

Summary by Dr. David Garvey

Connecticut Encore Career Forum

June 20, 2008

Presented by

[Civic Ventures](#)

[University of Connecticut's Program on Nonprofit Leadership and Strategic Networks](#)

The University of Connecticut's Program on Nonprofit Leadership and Strategic Networks and the national program Civic Ventures conducted a forum of Connecticut nonprofit organization executive directors and human resource specialists to discuss the potential of the encore career employee from the employer perspective. Please see Appendix B for a list of participants and observers. What Connecticut nonprofit leaders noted was:

The Potential of Bringing in Experience

Encore workers and mid-career sector switchers with transferable management and professional skill-sets were seen as very appealing, especially for nonprofits that do not have the funds to develop skill-sets internally. An example given was a prior for-profit accountant taking on a nonprofit accountancy management role. In this situation you would have highly transferable skill-sets that can be tailored to nonprofit accounting methods with likely minimal educational retraining. Many in the focus group mentioned they already have encore workers in leadership positions within their organizations and it has worked out wonderfully due to proper skill-set matching.

Participants mentioned a need for tools to prepare encore and mid-career sector switchers for successful careers in the nonprofit sector.

—Connecticut Forum

Transitional Learning

Within the nonprofit sector one meets aggressive goals similar to the corporate and government sectors, however, often with less organizational resources. Participants mentioned a need for tools to prepare encore and mid-career sector switchers to grasp realistic expectations of the dynamics of work-life in the nonprofit sector and to prepare individuals for successful careers in the nonprofit sector. Volunteering and encore internships were noted as potential effective methods to allow a person to enjoy a purposeful role and at the same time experience the dynamics of the operations of a nonprofit organization. Using technology for mentoring experiences, such as an internet *facebook* approach for encore workers, was an additional suggestion.

Accelerated education or retraining programs were a desired support mechanism of 61% of the individuals surveyed in Civic Venture's 2008 report, who were interested in learning new ways to use their skills in work that helps their community. The Connecticut focus group noted the benefit of introductory courses that can provide portals into the dynamics of the nonprofit world and nonprofit organizational management. These courses would help filter out those who may not be a strong match for the nonprofit work-life, and help tailor the skill-sets for those who are for the ready to transition into the nonprofit sector.

Pipeline Counseling

Along with training, Connecticut leaders noted services, in the following areas, that could support a pipeline that connects the encore worker with a job in the Connecticut nonprofit sector, such as:

- Programs specializing in the matching of encore workers with job opportunities in the nonprofit sector.
- Specialists who can assist nonprofits in job-resculpting hurdles that may come up in matching the assets of encore workers with the tasks desired to be completed.
- Outplacement services that connect for-profit companies involved in a reduction of force, early retirement and general retirement preparation for their employees to encore opportunities in the nonprofit sector.
- Legal and financial advice on pension reform and issues, especially in defined benefit pension plans, that might hinder the hiring of encore workers, along with advice on other legal issues encountered when hiring the older worker, and
- The institutional value of flexibility: finding changes in the workforce benefits that will have cross-generational appeal for both the younger and older worker, such as child/elder care dependent benefits.

Potential Reduction in Costs and Turnover

It was noted that if nonprofits can attract encore workers for employment who place health benefits, job stability and flexibility at a higher priority level than salary,¹ Connecticut nonprofits could potentially not increase payroll costs, while at the same time lowering turnover.²

However with A Concern for Not Holding Back Emerging Leaders

Participants noted they don't want to create an age-based glass ceiling for the emerging professionals by bringing in encore professionals for jobs that emerging leaders need to experience. There was also the concern expressed that if encore workers came in at salaries below the nonprofit wage scale it could depress the salary ranges for younger workers in an already depressed salary industry (compared to private and state sectors). Lastly, there was an education concern. As a sector, we must make sure we continue to educate and prepare our emerging leaders, while bringing in encore workers. It must be an "and with," not an "either or" when it comes to education.*

*Author's note—If the avalanche need for nonprofit executives over this decade and beyond pans out as reality, as predicted in the Bridgespan report,³ salary-depression and education loss

¹ In other words, certain encore workers may accept professional positions in the nonprofit sector, for less than their former private sector salaries in exchange for a purposeful role in society, health benefits, job stability and flexibility—as noted as motivators in Civic Venture's 2008 survey of encore workers.

² It was noted by a Connecticut focus group member, that in some positions younger workers come to the nonprofit sector to get experience, and then leave to go to the private or government sectors for higher pay.

³ Tierney, 2006a, 2006b

effects are most likely avoidable, due to the pure volume of need. However, additional research may be needed to examine these potential effects.

The Non-Executive Encore Employee

As found in Civic Venture's 2008 national survey, nearly one in five (18%) of current encore workers come from prior blue-collar jobs and experiences. These individuals would most likely not be immediately ready, with appropriate exceptions, for moving into employed nonprofit management positions, but would more likely take on front line service delivery roles.

