

Encore

A Spotlight on Philanthropy in the
Performing Arts

Alexander Haas
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from the organized desk of
Sandra K. Kidd | Senior Partner

Must Dos Before The Dog Days Are Over

The Dog Days of Summer—a saying I have heard since I was a little girl sitting on my grandmother’s front porch in sun-baked South Carolina. Their dog Red was fond of lying under that same front porch, and I always thought the Dog Days must be Red’s favorite time to do his favorite thing: nothing.

Later, I learned that the Dog Days take their name from the stars: the 40 days from July 3 to August 11 represents the period when the sun appears in the same region of sky as Sirius, the Dog Star, a part of the constellation Canis Major. Hence, the Romans called this time *diēs caniculārēs*, or “Dog Days.”



With the science lesson concluded, what can we do now that we've reached the end of the Dog Days of Summer and head into Fall? For many of us, the fiscal year has just wrapped up and it's not quite time to swing into fall giving. Volunteers and donors are coming back from vacations, and maybe we and our staffs are getting some last-minute time away as well. The slowed-down rhythms of summer can make it hard to feel productive.

So, here are a few ideas that can pair well with a cold glass of iced tea on a hot end-of-summer day. You can even kick your shoes off and no one will be the wiser.

1) Thank 10 people for their most recent gifts—in a personal way. Pick up the phone, or write an old-fashioned note, or send a personal text if that is how you connect best with the person you are thanking. Take the time to be thoughtful in your thanks. And if you find you enjoyed thanking these 10 donors, then keep going and thank 10 more.

2) Analyze 3 solicitation tools your organization used this year: What worked? What didn't? How much did it cost, both in direct costs and in staff or volunteer time? What was the return on investment? If you were starting a new fundraising program, would you use this method again?

3) Identify your top professional goal for the rest of 2021. Imagine that you are writing your year in review on New Year's Eve. What will your headline be? I am happy to be working with several clients whose capital campaigns are gaining momentum every day, and so mine will be "Campaign Success!"

We Think You Should Know

Houston Ballet Offers Blueprint for Pandemic-Era Events



HoustonBallet

The Houston Ballet's innovative approach to events in the time of a pandemic was recently featured in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. The organization prepared taped content for people celebrating their hybrid gala at home. The Houston Ballet's successful 2021 spring ball illustrates how charities can experiment with hybrid events that include a combination of socially distanced in-person gatherings and virtual programming. *The Houston Ballet is an Alumni Client Partner of Alexander Haas.*

The Ballet's February 2020 gala raised \$1.8 million, the most its ever raised at a charity ball. Leaders knew the *Houston Ballet Ball Home Edition* couldn't come close to raising that amount this year, but the organizers found success in other ways. The March 6 program included micro parties in private residences in addition to a lively virtual program and raised nearly \$850,000, much more than the \$500,000 the group's fundraisers were hoping for.

Based on that experience, officials at the nonprofit shared their advice for planning a safe and successful program. Among the key ingredients: Invite only a small group of people to the in-person portion, provide donors who host small gatherings with planning and other support, and make sure the videotaped content has the feel and energy of a live event. Flexibility is also critical. [Read more here.](#)
COP, 7-11

Other News

Lincoln Center (NYC) received a \$20 million gift from **Lynne and Richard Pasculano** to help revitalize opera, jazz, theater, and dance programming across its campus. The gift will be disbursed over five years and will help the **Metropolitan Opera, New York City Ballet, Lincoln Center Theater,** and **Jazz at Lincoln Center** fund some of their upcoming endeavors. *NYT, 8-17*

The **Boca Raton Arts District Exploratory Corporation** (FL) received a \$5 million gift from the **Edith & Martin Stein Family Foundation** in support of a planned arts and innovation center. *PND, 8-12*

