Achievements, challenges, and paradoxes for California nonprofits

At the CalNonprofits statewide convention in November, keynoter Robert Reich said, “Nonprofits have been working toward alleviating inequality for decades and are key players in resolving the problems that result from widening income inequality.” We couldn’t agree more.

Yet at the same time, California continues to have the highest rate of poverty in the nation: nearly 1 in 4 Californians lives in poverty (L.A. Times, 11/6/13). We have more to do in two arenas: increasing services to families and individuals, and changing the economic reality.

The success of healthcare reform in California is a shining light to other states struggling with (or opposed to) healthcare reform, with an amazing 215,000 people signing up in the first six weeks for health insurance through Covered California. This didn’t just happen, of course, without the muscle of the nonprofit sector.

Substantial grants from California foundations — notably The California Endowment and The California Wellness Foundation among others — ensured that media and nonprofit outreach would have the money needed to inform those who need health insurance. Nonprofits have turned out in force to reach the constituencies that already know us as providers and partners, in part funded by Covered California money that nonprofit advocates fought for. Healthcare reform is a long war, not a quick skirmish. But in these early days, we can be proud of how nonprofits have helped people get insured.

— continued on page 2

California continues to have the highest rate of poverty in the nation: nearly 1 in 4 Californians lives in poverty.

— L.A. Times, 11/6/13

A new year, a new legislative session—and we at CalNonprofits are looking forward to making sure your voice is even louder. We had some great wins in 2013, and we took important steps to amplify the power of nonprofits to have real influence in shaping public policy. We’re building on this in 2014, lifting the voice of nonprofits, protecting and enhancing the ability of nonprofits to serve California, and creating more ways for you to be involved.

Our collective efforts paid off in 2013! — continued on page 3

We connect you to our community

Sign up for our email newsletter.

www.calnonprofits.org/newsletter
New Member Resources and Webpages

We are thrilled to announce our new Member resources and webpages! You can now easily:
• update your information
• renew your membership online
• access members-only resources
• create or join discussions with the new social community
• register for events

Visit calnonprofits.org/membership to get started today!

Message from CEO Jan Masaoka, continued from page 1

Recent minimum wage legislation presents both a victory for our constituencies and an expense challenge for many nonprofits. Legislation — supported by MALDEF, SIREN and the Legal Aid Association among others — raises the California minimum wage from $8.00/hour to $9.00 starting July 1 and then to $10.00 in 2016. Such an increase will help thousands of families in direct ways that human service programs do not — a victory for nonprofit advocates. Paradoxically, service providers will be challenged by raising wages for their low-wage employees, especially difficult in the context of government contracts that are based on low wages.

At CalNonprofits we on the staff and board are busy working with all of you on projects for 2014:

• The study of the Economic and Social Impact of California’s nonprofit sector is underway. You can read more about it elsewhere in this issue or visit www.calnonprofits.org/advocacy/nonprofit-impact-study.

• Vote with Your Mission is ramping up again to support nonprofits mobilizing their staff, volunteers, board members and constituents to vote in the June and November 2014 elections. We’re thinking about bumper stickers: “I work for a nonprofit . . . and I VOTE.” What do you think?

• Policy task forces will convene on specific pieces of legislation to advise the CalNonprofits board on official policy positions. Consider joining one soon!

• CNAC — the California Nonprofit Advocates Caucus — will expand its activities in Sacramento for nonprofit policy staff and lobbyists.

In the last 18 months, our small staff of six has been invited to make presentations at 75 nonprofit coalitions and convenings in California — and we were able to make 74 of these! In particular our policy director Kris Lev-Twombly and I are available to speak at your conferences and coalition meetings on a wide variety of topics. Please let us know if we can join you!

Jan Masaoka
CEO, CalNonprofits  •  janm@calnonprofits.org  •  415.926.0034 direct line

Happy New Year!

The staff and board of CalNonprofits are looking forward to another exciting year of working with you to bring the full power of nonprofits to strengthening communities!

Wondering what happened to 2013? We are too! That’s why our next Buzz issue will include the 2013 CalNonprofits Annual Report.
A New Way to Talk (and Think!) About Volunteers

“Men don’t volunteer as much as women do,” or so says conventional wisdom. But Susan Ellis counters: “Men volunteer a lot; they’re just not called volunteers. They’re called coaches and firemen!”

With new waves of volunteers looking for work experience and retirement-age volunteers coming down the road, it’s even more urgent that we change the way we talk — and think — about volunteers.

**Old language** (often said in apologetic tone): “We have only a few staff, so we have to rely on volunteers.” **New language:** “Because we have so many volunteers, we are able to do a tremendous amount with just a few staff.”

**Old:** “Thank you for helping us today!” gushes a nonprofit staff person. **New:** “Thank you for helping the patients/audience members so much today!”

**Old:** “We have a couple of volunteers who help with the newsletter,” said the director of a nonprofit legal services organization, adding, “Oh yeah! And some pro bono attorneys.” **New:** “Our organization is lucky to have pro bono attorneys, pro bono writers, and pro bono graphics and layout staff.”

