

CEO Update

Happy November, everyone! Michele attended the NC Center for Nonprofits Annual Conference on November 2-3 and came away with some great lessons. I've asked her to share one of her key takeaways with you in this column. I plan to implement the strategy she was most excited about, and I hope you are as inspired as I am.

By Michele McKinley

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Nonprofits across the country and the state continue to struggle with the challenge of a workforce shortage, according to the National Council of Nonprofits' 2023 survey of 1,600 nonprofits nationwide, including 60 in North Carolina.

The key findings in our state reflect the larger picture with 81% of NC nonprofits reporting job vacancies and 74% of those vacancies being in program and service delivery. Nearly 60% of NC nonprofits have more vacancies compared to before the Covid-19 pandemic, yet waiting lists for services are 20.7% higher than before the pandemic. Eighty-one percent (four out of five NC nonprofits) cited salary competition as the greatest factor impacting ability to recruit and retain employees, followed by budget constraints (65.5%) and stress/burnout (53.4%).

No doubt, our Ys are experiencing these very challenges. The question is, what is your Y doing about it?

Last week at the NC Center for Nonprofits Annual Conference, keynote speaker Donna Murray-Brown, Vice President of Strategy and Development for the National Council of Nonprofits, highlighted that exploring team development as a strategy for sustainability for nonprofits is simply imperative for nonprofit leaders.

She emphasized that team development is a process and journey that doesn't happen overnight but needs to be part of an organization's ongoing practices. She shared a key takeaway that your Y can benefit from to build and develop your teams if you're not already working on this: [the "Stay" interview](#).

We're all familiar with "exit" interviews when leaving a place of employment, but Murray-Brown emphasized the need to connect with your current employees and conduct "stay" interviews to find out why your employees have stayed. Others have left but they are still there...why? What joy do they find in working for the organization? What else are they interested in doing for your organization that may fill a needed gap and provide them with the growth potential to keep them on board?

You may hear something you don't want to hear (such as "I'm job hunting but haven't been able to find something yet"), but you also will learn how you might better leverage skills and interests of current team members.

As a result, you will build goodwill with team members who feel more connected and included in the organization's work, impact, and success, and provide more

opportunities for leadership development, improve staff satisfaction and catalyze innovation.

Murray-Brown noted that succession planning is good, but it's not enough. As 10,000 baby boomers retire per day, team development is essential for nonprofits. She challenged nonprofits to embrace Gen Z and millennials (70% of the workforce), because they have fresh ideas and perspectives on work—as well as different expectations—and they leverage technology in different ways. This growth mindset and team development are simply imperative for nonprofit sustainability.