

ESC-US PEER CALL RE COVID 19

April 1, 2020

Participants: David, Yvonne, Vicky, Wendi, Darlyne, Jody, Jim, Paul, (new) Joel Greenbaum NESC/SFL
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We are unique among nonprofits and as such may have unique challenges or insights.

Joel: Started on internal housekeeping and rebranding, doing 501's health check on themselves.

Has met with major funders, offered consultants to help pro bono.

Brainstormed with consultants re how they can help the community.

Offered help to United Way with their community status survey.

Has had some nonprofits reach out for projects while things are slow for them.

David: Opportunity and risk at the same time – reduction in business but some new business

Jim: Houston has been virtual for a year, only using facility for seminars, has moved to hangouts.

Have not yet done a virtual project – more challenges with consultants than with clients.

Community in shock, nonprofits in shock.

Yvonne: Board retreats delayed, consulting projects down.

Jody: Mostly doing internal projects, reaching out to clients, encouraging virtual engagements.

Some clients coming forward to work on succession, HR issues.

Struggling with what more could we/should we do – maybe more surveying of NFP's

Wendi: State just moved to stay in place over the weekend, similar to Houston re being in shock.

Center for Nonprofits and Community Foundation doing great with information, financial need.

Paul: Pretty slow to adapt as a community.

Yvonne: Nothing long-term starting up

Staff layoffs by nonprofits.

Hosting a video to offer NFP ED's an opportunity to connect, going to breakout rooms on call, 90 participants expected

Some nonprofits are really busy, some have closed

Offering online signups for ED's to get quick consults

Joel: Could you create a Google calendar to do signups for those quick consults?

They're a virtual office, he's very tech-oriented

They've just done an executive search all virtual, including finalist interviews

Much pushback from retiree consultants

Vicky: They've done 2 match meetings on Zoom.

Rethinking onboarding process with new consultants, shorter sessions vs all day – cohort of 12

Rather than doing webinars re Covid response, informing clients of those being done by others

Subject matter roundtables such as HR/furlough and fiscal management

Still putting out proposals

Coaching was 50% of their work, moved to small team of consultants, frees up staff

David: Their project formations are very staff-driven – move more to volunteers with staff on quality

Home based last 2.5 weeks, checks were going to office, probably home another 2 months

Redirected mail to David's home (invoices and checks)

Asked board to make their gifts sooner, grantmakers are moving up payment from 12/31 to 3/31 – reach out and ask yours

Zoom Room is a window that stays open during a given time period

Need to equip consultants on how to function in a digital environment

Should we do workshops with like groups or will they not want to be with their competition?

Jody: Asked Vicky about layoff/furlough advice – do we need legal expertise to do that?

Maybe use a volunteer attorney with current experience?

Hopes to be helpful with CARES act but worried about giving legal or financial advice.

David: Maybe keep a staff person on the line?

What can ESC provide as a crisis response that's unique to ESC?

Yvonne: Breadth and depth of experience, available on short notice

Joel: Those plus our affiliate network broadens our expertise base

David: Move to virtual means we can serve a broader geographic area – no transit time factor!

Yvonne: Insights on being part of a larger organization: Getting slammed in higher ed environment – will have to reduce staff.

Having trainers record 5 minute hints and tips on topics like “if you had to cancel an event” etc. on their Facebook –other affiliates are welcome to repost these

Joel: From brainstorm meeting came a need to develop best practices for online meetings – he'll distribute those – has a college student intern

Julie to David earlier: They're having recent project leads reach out weekly to past clients as wellness checks – Jody is doing this also.

Yvonne has a webinar coming up on using Zoom, will send a link to ESC-US members

Joel uses Post-Scan virtual mailboxes, USPS forwards to them, they open mail and scan to account holder, will deposit checks - \$9.95 per month for first 5 scanned documents

David uses bill.com for bill payments; their bank will also do this.

Darlyne wants to move our Board meetings to a Zoom format; Yvonne suggested using a password.

We should expect to be operating like this for awhile!

Thanks to David for initiating this conversation.