonprofit Website**  
9AM - 12PM  
Temple University Harrisburg

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