**Old:** “We have 25 staff and 175 volunteers,” said a museum director starting a speech. **New:** “We have 200 staff, of whom 175 are volunteers and 25 are paid.”

To quote Susan Ellis again: “Paul Revere made his living as a silversmith. But he’s remembered for what he did as a volunteer.” If you’re a volunteer or staff who works with volunteers, give this article to the volunteers and staff you work with. Let’s not only change the world, let’s change the way we talk about it.
**Do Your Employees Need Help With California’s New Health Care Exchange?**

As we learned in the CalNonprofits survey of nonprofits and health insurance, nonprofits are more than twice as likely as for-profits of the same size to provide health insurance to employees. However, there are three groups of people who may need help with insurance: part-timers, seasonal employees, and the children/dependents of staff.

In a program that’s gotten national notice, CalNonprofits Insurance Services (CIS) has launched Nonprofit Advantage. Through this service, your employees’ family members and any employees not covered by your plan can get expert help enrolling on Covered California.

CIS can help your employees find the type of plan that best meets their medical needs, compare the cost of different plans, as well as determine their eligibility for federal tax subsidies that will significantly lower the monthly cost of health insurance. Services are provided over the phone in both English and Spanish and at no charge to either your employees or your organization.

If your nonprofit organization accesses any of its insurance through CalNonprofits, all of your employees and immediate family members will have access to this new program.

- Employees who aren’t covered on your group plan (e.g., part-time, seasonal, on-call) can take advantage of the program simply by calling our toll free number (888) 427-5222.

- Employees who have adult-aged children (20 to 26 years of age) on your plan may be able to save money by moving them to an individual plan.

- Employees who contribute to the cost of their dependents’ premium on your employer plan may also find it less expensive to move those dependents to an individual plan.

Help us get more nonprofit employees and their family members access to quality medical services through affordable health insurance. Encourage your employees to call CIS at (888) 427-5222, or download our Nonprofit Advantage flyer at www.calnonprofitsinsurance.org/resources/203-individual-enrollment-flyer to distribute to your staff members.
• There’s a lot of misinformation about the voting rights of people with felony convictions, resulting in false disenfranchisement for thousands at every election. Now law, AB 149 requires county probation departments to inform those on probation about their voting rights.

• When the state couldn’t keep some state parks open nonprofits stepped in. But what happens to the parks that aren’t on the “cut” list the next year? Now law, AB 594 allows the State Parks department to enter into an operating agreement with nonprofits and others to operate parks through 2014 fiscal year even if the park is not scheduled to be closed due to state budget cuts.

• Protecting good Samaritans from liability makes the goodwill economy thrive – and is crucial to many nonprofits’ program delivery. Now those who help others see are protected by SB 724, which provides liability protection to nonprofits while protecting clients from negligence.

• We participated in the Fireworks workgroup convened by Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal, in which we prevented an arbitrary, misguided 400% fee increase on nonprofits for fireworks sales by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. We also provided important input in shaping the contents of Senator Calderon’s Fireworks bill.

• A Victory in Defeat - We worked with Californians for the Arts, Latino Arts Network of California, and others to build support for Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian’s (D-Van Nuys) AB580, which called for an annual allocation of $75 million to the California Arts Council. Not surprisingly in a challenging budget year, the bill stalled in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. But thanks to our collective advocacy on AB 580, Assembly Speaker John Perez made a discretionary allocation of an additional $2 million to the California Arts Council for grantmaking, doubling what the Arts Council was slated to receive. We’re continuing to work with the arts community to win more funding for arts in the coming years.

Now in 2014, we’re excited to apply this momentum for more wins for the nonprofit sector. We’re currently reviewing all new bills, along with all bills carried over from 2013, to identify the opportunities and threats for the nonprofit sector.

This year we will also be:

• Convening our own task forces to inform our advocacy on specific bills.

• Calling on CalNonprofits member organizations like yours to participate and help strengthen our advocacy.

• Expanding the activities and impact of the California Nonprofit Advocates Caucus (CNAC) by launching new tools for advocates to work together in an online social community and assembling a committee of participants from multiple subsectors to lead the Caucus.

• Providing guidance and support to nonprofits who want to influence the state budget through a series of workshops around the state. — continued on page 6
Vote With Your Mission: Back for 2014 Elections!

What could happen if your staff, board, clients, and volunteers all voted with your mission? How much power would the nonprofit sector have if we all voted? As Robert Reich noted in his keynote address at the CalNonprofits Convention in November: “The largest party in America, by the way, is neither the Democrats nor the Republicans. It’s the party of non-voters.”

So CalNonprofits is bringing back Vote With Your Mission - our campaign aimed at showing how California’s nonprofit sector can be a real force in shaping California’s elections. We already have proof that asking staff, volunteers and constituents to vote works!

According to a report by Nonprofit VOTE in 2012, “Voter turnout among those contacted by nonprofits was 74%, six points above the 68% turnout rate for all registered voters—with the largest turnout differences seen among ‘low propensity voters’ who campaigns typically miss.”

