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## President's Corner

When I look at the state of Florida on a map, I can't but wonder how APRA-Florida exists in the first place. Geographically speaking, it is one of the most inhospitable states to organize a statewide committee. It's a laboring 10 hour drive from Pensacola to Miami. Still, we manage to not only exist but also to grow. And that is testimony to the dedication of the members of our association.

For a group of people who are often depicted as introverts, the prospect researchers that comprise APRA-FL stand in defiance of that description. My experience has been that members of our chapter are both engaging and accommodating, not only to each other but also to anyone who requests assistance from our group. We offer a mentoring program for those in need of assistance when first starting in the field of research. Our website, compliments of Audrey Geoffrey, has caught the eye of people in need of information and has resulted in my receiving several calls with requests for information. These are just two examples of our extending our expertise to others.

To keep an association as widespread as APRA-FL functioning at its highest level takes a bit of effort. This is testimony to efforts of board members such as Erin Hoyle, our CFO, and Mary Jamieson Dee, our CIO, who keep the operation running seamlessly. It is also nice to see new faces such as Craig Daugherty and Steve Rogers, our Directors of Professional Development and Membership & Marketing, respectively. Both of our newest members have been actively engaged in their first few months and show the same enthusiasm that has kept our chapter vibrant. Jennifer Filla, our President Elect, has also been very active in reaching out to others and offering new ideas to further our mission.

The truth is that none of this would not have been possible without the efforts of those that came before us. I've had the privilege of working with both Debbie Menoher and Steve Knight over the past year or so and am humbled to know that I follow in their footsteps. Inheriting such a well-defined and well-organized APRA chapter is an honor for anyone to assume. Being surrounded by a group of board volunteers who are enthusiastic, willing and capable of continuing that success only adds to that honor. And the future looks only brighter. Success here is defined by the sum of the parts. I thank all of you for all that you do.

Mark Noll

APRA-FL President

## Social Media & Your Prospects: APRA-FL Brown Bag Lunch

Social media offers prospect researchers a treasure trove of information about prospects, yet questions abound regarding the ways in which such information should be used in the research process. If you or any of your colleagues use social media sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Plaxo or others and share these questions, then don't miss this brown bag lunch seminar, where an expert panel of APRA-FL members will guide discussion on strategies and ethical issues related to researching prospects using these sources.

When: 10/16/2009 from 11:30am-1:00pm

Where: Generously hosted by the West Tampa Library  
2312 W Union St, Tampa FL 33607

Cost: FREE with registration

Registration: Email Jen Filla at [Jen@AspireResearchGroup.com](mailto:Jen@AspireResearchGroup.com)

## New APRA-FL Facebook Fan Page

We've created a new APRA-FL Facebook fan page that is more accessible and has more communication features. Come check us out and become a fan at:

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/pages/APRA-FL/134447641935?ref=ts>

This fan page will replace the group, so be sure to visit the link and join soon!

## Prospects Ain't What They Used to Be by Mark Noll

Much like the old song, "The Old Gray Mare," prospects in 2009 are not what they used to be. How could they be? The loss of \$12 billion in wealth in 2008 is not some phantom figure. The figure was based on funds that bled out of bank accounts, portfolios and retirement plans across a wide spectrum of investors. Small time investors as well as the wealthy all became victims of the sub-prime mortgage fallout. Few people were able to avoid this recession because it was unlike others. The old rule that a diversified portfolio would hedge ones investment against another did not hold true over the past 18 months. Stocks and bonds, as well as other markets, all showed losses in 2008.

The financial impact was also seen on the bottom line of charitable foundations. Many reported losses of 30% or more in their endowments. This decrease in funds will likely result in foundations issuing smaller gifts to fewer institutions. Major corporations, those which survived the downturn, also felt the pain of the recession. CitiGroup Foundation's Matching Gift Program was suspended in May. In what can be described as a sort of "non-profit trickle down," many charitable institutions are now feeling the impact of the economic downturn.

Charitable giving traditionally comes from assets. With those assets showing a negative return, it is hard for a donor to feel generous when their portfolios show double digit negative returns. This loss in wealth has forced potential donors to reconsider not only future commitments but also prior pledges. We need to look no further than Florida Atlantic University to see the repercussions the economic fallout had on long term pledges. There, a philanthropic gesture met head on with the reality of today's market. Is this an isolated case?

