

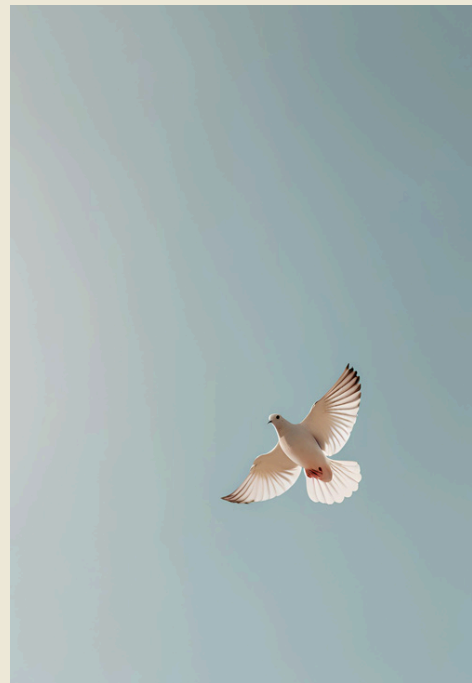
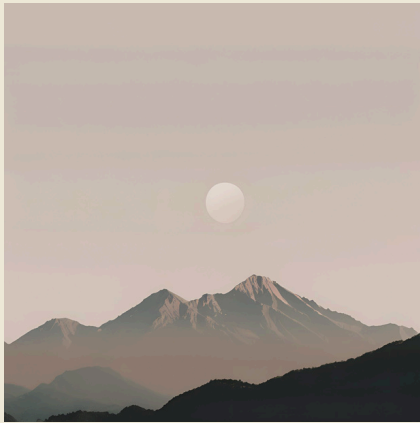
NOVEMBER, 2024

THE 2024 NONPROFIT AGENDA

Promoting Peace
Ensuring Excellence

5TH EDITION

CENTER FOR NONPROFIT ADVANCEMENT



center for nonprofit
advancement



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Center Team

Glen O’Gilvie, CAE, Chief Executive Officer | Taylor Strange, Chief of Staff | Erica Waller, Chief Financial Officer, Adanech Devenouges, Program Associate | Sean Sweeney, Director of Operations | Ellie Shippey, Communications Associate | Carla Trussell, Project Manager

VitalHealth: Elisha Hardy, Manager | Aziza Rush, Operations Coordinator

Team Partners: Pat Durbin, Broker, The Baldwin Group | Javier Goldin, CPA, Goldin Group | Pegah Hojjat, Finance Accountant, VitalHealth

Team Specialists: Tyiesha James, Program Manager, Chief Executive Leaders Ascend Program (CELAP) | Sheila Holt, Capacity Building | Edwin Washington, The Parks Main Street

FROM THE CEO

Dear Community and Nonprofit Sector Stakeholders,



I am once again overwhelmed with gratitude and humbled by the trust you continue to place in all of us at the Center for Nonprofit Advancement (the Center). On behalf of our Board of Directors, leadership team, and dedicated volunteers, I am honored to thank you for your partnership.

As we celebrate our 45th year, we reflect on our service and impact across the nonprofit, philanthropic, corporate, government, education, and faith-based sectors, to name a few. Through economic and health crises, equity and racial injustices, and funding and capacity challenges, our sector has remained strong due to our collective efforts, advocacy, and shared passion for supporting people and communities in need.

Over this past year and looking to the future, we have emphasized taking care of ourselves and each other. The recent rise in burnout among leaders and team members is alarming. Some view this as an outcome of the pandemic and the increased demand for services, while others point to the pressures of limited resources and high expectations from funders. As we work to understand and address these challenges, we have heightened our focus on wellness, including the physical and mental health of our network.

The Center is committed to supporting board members, leaders, and team members at every level. We provide access to our employee assistance program, which offers resources such as therapists, counselors, and referrals when needed. We have also begun hosting wellness outings and events, small-group and individualized therapy sessions, and affinity groups for individuals in similar roles to foster community. Additionally, we offer guidance on organizational policies, technical assistance, and strategies for fostering positive workplace culture.

To enhance access to funding for nonprofits and evolve with changing needs, the Center is leveraging our management assistance and fiscal partnership efforts as part of an overall capacity-building strategy. Our support for organizations undergoing leadership transitions and partnerships with others to secure funding through competitive processes has proven critical for sustainability and long-term community impact.

Through it all, our overarching goal remains the same: to stay nimble, responsive, and relevant in meeting the needs of the nonprofit sector and the communities we serve.

