

# Advancement

A NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS AND FRIENDS

The Wayland Group, Inc.

Counsel to Non-Profit Organizations:  
Resource Development, Marketing, and Strategic Planning

Spring and summer are busy seasons for The Wayland Group, filled with a good deal of committee and trustee work, a summing up of projects at the end of the academic or fiscal year cycle, and a busy time for planning and feasibility studies and other planning exercises. They are also typically seasons for stocktaking, during which staff of The Wayland Group meet to assess the past year's projects and look ahead to those coming up; and also to take a broader view of trends and phenomena affecting institutional advancement.

Over the past several months we have been considering, in particular, those broad cultural trends which are having or can be expected to have a significant impact on all of our work over the next decade. The spring season presented two particular opportunities to consider some of these issues more formally -- first, at a very stimulating edition of our periodic Leadership Roundtable Breakfasts in April, at which Emerson College President Jackie Liebergott and Director of Foundation Relations at Boston College Gary Messinger were our special guests; and secondly, at an invited keynote address for the statewide CONFR organization in New Hampshire. During our preparation and discussions, we identified six broad cultural trends which can be expected to have a significant impact on institutional advancement; and some suggestions which might guide us in our future planning as advancement professionals. The cultural trends that we identified are as follows:

1. Distrust of large, well established, particularly "wealthy" institutions

We see this trend throughout society. Since the 1970s, at least, for example, there has been an increasing disillusionment with and distrust of government. The confluence of Viet Nam and Watergate shook the confidence of many in the Federal Government, which since the Roosevelt Era at least and arguably since the end of the Civil War had been the ultimate, large, and trustworthy institution. Many more recent examples come to mind, as well. During the 1980s, we saw United Way and other federated charities bow to donor demand and move from a relatively bureaucratic allocations process to providing donors with greater choice. More recently, a group of university alumni succeeded in securing an injunction preventing the university from proceeding with a critical construction project, on the basis that the university had, in effect, through soliciting their gifts, invited their input and approval of project plans. Backyard examples of critically minded, challenging non-profit constituents exist in every quarter. In general, we see a drive for greater accountability for institutions, and less trust of size and history as prima face evidence of worthiness for support.

2. Generational Change

As has been widely reported, over the next several decades an extraordinary transfer of wealth will take place in the United States -- a transfer in the many trillions of dollars. What is less widely reported is that such a transfer is occurring between a philanthropic generation of individuals and a relatively less

philanthropic generation. Those of the “baby boom” generation began their families later and arguably have fewer discretionary resources than their parents. This phenomenon is even more pronounced among Generation ‘X’ers and other young people. Among the recipient generations for “transferred” resources, there is a confluence of the pressure of rising costs for goods and services together with a more entitled, value/benefit orientation in which people, perhaps rightly, insist on getting “more impact for their money.” Some would argue that overarching this generational change is a pervasive sense of decline together with true decline in socio-economic status, and for the first time since the post war era began, wage earners and families are aware of economic “limits” and are wary about the future. Those with these attitudes and concerns are likely to be very discriminating donors, indeed.

### 3. Increased use of technology and electronic communications and the changing media environment

The implications of this trend for non-profits are significant. Twenty years ago not-for-profit organizations credentialed themselves by demonstrating responsible planning and budgeting; over the next ten years their approaches to and competence in technology will be a similar “test.” In addition, contemporary audiences are more and more used to receiving messages through higher cost electronic media, whereas not-for-profits have traditionally used—and still arguably can only afford—lower cost media (e.g., direct mail, etc.). Efforts on the part of non-profits to communicate with their existing and potential constituencies are made even more complicated in that traditional media have saturated the market. Indeed, some direct mail consultants are for the first time suggesting that we mail less frequently, rather than more frequently, so as to provide a greater impact through selectivity. Accordingly, non-profits must be highly sophisticated, strategic, and knowledgeable about the range of communications techniques available.

