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October 2017 News



Racial Gap in Nonprofit Leadership

Mecklenburg County has an estimated 4,700 Nonprofit organizations providing direct services, raising funding, and recruiting Mecklenburg County volunteer boards. While this number seems and is astronomically high, creating issues such as duplication of services, competition for board leadership, confusion for funders, and unclear distinctions between the services provided, there is a more disturbing fact.

Of the nonprofits operating in Mecklenburg County with significant operating budgets (\$1 million and over) only **12%** of these organizations are being led by an African American CEO/Executive Director.

This is not only an issue in Charlotte but nationally:

“The nonprofit sector is experiencing a racial leadership gap. Studies show the percentage of people of color in the Executive Director/CEO role has remained under 20% for the last 15 years even as the country becomes more diverse...” <http://racetolead.org>

One prime recruiting source for a Nonprofit CEO has traditionally been, in addition to the pool of current CEO's, prospective candidates active in nonprofit board leadership. However, racial inequity exists as well in nonprofit board composition:

Board Source's recent "Leading with Intent" Survey shows diversity has actually declined on nonprofit boards. Nearly a fifth of all chief executives report they are not prioritizing demographics in their board recruitment strategy, despite being dissatisfied with their board's racial and ethnic diversity. According to the 2017 survey: 90% of CEO's and Board Chairs are White, and 84% of Board membership. <https://leadingwithintent.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/LWI2017.pdf>

Marissa Tirona, with the Ford Foundation, reports that nonprofits doing a "national search" tend to create job profiles and use recruiting practices that often favor white candidates. We also hear and have experienced frequent practices such as:

- Recruiting and sourcing based on who we already know
- Selection based on who would have the best 'contacts' and social networks
- And perhaps most exclusionary, Selection criteria and based on who would be the best "cultural fit"

In a sector dedicated to inequality and social justice, how do we also find such clear systemic bias?

Taking Action: Will you be part of a frank, roundtable discussion about this issue and what we must change to have our hiring practices align with our values? [Click here if you are interested.](#) We will convene a group in a suitable size location to have the first discussion before the end of 2017. We seek participation of a group of diverse participants who are Executive Directors, Board Chairs and Board Members, Selection Committee members, and Executive Recruiters. We hope to have participants who have been thinking about this and not coming to raise their own awareness but to speak specifically about the issue and what could be done.

"When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it--always."
— [Mahatma Gandhi](#)

Beginning a New Quarter of the Year

For many nonprofits the quarter beginning October 1 through December 31 is the quarter that is the 'make or break it' quarter of the fiscal budget year. This quarter should reflect more realistic, accurate cash projections for revenues in annual cash flow planning and the best chance to make informed expense impact decisions to make an impact on the annual operating budget. Obviously, if you wait too late in the fiscal year to adjust expenses, the impact might be too minimal to make a noticeable difference. This is also the quarter of the year for large amounts of donations to come into the organization in coordination with year-end tax planning for major donors. October then, is arguably **the**

most critical month to move “from cultivating to asking” as you to close out year-end asks and receipts. October is also **the** month for 'implementing' effectiveness strategies so they have time to take hold and produce results.

LevRidge Resources continues to help strengthen nonprofits during Executive Transitions



Bill Geiger - Interim Executive at [McColl Center of Art and Innovation](#)

Lisa Gray - Interim Executive at [Charlotte Museum of History](#)

Bruce LaRowe - Interim Executive at [Mint Museum](#)

Laurie Schwartz - Development Director at [The Levine Museum of the New South](#)

Let us help you with your leadership succession plans; a sustainability assessment; or working with your board to strengthen and develop board leadership. Call us to start a conversation @ 704 366 6680

Thank you for your Interest!

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