Arturo Jacobus, who has served as president and CEO of the **Atlanta Ballet*** since 2009, has retired. **Tom West** has replaced Jacobus as executive director. West has spent more than 20 years in arts management and most recently served as chief advancement officer for the Los Angeles-based American Film Institute. He has also worked at the **John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts** and the **Seegerstrom Center for the Arts** (Costa Mesa, CA). *Marietta Daily Journal, 8-12*

Kara Medoff Barnett, executive director of the **American Ballet Theatre**, will be stepping down later this year. Barnett will be leaving to lead social impact marketing and strategy at First Republic Bank and develop the recently established First Republic Foundation. *NYT, 7-26*

The Wallace Foundation announced a five-year, \$53 million initiative in support of arts organizations founded by and for Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latinx, Arab American, or Asian American/Pacific Islander communities. Later this year the foundation will select ten to 12 organizations with annual budgets of \$500,000 to \$5 million for the first group, and in late 2022, a second, larger group that will include

organizations with budgets below \$500,000. *PND, 7-20*

*Alumni Client Partner

More Philanthropic News

Donate Button on a Zoom Call?

Speaking of raising money through virtual events...things may have just gotten a little easier thanks to the launch of a new donate button on **Zoom**. Now, participants in Zoom meetings and events can make charitable contributions within video calls through Donations by *Pledge*, a free app created by Pledge, a fundraising technology firm. Pledge does not take a cut of donations.

Last year, an estimated 25,000 nonprofits used its virtual event tools to broadcast fundraising appeals and a real-time ticker that lists donors on roughly 50,000 virtual events streamed on Zoom, Twitch, YouTube, Facebook Live, and Instagram Live.

Free and paying users of Zoom can activate the donate button by going to their Zoom account settings, switching on Zoom Apps, and installing the free app. They can start a campaign by selecting at least one charitable beneficiary from the more than 2 million nonprofits in Pledge's global charity database. Nonprofits that aren't in the database can work with Pledge's support team to get approved and added to the list.

[Here's more information about Zoom's new donate button.](#) *COP, 8-31*

Philanthropic Sector Increasing Diversity

A report from CHANGE Philanthropy finds that diversity among professionals in the philanthropic sector increased between 2018 and 2020.

The **2020 Diversity Among Philanthropic Professionals Report**, based on survey responses from almost 2,500 staff and board members at 124 foundations, found that:

- 45.3% of respondents identified as people of color, up from 37.8% in 2018.
- African Americans accounted for 13.5% of respondents, up from 11.1%.
- Asian Americans 9.6%, up from 8.9%.
- Latinx 8.7%, up from 6.3%.
- The percentages of Indigenous and Middle Eastern respondents dropped to 0.8% and 0.5% from 1.6% each in 2018.
- Professionals of color had the largest representation at grantmaking public charities (50.4%, up from 47.5% in 2018).
- At private foundations, professionals of color was 49.4%, up from 40.3%.
- Corporate funders professional of color staff was 40%, up from 28.6%.
- Professionals of color at community foundations stands at 29%, up from 26.4%.
- Grantmakers based in the Northeast were the most racially and ethnically diverse in 2020 (53.4%, up from 37.6%), while those in the Midwest (35.4%, up from 29.7%) and South (34.8%, up from 34.4%) saw smaller increases. *PND, 8-6*

Schwab Charitable Awarded \$3.7B DAF in 2020

Schwab Charitable, provider of donor-advised funds, facilitated 855,000 grants totaling \$3.7 billion in fiscal year 2021 — a 13% year-over-year increase in total funding awarded to charities.

In all, Schwab Charitable account holders supported more than 113,000 charities across all 50 states and

boosted the number of grants by 24% compared to the previous all-time highs set in fiscal year 2020. The organization also noted a 48% increase in the number of grants that were not designated for a specific purpose, and an overall increase in awards driven by technology, as 79% of grants in FY21 were handled through an automated review and approval process. Approximately 60% of contributions to Schwab Charitable in FY21 were in the form of non-cash assets, including publicly traded securities, restricted stock, and private business interests. *PND, 7-20*

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