Please continue to follow us on social media and stay connected. We look forward to achieving continued success together.

Be well,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. PLATON".

Chief Executive Officer

Peacebuilding Pathways for Youth

WRITTEN BY:

HEATHER PAYNE, MS, SHE/HER/HERS, PROGRAM MANAGER

DAVID J. SMITH, JD, MS, HE/HIM/HIS, PRESIDENT

FORAGE CENTER FOR PEACEBUILDING AND HUMANITARIAN EDUCATION

One of the most elusive concepts humans seek is peace. We struggle not only with how to attain it, but with what it means. “Peace on earth”, “inner peace”, and “peace of mind” all evoke different ideas and imagery. For the nonprofit, charitable, and philanthropic fields, peace is about the work that’s done day to day to improve individual lives and enhance societal wellness. In this way, peace is about the human condition: ensuring freedom from harm, pain, and want, as well as creating opportunities to learn, support a family, and foster community.

To work at peace means the building of peace, or peacebuilding. A major emphasis in peacebuilding is studying, preventing, resolving, and responding to violence and conflict. Today, violence is contextualized in a broad way to include a range of harms that can be physical, economic, or psychological. Violence is often a matter of deprivation that includes the denial of basic human needs. We are reminded that the Indian activist and proponent of nonviolence Mahatma Gandhi believed that poverty was the worst form of violence.

Youth and young professionals are at the core of our work at the Forage Center for Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Education. Effective peacebuilding that fosters positive social change requires individuals who possess both the passion and the skills to address today’s challenges. In our work, which focuses on offering experiential opportunities to learn about the work of humanitarians, we emphasize that peacebuilding is not only a way of thinking but a career pathway. As a student chooses to become a scientist, skilled tradesperson, or business owner, they can choose to be a peacebuilder.

But what are the pathways to peacebuilding?

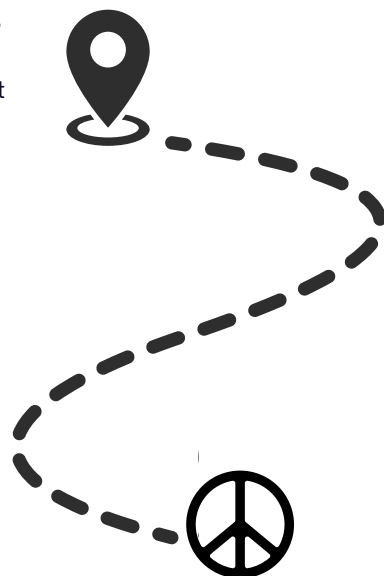
While there are few job titles specifically labeled “peacebuilder,” many of us engage in peacebuilding activities without recognizing them as such. We might not call it peacebuilding, but if we are helping those in need of shelter, feeding the hungry, promoting good health practices, or advocating for the arts to ensure access for everyone, we are, in fact, contributing to peacebuilding efforts.

Early on, young people can be exposed to the value of working for peace. They can be shown how their efforts and creativity can improve conditions for others. This allows them to find meaning in their work, rather than solely focusing on climbing the corporate ladder, which may lead to financial success but lack a sense of purpose.

Career development tends to focus on specific occupational positions that align with a person’s interests and abilities. But peacebuilding transcends many occupational groups. Those working to improve living and learning such as teachers, health care workers, and those working for nonprofits are all working for peace.

There are training and academic strategies that can be employed by a person seeking to build peace. Colleges and universities abound with degrees and programs that consider different dimensions of peacebuilding including in social justice, human rights, and conflict resolution. A student seriously considering a peacebuilding career could seek out studies that foster critical thinking, expose them to global perspectives, consider the lives of the marginalized, and teach ways to organize and build capacity for advancing social change.

At the Forage Center, we have worked with high school, college and university, and international students. We have particularly focused on community colleges, which number around 1,000 in the U.S. These institutions reflect the diversity of America, as students come from various backgrounds, needs, and ethnicities. Community colleges are often the destination of those who have recently immigrated to this country. Little wonder they are referred to as “democracy’s colleges.” We have also worked closely with international students, both in the U.S. and abroad.



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In the fall 2024, we hosted a virtual program for college students that included Afghan girls living in a society that denies women basic rights and freedoms. Peacebuilding should always aim to uplift individuals in desperate circumstances and offer them hope.

When thinking about a pathway it is best to look at one's personal journey. As a high school student, co-author Heather felt she didn't excel academically and had not planned to pursue higher education. Art was her strength and she believed success was achievable without college. However, after being encouraged to try community college, she fell in love with learning. This passion led her to continue her education, changing her major from art to psychology and eventually discovering peace studies—a perfect fit for her values of nonviolence and peacebuilding.

