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Surging Non-Profit Sector Seeks Senior Leaders



During a time of tremendous societal transformation, not-for-profit organizations provide support and stability for individuals and their communities. These mission-driven institutions create equitable opportunities for all, leverage funds and resources for critical social programs and initiatives, and ensure at-risk and underserved individuals are not left behind, according to **WittKieffer**. The value of not-for-profits has only intensified as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding progressive social movements.

Executive recruiters say today's not-for-profits face a growing need for exceptional leaders. "Passionate, driven and talented not-for-profit leadership is vital for managing increasingly complex challenges while keeping organizations focused on their central missions," said WittKieffer. "Without strong executives, non-profits struggle and thus individuals and communities suffer. CEOs, executive directors, and senior teams in the non-profit sector must be able to envision, develop, and execute strategic plans that ensure their organizations can succeed and continue to make a difference in the lives of those they serve."

Recruiting in the non-profit sector is still in high gear, but there are also high winds and high waves at play," said Deb Taft, CEO of **Lindauer**. "The non-profit talent shortage that doubled in the decade preceding the pandemic, as non-profits proliferated, was only exacerbated by the various events of 2020 and 2021. Strong leadership talent is still insufficient to meet demand, and competition is fierce from technology and professional service providers adjacent to the non-profit sector."

While there is upward pressure on compensation for top talent, boards and HR teams have yet to catch up in accepting these market forces, still believing leading candidates will choose them for their mission alone, according to Ms. Taft. "Multiple offers and counteroffers are common, top candidates want work mode

flexibility, and finalist pools melt quickly if organizations hesitate or are not organized to seal a hiring deal in rapid order," she said. "Add in the sustained, strategic work it takes to create belonging for talent of diverse lived experience, which remains in high demand, and a number of organizations continue to struggle to hire the leaders they need. Organizations that are most successful understand that recruiting is different than hiring, that authentic diversity and inclusion efforts are vital, and that demonstrating flexibility, good culture, and employee-focused policies is winning the day."

Surging Non-Profit Sector

Lindauer is seeing strength from every part of the non-profit sector in 2022, even in the face of potential recession pressures. Ms. Taft notes that leading non-profits understand that they need to stay focused on driving top strategic priorities and strong talent to be successful in any operating environment. "Education, healthcare, and larger charities are all strong," she said. "Even arts and culture organizations hit hard by the pandemic are emerging with increased strategic focus and hiring to thrive forward. Perhaps only with smaller non-profits are we seeing recalibrations and struggles, which should result in increased mergers. When mission-based strengths and operations could be stronger together, I urge boards to suspend egos and be bold in exploring smart combinations."

BY THE NUMBERS

Talent & Culture are Top Priorities

79% of non profit organizations said they were prioritizing talent acquisition in 2022...

while **91%** said they were prioritizing culture and employee engagement.

Source: NonprofitHR

Ms. Taft notes that non-profits offer senior executives the opportunity to apply all their best executive expertise in environments that simultaneously feed their souls. Lindauer says it has seen a number of extraordinary leaders seeking a transfer from for-profit companies into mission-based organizations, and more "Boards seem more open to these recruitments than ever before," said Ms. Taft. "The results can be energizing, as long as all parties do the work to ensure success vs. assuming a corporate leader will be an automatic home run. Mission success can be akin to corporate success in many ways, but these (cont'd. to page 2)



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new leaders typically need to adjust how they navigate stakeholder engagement, understand power dynamics with non-profit customers, implement process, and communicate.”

The market remains very competitive for top non-profit leaders, according to Diane Charness, co-leader of the non-profit practice at **ZRG Partners**. “The sector is truly at a crucial time, needing innovative and transformational leaders to scale their organizations,” she said. “This requires a diversity of skills and perspectives. I encourage clients to be open to a range of candidate profiles—including those from industry with the sensibility required to lead a mission-based institution while also leading in a shared governance environment. It takes expertise and experience for the executive search consultant to aptly identify candidates who will make a successful transition, as not all do. Search consultants that him/herself have worked at the intersection of the public and private sectors are best prepared to understand the talent needs of a growing social impact organization.”