Though the global economy is starting to show signs of a rebound, most economists predict that it will take years to recoup the losses incurred by the recent recession. In fact, some point a double dip recession similar to the one in the early 1980's. Closer to home, things look even a bit cloudier. The *Miami Herald* reported this month that 23% of Florida home loans were either past due or in foreclosure in the second quarter this year, making Florida the # 1 state in the nation in this category. Adding to the misery is the fact that almost half the homes in Florida now have a negative equity, according to data from First American CoreLogic. Foreclosures in the Subprime markets, like those that helped to spur the mortgage and banking crisis, are slowing down. However, traditional loans to those considered to be good credit risks are deteriorating at a higher pace due to falling home prices and mounting job losses.

Despite the downturn, the needs of non-profit organizations do not cease as a result; rather, they are on-going and ever-increasing. Non-profits still need to raise funds to meet the needs of their targeted populace as well as to fulfill their missions. As a result, development officers are often asked to find more gifts in an economy that suggests the alternative. Development officers often turn to prospect researchers to help them achieve this objective. Prospect researchers, at this juncture, are often scrambling to redefine those points of wealth. A reality check tells us that the electronic screening we had in 2007 now serves more as a road map rather than a treasure map. It still points to potential prospects, but the specifics have become muddled.

As is always the case, determining one's recalculated wealth is no easy matter. Reducing a prospect's capacity by a set percentage across the board is foolhardy at best since some markets were hit much harder than others. In fact, a few entrepreneurs did well during the downturn. How do we go forward from here?

## Prospects Ain't What They Used to Be by Mark Noll (continued)

Some economists are predicting that it will take up to 10 years for people to recoup their losses. If one subscribes to the concept that donors have the capacity to give between 2-5% of their net worth to charity, then that percentage will likely be based on a lower net worth. The end result is a smaller gift or longer payment terms. One could also make a case that a few donors make contributions for tax purposes and since many will be showing negative returns over the next few years, they do not have an incentive to give.

Despite all of this, the intent to give for most donors still exists. Most potential donors still feel that desire to give to a cause that is near and dear to them. Smaller endowments will not stop a foundation's charitable mission. Even Donor Advised funds need to show contributions. Though the economy has reduced the scope of one's ability to give, it has not removed the intent.

As researchers, we need to be sensitive to ones slowly stabilizing capacity levels. We need to stress that in many cases, yesterday's ability does not meet today's reality. There has been a metamorphosis in the world of philanthropy, and we need to be sure we inform our development staff of this change. They, in turn, need to be sensitive to the new way of life despite the need to raise that big gift. In time, our donors will back to the pre-recession levels of capacity, and it would serve all of us well if we were to be patient in that process.

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*APRA-FL President Mark Noll is the Assistant Vice President of Research and Advancement Services at the University of Central Florida Foundation. He joined the UCF Foundation in June of 2005 as Director of Research & Prospect Management. Prior to working in Orlando, he served as Director of Research and Operations at the University of Scranton in his native Northeastern Pennsylvania. He was also a registered fund raising consultant in Pennsylvania and worked with such groups as the Mercy Health Partners and the Monsignor Andrew J. McGowan Institute for Community Health Initiatives.*

*Prior to joining the fundraising world, Mark worked for over 10 years in the field of job training where he served as Director of Management Information Systems. He spearheaded an effort to automate data from hard files to electronic files. He was also responsible for supervising data processing, statistical reporting and compliance among many other tasks during those years. Mark is a graduate of King's College in Pennsylvania and did post graduate work both at King's College as well as the University of Scranton.*

## Welcome New APRA FL Officers!

Congratulations to the following individuals who were installed onto the APRA-FL board on July 1, 2009:

- **Jennifer Filla**, President-Elect, replacing Mark Noll
- **Craig Daugherty**, Director of Professional Development, replacing Brenda Knight
- **Steve Rogers**, Director of Membership and Marketing, replacing Debbi Mirra

Additionally, the chapter presidency transitioned from **Debbie Menoher** to **Mark Noll**, effective July 1, 2009. **Debbie Menoher** is now Immediate Past President on the APRA-FL board.

