



April 2020



WHAT KEEPS US TOGETHER EVEN WHEN WE'RE APART?

Who could have imagined our quarantined life a month ago when the coronavirus was just beginning to spread in the U.S.? Staying at home and staying away from others is the new normal. While these measures are necessary to

slow the spread of COVID-19, they raise serious concerns about social isolation and loneliness, not only for older adults but for everyone. Before the pandemic, an estimated 1 in 3 older adults reported being lonely. And as we know, loneliness and social isolation are linked to a range of health issues.

While everyday habits are changing, what shouldn't change is a focus on human communication and building a strong community. Social distancing does not mean withdrawing from society. Rather, we should view it as an invitation to contribute and connect in other ways to the communities we live in.

If you didn't know it before, I'm an optimist. I look for the silver lining in any challenging situation. And I believe that this unforeseen pandemic offers an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the collective mission and values of the Shepherd's Centers network.

Some of my hopes:

- Our experiences with social distancing will bolster appreciation—and support—for older adults to experience face-to-face connection and the joys of friendship through Shepherd's Centers. Because of the current social restrictions, suddenly vast numbers of others are beginning to understand what it feels like to be lonely and isolated. This deeper empathy could be transformative to further our mission when the crisis is behind us.
- The network will closely collaborate like never before to advance our common mission and enjoy success from a stronger network community. We're all in this together, and we're pulling together to share emergency policies and responses, communication strategies to stakeholders, and network-wide lifelong learning sessions. Additionally, we're learning to use technology in new ways. These new skills can help us stay connected and strengthen communication now and for years to come.
- The images and notions of aging in America will be more realistic. Some older adults are more vulnerable and need support to remain living safely and independently. Other older adults continue to be leaders contributing to society in significant ways, from licensed medical practitioners coming out of retirement to

volunteers stepping up in service. (Let's hope the petition to crown Dr. Anthony Fauci as the "sexiest man alive" for People Magazine's 2020 issue will come to fruition, creating a powerfully strong image of aging.)

Shepherd's Centers connect older adults and create caring relationships that bind society together, whether we're close together or far apart. You continue to inspire us through your many acts of care and compassion and for the many ways you continue serving during this epidemic. Thank you!

Sarah Cheney

DON'T DISCONNECT DURING CHALLENGING TIMES

Is it a waste of time to fundraise when times are tough? Experts say that while it may seem counterintuitive, people actually give more in tough financial times. The catch: they give to organizations they care about. In fact, they seem to respond with even greater dedication, generosity, and a genuine sense of sacrifice.



The lesson: do an outstanding job of thanking donors properly and often. Donors want to know that their gift has been celebrated and used effectively. So don't disengage in fundraising during COVID-19.

Three things you should be doing:

- 1. Reach out to your donors.** Make phone calls and write personal notes. The purpose is to communicate authentically about how the crisis is affecting your operations and the older adults you serve. This is the perfect time to listen to your major donors and understand why they are passionate about the mission.
- 2. Elevate your digital engagement.** Your stakeholders care about the older adults you help and want to hear from you. With everyone staying home and connecting online, you need to be online too. Post updates and stories on your social media platforms. Consider a personal message to your stakeholders by posting a video. It doesn't have to be perfect, just authentic.
- 3. Develop a plan and share it.** You don't have to have all the answers, but you do need a plan B, C and D. Communicate this plan, and your back-up plans so that stakeholders know you are prepared.

We also liked the suggestions and resources found [here](#). These efforts will keep you moving forward and positioned to excel. Now is not the time to hibernate.

SIMPLE FUNDRAISING IDEAS TO DO RIGHT NOW

It's important that you continue fundraising in these difficult times. Check out these ideas for [smaller events from the Nonprofit Leadership Lab](#). (Of course the small gathering ideas can be planned now to implement in a few months.) You may see an idea that could have just the right impact. Remember to consider adaptations that might make it just right for you.