Non-profits are defined by their tax status in the U.S. and have been the stewards of providing much needed services to communities around the country. “With the profound changes we’ve experienced during COVID and expanding social movements, there is an extraordinary opportunity for the private and public sectors to join forces to address society’s most pressing challenges,” said Ms. Charness. “Non-profit organizations that understand this evolving trend will thrive through increased financial support, innovative leadership talent, and improved operational platforms.”

Those successfully leading corporate entities will have built transferable skill-sets and relationships that can benefit mission-based institutions, according to Ms. Charness. “The ability to facilitate and communicate an organizational vision, scale revenue streams, develop impactful products/programs, enhance operational efficiencies, deploy leaders, and create meaningful brand awareness and messaging, are all necessary to driving success of a company, as well as a non-profit,” she said. “Corporate leaders seeking greater impact or meaning to their work, may find themselves seeking opportunities in the non-profit sector. I embrace cross-sector executives and believe these diverse experiences inform the most transformational leaders. However, there are nuances to inspiring and driving the work of non-profits that must be understood, and valued, before making the transition or it will be a rocky road ahead for the leader and the organization.”

James Abruzzo, the long-time global head of the non-profit recruiting practice at **DHR Global**, notes that in his four decades of recruiting senior leaders to non-profit organizations he has never seen a time of such demand coupled with a dramatic lack of supply of talent. “My phone, and those of my many non-profit practice partners, is ringing constantly with inquiries from current and prospective clients, seeking talent,” he said. “This demand was predicted by Bridgespan and others; however, it was delayed by the pandemic and now, with things somewhat normal, the imbalance between need for talent and the availability of that talent is at crisis level. And the job seekers’ attitudes are changing – high inflation, working from home, and a general existential (cont’d. to page 3)

LEADERSHIP SEARCH

Russell Reynolds Associates Seeks New Leader for Baltimore Museum of Art



The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) has named **Russell Reynolds Associates** to help find a new director to replace Christopher Bedford, who has moved on to lead the San Francisco Museum of Art. Russell Reynolds was chosen following a rigorous interview process led by the BMA's 10-member search committee, which is co-chaired by BMA board chair Clair Zamoiski Segal and trustee Darius Graham. The committee prioritized finding a firm that has deep knowledge of and passion for Baltimore, a demonstrated track record of helping museums like BMA identify talented leaders, and the capacity and creativity to search in a competitive hiring market.

"When we first announced the formation of the search committee in February 2022, we made a commitment to provide opportunities for the museum's many stakeholders to share their perspectives about the qualifications and characteristics of the BMA's next director," said Ms. Zamoiski Segal and Mr. Graham. "We continue to believe that this is a critical aspect of finding the right person to carry forward and further express the BMA's mission of placing diversity and equity alongside artistic excellence. We chose Russell Reynolds as our search firm because they so distinctly understand our vision for both this search and the institution more broadly. We have incredible confidence in their expertise and look forward to working with their team to further define the search process and our immediate next steps."

sense of how important is career in the face of death and disease, is leading individuals to leave jobs either for much higher paying positions or just to reevaluate one's life."

Attendance Driven Non-Profits

Mr. Abruzzo says the non-profits that are thriving are often attendance driven. For example, many non-profit arts and culture clients are thriving because there is a pent up demand for live culture. In addition, these organizations have gone through a period of cutbacks and cost-saving combined with significant one-time cash infusions from the PPP and SVOG government funds.

"If we consider a trend toward rethinking work, the trend of senior for-profit executives looking to non-profits is not as popular as it once was," said Mr. Abruzzo. "However, with the above-mentioned demand, any talented, warm blooded individual can now find work. And board members, who are retired and well-off, are seeing the openings, the lack of talent, and the need for leadership in their own organizations, and some are deciding to take the helm either temporarily or for the long term."

The Great Reshuffle

"On the surface, there are more senior-level positions open than there are people to fill them," said Allison Fuller, co-founder and managing partner of **Envision Consulting**. "Non-profit employers know this, and are responding to the Great Reshuffle by offering flexible work arrangements, providing innovative benefits, and taking actionable steps to strengthen DEI within their organization. But at the same time, culture is front and center."