After undergraduate studies, she pursued a master's degree in conflict resolution at the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University. There she focused on international peacebuilding, inspired by her experience with the Forage Center's humanitarian simulation, which reinforced her commitment to a career in peacebuilding despite the challenges she knew she would face.



Her journey soon led her to work with Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Lebanon and to engage in unarmed civilian protection in South Sudan and the U.S. She reflects, “I chose a path of promoting peace over conventional success, which has been deeply rewarding.”

Heather's journey may not be suitable for everyone. While her work overseas was impactful, it may not be easily accessible for many. Young people are often deeply connected to their communities and families, and for them, peacebuilding can be pursued in their hometowns. A career as a teacher or volunteering for a local charity or aid group permits one to apply peacebuilding in their own backyards, places that often need it most. A person who volunteers to assist those displaced by a hurricane or wildfire, works in an after-school program to help underprivileged students build skills, or supports the needs of those recently immigrating to the U.S., are engaged in peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding can be accomplished in any career that positively impacts lives and improves communities. This contributes to enhancing the human condition by ensuring that everyone is well-fed, housed, clothed, lives free from violence, and feels secure in the belief that a good life is achievable. Being a peacebuilder means ending each day with the satisfaction of knowing,

“I made a real difference in someone's life today.”

EMPATHY AND INNOVATION: HOW YOUTH HACKATHONS FOSTER PEACEBUILDING THROUGH DESIGN THINKING



“The program encourages each participant to contribute their unique strengths, enabling them to solve community challenges while fostering empathy, critical thinking, and collaboration.”

WRITTEN BY:

► TIM WEEDON, HE/HIM/HIS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TECH TURN UP

Introduction

When I arrived at American University, I felt nervous. Only 6.19% of the people looked like me, and the community’s wealth was far beyond what I was used to.

Context and Relevance

Many students in our Tech + Art Hackathon Series faced similar journeys, traveling from under-resourced neighborhoods to an unfamiliar environment filled with tension and unease.

Thesis Statement

This essay explores how a series of youth hackathons, using a design thinking approach, contribute to peacebuilding by nurturing empathy, promoting innovation, and fostering collaboration among young people in Washington, D.C.

Overview of the Hackathon Series

The Tech + Art Hackathon Series combines STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) with design thinking to foster creativity and empowerment among underserved students in Washington, D.C. Participants work together in diverse teams to solve real-world challenges like food insecurity, public safety, and environmental sustainability. This interdisciplinary approach enhances their technical and creative skills while also teaching empathy, critical thinking, and collaboration—essential tools for peacebuilding. A core principle of the program is recognizing the diverse needs of participants. Providing resources alone isn’t enough; students need varying levels of support to fully engage. The program encourages each participant to contribute their unique strengths, enabling them to solve community challenges while fostering empathy, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Ultimately, we aim to nurture a generation of skilled, innovative, and civically engaged individuals who can contribute positively to their communities and society.

Target Audience

The hackathon series focuses on underserved students in Washington, D.C., leveraging partnerships with local schools and nonprofits. A key priority is reaching those without access to STEM opportunities, while also engaging students who have STEM exposure but lack experience blending arts into their learning.

Community Engagement

Community stakeholders and mentors play vital roles in the hackathon, offering more than just guidance—they model the collaborative and empathetic behaviors that are fundamental to peacebuilding. By watching adults work together, students gain firsthand experience in how teamwork and mutual respect can bridge divides and drive innovation.

Hackathons highlight that the most groundbreaking solutions come from blending diverse ideas. Mentors reinforce this peacebuilding mission, showing young participants that cooperation is crucial for solving complex problems and that empathy is essential for fostering positive social change.

Empathy and Understanding Through Design Thinking

When I arrived at American University, I felt out of place, but stepping into a multicultural welcoming ceremony gave me a sense of belonging—a feeling shared by many students in our Tech + Art Hackathon Series. These students also traveled from under-resourced neighborhoods to an unfamiliar environment. Yet, like me, they bridged divides, moving past stereotypes and forming meaningful connections. Design thinking begins with understanding and connecting to the needs of others.

For hackathon participants, this means stepping into another person’s shoes to better grasp their experiences, challenges, and hopes. This shift in perspective helps them move beyond narrow viewpoints, opening the path to effective teamwork, which is crucial for peacebuilding.

