



Nonprofit News

Planning for the Future? Invest in Emerging Leaders

By Zach Davis, BoardSource

New and diverse perspectives matter—everyone knows that. What isn't as clear is how to translate intent to incorporate new and diverse perspectives into a strategy for better decision making at the board level. In follow-up to a previous [blog post](#) I wrote about the importance of age diversity on nonprofit boards, I want to share some practical strategies for capturing and utilizing the insights of young leaders through the establishment of an "Emerging Leaders Advisory Council" — ELAC for short.

Envision Outcomes. It will be important for your organization to determine what it would like to see its ELAC accomplish, what the ideal impact would be on your organization. These outcomes will help determine the purpose, goals, and objectives for the group and help shape the needed council infrastructure in support of these goals. For example, do you envision your ELAC providing your organization with a clearer perspective on the future trajectory of your community and suggesting how your organization might adapt to meet those future needs? If so, capture that. (And start thinking about how the council might accomplish that outcome, such as designating time during all of its meetings to raise and answer a generative question related to trends and cultural shifts in the community.)

State the Purpose. Your ELAC, like all advisory councils, needs a statement of purpose — one that is related to the outcomes you envisioned. Make it clear why this group is important to your organization's success. Statements of purpose can always be revised as the group evolves, but, initially, your ELAC might:

- serve as ambassadors to the community
- give feedback on certain programmatic elements
- gather input from or serve as a liaison with key constituencies
- provide an independent, unbiased sounding board for new ideas and new ventures

- help you identify institutional strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities

The purpose of an ELAC must be clear. From an organizational perspective, you need the staff to buy into the program, understand the value of the group to the organization, and be excited about supporting it. You don't want them to see this as just another task. From a participant's perspective, it must be clear how the council is connected to the organization's mission, how it integrates with the board of directors, and what the requirements are for individual participation — this must be well laid out so that there is a clear, well-packaged case for joining the group. The clearer the purpose, the easier to direct the actions of the individuals and the collective group.

And don't forget to identify an ideal membership number for your council because, just like the board, you want all members to be engaged. If it is too big, that might not be the case.

Recruit. I could write a full post on recruitment alone, but for the purposes of this topic, I suggest creating an application and making it as easy as possible for an emerging leader to find the application on your website or through a central community source (an association of nonprofits, a community foundation, etc.)

And talk about your council with your partners. Connect with your funders and let them know that you are starting this program and that you welcome applications from their talent pools. It also illustrates to your funders that you are making long-term investments in the community and that their grant dollars are being well spent. Reach out to corporations. Many are looking for ways to strategically engage their emerging leaders in community activities. Ask community organizations, such as universities with master's degree programs and Young Nonprofit Professional Networks if they would

BoardSource Blog

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Fall
2016

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2016 Fall Nonprofit Management Seminar Series Calendar



October 6, 2016 *Giving Tuesday--Tips & Tricks for Success*

Join Liz Vibber (Catalyst Center NM), Jeff Miles (Keystone Opportunity Center) and Amy Gianficaro (Calkins Media) for this fast-paced sharing of best practices and tips and tricks to make the most of your organization's Giving Tuesday campaign.

Choose from 2 sessions

8:30 am - 10:00 am

Walton Room (Partners' Building)

2506 North Broad St.

Lansdale, PA

3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

The Intelligencer Building

333 North Broad St.

Doylestown, PA

October 7, 2016 *The New DOL Overtime Regulations: What They Mean for Employers*

These new regulations will require action from almost every for-profit and not-for-profit organization with employees earning less than \$47, 476 per year. Come learn about the changes in the law and what your organization will need to do when the law goes into effect on December 1, 2016.

Patty Collins, Esq. of Antheil, Maslow & MacMinn, LLP will be joined by Cindy Bergvall, CPA of Bee, Bergvall & Co. for a panel discussion on this critical topic.

8:00 am - 10:00 am

Aldie Mansion

85 Old Dublin Pike

Doylestown, PA 18901

Breakfast will be served.



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October 12, 2016 *Create a Winning Development Plan*

Is your development plan a road map for success? Whether you are creating a new plan, or refreshing an existing plan, this session will provide participants with tools and templates to guide your organizations towards its goals!

Bonny Anderson, MMS and Sylvia Bastani, CFRE CPC of MacIntyre Associates

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

PA Center for Biotechnology

3805 Old Easton Rd.

Doylestown, PA 18902 (next to Doylestown Airport)

November 9, 2016 *Diversity and Inclusion: Knowledge, Attitudes & Skills for Nonprofit Leadership*

This workshop guides participants through an exploration of principles and practices for effective intercultural communication. Using research-based methodologies, we will examine diversity and develop the skillset to navigate a variety of cultural situations, in the workplace, domestically and globally.