For every investment employers are willing to make on work schedules and building leadership pipelines, they are also

enormously cognizant of workplace dynamics and how the right hire fits into their strategic initiatives, according to Ms. Fuller. "But because it's an employee's market, leaders are scrutinizing their moves just as carefully, and aren't willing to leave their organizations for a few extra perks," she said. "These professionals are seeking meaningful jobs and often that means working for an organization that can demonstrate a real commitment toward DEI through its policies and practices. The leaders are out there, and there are matches to be made, but as both sides take a long view of what constitutes success, placements are simply taking more time and our pools have to be more diverse."

Envision Consulting has worked to take a more data-driven approach to these hiring shifts, partnering with its local non-profit center in Los Angeles to release the *Equitable Non-profit Workplace Report*. More than just a compensation survey, the study provides a number of data-backed findings on what non-profit employees want, what employers are actually offering, and how that is impacting job satisfaction, retention, and advancement in the non-profit sector. According to the report, one in three employees surveyed agreed that most of their colleagues would have to leave their organization in order to get a promotion.

Approximately one third of employees in their 20s, 30s, and 40s said they did not understand the criteria for advancement in their organizations, and just over one third said they would have to leave their current position and employer in order to get a promotion. The report also shows that while DEI-focused recruiting and conversations have been implemented by more than three quarters of organizational respondents, fewer than one third have adopted an explicit DEI hiring policy.

Thriving Non-Profits

"Organizations can remove barriers in the hiring process, by eliminating credit checks on candidates, allowing everyone to be able to apply online, adhering to structured hiring processes, and ensuring job descriptions are unbiased," said Ms. Fuller. "Envision is recruiting from beyond the typical sources, ensuring more than 90 percent of our finalist panels include candidates from underrepresented communities."

As a consulting firm that works exclusively with non-profits, Envision is seeing that with its clients across the firm's executive search and strategy services. "Right now, organizations with diversified funding streams who have been able to pivot services during the pandemic have benefitted from increased participation from individual and foundation donors and re-directed COVID funding," said Ms. Fuller. "The non-profits who will thrive in the long run will likely be the ones that have clear alignment across leadership, particularly on what it looks like for the organization to carry out its mission. So, there's no question whether the mission is relevant – in fact, it's probably more critical now than ever before."

Ms. Fuller notes that the non-profits that are seeking to pivot from COVID-driven emergency services and return to mission-centered programming are asking tough questions: How well does our organization involve philanthropy, legislators and advocates, and businesses? Have we integrated a DEI

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lens into our strategic planning, conversations about vision and mission, organizational assessments, and outcomes evaluations? Do our decision-making bodies include representation from the community? Should we forge strategic partnerships to expand our reach and/or work more efficiently? Have we invested enough into technology and do we have adequate cybersecurity? Even non-profits that are in one form thriving by expanding their footprint are facing these questions, according to Ms. Fuller.

Never Been Busier

To paraphrase the CEO of one of the Forbes top 25 executive search firms, recruitment of senior leaders by non-profits has never been busier. “The challenges of navigating COVID brought profound pressure on leaders in just about every non-profit sector,” said Karen Alphonse, a search solution leader and executive coach with **ExecSearches.com**. “Many organizations, such as education and arts and culture, have had to completely reinvent themselves, and there has become an intense focus on fundraising and day-to-day operations. This hastened the thinking of some leaders already considering retirement, and some organizations continued to rely on interim advisors and existing staff to continue to stay afloat. Now search professionals are finding that they’re reacting to pent-up demand coupled with a diminished talent pool fueled by the Great Resignation, and much of the candidate pool is thinking very differently about work and what they’re interested in doing. For many there’s a quest to find professional satisfaction and work-life balance. COVID threw a spotlight on quality of life, health, comprehensive benefits, and social issues.”

Organizations not already distinguished by diversity, equity, and inclusion are instilling it into the operations and are attracting leadership, staff, and donors who share them, according to Ms. Alphonse. “Non-profits want their leaders to have a sophisticated understanding of the issues and there is increased demand for leadership to reflect the communities,” she said. “This has created a stampede to recruit accomplished leaders who bring perspectives that represent a full spectrum of economic, social, cultural, gender, and educational backgrounds, just to name a few. To facilitate this, many organizations have created C-suite DEI officers.”

