



FRONT PAGE

Capacity-Building News to Use for Wiregrass Organizations



HOT TOPIC **Looking Up**

We have all seen this. You watch a family get seated at a restaurant, and almost immediately, each member is on his or her smart phone—and they are not texting, tweeting, or sharing with each other. They are each in a separate little (and virtual) world. So much for family time!

As nonprofit leaders, internet, email, and social media are important to our work. We are expected to stay in touch. (At least, we expect it of ourselves.) We run important organizations and things happen that require our attention. Especially around the holidays, clients need unusual help on unusual schedules. But let's be honest. There are times when our attention is not all that critical. We are simply addicted to our phones because, heaven forbid, we might miss something.

The research on the addictive nature of social media and internet/email is mounting. The National Institute of Health reports that such additions can cause neurological, psychological, and social problems. And though these "addictions" may not yet be officially listed in the DSM-VI, do we really need scientific confirmation to see what is happening all around us?

Nonprofits need to use technology and social media to effectively tell the stories of our organizations, engage with stakeholders, and remain responsive to clients. But surely we are all smart enough to learn to use technology as a tool, and not become a slave to it.

In the coming weeks, can we just enjoy the beauty and wonder of a lit Christmas tree without sharing it on Instagram? Can we read "The Night Before Christmas" to our children or grandchildren without needing our FB friends to "like" the moment? Can we enjoy a visit to Grandma's house, even though her internet speed is too slow to support messaging?

This holiday season, let's do our jobs, help our constituents, engage with our Boards and staff, and network with colleagues. But... let's also remember to **LOOK UP!** and enjoy the moments right here and now.

Happy Holidays from all of us at Wiregrass Foundation!



GRANTS UPDATE **(October Meeting)**

Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center
—VOCA state grant match
\$66,375

Sight Savers—Wiregrass Children's Eye Care
\$25,000

Alabama Giving---Sustainability Grant
\$15,000

South Alabama Regional Council on Aging
--Personal Assistant Program for Seniors
\$58,435

\$32,738 in Micro-grants to eight organizations



MILESTONES **Fundraising and** **Donor Stewardship**

CapCONNECT program participants were fortunate to have Gail Perry with *Fired Up Fundraising!* provide them with an exceptional program in October on how to increase their fundraising revenue while creating continuing supporters. The Wiregrass Area is relatively small, when you consider community needs and the size of the donor base that must be shared by all nonprofits in the area. Non-profits not only struggle with raising operating and program funds, they also must be able to continue to tell their story and remain consistently energetic about their cause. Gail facilitated a discussion with the CapCONNECT members with examples of how they can convey what their organization's mission is and how their work is vital to the community. The important follow up is to convey to your donor how important they are to your mission.

This lesson is central to all area nonprofits. Receiving donations from your donors is what allows you to do your work – but keeping that donor's trust and support sustains your organization to continue doing your work. It is so important to develop donors and acknowledge their support – but don't forget to stay in touch. Let them know how their donation has made a real difference in the lives of people right here in the Wiregrass!