Practical Example

During one of our hackathons, students were asked, “How might we make fresh food more accessible to families living in food deserts?” Some participants, coming from neighborhoods with scarce fresh produce, were familiar with the issue. One student explained that it wasn’t that people in these neighborhoods didn’t want healthier options—it’s that healthier choices simply weren’t available.

This was a powerful realization for students unfamiliar with living in a food desert. They listened attentively, asking questions to understand the lived reality of underserved families. Through these conversations, participants shifted from viewing food deserts as an abstract concept to understanding the real human impact—demonstrating empathy in action.

This shared understanding inspired the group to think creatively about solutions. They devised ideas such as mobile produce markets or partnerships with local centers to distribute fresh food. Their teamwork went beyond addressing a problem—it was about creating something meaningful, shaped by the diverse experiences of each participant.

Link to Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding, like problem-solving, calls for creativity, understanding, and a shared pursuit of common goals. By encouraging students to step outside their comfort zones and connect with others who have different life experiences, our Tech + Art Hackathons help break down the echo chambers created by personalized algorithms and social media, which often limit critical thinking and reinforce biases.

Through hackathons, we provide a space where diverse groups come together to share and listen. This process challenges participants to think beyond their assumptions, fostering deeper empathy, broadening their worldviews, and developing a nuanced understanding of the issues affecting their communities. Working alongside peers with varied experiences is more than a skill—it's a vital step toward building a peaceful, connected society. We aim to show that understanding others is not passive but an active pursuit, driven by curiosity and openness to change. In environments where inequality often limits access to diverse perspectives, the Tech + Art Hackathons open doors, foster creativity, and cultivate a sense of shared humanity. By bringing young people together to explore and understand each other's challenges, these hackathons plant the seeds of peace—one empathetic interaction at a time.

Collaboration Across Diverse Backgrounds

Bringing together students from diverse backgrounds helps break down stereotypes and fosters a safe, inclusive environment. Each group works toward a shared goal, learning firsthand how teamwork is essential to peacebuilding.

While some may excel in design, others bring creativity or coding skills. These individual strengths come together to solve problems and build a prototype—a process that mirrors real-world peacebuilding, where people from diverse backgrounds must unite to achieve shared objectives.

Mentors share real-world experiences, teaching soft skills like listening and understanding others' perspectives. In one instance, when two students with strong personalities clashed, a mentor stepped in to teach them how to "read the room" and collaborate effectively. This intervention helped the group find common ground and ensured everyone felt included.

The lasting impact of these experiences is that students learn how to work together peacefully, gaining a deeper understanding of other cultures and recognizing the value of diversity. Through this process, they develop the ability to see the world through someone else's eyes, a skill that is crucial for building peaceful relationships in difficult situations.

Conclusion and Hopeful Reflection

Hackathons, through design thinking, understanding, and teamwork, serve as catalysts for peacebuilding. They provide a space where young people can work together, learn from one another, and create solutions that positively impact their communities.

Cooperation and an awareness of where other people are coming from are fundamental to peacebuilding, and programs like this equip the next generation with these essential tools. In *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell explores how small actions create significant, lasting change. Similarly, youth-driven creativity and innovation, as seen in these hackathons, can become the tipping point for a more peaceful future.

By allowing young people to connect, collaborate, and innovate, we plant the seeds of peace in their hearts and minds. When multiplied across communities, these small moments of connection can tip society toward greater understanding and cooperation.

As students become leaders and changemakers, the lessons learned through hackathons will ripple outward, influencing how they interact with others and approach challenges. The compassion, problem-solving, and teamwork skills they develop are crucial for addressing tomorrow's complex issues. Youth-driven initiatives like these remind us that the future of peace depends on the creativity, resilience, and unity of the next generation.

By nurturing these qualities, we cultivate the architects of a more peaceful future. Programs like these encourage youth to become agents of peace, equipped to lead with understanding and collaborate across differences.

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- » **Final capstone** allows you to apply what you learn and implement solutions

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- » Strategic Planning for Nonprofits
- » Strategic Social Media Communication
- » And More



LEARN MORE 

Finding Serenity in My Skillset:

Embracing My Unique Contribution in a Nonprofit Role

BY ELLIE SHIPPEY, SHE/HER/HERS
COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE FOR
THE CENTER FOR NONPROFIT ADVANCEMENT

In my tenure at the Center for Nonprofit Advancement, I've landed in a place where I feel comfortable pitching out-there ideas to the comms team—ideas like a blog post that explores the authenticity of Season 6 of *Love Island USA* and its breakout cast. My goal was to relate the season's popularity to the cast members' genuine qualities and connect their feats of authenticity to the way we show up as nonprofit professionals. While we don't have cameras tracking our every move, we are still "on screen" for our audiences: our boards, our communities, the stakeholders we serve.