Although different entities define thrive in a variety of ways—be it by profit, growth, total assets and even popularity—across the board the non-profit sectors that are prospering are those involved in healthcare, human services, advocacy, human rights, and the environment, according to Ms. Alphonse. “COVID put tremendous and immediate demands on hospitals, clinics and emergency health facilities, all of which stressed internal systems, causing non-emergency services to take a backseat,” she said. “These kinds of facilities have had to re-examine their services to find ways to generate a profit during a period of shifting priorities and uncertainty. In the education sector, the maze of COVID restrictions, options and vaccination put pressure on universities, schools and learning facilities to abandon the old-way-of-doing-things. The change in the political and social landscape has caused a lot of upheaval.”

Non-profits that champion diversity are also enjoying a new lease on life. “Social activism, at an all-time high in the (cont’d. to page 5)

wake of George Floyd, the overturning of Roe v. Wade, and attacks on the rights of immigrants and the LGBTQ+ community, has given rise to focused thinking,” said Ms. Alphonse. “At the international level, so has the political unrest in the Ukraine, Middle East, and Africa. Organizations that give voice to our collective angst about the future of the democracy and the fate of the planet have been re-energized by recent geo-political events. Based on international unrest, we can foresee that refugee-friendly, resettlement, and international aid organizations will experience a resurgence.”

“So will domestic organizations that provide safe havens for immigrants on the run due to political repression, poor economics, and disrupted infrastructure in their countries of origin,” she said. “Never has messaging and branding been more important, and leaders who can identify and voice those strategies are in unprecedented demand.”

Many business sectors across the globe are experiencing a job seekers market, and the non-profit arena is no different, according to John Toolan, vice president at **Bryant Group**. “Those seeking leadership positions understand that there are more quality opportunities available than there are qualified people to fill them, which allows them to be more selective,” he said. To help organizations stand out, Bryant Group encourages employers to focus on what makes their organization impactful and lean into that.

“Keeping the mission at the forefront of each conversation and interview to ensure that there is mission alignment between the candidate and the organization will create a more enjoyable interviewing process for both sides,” said Mr. Toolan. “Studies have repeatedly shown that employees seek a sense of value in their work. Helping them understand how their contributions during work hours impact the world around them is a powerful recruitment tool. As an additional bonus, it can encourage the candidate to turn down offers from other organizations to join yours.”

Once on board, when staff feel that they are contributing to something larger than themselves, and larger than their organization, they have a sense of fulfillment that aids in their retention. With the large number of positions available, the quantity of opportunities can feel overwhelming to candidates, according to Mr. Toolan. “Using a proactive search firm can help because they market your opportunity to people who are likely to align with your mission,” he said. “Additionally, they connect with people who are open to new opportunities but are not actively seeking new roles. This can lead to a broader and more diverse pool. Often it also reduces the rush to extend an offer before a competitor.”

Bryant Group finds that non-profits that have cultivated a genuine relationship with their constituents fare far better than those that are more transactional. Personal and national economies constantly change, and when they do, charitable giving can be affected. However, stakeholders who receive value in their interactions with the organization remain committed.

“Allowing stakeholders to volunteer, mentor, and involve friends and colleagues in the organization, forms a stronger bond which leads to greater affinity,” said Mr. Toolan. “Creating a sense of community where constituents find joy, comfort,

(cont'd. to page 6)



McCormack+Kristel

McCormack + Kristel is a national provider of executive search consulting services for nonprofit and philanthropic organizations.



The M+K Team

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solace, or meaning will ensure their continued participation. Additionally, keeping the organizational mission at the forefront in all communications and conversations keeps donors and potential donors focused on the organization's impact."

Profits Still Matter

The public has a common misconception that non-profits don't need to generate profits. Nothing could be further from the truth, according to Mr. Toolan. "The fact is that non-profits funnel their funds back into the impact areas of the organization rather than compensate shareholders," he said. "The more income a non-profit generates, the greater its reach and impact. Passionate leaders skilled at evaluating operations and creating efficiencies can propel the growth of non-profits quickly and sustainably."

Bryant Group finds that many senior executives reach a point in their career when they have climbed the mountains they wish to conquer and now want to contribute to the greater good of society. As an example, Bryant Group recently conducted a search where a leading candidate left his law practice because he was "tired of making billionaires wealthier." He brought his superior negotiating skills to the higher education sector, where he renegotiated contracts and leases, resulting in significant cost savings.