For these non-executive positions there was concern expressed for matching appropriate jobs and tasks with the health and fitness of the encore worker. A potential solution suggested by Civic Ventures could be *job-resculpting*; where organizations restructure jobs and team approaches to tasks, so that the assets of the encore workers can meet the task needed to be completed. An example from the nursing field was used.

Workforce Investment Board Support

Participants noted a need to work with the state's workforce investment boards to strengthen the case of the Connecticut nonprofit sector as an identified workforce need area. This partnership and recognition will help in obtaining state and federal grants for workforce development in the nonprofit sector. In addition, there may be other partnerships with state agencies that can support the encore employment effort, such as the development of a media campaign that brings awareness to encore and sector-switcher career opportunities: similar to the advertising McDonalds did a few years back to attract older workers.

Age Diversity Strengthens Organizational Capacity

Finally, it was noted that expanded employee age diversity, that would be a by-product of hiring encore workers, would have the potential for strengthening and providing *added-value* to the individual nonprofit organization, if mentoring and exchange of knowledge back and forth between the employee generations (older and younger workers) was purposefully and strategically executed by senior management in its business plans. Educating the current nonprofit organization workforce on the benefits and dynamics of a multigenerational workforce was seen as prudent.

In Closing

Connecticut's workforce is aging.⁴ A majority of this mature workforce is seeking income and purposeful employment in their second half of life—encore careers.⁵ At this same time, Connecticut's nonprofit sector is projected to lose close to 75% of its current senior managers by 2016,⁶ resulting in the potential loss of collaboration capacity and effectiveness of private and governmental social services.

What is recommended is a structured response to match mature Connecticut workers desiring an encore career, who possess transferable organizational experience and managerial skill-sets, with

⁴ Klein, 2007

⁵ Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc, 2008; Princeton Survey Research Associates International (2005)

⁶ Tierney, 2006a, 2006b

purposeful employment at the managerial level of Connecticut nonprofit organizations. This approach will assist in alleviating the negatives and accentuating the positives of these two simultaneously occurring demographic trends. However, in order to do this, sector switchers state they need education and employment guidance support to effectively recareer into Connecticut nonprofit organizations.⁷ A state-wide, multi-agency approach is recommended to provide the educational and employment services desired—termed ***Encore! Connecticut***.

References

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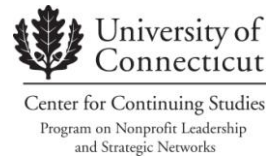
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Tierney, T. J. (2006b, summer). *The leadership deficit*. Stanford Social Innovation Review, pp.26-35.

⁷ Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc, 2008; Princeton Survey Research Associates International (2005)



The Encore Career Workforce: A Talent Source for the Nonprofit Sector

Connecticut Nonprofit Leadership Roundtable
University of Connecticut Greater Hartford Campus
Friday, June 20, 2008, Noon to 2:30

Participants

1. **Stephen Bayer**, *Senior Staff Advisor, Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford*
2. **Peter DeBiasi**, *Executive Director, The Access Community Action Agency*
3. **Cheryl Dunn**, *Director of Human Resources, The Shelter for Women*
4. **Karen Eichstaedt**, *Director of Human Resources, United Community & Family Services*
5. **Diana Genotti**, *Director of Human Resources, New Opportunities, Inc*
6. **Paula Gilberto**, *Senior Vice President, United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut*
7. **Seanne Hanke**, *Director of Program Analysis and Development, Empower New Haven*
8. **Patrick Johnson**, *Executive Director, Oak Hill*
9. **Kiki Karpen**, *Executive Director, Community Fund of Darien*
10. **Brenda Kelly**, *State Director, AARP Connecticut*
11. **Mary Kozich**, *Director of Human Resources, Community Renewal Team, Inc*
12. **Margaret Nareff**, *Executive Director, The Shelter for Women*
13. **Elaine Osowski**, *Director of Voluntary Services, St. Luke's LifeWorks*
14. **Jill Romatzick**, *Director of Human Resources, New Samaritan Corporation*
15. **Ann Thomas**, *Interim CEO, United Way of Connecticut*
16. **Louise Varricchio**, *Director of Human Resources, St. Luke's LifeWorks*
17. **Laura Zimmerman**, *Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford*
18. **Doe Hentschel**, *Vice President, Leadership Greater Hartford*

Observers

1. **Mark Berardi**, *Training and Membership Services, Connecticut Association of Nonprofits*
2. **Susan Deschamplain**, *Grants and Contracts Manager, CT Department of Labor*
3. **Linda Friedman**, *Program Manager, UConn Program on Nonprofit Leadership and Strategic Networks*
4. **David Garvey**, *Director, UConn Program on Nonprofit Leadership and Strategic Networks*
5. **Deb Migneault**, *Member, CT Commission on Aging*
6. **Susan Nesbitt**, *Director, Center for Continuing Studies, University of Connecticut*
7. **Jon Swift**, *Governor's Office for Workforce Competitiveness*
8. **David Williams**, *Director, Greater Hartford Campus, University of Connecticut*
9. **Sandra Wood**, *Philanthropic Consultant; Chair, UConn Program on Nonprofit Leadership Advisory Board*