**Steve Knight**, former Immediate Past President, **Debbi Mirra**, former Director of Membership and Marketing, and **Brenda Knight**, former Director of Professional Development, have rotated off the board. We thank them for their years of service and tireless dedication!

The following officers will continue their service to the board: **Audrey Geoffroy**, **Erin Hoyle**, and **Mary Jamieson Dee**.

### 2008-2009 APRA-FL Board of Directors

<b>President:</b>	<b>Mark Noll</b> , University of Central Florida Foundation
<b>President-Elect:</b>	<b>Jennifer Filla</b> , Aspire Research Group LLC
<b>Chief Financial Officer:</b>	<b>Erin Hoyle</b> , Florida State University Foundation
<b>Chief Information Officer:</b>	<b>Mary Jamieson Dee</b> , Florida State University Foundation
<b>Director of Professional Development:</b>	<b>Craig Daugherty</b> , Wycliffe USA
<b>Director of Membership and Marketing:</b>	<b>Steven Rogers</b> , Florida State University Foundation
<b>Director of Technology/Webmaster (non-voting):</b>	<b>Audrey Geoffroy</b> , University of Florida Foundation
<b>Immediate Past President:</b>	<b>Debbie Menoher</b> , University of Florida Foundation

## A Look Back at APRA-FL's 2009 Spring Conference

In 2009, researchers were faced with an economy that some had not seen for decades—and others had not experienced ever before. To respond to the changing needs of our institutions and our donors, researchers, and fundraisers found themselves re-evaluating almost everything they knew about wealth indicators, capacity, and the cultivation process. It was only fitting that the theme of this year's spring conference was Research in Challenging Times.

Two APRA-FL members presented, and we were also fortunate to have two national speakers as well. Steve Knight (WealthEngine) presented *Hangin' Tough: Bare Knuckle Research for a Bare Bones Economy* and Jennifer Filla (Aspire Research Group, LLC) spoke of *Matching Resources to Mission: Timely Prospect Research*. Lawrence Henze (Target Analytics, a Blackbaud Company) reviewed *Successful Strategies for Fundraising in a Down Economy*, and Karen Greene, Vice President of Operations & Services, Arizona State University Foundation, presented *Performance Benchmarking*. Collectively, the speakers offered invaluable, timely advice about researching, fundraising, and maintaining accountability amid a period of unprecedented financial uncertainty.

Additionally, a panel moderated by Mark Noll, Assistant VP of Research & Advancement Services, University of Central Florida Foundation, discussed the *15 Habits of Highly Successful Research Shops*.

This year, two APRA-FL members, Jeanne Anderson of Audubon of Florida and Lorraine Shim of Nova Southeastern University, received scholarships to attend this year's spring conference. Both were recognized during the day. And Working Philanthropy's Lori Hood Lawson was presented with a plaque in appreciation for her service to APRA-FL.

This year's conference sponsors included GG&A, our core sponsor; Target Analytics, a Blackbaud company; WorkingPhilanthropy.com; PRO iWave; and Advizor Solutions. Additionally, WorkingPhilanthropy.com offered every registrant a \$25 coupon towards the purchase of any one course. This year's door prize was a one year subscription to WorkingPhilanthropy's 15<sup>th</sup> & Lawson publication.

## Have You Heard the Buzz About the Field of Prospect Research?

Recently, prospect research has been touted by *US News and World Report* and CNN as one of the best little-known fields with great job opportunities. We've long known this, and we also probably joke that we never grew up wanting to become a prospect research analyst, manager or consultant—probably because we didn't know the field existed! In fact, many of us “fell into” the profession or stepped into it from similar fields...library research or other areas of development.

If you're willing to share, APRA-FL would love to hear your stories about how you came into the profession and where the field has taken you. Feel free to e-mail Mary Jamieson Dee at [mdee@foundation.fsu.edu](mailto:mdee@foundation.fsu.edu) or post a story about your journey APRA-FL Facebook fan page. Your stories may be highlighted in the next issue of the Florida Enquirer!