Last year, I first floated the idea of connecting our organization's blog to pop culture—tying insights about nonprofit leadership to moments, people, and films that resonate in mainstream media. I saw this as an opportunity to embody our mission through the communications work I do at the Center: delivering valuable insights on capacity building and nonprofit leadership in an engaging, relatable package.



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A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down," as Mary Poppins, that legend, once said.

An unconventional idea like this might seem like something that would be breezily pitched by a super confident person. But, in reality, it was the hard-earned product of winning the battle against imposter syndrome. And so, dearest gentle reader (any *Bridgerton* fans out there?), I wanted to share how connecting my passion for pop culture with my work helped me find peace within my role, empowering me to bring my fullest self to the table—and hopefully inspiring others to realize how the things that spark joy in them can also spark innovation in mission-driven work.

Before joining the Center, I had never worked in a nonprofit setting. While I'd admired role models in mission-oriented careers, I spent the years after college exploring other interests, burdened by a profound uncertainty about my professional identity. I knew I could write well, that there were countless causes I cared about, and that I was willing to work hard. But I struggled to believe I could belong in a professional environment. Despite these reservations, I pursued a role at the Center, and in August 2022, I was thrilled to accept their offer.

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As the Center's Communications Associate, I've spent two years immersing myself in our mission to enhance nonprofit operations as a nonprofit ourselves. A big part of my role involves thinking about how we communicate our resources to our members so that they feel genuinely valuable and relevant. Something I quickly noticed was that communication in the nonprofit sector often leans straightforward, sometimes even a bit dry. People may throw in creativity here and there—some jokes in an email, a personal anecdote in a presentation—but, overall, there's a formal tone in nonprofit spaces that can feel a bit impersonal.

In these past years, I've grappled with understanding the existing communications model and learning how to adapt to it, all while figuring out how to embrace what I bring to the table. Initially, I felt out of place in a professional setting, imagining that everyone else naturally possessed "professional instincts" that I didn't. I worried about things like saying "like" too often in meetings or fumbling through status updates. But my team was always supportive, never nitpicking or pressuring me to present differently. Slowly, the energy I spent worrying transformed into the comfort of knowing I could be myself. I came to understand that being nervous was okay; my team made me feel safe. That newfound security freed up the mental space I needed to grow, learn, and feel deserving of my role. It helped me stop "fitting into" my position and start making it my own.

That peace gave rise to my pop culture blog ideas, like the one that originated during a brainstorming session with the comms team in summer 2023. We were looking for a fresh, unexpected blog idea to experiment with during the quieter summer months. The answer was clear: write a blog about the Barbie movie. It started as a joke, but with my team's encouragement, I took a leap of faith and went for it.

The thing is, I loved the Barbie movie and the cultural conversations surrounding it, so this task brought me genuine joy. Even as a child, I'd felt a thrill in predicting what people would give their attention to and exploring why certain moments captivated us. Tasked with the Barbie blog, I found myself naturally drawing connections between the movie's themes and nonprofit work. I saw Barbie and Ken's journey of self-discovery as a metaphor for nonprofits navigating the ambiguities of big, ambitious goals. The characters' courage and self-compassion resonated with how nonprofits face uncertain paths, steered by practices that foster resilience and giving ourselves grace. Writing that blog became a bridge between my love for pop culture and my desire to make nonprofit leadership insights accessible and engaging.

This journey of self-discovery and professional growth is ongoing, but I'm grateful for the chance to reflect on what I've been able to create with the support of my team and the peace I've found in shaping my role to fit who I am. I'm excited to see how this evolves and how I can continue enriching the Center's communications to better reach the nonprofits we aim to support.

In summary, here are the takeaways I most hope others find useful if you're currently battling with imposter syndrome in any way, shape or form:

1. **Imposter syndrome is tough**—it takes time to diminish its grip, but it's not an endless battle.
2. **Recognize the ways your team empowers you and values your individuality.** This can help reclaim energy that might otherwise be spent on worry, allowing you to use that energy where it counts
3. **Bring your passions into your work.** Infusing your work with what excites you as an individual outside of work can make the work easier, more fun, and benefit the quality of your work product. Whatever this ends up looking like can be as unique as you are. The sky's the limit :)

Building Peace, One Family at a Time

BY MELISSA REINBERG, SHE/HER/HERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEGOTIATION WORKS

We are building peace one family at a time by empowering individuals from historically marginalized communities with self-advocacy and negotiation strategies they can use to work through everyday conflicts involving loved ones, friends, neighbors, employers, housing providers, and more. With the confidence and commitment to listen to one another, learn each other's perspectives, and work alongside one another, community members can collectively sort through their differences in a non-violent manner and contribute to the upward trajectory of the community as a whole.

