President's Column

Catherine Murray-Rust

As a long-time ALA and LAMA member, I have a strong attachment to the City of New Orleans. Because of a cancelled preconference (not LAMA's I hasten to add) and a last day meeting, I spent a whole week at my first Annual Conference in the Mardi Gras city. I had time to do some of the more wholesome tourist activities, stop in at Preservation Hall, take the streetcar all the way up and down St. Charles Avenue, and become acquainted with the best restaurant food available outside of New York. My first preconference planning committee service and the best ever Scholarship Bash featuring the Neville Brothers took place in New Orleans a few years later. I have even walked the entire length of the convention center to pitch an idea to the LAMA Programs Committee that met on the very last day, in the very last room on the second floor. And I am honor-bound to make good on my promise to my father to see the D-day Museum next time I go.

Because of these memories, it was especially hard to watch the news about the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. In the three weeks after the hurricane disaster in the Gulf States, the American Red Cross collected almost three-quarters of a billion dollars from private and business sources. I am proud of our library community's massive outpouring of support for librarians and libraries in the area and ALA's efforts to connect those who can give with those in need. In addition to world-wide communications, this level of philanthropy is the result of skillful matching of the millions of individuals who wish to donate with the nonprofit organizations that communicate what needs to be done and ensure that giving is easy. It took less than two minutes for me to make a gift online to the American Red Cross, receive a receipt, and a thank-you letter. As someone who spends a lot of time on fund-raising, I was impressed.

This issue of LA&M is devoted to the art and science of raising money for libraries. Most of us, whether we work in academic or public libraries, focus a modest amount or a great deal of our energy on fund- and friend-raising activi-

ties. As public funding decreases, fund-raising is a necessity if we are to ensure that future collections and services are available to our user communities. Fortunately, there is research and practical advice from many library leaders, including the authors in this issue, to help us.

Every fund-raiser in every library, university, church, or relief organization would love to turn the reluctant into the generous, the small donor into the major one. The key question on which development-minded professionals focus is how to effectively match donors and programs needing support. This key question in turn brings up many others. What do we know about the motivation to give? What makes some people generous and others not? Can the habit of philanthropy and the desire to give back be taught or learned?

There is a growing body of research that informs us about demographics of donors. For example, the Giving USA study published conducted in 1999 shows that 70 percent of all U.S. households give an average of 2 percent of their income, with religious organizations receiving up to 60 percent of contributions. A widely read text in the fund-raising community, *The Millionaire Next Door*, (New York: Pocket Books, 1996), presents a picture of the kind of Americans who create significant wealth and who may become major donors to all kinds of causes, including libraries. Stanley and Danko report that 80 percent of America's millionaires are first generation, and as a group they are frugal, self-sufficient (and expect their children also to be), and devote ample time and energy to generating and managing wealth.[1] Many other researchers are investigating the factors—age, gender, race, education, religious affiliation, income, and wealth—that impact philanthropy as well as donor expectations for recognition and stewardship. Because of the way the U.S. tax laws handle charitable giving, economists study the impact of tax benefits on donor motivation.

In addition to gaining insight into donor personalities and expectations, library leaders rely on the fund-raising community to provide information about effective techniques for approaching the variety of donors. A key question is how to segment potential donor groups and match the best strategies to them. Victoria Steele and Stephen Elder's book, *Becoming a Fund-raiser: The Principles and Practice of Library Development*, is a classic introduction

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to the basic concepts and big issues of fund-raising, including major gifts, friends groups, and communication strategies. They say that the challenge is to keep the effort personal and build long-term relationships at a time when libraries, technology, and the economy are changing rapidly. Steele and Elder conclude with a statement about the motivation of fund-raisers, rather than donors. "One of the best reasons for having a development program is that it allows us to articulate the direction of, and set the priorities for, our libraries and to take this message to others."[2] This surely is what stewardship and leadership are all about.

References

1. Thomas J. Stanley and William D. Danko, *The Millionaire Next Door: The Surprising Secrets of America's Wealthy* (New York: Pocket Books, 1996), 3–40.
2. Victoria Steele and Stephen Elder, *Becoming a Fund-raiser: the Principles and Practice of Library Development* (Chicago: ALA, 1992), 127.

point in his article in this issue on fund-raising in public libraries when he writes that development has an affect of sparking new energy among staff who become increasingly involved in conveying the library's mission through Friends events and fund-raising activities.

Different Cultures, Same Aspirations

The articles that follow show clear association between different types of libraries and the relationships they seek to nurture with external sources of funding. Dewey pursues development and fund-raising as "an established and successful practice in today's large public universities." She explores the historical development of fund-raising among public university libraries and the importance of working with the campus to dispel myths, expand donor bases, and identify appropriate fund-raising projects.

Julie Todaro examines the underexplored topic of development work in community colleges, where the need for outside dollars has become increasingly important in light of economic shifts in the broader society. Given the growth in the presence of foundations at community colleges, skillful library administrators will need to develop strategies and articulate needs in relation to the overall plan for college-level development.

Pearson examines the growth of fund-raising in public libraries. He discusses three organizational structures, the development officer, the foundation, and the merged model integrating various elements and strategies of organization. In her column, Bonnie A. Osif associates successful fund-raising with the important field of identity theory when she asks, "What causes a giver to give cheerfully? There can be many reasons, but the altruistic one of iden-tifying with an organization that performs a public good should make the giver quite happy." In this regard, the centrality of identity and, more specifically, seeing oneself in the mission of the library both become important to marketing and fund-raising initiatives.

In all of the essays included here, common themes emerge. It is evident that few libraries will be successful not only in initiating new programs and projects but also in improving organizational capacity unless existing budgets are complemented with external funds. The ability of libraries to assume leadership roles in providing information and services to diverse communities will require broadened patterns in funding that will include fund-raising, grant writing, appeals to foundations, and building and managing larger endowments. It is also evident that successful development will require understanding and support from staff and strategic alignment with the financial priorities of the parent institution. As Victoria Steele and Stephen Elder wrote, the success of development will be determined by its contributions "to the strategic vision for the library."[4]

References

1. Joan Magretta, *What Management Is: How It Works and Why It's Everyone's Business (*New York: Free Press, 2002), 39.
2. Mike Hudson, *Managing at the Leading Edge: New Challenges in Managing Nonprofit Organizations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 1
3. Ibid., 8
4. Victoria Steele and Stephen D. Elder, *Becoming a Fund-raiser: The Principles and Practice of Library Development,* 2nd ed. (Chicago: ALA, 2000), 22