"In these cases, the executives enjoy bringing their expertise to bear to improve their local or national community or to contribute to causes that they hold dear," said Mr. Toolan. "This brings more diverse thought into the organization and can lead to other forms of diversity. Often the infusion of an executive from outside of the non-profit area aids in identifying roles that allow for transferable skills. This opens the door for others from corporate America to join the non-profit world, experience its benefits, and diversify its workforce."

While there are some signs of cooling, staff transitions continue at an historic pace and the demand for non-profit executives remains strong, according to Michelle Kristel, managing partner of **McCormack+Kristel**. "Racially and ethnically diverse candidate panels, a founding principle of our practice, and leaders skilled at creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive cultures continue to be priorities for our clients," she said. "Well-qualified candidates, particularly diverse leaders with track-records of success, are being presented with an abundance of opportunities. We have always advised our clients that interviews are a two-way street, with candidates assessing clients as much as clients are evaluating them. At no time has this been more true. Perhaps related to the profusion of opportunities and increased scrutiny of organizations and boards, we are also seeing an increase in late-stage candidate withdrawals."

For the sake of organizational stability, many CEOs paused planned departures at the height of the pandemic. As pandemic conditions improve, McCormack+Kristel is seeing an uptick in CEO resignations and a continuation of the generational transfer of leadership that has been unfolding as baby boomers reach retirement age. "For those organizations with the foresight to do succession planning, the leadership transition can often be efficient and relatively painless," Ms. Kristel said. "For those who haven't, the search for a new CEO can be long, time-consuming, and

LEADERSHIP SEARCH

DRiWaterstone Human Capital Seeks CEO for New Hope Housing in Northern Virginia



DRiWaterstone Human Capital has been enlisted to find the next chief executive officer for New Hope Housing (NHH), a non-profit organization that operates homeless shelters and housing programs across Northern Virginia. The new CEO will be responsible for all aspects of New Hope Housing's operations, leading the staff in accomplishing NHH's goals while acting as the primary spokesperson to external parties, said DRiWaterstone Human Capital. The position, which operates under the supervision of NHH's board of directors, will provide regular and fulsome updates to the board about the organization's financial, programmatic, and developmental operations.

Created through a recent merger between DRi and Waterstone Human Capital, DRiWaterstone Human Capital is a culture-centric executive search, leadership advisory, and human capital firm focused on helping mission and purpose-driven organizations across the U.S. build high performance teams and cultures.

perilous, especially when finding the successor to a founder or long-term, respected leader. No one is likely to be a younger version of the departing leader, nor should they typically be."

For McCormack+Kristel, non-profits with a clear and relevant mission and a mix of funding sources are thriving. "Those who have outlived their mission or who rely too heavily on government contracts are most at risk," said Ms. Kristel. "In the HIV/AIDS sector, for example, we have seen many smaller service organizations such as HIV prevention organizations merge with primary care providers in their communities. Private sector funders look for synergies and overlapping services among the organizations they support, and they frequently encourage such consolidation."

Mission has always been the motivating force for non-profit leaders. "The pandemic both exacerbated and exposed inequities in healthcare, housing, and food security," said Ms. Kristel. "The documented, brutal murders of black men amplified a national conversation about systemic racism. And local and national politics and policies are becoming increasingly hostile to women and LGBTQ people. In the wake of seismic cultural and economic disruptions, organizations advancing equality and addressing injustice in its myriad forms are more attractive than ever to board and staff leaders, volunteers, and donors."

The Great Reexamination

The Great Resignation has been fueled by a great reexamination, according to Ms. Kristel. "The current state of national and global affairs has caused many to look inward, prompting questions about our purpose, about where we live and how we work," she said. "In answering these questions, many corporate executives, particularly those looking to write the last chapter of their professional story, are motivated to leverage their accumulated skills in service of a greater societal good. While many executives find fulfillment in volunteer and board service, others, often in what Dante called the middle of life's journey, making work the primary opportunity to give back is essential for personal satisfaction and emotional health."