Are you already working on registering voters or protecting voting rights? Many nonprofits in California are deeply involved in voter engagement work, as well as in advocacy on policies at the county and state levels that promote broad access to voting for all Californians. Send us your stories so we can make sure policymakers know that too!

Get involved with Vote With Your Mission in 2014 – there are lots of ways to participate - and help us tell the story of how nonprofits in California make a real difference in elections. To learn more about how to get involved, visit www.votewithyourmission.org or contact Kris Lev-Twombly at krisl@calnonprofits.org.
What Every Nonprofit Should Know About Unemployment Insurance

CEOs, CFOs and HR Executives are invited to join this webinar with an expert from the Unemployment Services Trust (UST) to learn answers to:

1. What are the three unemployment insurance options for 501(c)(3)s with 10+ employees?
2. How can nonprofits save $100 per employee on unemployment insurance?
3. What can we do when staffing changes occur to control costs?

In addition, they will discuss changes in Unemployment Insurance (UI) Integrity Laws, to make sure you are in compliance to avoid costly penalties.

Member Webinar:
Thursday, January 23
10 am

Register here >

“This is one of the best-kept secrets in the nonprofit industry. It’s a shame more people don’t take advantage.”
– 2012 UST Survey Respondent

Are you getting the most out of your membership?

Joining CalNonprofits strengthens the voice of the nonprofit sector in Sacramento — and we love that so many of you are helping us build clout! But did you know there are also a variety of money saving programs for Members? You get special access and discounts on insurance, office supplies, shipping, human resources compliance, financial services, and much more!

Current Members and Not-Yet-Members are welcome to join Christina Dragonetti, Membership Manager, for a discussion of the wide variety of benefits enjoyed by CalNonprofits Members. Learn about the programs, ask questions, and get signed up for the benefits you’ll use!

RSVP for any of the upcoming webinars at www.calnonprofits.org/membership.
Did You Miss the 2013 Policy Convention?

The 2013 Convention was a great success! At the end of the day, a clear theme emerged: “Our collective voice is powerful, and we have a lot of work to do.”

In his keynote address Professor Robert Reich talked about the alarming growth of systemic inequality in the U.S. and the role of nonprofits in combating inequality and supporting communities. Reich’s stark assessment is that “for 90% of Americans, there is no economic recovery.” But he is hopeful, saying “we in the US have a great capacity to expand and reform capitalism” and nonprofits, as the vehicles we choose to express our values, are in a position to lead that effort.

Resma Shamasunder, Executive Director of the California Immigrant Policy Center, pointed out “where California goes today, Alabama and Mississippi will go tomorrow.”

We rounded out the day with a lively networking happy hour and Vanessa Esperanza from the Alliance for Better Communities won a $25 Starbucks gift card for submitting her suggestion for a nonprofit sector tagline: “Led by hearts, driven by minds.”

Heartfelt thanks to all the amazing speakers for giving us all a hearty feast of food for thought, and for making the day engaging and fun! And a warm thank you to our sponsors — we can’t do this without you.

“Where California goes today, Alabama and Mississippi will go tomorrow.”

— Resma Shamasunder, Executive Director of the California Immigrant Policy Center
“Nonprofits are in the frontlines and faced with the burden of talking about inequality in America, you need to push Congress to take this conversation seriously.”

– Robert Reich in his keynote address at the 2013 Convention
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The Northern California Community Loan Fund develops creative solutions to help our clients be successful. We teach nonprofits how to use resources strategically and how to align their money with their mission.

Whether you are choosing a copy machine or planning to move to a new facility – every decision will either help or hurt your nonprofit’s impact. We offer a wide array of consulting services to our clients’ unique needs to help them better manage their finances and their facilities. Our services include:

- Business model analysis
- Financial training for boards and staff
- Debt analysis and financing alternatives
- Budget development and monitoring
- Cash flow management tools
- Facility strategic planning
- Lease vs buy analysis
- New Market Tax Credit analysis

CalNonprofits’ members get exclusive access to CalNonprofits Insurance Services – a one-stop solution for cost-saving products, quality service, resources, and expertise.

Certified to assist organizations with enrollment in Covered California.

Visit [www.CalNonprofitsInsurance.org](http://www.CalNonprofitsInsurance.org) or call (888) 427-5222 for a free quote!
Why does California need nonprofits?

Study of the Economic and Social Impact of the Nonprofit Sector

The first-ever comprehensive study of the size, scope and impact of California’s nonprofit sector is underway: a joint project of CalNonprofits and the University of San Diego, it will report on the economic impact of California’s large and diverse nonprofit sector, highlighting the impact nonprofits have on communities and our role as leaders of innovation. The importance of the study is underscored by the foundations that have funded it to date: Annenberg Foundation, Irvine Foundation, Weingart Foundation, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

We need your participation! Make this study as meaningful as possible by completing the online survey here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CaliforniaNonprofitSurvey. And please pass this along to your friends and colleagues elsewhere so they can take part in the research as well.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Principal Investigator Dr. Laura Deitrick, Caster Center Director of USD at 619-260-2903.