### 4. Desire for humanity, community, and “connection”

There’s a pervasive nostalgia throughout society over a time in our collective past when life was—at least in memory—simpler, more elemental, and happier. The rise of a vigorous publishing industry on the subject of American nostalgia, new planned communities organized around “town commons,” and even the kitsch of “Nick At Nite” are symptomatic of an overall societal drive to retreat from the extraordinary pace, complexity, and “noise” of contemporary life to a simpler past in which people felt more connected to one another through common values, community and culture. Thus we can expect constituents of non-profit organizations to be looking to their volunteer and donor involvement to fulfill part of this need.

### 5. Pluralism and Diversity

The plurality of constituencies and ethnic groups is no longer just a phenomenon of large urban centers; throughout society, there is both the fact, and the recognition, of increasing diversity and heterogeneity of constituents and “customers” served. (In Santa Clara County, California, 96% of the children in the public schools are “minority” students speaking 23 different native languages!) For some institutions, this is a clear challenge to institutional identity, since institutions can no longer define themselves exclusively—or even principally—through the constituencies they serve, but will be forced, not only to serve a heterogeneous constituency, but also to define the essence of their mission and program as other than a specific or particular group or audience as defined by ethnicity, religion, etc.

### 6. Rapid institutional realignment through merger and consolidation

As in most business trends, the not-for-profit sector has followed the trend in the corporate sector in the direction of partnerships and mergers. Some of these alliances are driven by necessity, some by resource constraints, some by a drive for efficiency, as in the corporate sector. In any case, the challenge to institutional advancement programs is a potential loss of identity and a general flattening of “brand” identification which for most institutions has been an essential factor in their marketing efforts.

How can we respond to the trends described above? Some thoughts:

1. Let people “touch” what you do; let constituents and potential donors see and feel the real work of your organization

During the 70s and 80s it was fashionable for not-for-profit organizations to behave in a more “corporate” manner. While much of this was useful and brought non-profits a better level of organization and more responsible financial management, many institutions pressed the trend too far. It is not in the spirit of the independent sector to “downsize” for “shareholder value.” Indeed, to the extent to which non-profits compete with the corporate sector in this regard, they are unlikely to be viewed more favorably. Potential donors need to understand that quality institutions in the independent sector are providing essential services and need to be judged by the value of their missions and the quality of their programs, not merely by their organizational abilities. To make this point, we need to find ways to demonstrate our programs directly to our donors.

2. Clarify your mission, while embracing appropriate strategic alliances

What business are we in? What do we do well and what do we do badly? In those businesses in which we are challenged, what do we want to improve and what do we want to abandon? Who can be our partners? Do we necessarily lose “brand” as a function of affiliation and partnerships? Although some institutions whose identities have been subsumed through merger have lost some of their historic identity, in fact many institutions have used strategic alliances to better their “brand identification”—indeed, to clarify the way in which they fit into the marketplace of institutions. (Among Wayland Group clients the relationship between Dimock Community Health Center and Beth Israel Hospital is a signature example.) People will respond to an important, proportional, differentiated mission irrespective of alliances. Accordingly, while we need to clarify our mission, we should not be afraid to collaborate for effectiveness and for increased “reach.”

3. Share real information—not a mere “communication strategy”

While acknowledging the importance of lively, interesting, and engaging institutional marketing, our experience is that audiences are more and more cynical about a pure public relations strategy. Potential donors and “customers” are interested in the simple truth without “fudging.” Accordingly, make your message truthful and available in many ways and through different media. (Most importantly, as Emerson College President Jackie Liebergott pointed out at the Leadership Roundtable, we must communicate through people; no technology or communications vehicle can possibly compete with the simple human interaction which is at the heart of every donor exchange.)

4. Link individuals to the real work of an organization—give them a stake and expect and demand the best

In our experience, people will give to those organizations where they have a special personal connection—not only through their particular history, but also through ongoing involvement and responsibility. In the most effective organizations people giving the most time are also giving the most money. In your thinking about donors, emphasize a lifetime of relationship, continue aggressive fund-raising, and be continually in the business of forming advisory committees, focus groups, task forces, and adjunct boards to “throw open the doors” of your organization and issue a legitimate, thoughtful invitation for participation where participants have a real stake and their opinions are respected—as opposed to a mere “cultivation strategy.”