Too often, disputes are settled not with negotiation tools, but with violence. The results can be tragic, leading to violent crime and specifically gun violence. Experts agree we must focus on the root causes of the discontent, frustration, and sense of hopelessness that often drive violence. Though there are no easy or clear solutions to this complex problem, our experience at Negotiation Works suggests one important factor: when individuals possess the tools to work through their disagreements without escalation, peaceful resolutions are possible.



As an organization that teaches negotiation skills to help marginalized people in our community, we know the value of and need for these skills. Our students use their newly acquired negotiation skills to forge new chapters in their lives and effectively handle disputes and conflicts that arise everyday.

Our nonprofit organization provides negotiation and self-advocacy training for people throughout the DC metropolitan area who are emerging from difficult situations—such as incarceration, homelessness, addiction, and domestic violence—so they develop the skills to navigate daily challenges and advocate for their own needs confidently and productively.

Multi-week negotiation courses, our signature program, present foundational negotiation and self-advocacy strategies, including identifying personal priorities, considering various perspectives and solutions, and taking initiative to achieve one's goals. Our curriculum connects these negotiation strategies to scenarios we have designed to reflect situations familiar to our participants, such as a formerly-incarcerated individual seeking a lease from a landlord; a food stamp recipient persuading her caseworker to reinstate her benefits after a wrongful termination; or extended family members determining who will care for children whose parents are struggling with mental health issues, homelessness, addiction, or incarceration.

We have witnessed the power of negotiation skills to empower people and lift up marginalized communities. Our students become more capable and collaborative problem-solvers, endure fewer protracted conflicts, and reach more satisfactory outcomes as they rebuild their lives after hardship. Moreover, they are better equipped to work through the daily frustrations that might otherwise fester and escalate into gun or other violence. As an example, consider an individual who suffers property damage to his automobile. He decides to approach the group of people he believes is responsible for the damage and seek compensation from them to cover the costs of his car repair. He chooses to bring and display a gun during this conversation. The discussions, not surprisingly, go poorly, and the situation escalates into a neighborhood gun battle. At this point, the individual has not received the funds he needs to repair his car; instead, he and the others are at risk of serious injury, have opened themselves up to further retaliation, and are subject to potential criminal prosecution.

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Negotiation Works' training offers individuals knowledge, skills, and confidence so they can engage in effective, non-violent methods to resolve disputes such as these. Not only will engaging in productive dialogue help prevent violent outcomes, but it will also more likely result in individuals getting what they need—which in this example are funds to repair property damage—and feeling more satisfied and less prone to engage in violent behavior in the future.

Our programs set the stage for our students to pass along their positive problem-solving abilities to younger family members. When young people witness their parents or older family members handling heated issues through conversation and negotiation rather than escalation and violence, they learn new skills themselves. Consider Ernest, who took part in our negotiation class as a component of a nine-month entrepreneurship program designed for individuals returning from incarceration. As Ernest explained, learning effective conflict resolution strategies resulted in a multiplier effect. "I taught what I learned in this class to my teenage daughter," Ernest shared. "It helped her communicate with me more effectively, and it helped her communicate with her teachers more effectively."

More broadly, these benefits have a ripple effect throughout neighborhoods and communities. Individuals with strong problem-solving skills and the confidence to use them will better manage daily and ongoing conflicts at home, in the workplace, and with everyone with whom they come into contact. With solutions rather than battles, everyone—from parents and children, to employers and employees, to neighbors, acquaintances, and friends—will benefit from stronger family bonds, more collegial work environments, and community members willing to work through their differences. With confidence that negotiation is a viable alternative to violence and that using negotiation can be effective at resolving their disputes, individuals will more successfully work through daily conflicts, strengthen interpersonal relationships, experience greater employment success, and contribute to a more stable, peaceful community.



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John Eusanio
Partner and Not-For-Profit Industry
Practice Leader
jeusanio@citrincooperman.com
646.979.6091

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Spotlighting



GREATNESS WITHIN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR

The Center celebrates outstanding achievements and best practices in the region through its award competitions, recognizing visionary leadership. Selection committees, composed of respected leaders across diverse sectors, volunteer their time to review nominations, conduct site visits, and guide the selection process.

We extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of our 2024 Award Competitions—including all participating nonprofits, our dedicated selection committee members, and our generous sponsors.

Phyllis Campbell Newsome Public Policy Leadership Award

The **PCN Award** was created to highlight the work of elected and non-elected officials who have gone above and beyond in partnership with the nonprofit sector to ensure more vibrant communities. Each year, the Center honors four public officials, one from each jurisdiction in our region: the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Congratulations to our 2024 winners!

Washington, DC

Zachary Parker

Councilmember, Ward 5



Montgomery County

Natali Fani-Gonzalez

Councilmember, District 6



Prince George's County

Emmett V. Jordan

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Virginia

Catherine S. Read

Mayor



Board Leadership 2024 Award

Congratulations to our 2024 winner!



The Board Leadership Award also provides an opportunity for all of us to learn from successful boards through our Best Practices video shorts. This year we featured **Unique Perspectives of Fundraising**, **Excelling as a Working Board**, and **The Board Service Life Cycle**. The series includes interviews with leaders from both our award winner and honorable mention.

Videos were released in August and are now available to watch on demand.

Visit the Center's website to learn more.

America's Charities

Founded in 1980, this organization unites nonprofits, employers, and employees to foster impactful giving. Through workplace campaigns and assistance funds, they've raised over \$900 million for 25,000+ nonprofits, providing essential funding and resources that sustain and empower nonprofit efforts across diverse causes.

And kudos to our 2024 Honorable Mention!

Alfred Street Baptist Church Foundation

Founded in 2002, this organization awards scholarships to Washington, DC area high school seniors and divinity students. Offering \$20,000 Millennium Scholarships and various Legacy Scholarships (\$1,000–\$30,000), ASBCF has grown significantly in applicants, donors, and scholarship funds, fostering academic opportunity and support.

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Excellence in Chief Executive Leadership

Since 2005, the Center has recognized outstanding nonprofit leaders in our region with the EXCEL Award. This annual competition spotlights inspiring individuals who have successfully led their nonprofits with innovation, ethical integrity, motivation and strategic vision.



Special thanks to

Congratulations to our 2024 winner!



Dawn Quattlebaum,

CEO, Seabury Resources for Aging

In 2020, Dawn Quattlebaum was appointed CEO of Seabury Resources for Aging, bringing over 30 years of experience in healthcare, senior services, senior housing, and area agency on aging services. Since joining Seabury, she has held key roles, including Administrator of Friendship Terrace and Program Director of Ward 5 Lead Agency Services. In 2014, she was promoted to Chief Program Officer, and by October 2019, she advanced to Chief Operating Officer.

And kudos to our 2024 Honorable Mentions!



Dr. Indira Henard,

Executive Director, DC Rape Crisis Center

Dr. Henard is the Executive Director of the DC Rape Crisis Center, where she has led fundraising, operations, and coalition building for 17 years. Under her leadership, the Center has earned awards like "Best Places to Work" by Washington Business Journal and "Agency of the Year" by the National Association of Social Workers. With over 20 years in the violence against women movement, she has worked nationally and internationally to enhance organizations' responses to sexual violence.

Julie Fabsik-Swarts,

CEO, Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA)

Julie Fabsik-Swarts is the CEO of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA), which supports professionals in over 40 countries. With 35+ years of nonprofit and association leadership experience, she has led organizations such as the National Postdoctoral Association and the National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials Association. Julie joined EAPA in 2021 and has since boosted membership, modernized the World Institute and EXPO, and revamped the association's policies.



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CREATING LASTING IMPACT

Our member organizations touch the lives of countless adults, children, and families throughout our region, and in some cases, throughout the nation and the world. Mission areas served by Center members include:

- Advocacy
- Arts, Culture & Humanities
- Education
- Environment
- Health & Nutrition
- Homelessness
- Legal/professional
- Philanthropy

A YEAR IN Review 2024

In a year marked by events like the presidential election and Summer Olympics, it's easy to feel swayed by the highs and lows that disrupt our balance, for better or worse. Winning can feel like an ideal we should endlessly strive for, especially when we've faced the challenges of loss. By allowing both wins and losses to be part of the cycles in our work for our communities, we can reclaim the energy often spent on over-excitement or despair.

At the Center for Nonprofit Advancement, we've seen the remarkable outcomes from the efforts of our members. We're committed to supporting your successes and creating space to learn from the inevitable setbacks.

In doing so, we strengthen our collective work for the future. We're deeply grateful for the trust you place in us, and we're honored to continue supporting you through the opportunities and challenges of 2025.



