

# Atlanta Results

Your Monthly Resource for Philanthropic News

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June 10, 2021

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**Mrs. Leonard "Be" Hass**, would have celebrated her 116th birthday on May 16th this year. If you've been around a while, you may know that Be is the Haas in Alexander Haas. Some will remember her as the tireless volunteer, who donated countless hours to The League of Women Voters in the '30's, trying to do what she could to ensure no one's voice got lost in the clamor of a rapidly growing skyline. To others, Be was the strong woman who became a leader during a time when women were taught not to speak about money and politics. As the only woman appointee to Governor Arnall's commission to

redraft and revise Georgia's constitution, she defied the idea of the powerless woman. She knew she could make a difference.

In 1954, Be helped to found the first fundraising firm our city has ever known, now named Alexander Haas, and what a difference she made. She was involved in planning more than 400 fund-raising campaigns for schools, hospitals, art groups, churches and civic programs. At one point, she was involved in 90 percent of the campaigns under way in the city. For her efforts, in 1988, she became the 22nd recipient of the WSB Radio/Atlanta Gas Light Company's "Shining Light" award for her service to humanity.

Be, a lifelong Atlantan, departed our lives in 1997, but her indelible mark on Atlanta, fundraising, nonprofits, and a multitude of other causes, lives on today. Happy Birthday, Be.



## Discontinue Advisory Councils?

by Arthur L. Criscillis, Ed.D.  
Managing Partner

In my work with organizations, including the training and coaching I do, one constant question that arises relates to Advisory Councils. In some instances, an executive wants to start one and is seeking some advice. In other instances, one already exists but doesn't function effectively and organization leaders want to elevate the work (which typically means more attention to giving and getting financial support for the institution) of the council.

It seems to me (and has for a long time) that by taking some basic and fairly straight-forward steps these leadership volunteer groups can be more helpful to the organization and its leaders, while remaining more satisfying and rewarding for those who serve. How so?

Let's begin with being clear about what we want from this leadership volunteer group. Here we need to be honest with ourselves. I suspect we want some engagement in giving. We would also like for the members to help connect the executive director to important potential benefactors/companies that may benefit from the work we do, and/or the enrichments we may add to the community. We may also want and need advice. They could also provide insight into management/leadership principles that would be useful to the leadership team. They could act as a focus group to assist in planning. They could address concerns/issues that arise on an ad hoc basis. In short there are many ways this body could be meaningfully engaged in helping the organization and community she/he serves. Once we have clarity about that, we can more effectively recruit members and those members will have a clearer understanding of what they are signing on to doing.

Let's move from expectations to nomenclature. When conducting training sessions for organizations leaders, I will frequently ask them the question: "How many of you have advisory councils?" Virtually all raise their hands. I quickly follow up with another question: "How many of you want advice?" Most of the hands drop and that question elicits knowing smiles and some laughter. In short, the name we give this volunteer leadership group sets expectations. **If the expectations go beyond providing advice, then let's banish "advisory" from the name we give to the group.** What we want is more like "leadership." Maybe **Leadership Council would be a more appropriate name.**

Consider how you want to handle the question of giving. Some go with a "pay to play" model, that requires a minimum contribution from members of the committee. If you go that route, you will want and need to consistently enforce it. And you will need to indicate that this is a minimum expectation. Others indicate that providing philanthropic support for the organization is an essential component of membership but indicate that what is appropriate from a given member varies but is still expected.

What about membership? It's the organizations' Advisory Council. Therefore, the executive director needn't relinquish her/his role in determining who to invite to be a member. In short, don't cede that to a "membership committee." The leader should strongly encourage members to recommend others for

membership; and also rely—maybe informally—on the advice of some key members given in an informal way about membership. Members can and should be involved in meeting with and inviting prospective members to serve when that is feasible and reasonable. Establish terms and term limits for members to allow the council to be renewed and refreshed. It also can allow for an easy way to have a less productive member removed from the council.

When forming these councils, there is no need to have bylaws—this isn't a governing body; it has no fiduciary responsibility; and it has no formal role in the administration of the organization. There is no need for bylaws, and they can only serve to give an incorrect impression about the role of the council. They can also unnecessarily bog things down.

These are, to my way of thinking, some key elements for more effective, more rewarding (for all concerned), and less confusing/frustrating leadership councils—clear expectations, broad opportunities for engagement that includes philanthropy, not bureaucracy.

The logo for Alexander Haas, featuring the name in a purple, elegant serif font.

please join us for the virtual release

## **Giving USA Results for 2020**

**Tuesday, June 15, 2021**

Virtual/Online Giving USA Presentation

9:00am to 10:00am

Presented by Alexander Haas  
in partnership with AFP Greater Atlanta Chapter

2020 was a year like none other with Covid-19 impacting every sector. This year, David King's presentation of Giving USA Foundation's Annual Survey of Giving will give an in-depth look at how nonprofits weathered the pandemic crisis along with what lies ahead. It is sure to be valuable and not to be missed.

**Reservations are required.**

Click [here](#) to register.

