



FRONT PAGE

Capacity-Building News to Use for Wiregrass Organizations



HOT TOPIC **NON-PROFITS:** **ECONOMIC SUPERSTARS**

There can be no debate that non-profits provide the social service safety net without which we could not survive as a society. The basic needs of so many people (think Maslow--physiological, safety, belonging) would not be met were it not for our charitable organizations. Non-profits also generate many of the opportunities that elevate our quality of life—the arts, education, spiritual connections—all the things that make life worth living. But it is sometimes easy to forget that non-profits also are major contributors to the economic engine of our state and our nation.

Over 5% of our country's GDP is attributable to non-profits (US Bureau of Economic Analysis 2014.) Right here at home, there are over 18,000 non-profits operating in the State of Alabama, about 12,000 of these as 501 c 3 public charities. Alabama non-profits generate \$13.5 billion in revenue ("billion" with a "b") each year and hold about 40 billion in assets. And before critics try to use that information incorrectly, a quick scan of 990's clearly affirms that this revenue goes right back out in service to Alabama residents, and the assets are carefully maintained and managed to provide these services.

And non-profits provide JOBS!!! The non-profit sector is the 3rd largest employer in the US after retail and manufacturing. Non-profits provide paid opportunities to 11 million employees, and the sector is adding 2% each year. In fact, the sector continued this upward job growth even through the recession years of '07 and '08. In Alabama, approximately 5.4% of workers (est. 80,000 people) are employed in non-profits, with healthcare and social service organizations creating the lion's share at 67%.

So as we thank our non-profits for what they *do*, we should also celebrate what they *are*. They are economic superstars essential to both the quality of life we enjoy and to the economic foundation that makes that quality possible.

GRANTS RECENTLY AWARDED *(June and August Meetings)*

Impact Alabama—Focus First
\$15,000

Wiregrass United Way—Challenge Grant
\$400,000

Wallace Community College—Surg Tech Program
\$551,339

Family Services Center—HIPYP
\$105,540

Town of Ariton—Multipurpose Field
\$15,000 Challenge Grant

Save-A-Pet—Animal Transport
\$30,000

\$38,600 in Microgrants to eight organizations.
Ongoing support for Foundation programs:
Bright Key and CapCONNECT



PLANNING for the UNKNOWN

WF Micro-Grants are awards of \$5,000 or less, intended to assist non-profits with unbudgeted or previously "unknown" challenges and opportunities. But a Micro-Grant

still requires an application. So...how do you write a grant application for the "unknown"?

The majority of our MG's are not emergencies. Most are issues or opportunities that are simply out-of-reach of operating budgets. In budget planning, some items always wind up on the cutting floor. Keep a list, and when the Micro-Grant application window opens, consider whether an MG might be a way to get it done. As new opportunities (or problems) present themselves during the year, do not dismiss them because there is no room in the budget. An MG might be just the way to fund that newly announced professional development opportunity, or to replace that storm-damaged equipment not covered by insurance. And MG applications are extremely simple—basically a long paragraph and a budget. (We will call you if additional info is needed.)

In 2019 changes are coming to the MG program to make the program more attractive and meaningful. So keep those lists handy and stay-tuned.