Hunt Scanlon Non Profit Recruiting Top 60

Academic Search Jay Lemons, President	(202) 332-4049	Kittleman Search Cory King, President & CEO	(312) 283-8420
Aspen Leadership Group Jeff Hanavan/Ron Schiller, Founding Partners	(970) 315-2818	Korn Ferry Jodi Weiss, Practice Leader	(917) 744-5983
Ballinger Leafblad Marcia Ballinger/Lars Leafblad, Co-Founders and Partners	(651) 341-4840	Lindauer Deb Taft, CEO	(617) 262-1102
Bauer Harris Brad Bauer/Jeff Harris, Managing Partners	(617) 233-3071	m/Oppenheim Executive Search Mark Oppenheim, Founder	(415) 762-2650
BoardWalk Consulting Sam Pettway, Founding Director	(404) 262-7392	McCormack + Kristel Michelle Kristel, Managing Partner	(212) 531-5003
Bryant Group Sally Bryant, President & CEO	(972) 739-6030	McDermott + Bull Chris Bull, Managing Partner	(949) 529-2690
Buffkin Baker Roland Lundy, Operating Partner	(615) 988-2587	Montague & Associates Executive Search Mary Lee Montague, CEO	(312) 543-6460
Caldwell Heather Ring, Partner	(416) 934-2210	Moran Company Bill Moran, President	(855) 883-0464
Campbell & Company Peter Fissinger, President & CEO	(877) 957-0000	Myers McRae Kenny Daugherty, President; Emily Parker Myers, CEO	(478) 330-6222
Carlson Beck Sally Carlson, Managing Partner	(415) 203-5259	N2Growth Kelli Vukelic, CEO	(267) 570-3344
CarterBaldwin Executive Search Price Harding/Bill Petersen, Co-Practice Leaders	(678) 448-0000	NextSearch Elaine Peters, CEO	(949) 400-1132
The Christopher Group Thomas Christopher, CEO	(440) 588-8470	Noetic Search Rhyan Zweifler, President	(312) 863-8577
CohenTaylor Executive Search Chris Cohen, Founding Partner	(612) 354-5760	Odgers Berndtson Steve Potter, CEO	(212) 972-7287
Comhar Partners Bernard Layton, Practice Group Leader	(239) 345-4050	Pena Search Holly Pena, Founder & Principal	(214) 736-8876
Cooper Coleman Johnny Cooper, Founder & Principal	(312) 380-9383	Phillips Oppenheim Debra Oppenheim/Jane Phillips Donaldson, Co-Founders	(212) 953-1770
DRIWaterstone Jennifer Dunlap, Principal & CEO; Nancy Racette, Principal & COO	(703) 294-6684	Pillar Search Cindy Joyce, Founder	(617) 529-7708
DHR Global James Abruzzo, Global Practice Leader	(212) 883-6800	Russell Reynolds Associates Kimberly Archer/Simon Kingston, Co-Practice Leaders	(202) 654-7800
Diversified Search Group/Koya/Grant Cooper Molly Brennan, Managing Partner	(978) 384-1296	Sage Search Partners Paula Fazli, Managing Partner	(617) 290-3922
DRG Search David Edell, President; Dara Klarfield, CEO	(212) 983-1600	Scion Executive Search Isaac Schild, CEO	(917) 525-5044
EFL Associates Nancy Huckaba, VP & Practice Leader; Dan Cummings, SVP	(816) 945-5418	Shelli Herman Associates Shelli Herman, President	(800) 396-0595
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Envision Consulting Allison Fuller/Matt Kamin, Co-Founders	(626) 714-7577	Spencer Stuart Michele Haertel, Consultant	(203) 324-6333
ExecSearches.com F. Jay Hall, Founder & President	(646) 495-1619	Sterling Martin Associates David Martin, CEO & Managing Partner	(202) 327-5485
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Kevin Chase Executive Search Group Kevin Chase, Managing Partner	(323) 930-8948	ZRG Partners Diane Charness, Managing Director	(202) 350-4666

SPOTLIGHT

Non-Profit Recruiting and How its Changed Over the Years



Sam Pettway, a 30-year search veteran, launched **BoardWalk Consulting** in 2002. Over his career in executive search, he has worked with hundreds of board members and leadership teams with entities ranging from start-ups to mature multinationals in both the corporate and non-profit sectors. Mr. Pettway

has served clients as varied as international relief agencies, national foundations, regional trade associations and local agencies in dozens of markets.