5. Be specific in describing the reach and impact of your organization’s programs

People may distrust size, but they do want quality. Donors will respond to specific cause-and-effect arguments which are moderate and proportional and which show “authentic,” real progress. Baby boomers, particularly, will place an emphasis on specific, measurable impact.

With these thoughts as background, it must also be said that what is most important to a successful advancement program is good strategic thinking, consistently and persistently pursued. A real effort to understand the marketplace in which an institution operates, to clarify the mission, and to link interested individuals with the real work of a program will pay huge dividends to the ultimate results in your development program.

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We are delighted to announce that, effective September 1, Melissa F. von Stade has joined The Wayland Group as a Vice President of the firm. Melissa has for the past eight years managed her own highly successful independent consulting practice following a successful staff career at Harvard and elsewhere. Melissa brings to the firm a style of consulting which is entirely congruent with our historic approach -- grounded in the fundamentals of advancement but with a creative, problem-solving approach to working with clients. Melissa will continue her work with a variety of her existing projects under The Wayland Group "banner," and will also be both assisting and leading new projects as she joins the firm. We are delighted and proud of this great new addition to our consulting team.

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Over the past eighteen months The Wayland Group has continued its work with an extraordinary range of important non-profit organizations involved in a variety of activities.

In June of 1996, the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research successfully met a \$1,000,000 Kresge Challenge Grant, completing their \$12,000,000 capital campaign on schedule. Although they will continue their campaign until the formal dedication ceremony of their new wing on September 30, we offer our congratulations to Director Gerry Fink, Campaign Chairman Susan Whitehead, and Director of Development Harriet Winer for completing this first-ever formal capital campaign for one of the leading biomedical research institutions in the world.

In February we completed the third of three project assignments for the National Academy of Sciences, a national Planning and Feasibility Study in which we recommended an \$83,000,000 capital campaign for a variety of critical objectives of the National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, and Institute of Medicine. Importantly, the campaign will be a first-time collaboration among both Academies and the Institute, signaling a new era in the development of private sector support for this true national treasure.

The Worcester Art Museum has selected The Wayland Group to assist in planning for a major campaign to coincide with the Museum's Centennial in 1998. Known to critics and museum-goers throughout the nation as the finest small museum in America, this is an exciting and prestigious assignment for us, and we look forward to working Campaign Co-Chairs Howard Jacobson and Tony Tilton, Director Jim Welu, and Deputy Director Janet Spitz. The Museum plans major renovations, endowment-building, and a set of special initiatives to coincide with their 100th Anniversary Celebration in 1998.

This spring and summer, we have been engaged in an exciting project for the Lown Cardiovascular Research Foundation. This pathbreaking foundation, which supports the work of the medical group headed by Nobel Prize winner Dr. Bernard Lown, will require a new building which will double the existing square footage of their facility on Longwood Avenue in Brookline, as well as increased endowment for research activities and the unique Fellows program which in 1996 celebrates its 40th Anniversary. The Wayland Group's job is to conduct a formal Planning and Feasibility Study to determine the capacity of the foundation to raise funds for these purposes. Dr. Lown, Dr. Thomas Grayboys, and others in their physician/scientist group have pioneered the use of non-invasive approaches in treating and managing cardiovascular disease, with extraordinarily positive results which, although clearly known by the group and their patients for many years, are now well documented through longitudinal studies of patient outcomes. We feel honored to have been selected for such an important assignment.

In May, Radcliffe College kicked off its \$100,000,000 Campaign for Radcliffe at a gala evening at the Charles Hotel. On that occasion, Radcliffe President Linda Wilson and Campaign Co-Chairs Suzanne Murray and Maria Monet announced that \$42,000,000 had been raised toward the \$100,000,000 goal. These are extraordinary results for Radcliffe. While the four years to the completion of the Campaign promise to be difficult and challenging ones, Linda Wilson's vision for Radcliffe and the reorganization of the College's activities into the two "branches" -- Radcliffe Educational Programs and Radcliffe Institutes for Advanced Study -- provide an exciting framework for exploring support opportunities with donors who can be partners in Radcliffe's future.

