



Editor's Keyboard

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Guest Editor

We generally assume that the mission of libraries is to provide public goods to their communities. Yet in recent years meeting that responsibility has become increasingly difficult for libraries to achieve with existing resources, and the state of affairs that has emerged has also given rise to new patterns in funding library initiatives.

The special section of *Library Administration and Management* that follows is devoted to revisiting the issues and challenges associated with managing development and fund-raising in libraries. Libraries are caught in a vortex of transforming expectations, continuous change, and demographic shifts that only increase the challenges to service. As a consequence, libraries seek to strike a balance between funding received as a part of their operating budgets and from extramural sources of revenue. The essays presented here represent different types of libraries yet also juxtapose different characteristics of organization, environment, and culture with common concerns in the library community over constraints in developing strategies for broad-based financial support.

Several important assumptions must be recognized from the outset. First, libraries are generally resource dependent. Tradition has it that most libraries receive their operating resources from a parent organization—a college or university, state agency, municipal government, corporation, or school system. Second, resource dependence has meant that there is a limited tradition of development as a function of most libraries. As outsiders to the inner workings of libraries and the costs associated with library services, collections, and technology, our constituents have often struggled to understand the association between the aspirations of libraries and the necessity to broaden financial support.

Third, while there are substantial differences in libraries, it is also evident that as nonprofit organizations libraries can learn from one another about the role of development and fund-raising initiatives. Circumstances that create the necessity to fund-raise may differ; however,

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all libraries seek to improve their capacity, manage performance, and create exciting opportunities for their users.

Mission, Values, and Development

In her book, *What Management Is*, Joan Magretta suggested that for nonprofit organizations, “mission, not ‘customers,’ must be in the driver’s seat. ‘Customers’ can lead mission-driven organizations astray.”¹ In other words, those who give to a library are not necessarily the people who will gain directly from using the services of the library. Instead, they are the individuals, organizations, and agencies that recognize the value of the library and seek a way of sharing in the mission. How a library defines its aspirations will affect the appeal it has to potential donors and funding agencies on the one hand and, on the other, to administrators and development officers elsewhere in the parent organization. As Barbara Dewey writes in her article in this issue, “Regardless of the fund-raising environment, library directors must be tireless in pointing out the priority and the centrality of the library in supporting the university’s mission, goals, and aspirations.” Although directed at public universities, Dewey’s comments are relevant to other types of libraries as well.

The priority and centrality of the library will ultimately affect priority and centrality in the minds of donors and decision makers alike in determining what must be supported to advance mission. The goal of development is also not limited to finding money for new initiatives. Libraries must focus their efforts on capacity building and integrate funding strategies in this direction. Building organizational capacity “is about systematically investing in developing an organization’s internal systems and its external relationships so that it can better realize its mission and achieve greater impact.”² Fund-raising becomes a part of a broader strategic plan to develop “the organization itself, its people, and its relationships to give it the power to have greater impact.”³ In other words, long-term financial growth from sources outside of the operating budget can and will insure the overall health and well-being of a library and can provide a new avenue for staff involvement in the library’s mission. Peter D. Pearson makes this

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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.

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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-

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.

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