You might also consider reaching out to your big supporters and ask them to donate to meet a 1:1 match. Maybe your board will donate a \$5,000, and you ask your supporters for contributions so that you can turn this into \$10,000 in a month. Give people a way to help! You just need to ask.

What do right now: keep fundraising!

Immediate	Be strategic w/COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-care• Cancel or postpone event (or make it virtual)• If COVID-19 is harming your clients share it with your donors so they can help• Don't rob donors of giving opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If clients impacted share how• If not share urgency of you work i.e. "This was a crisis before X"• Be fluid & flexible• Could lose donor's attention, do more to get it bolder, urgent, + emails

RE-THINKING YOUR SPECIAL EVENT

Your major spring fundraiser was canceled, postponed, or is in limbo. Now what?

First, you're not alone. According to [one survey](#) of more than 700 nonprofits, 68% said they canceled or were planning to cancel a special event fundraiser. Of the nonprofits that had canceled an event, half did not have an alternate plan to raise funds.

Second, be among the proactive and consider a plan to make your special event a virtual fundraiser. That is, hold the "event" but put it online. You can live stream your event on Facebook or YouTube and broadcast it through your event page. By using your event page to share the live stream, you have your impact metrics, donation link and information about your organization all front and center. By live streaming you can still give your planned presentations, show videos, and present awards and keynotes. Remind the audience multiple times throughout the virtual event to donate. You can even display an event thermometer and donor wall on your event page so everyone can see the progress toward your fundraising goal and donors continue to be recognized.

Experts say to have fun with your event. Tell supporters they don't have to get dressed up, drive across town, or worry about what's being served. They can "attend" in their sweats or jammies, make and enjoy their favorite meal and have a front row seat to watch. Or, ask everyone to get all dressed up, even the presenters. This may be a welcome change of pace these days.

Check out this [example](#) of a special event gala turned virtual. If you are considering this option, listen to [The Show Must Go On webinar](#) for more helpful how to's.

One final note, if you have already sold tickets to your event, don't assume you need to give an immediate refund. Ask your guests if they would like their ticket purchases to be considered a donation. The reason they purchased tickets was to support your mission,



and many will gladly donate the funds they paid to help your Shepherd's Center stay up and running smoothly during this difficult time. Approach your sponsors in the same way. Develop a "virtual" publicity packet where you highlight your sponsors on Facebook, email signatures, and so forth.

P2P FUNDRAISING

Peer-to-peer fundraising, or P2P, is a strategy to extend a nonprofit's fundraising reach. It's often associated with large events, like a walk-a-thon. But it can be used successfully with simple opportunities. The idea of P2P fundraising is just what the name implies -- people who support your mission ask their friends and family to support it too.



P2P campaigns are usually managed through special online platforms. Here's a list of some of the [top sources according to Candid](#). Successful P2P campaigns need planning and staff management. But in today's new virtual world and social distancing, it may be the right time to consider this approach.

One potential way to ease into a P2P campaign is to enlist the help of your special event gala or luncheon leaders. For example, if these leaders were table captains for your now canceled event, engage them to be ambassadors for a peer-to-peer fundraising challenge. Rather than have them fill tables, challenge them to fundraise the equivalent amount on your behalf. Empower them to share stories of their involvement, provide them with photos, talking points, and templates for social media and email. Perhaps create a challenge every week and reward the winner with fun and inexpensive prizes for the most raised, biggest increase week-over-week, highest number of new donors, and most social media posting.

COVID-19 RELIEF BILL

You no doubt are aware of the new CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security). This relief package is meant to help American citizens and businesses in the wake of the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak. There are millions of dollars earmarked for different industries and types of businesses, including nonprofit organizations.



In particular, you should be aware of the following areas:

Loans for Nonprofits: This program is designed to make funds available to qualifying businesses through U.S. Department of the Treasury approved banks, credit unions and other lenders. This is available for 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations with 500 or fewer employees. Nonprofits can borrow 2.5 times of monthly payroll expenses, up to \$10 million. The funds can be used to cover: 1) qualified payroll costs; 2) rent and utilities; and, 3) interest on mortgage and debt obligations. If all guidelines are met, this loan will likely be forgiven, essentially making this a grant.