CREATING PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Each month, the Center offers a series of interactive and engaging classes designed to share practical insights and the latest strategies for effectively managing key aspects of nonprofit operations. Covering a wide range of topics—from crafting online content for short attention spans to aligning development and finance—these sessions provide invaluable guidance for nonprofit professionals.

This past year the Center provided 62 classes and events for more than 1,652 participants—and counting!

Additionally, we offer two comprehensive training courses. The **Executive Preparation Institute (EPI)** expands the pool of strong, capable leaders by equipping senior nonprofit professionals with the skills needed for the chief executive role. Meanwhile, **Board Basics A to Z** empowers nonprofits to cultivate passionate and effective boards by educating new, current, and potential members about their expectations and responsibilities. Due to its popularity, we've introduced a follow-up course, **Board Basics Part 2**.

Fiscal Sponsorships

For early-stage nonprofits, fiscal sponsorship enables leadership to focus on programming and execution while strengthening the organization's capacity. The Center's team partners closely with these leaders to support growth through board development, executive coaching, technical assistance, organizational assessments, and strategic planning. We manage compliance, fiduciary oversight, and financial processes, equipping organizations with the resources to achieve IRS exempt status within three years and thrive in the sector.

Currently, the Center is working with:

- CREATIVE SOLUTIONS 4 YOUTH (CS4Y)
- LOVE MORE MOVEMENT
- ROLL ON! PRODUCTIONS, LLC



Since 1984, a key benefit for our members, VitalHealth enables Center member organizations to offer their staff access to affordable medical coverage, including dental, vision, and life insurance.

Fitness Challenges

Following the successful fitness challenges in 2023, VitalHealth continued its partnership with Reaction to provide fitness and wellness challenges to those who signed up in the Reaction app. **Stay Focused** was a one month personalized step/squat/breathing challenge, while the **Explore** challenge expanded the wellness goals to include yoga and planking practices.

With 60 Center members staying active and engaging within the app, posting their accomplishments and cheering folks on, folks were able to enjoy fitness with community encouragement.

Enhancing Nonprofit Development with Robust Partnerships

Building on the success of its inaugural cohort, the Center for Nonprofit Advancement has launched a new group for the **Chief Executive Leaders Ascend Program (CELAP)**, backed by an additional \$335,000 in philanthropic funding from JPMorgan Chase. This program empowers Black women nonprofit leaders in Washington, D.C.'s Wards 7 and 8 and aims to address funding disparities in the nonprofit sector that disproportionately affect organizations led by people of color and their communities.

In June, the Center partnered with **Martha's Table** to provide customized capacity-building support to 14 nonprofit organizations. This initiative includes organizational assessments, in-depth interviews, and tailored plans to enhance their effectiveness and sustainability, ensuring they can continue making a significant impact in their communities.

Driving Equity Forward

In 2024, the Center continued its **I Am The Change** series, celebrating heritage months and honoring the historical figures and events that have propelled progress and laid the groundwork for today's efforts toward progress. We also renewed our commitment to DEIJ by continuing to offer **DEIJ-focused training sessions free of charge**.

Supporting Economic Mobility

We were honored to contribute to Season 2 of **Opportunity Knock\$**, an award-winning PBS series focused on supporting



families toward financial stability. Through this series, the Center for Nonprofit Advancement worked closely with **Veterans Growing America**, sharing our expertise in capacity building and organizational support to enhance their impact.

INSTAGRAM TAKEOVER



In 2024, member organizations leveraged a unique opportunity to access the Center's Instagram account for a specified time, promoting their news and activities to our audience of over **1,500 followers**.



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get
CENTERED
with bingo



We had a fantastic time with everyone who joined us virtually in March for our 5th annual Get Centered with Bingo! This event gave participants the chance to assess their organizations' crisis response with expert tips and recommendations, all while playing for incredible prizes. Attendees enjoyed three lively rounds of bingo with amazing prizes up for grabs—including AirPods, IT support, personal tax consultations, sleek 24" Samsung Curved LCDs, and Amazon gift cards—thanks to our generous sponsors: **Purchasing Point, Goldin Group, Nonstop Health, Simple IT Care, and UST.**

Capacity Building Conference

The 2024 Capacity Building Conference, held on September 19, was a resounding success, bringing together over **80 nonprofit leaders** for a day of learning and networking at 2020 K Street NW. Attendees engaged with a stellar lineup of speakers who provided practical tools and innovative strategies to **enhance nonprofit sustainability.**

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