



Michael Geis,
CFRE, FAHP

Message from Michael Geis, CFRE, FAHP
Founder & President
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In the world of fundraising, leadership support plays a vital role in the success of an organization's philanthropic efforts. In fact, nonprofits where the CEO embraces fundraising are innately better positioned to succeed.

As I gathered my thoughts for this quarter's message, one thing that continued to resurface is how fortunate I am to work with tremendous leaders who understand the importance of involving their leadership team in their overall fundraising strategy. I want to take an opportunity to recognize how three leaders are paving the way and making a difference in their organization's fundraising efforts.

Client Spotlight
Crossroads of Western Iowa



Crossroads of Western Iowa currently operates in Monona, Harrison and Pottawattamie counties providing a variety of services ranging from employment opportunities and training; to residential and supported community living; and respite services for children and adults.

In the past year, Crossroads has tackled a development audit that has set the foundation up for success. By reviewing everything from their record-keeping to their stewardship and prospecting efforts, the audit has provided insight on what's working well while identifying opportunities to help streamline their overall processes.

Crossroads CEO Brent Dillinger, joined forces from the ground up, setting the stage for much anticipated success. The results from the audit have provided a foundation for their philanthropic efforts and steered them toward their overall fundraising strategy.



Frank McGree, CEO



Since Goodwill launched its \$8 million capital campaign, *Building Hope...it's everyone's job*, Frank has relentlessly made phone calls, participated in strategy meetings and enlisted natural partners, including Board members. He has actively utilized Board members to open doors that have allowed him to meet key constituents. And when it comes to approaching prospects about the consideration of a gift, Frank is fearless.



Brent Dillinger, CEO



Brent understands that in order to set records in fundraising, he must first invest in the infrastructure and components necessary to succeed. He has taken the time to educate his board, his staff as well as his constituents on the importance of fundraising. In order to jump-start the organization's philanthropic initiatives, Brent enlisted our services to devise a fund development plan. He convinced his Board to undergo a feasibility study, realizing that not doing so could result in lost opportunities for the organization. Fundraising is always a topic of discussion on the Board agenda and he has accelerated Crossroads' readiness to undertake a significant fundraising effort, putting the building blocks in place to be exponentially successful.



Thought for the Day

***“It takes a noble man to plant a seed for a tree that will some day give shade to people he may never meet.”
– David Trueblood***

Recommended Readings

***“Fund Raising Realities Every Board Must Face: A 1-Hour Crash Course on Raising Major Gifts,”
by David Lansdowne***

[*Five Trends that Will Affect Online Fundraising in 2010*](#)

Marsha Lommel, CEO



Marsha has been an avid student of relationship fundraising. She possesses the interpersonal skills that allow her to be effective in major-gift solicitation, while actively acquiring the knowledge to better understand the fundraising process. Marsha has elevated fundraising to the same level of importance as other hospital challenges and has dedicated time each month to engage her senior advisory group. Whether it's showing a video, sharing snapshots or cultivating events, Marsha's compassion for Madonna is infectious.

These are just a few of the leadership success stories I have witnessed while having the privilege to work with such outstanding organizations. I hope each of these examples helps portray the fact that success is achievable when you make the commitment.

Better Efficiency Equals Increased Productivity



Too often, fundraising goals for organizations are established without understanding what is achievable, or more importantly, if it's realistic. Through our development auditing process, we examine your fundraising infrastructure, interview staff and examine productivity that will help us identify the potential for your organization. [Click here](#) to learn more.

The Geis Group Welcomes Campaign Director Marla Grose



Marla Grose has joined The Geis Group after working as a television reporter and news anchor for more than five years. Her extensive writing and public speaking experience will enable her to offer clients innovative ways to publicize campaigns and identify solutions to help organizations effectively produce results.

Marla is currently working with Goodwill Industries on *Building Hope...it's everyone's job*, which is an \$8 million campaign that will support the relocation of its central retail store, various training programs and administration. Additionally, she is serving as the campaign manager of the Nebraska Expansion project for Mosaic, which will help raise money for new homes that will primarily house individuals from the Beatrice State Development Center. Marla is also working with Prairie Loft in Hastings, Neb., which is an organization that provides agricultural and outdoor education for kids.

“We are so fortunate to have Marla on our team,” said president and founder Michael Geis. “Since coming on board nearly three months ago, she has excelled at helping our clients achieve their goals, while establishing strong relationships with several donors, staff and volunteers.”

Grose received her Journalism degree from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. She currently lives in Omaha with her husband and enjoys being active in the community.