## Local News & More to Know

**Georgia State University\*** received a \$15 million grant from the **Robert W. Woodruff Foundation** to renovate the historic Southern Bell Telephone. One of the largest gifts in Georgia State's history, the Woodruff Foundation grant launches the fundraising campaign for the new Student Success Center with a commitment that covers a significant portion of the project's expected cost. *MetroAtlantaCEO, 6-7*

**Michael Jordan** and **Jordan Brand** awarded a million dollar gift to **Morehouse College** as part of their *Black Community Commitment*. The gift will help fund scholarships, technology, as well as educational programming for students studying journalism and sports-related areas of study. *MetroAtlantaCEO, 6-2*

The **Atlanta BeltLine Partnership** received a \$2 million grant from **The Coca-Cola Foundation** supporting green infrastructure planned for Westside Park and Enota Park. In celebration of Coca-Cola's 135th anniversary, the Foundation awarded \$35 million in grants to local COVID relief, environmental and community initiatives in the United States and Canada. *MetroAtlantaCEO, 5-21*

**Clark Atlanta University** received a \$3 million gift from Tucker, GA-based manufacturer, **House of Cheatham** to fund entrepreneurial programming. House of Cheatham is home to popular multi-cultural hair care brands and the donation in the name of its late founder, businessman and former Georgia State Senator, Robert H. Bell. *MetroAtlantaCEO, 5-17*

And we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the passing of **A.D. "Pete" Correll**, one of Atlanta's most influential business leaders and such a strong advocate for the nonprofit community. Correll, who retired as CEO of Georgia Pacific in 2005, served in top civic roles – chair of Central Atlanta Progress, chair of the Metro Atlanta Chamber and chair of the Atlanta Committee for Progress. He passed away on May 26th, at the age of 80. Mr. Correll left an indelible mark on our community.

### Most Nonprofits Emerging From Pandemic Wounded But Still Operating

Nonprofits across the nation suffered deep economic hardships during the pandemic, but strong government support and stepped-up giving by foundations and individuals averted the widespread charity failures that many experts had feared. A new study released on June 8 by the Center for Effective Philanthropy examines how charities weathered the pandemic.

#### Key Highlights

- 58% of nonprofits reduced their services last year.
- 49% cut operational costs.
- 38% drew down their reserves.
- 31% laid off or furloughed employees.
- 25% of women leaders said some or all of the foundations that support their organizations provided new multiyear grants.
- 46% of male nonprofit leaders said some or all of the foundations that support their organizations provided new multiyear grants.
- Charities serving Asians saw somewhat lower rates of unrestricted funding from donors than other groups. The study didn't find evidence of such disparities affecting nonprofits serving Black or Hispanic people.
- The lobbying push that made nonprofits eligible for forgivable Paycheck Protection Program loans as the most important factor in keeping nonprofits afloat through the pandemic.

The study, by the *Center for Effective Philanthropy*, can [downloaded here](#). *COP, 6-8*



## Are DAFs Bad for Philanthropy?

### Some Researchers Say Yes

According to a new data analysis from Boston College law professor Ray Madoff and James Andreoni, an economist at the University of California at San Diego, **charities lost out on \$300 billion from 2014 through 2018 as charitable donations went into donor-advised-fund accounts and private foundations** and didn't come out. The amount lost is substantial: For context, "Giving USA" estimated individuals donated \$295 billion to all charities, including DAFs, in 2018 alone.

The findings from the research directly counter the narrative put forth by major donor-advised-fund sponsors, who argue the increasingly popular giving vehicles boost giving by providing a useful silo for charitable funds that can be opened when need is greatest.

"There's basically no evidence that the rise of DAFs has increased the total amount of giving," said Madoff, noting that individual charitable giving has hovered around 2 percent of income for at least four decades, according to "Giving USA," the annual study of American philanthropy.

Madoff, along with the philanthropist John Arnold, has been building a coalition of donors, scholars, charities, and foundation executives to press Congress to add new incentives to insure that more money flows to charities that put the money to work right away. Among their proposals are new incentives to encourage donor-advised-fund holders to distribute their money within 15 years and the creation of a new class of donor-advised funds that withhold tax deductions on contributions until the money is given to a working charity. They are also seeking to limit the ability of private foundations to meet their requirements to distribute at least 5 percent of assets every year by contributing to donor-advised funds.

As a result of the growing diversion of charitable contributions to donor-advised funds and private foundations, Madoff and Andreoni estimate that from 2014 to 2018, working charities received gifts equivalent to around 73 percent of the value of individual giving in that time.

## COVID-19 Led to Mid-Level Fundraising Efforts

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the growth of fundraising programs targeting mid-level donors. A new report found that the social-distancing measures necessitated by the pandemic accelerated the transition to digital fundraising conducted via email, virtual gatherings, and social media and helped many organizations reach new supporters. Fundraisers also reported increasing outreach efforts targeting mid-level donors through handwritten notes, phone calls, and Zoom visits.

With a surge in donations in response to the public health crisis, especially from mid-level donors, the organizations in the study saw an opportunity to restructure their fundraising programs and hire additional mid-level staff to strengthen their efforts to steward, retain, and upgrade "emergency" donors to major donors. In addition, many organizations are investing in professional development for their mid-level fundraising teams.

To read the study, go [here](#). *PND*, 6-1

## We'd Like You to Know

### Transforming Institutions

For more than 30 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the Atlanta nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with some of the largest, and some of the smallest, organizations that help make Atlanta a better place to live.

[Our Metro Atlanta Client Partners](#)

## Our Transformational Services

You're just a jump away from learning about all the fundraising aids Alexander Haas has in its vault of Transformational Services.

[\*Jump!\*](#)



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