Over the past year-and-a-half we have been working with Shady Hill School on the design and implementation of a major capital campaign for new facilities, technology, endowment, and their signature teacher training course -- the only teacher certification program housed in an independent school in the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We completed a Planning and Feasibility Study in the summer of 1995 under the direction of Director Bruce Shaw and then Board Chair Dick Belin, and have continued through the development of an implementation plan and the first stages of the Leadership Phase of the Campaign, working with Bruce, Dick, newly-elected Board Chair Josh Posner, and, of course, their energetic and effective Director of Development Teresa Schmitt. Shady Hill's historic commitment to high quality progressive education makes the School, for us, a highly satisfying consulting partner.

Commonwealth School in Boston has also been a key object of our efforts over the past eighteen months. Although founded through the extraordinary philanthropy of Charles E. Merrill, Jr. (who was also Head of the School for several decades), the School has not to this point had a broad-based tradition of philanthropy. Accordingly, a capital campaign for Commonwealth is a project whose importance reaches beyond the achievement of certain critical objectives into creating a culture for philanthropy and asking alumni to take on increasing responsibility for the School's future. We've been working intensively over the past eighteen months with School Head Judith Keenan, Board Chair Polly Chatfield, and Development Committee Co-Chairs Amy Merrill and David Gleason. Their Campaign will be a "sprint" to the finish line, scheduled to conclude in June of 1997!

We have been particularly gratified this spring to be working again with Lasell College on a Planning and Feasibility Study for the campaign planned to coincide with the College's Sesquicentennial in 2001. We began working with Lasell in 1986, at a time when their development program was informal and relatively new. It has been wonderful to see the blossoming of the total advancement program under the leadership of President Tom de Witt and Dean for External Affairs Helena Hartnett. (Through their communications with trustees, alumnae donors, and friends, they have been extraordinarily effective communicators and have invariably "told the truth" -- and achieved great respect in so doing.) We have also enjoyed working through this project with Board Chair Dick Holway, Development Committee Chair Nancy Donahue, and others who have been our long-time partners in this particular "journey."

The YMCA of Greater Boston is an extraordinarily diverse and important "linchpin" human service organization for our region. This spring Ann Peterson and Jim Kitendaugh took on the assignment of developing a new implementation plan for a proposed capital campaign for the "Y," working with President John Ferrell and Development Committee Chairman Charles Parrott. We also very much appreciated the support of Vice President for Marketing and Membership Diane Nahabedian in our early work with the organization. Their campaign objectives will include new or significantly renovated facilities in South Cove, Roxbury, and Allston-Brighton, which will house child care and youth programs, family centers, and educational programs, as well as the health and fitness programs associated in the public mind with the Y. (Did you know that the YMCA of Greater Boston is the largest child care provider in Eastern Massachusetts? We didn't.)

We continue our work with Clark University on Clark 200—a \$100,000,000 capital campaign focusing on endowment for students and faculty. Clark's progress over the past year has been significant, passing the \$30,000,000 mark by the end of their fiscal year, with a public announcement planned for the spring of 1997. Over the past year, our work has included working with a Faculty Campaign Priorities Working Group, Co-Chaired by Vice President for University Resources Fred Regan and Provost Roger

Kasperson, in a successful attempt to define and articulate a set of campaign priorities which would both meet the needs of the University's Academic and Financial Plan and resonate with donor prospects. We have also enjoyed working with Director of Communications Kate Chesley on an identity program for the Campaign. Kate is an extraordinarily effective communicator and "imager"—we won't steal her (or Clark's) thunder by previewing their wonderful campaign identity program here—details to follow in future newsletters!

The 1995-6 year has also been enriched and enlivened by continuing or renewed work with a number of The Wayland Group consulting client-partners, including Walnut Hill School, Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts, Thunderbird/American Graduate School of International Management, Facing History and Ourselves, Deaconess Hospital, Dimock Community Health Center, and Rogerson Communities. We look forward with optimism to the next twelve months -- but also with a healthy respect for the challenges that all of us face in trying to advance these wonderful institutions that are engaged in such important work. Many thanks to all for your continuing confidence and support.

Jim Kitendaugh  
Sue Kinney

Lynne Cavanaugh  
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Ann Peterson  
Betsy Gross

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