Janet Mintzer and Laura Lomax of Pearl S. Buck International

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

PA Center for Biotechnology

3805 Old Easton Rd.

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Emerging Leaders cont'd

be open to posting the application on their intranet or sending it out through internal channels. These are great ways to engage with organizations in your community and establish credibility while not asking for money.

Invest. An ELAC is not something that you can create and then forget — it needs to be thoughtfully integrated within the organization and the members valued for their service.

- Assign a staff or board member to help organize meetings, make presentations, or sit in on meetings.
- Ask board members to meet with the council to discuss your organization's mission and vision.
- Encourage council members to experience your organization's programs firsthand.
- Maintain a reasonable flow of information between meetings (newsletter, memos, reports, etc.)
- Plan a retreat or special meeting to help council members think about their role.
- Invite staff members to reach out to individual council members to ask them questions related to their areas of expertise — make the members feel like they are making an impact, individually and collectively.

An investment in these emerging leaders now will lay the foundation for deeper organizational engagement from the individual in the future — financial and mission-based engagement.

Establish a clear line of communication with your board and organization. Boards should always be curious, but many comprise like-minded individuals. They need a holistic approach to creating a culture of inquiry, and establishing mechanisms to strategically communicate and learn from emerging leaders can be a valuable asset for a board at any stage of development.

At one or a recurring set of board meetings, ask your board members to write down future-looking questions that they have about the organization or community. These questions might include the following:

- What are key trends in the community?
- How do millennials or members of Generation Z view certain aspects of organizational programming?
- How will demographic changes impact the organization's ability to deliver on its mission?
- How can the organization make a greater impact and share its message through emerging forms of media and technology?

Use these questions to help set the council's agenda and spark conversation during the ELAC meetings. Have a staff member record the answers and put together a brief report on the answers to send to the board.

Engage in Mission. Make sure that you are engaging your council members outside of meetings. Young professionals want to see the impact they are making and will be more likely to advocate for your organization within their networks (which are probably different than those of the board) if they can see that impact firsthand.

- Bring ELAC members to partnership or community meetings. (This has the added benefit of showing your partners and community that you are investing in the next generation and the community's long-term success.)
- Assign each member to a specific programmatic area of the organization. Have breakouts during each council meeting to give all members an update on programmatic developments.

One of your organization's objectives should be to prep your council members to be ambassadors for the organization and to share their own personal stories with other young professionals in their network. This allows the nonprofit to establish credibility and value around the structure of its emerging leader system — allowing outside employers, donors, and other young professionals to see potential long-term value in program participation or with the organization. This exposure adds to the quality of the talent pool and to the level of strategic analysis that can be contributed by the advisory council.

Create a Mentor Program. Mentorship is a great way to engage young leaders and for board members to identify talented individuals who potentially could be great additions to the full board. While it might be difficult for board members from outside of the area to participate in the mentorship program beyond a virtual interaction, setting aside a lunch or breakfast hour during one board meeting or retreat per year for in-person mentor meetings will go a long way in helping establish relationships. Additionally, I would suggest making this program an opt-in application process for both parties. This can be as simple as a two- or three-question survey about why both parties are interested in participating, a list of the expectations, and space for signature. The staff liaison can then strategically match the advisory council members with participating board members.

These are just a few examples of ways to integrate future-looking practices into the decision-making function of an organization's board. There is real organizational value in taking the time to invest in emerging leaders as it can prepare the organization for greater impact in the future.

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Applications open for LEADERSHIP Philadelphia board recruitment program

[LEADERSHIP Philadelphia](#) serves as the link between motivated private sector talent and non-profit board needs. As part of the Core Program, LEADERSHIP recruits, informs, and trains area executives in civic affairs and board management skills and then places them on non-profit boards of directors. Through our board placement work, LEADERSHIP is able to help community leaders use their professional skills and personal passions to build the capacity of important organizations, thereby strengthening the community as a whole.

LEADERSHIP Philadelphia is accepting applications from nonprofit agencies for its board member recruitment program.

Through the LEADERSHIP Collaborative, LEADERSHIP works directly with non-profit organizations that are actively seeking new board members. In order for non-profit organizations to receive priority for board placement and to get exposure to the offered classes, they pay an annual administrative fee.

Benefits of Collaborative membership include:

- ◆ Access to prospective board members
- ◆ Enhanced visibility in the corporate community
- ◆ Participation in the annual agency fair (optional)
- ◆ Publicity for upcoming fundraising events and initiatives through LEADERSHIP's alumni e-newsletter

For more information on board placement and the Collaborative Program or to request an application, please contact [Molly Chernelich](#), Director of Alumni Engagement. mollyc@leadershipphiladelphia.org

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