Universal Charitable Deduction: CARES Act lifts the limitations on charitable contributions:

- For the 2020 tax year, individuals can deduct any cash contributions made to qualified charitable organizations, up to 100% of their adjusted gross income. Deductions for cash donations were previously limited to 60%.
- For the 2020 tax year, corporations can deduct up to 25% of the taxpayer's taxable income for any cash contributions made to qualified charitable organizations. Deductions for cash donations were previously limited to 10%.

The Independent Sector has [helpful information](#) on the CARES Act for nonprofits.

#GIVING TUESDAY NOW

The team at Giving Tuesday has announced a new global day of giving and unity -- #GivingTuesdayNow. This celebration of generosity, set to take place on **May 5, 2020**, is designed to drive an influx of giving, helping to mitigate the growing impact of COVID-19 on nonprofits. The spotlight is on social isolation, and Shepherd's Centers address social isolation every day. Moreover, we will continue to do so long after the majority of Americans are back to "normal." This is the perfect time to ask for support for your mission. Check out these [Giving Tuesday strategies](#).



TO APPLY OR NOT TO APPLY?

Now is the time to submit grants. The stock market did extremely well in 2019, meaning that foundation assets were at an all-time high. And since Foundations must distribute an average of 5%, there is potentially more funding available through grants.



It underscores the urgency to get started on grant writing or continue efforts for obtaining grant funding throughout 2020. With stocks plummeting, foundation assets are decreasing as will the amount they will be required to give to charitable causes in the 2021 calendar year.

But right now, many foundations are giving specifically to emergency causes and some are even issuing multi-year grant commitments. **THIS** is the year to sharpen your grant writing skills and highlight how your mission is important during the crisis and after.

KEEP DOING GOOD

Shepherd's Centers around the network continue to do amazing things during these difficult times, all to help older adults live healthy and safely in their home.

Shepherd's Center Central (MO) remains hard at work providing hot meals to older adults. Check out this [great media coverage](#).



Northland Shepherd's Center (MO) also continues with meal delivery. They have volunteers on Facebook asking when they might help.

Shepherd's Center of Hamilton County (IN) has an emergency response plan to help older adults with meals, food, and supplies, as well as friendly calls and personal cards made by area families. We think this is a great way to engage new people with your mission.

Shepherd's Center of Annandale-Springfield (VA) continues to provide urgent medical rides in compliance with guidelines from the state.

We know that most centers have introduced and expanded friendly callers to ensure older adults are connected. Please let us know about the services and activities you are providing by emailing [Sarah](#).



DID YOU KNOW?

The network is offering online Adventures in Learning classes, open to all Shepherd's Center participants and friends at no cost. We are excited to provide these sessions to connect and build comradery among older adults, just as we do with

our in-person gatherings. We've had three sessions to date and many more scheduled. Check out the lineup:

Wednesdays in April: "Green Jean" Ponzi, from the Earth Ways Center of Missouri Botanical Garden, is offering interactive presentations in celebration of the 50th Annual Earth Day (To register, send an [email](#) with the class name in the subject line.)

Fridays in April: Art historian and Shepherd's Center leader Betsy Solomon is presenting different art history topics. (To register, send an [email](#) with the class name in the subject line.)

Tuesdays beginning April 21: "Captivating Conversations" with well-known authors and speakers. Registration information will be distribute soon.

Small group opportunities are being planned as well. We welcome your ideas on presenters and topics. This is a new way to highlight and recognize some of the best-loved instructors around the network!

These new online AIL opportunities are being offered through Zoom. [Share this tutorial](#) on how to access a Zoom meeting with your Shepherd's Center folks. Registration varies from class to class so please share promos often. If you have any questions, please contact [Sarah](#).

**We appreciate the generosity
of our 2020 sponsor!**



**CREATIVE
PLANNING**

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