BoardWalk Consulting, based in Atlanta, is a national executive search firm that recruits CEOs and senior leadership for mission-driven non-profit organizations. The firm leads executive searches for clients from across the non-profit sector with global, national, regional, and local missions.

Mr. Pettway recently sat down with Hunt Scanlon Media to discuss what is happening today at non-profits and how the sector has evolved over the years.

Sam, how has the non-profit sector changed since you first started recruiting for the sector?

Broadly speaking, everything has become more professionalized as the sector has matured. Early on, we often had to sell the very concept of executive search. Today, even start-up organizations respect the added value of a comprehensive search, and smaller organizations are finding more donors willing to help offset the cost. More importantly, the value of leadership itself has grown in the eyes of boards of directors. As expectations for impact have grown, so too has the willingness to invest in leadership. No one joins a non-profit for the money, but the “sacrificial compensation” that some organizations actually bragged about is pretty much a thing of the past. Lastly, while the need for safety nets will always be with us, more and more organizations are addressing the upstream causes, which by definition requires an actionable strategy.

Can you provide an overview of the state of recruiting senior leaders for the non-profit sector?

These are robust times for non-profit executive search, and demand for superior leadership has never been greater. This will be BoardWalk’s third record year in a row, a reality reported by a number of our fellow practitioners, and the pace of inquiries from clients continues to grow. First-rate leadership is always in demand, but the pandemic highlighted the value of authentic leadership in extraordinary ways. Expectations of non-profit leaders have also grown, as yesterday’s ceiling becomes today’s floor. As we emerge from the pandemic, everyone is exhausted, and yet boards’ expectations of leaders continue to grow. Our non-profit and foundation clients address the most intractable issues of the day, and real progress can be elusive and difficult to measure. This is especially true for organizations tackling issues at the interface.

Climate change and environmental justice, health access and economic mobility, food insecurity and academic achievement – none of these exist in isolation, and all are impacted by diverging views on fairness, equity and opportunity. Add in the changing demographics of an organization’s workforce and the evolving protocols around work itself, and the demands on today’s non-profit executives can feel overwhelming and add further challenges at a time when civil discourse can feel like a lost art.

What types of non-profits are thriving?

We see a bit of a bifurcation. Large, well-established organizations have the constituencies and assets to weather various storms, and yet many leaders (and funders) are attracted to more entrepreneurial initiatives. Organizations that resist mission creep do well, as do those that do not shy away from complexity. Those who embrace diversity and equity in their work and their workforce are doing quite well, as are those addressing publicly perceived challenges (food, housing, climate, veterans, democracy). In our view, ideas and organizations rarely fail for lack of capital, but they frequently fall short for lack of leadership.

“In our view, ideas and organizations rarely fail for lack of capital, but they frequently fall short for lack of leadership.”

Where have you been finding talent for the non-profit sector? Are you looking at corporate executives?

Sometimes, the most innovative and impactful leadership solutions come from outside the client’s immediate sector. For clients receptive to corporate backgrounds, and for corporate executives able to work effectively within the very different culture of non-profits, the match can be beautiful indeed. The beta is definitely higher – Type-A corporate leaders are often flummoxed by the pace and collaborative nature of decision-making in a non-profit – but the rewards can be greater, too. Whether a candidate is from a comparable organization or one far removed from the client’s mission, we’re always looking for adaptive expertise that can be harnessed in compelling ways.

Why is the non-profit sector appealing to senior executives?

The move “from success to significance,” in Bob Burford’s words, holds great appeal to many executives, and the pandemic in particular prompted many to take stock of the alignments of their life goals with their current work. We are in an epic moment of change relative to new generations and new consciousness about the satisfactions and requirements of new career choices. At BoardWalk, we believe in hybrid careers, in which people may engage in different work at different life intervals. While the demands of the non-profit sector can be daunting indeed, the opportunities for impact, for leveraging expertise, wisdom, and passion in new contexts can be thrilling.

SPOTLIGHT

What Types of Leaders Do Non-Profits Seek



Vetted Solutions specializes in helping purpose-driven organizations in all aspects of leadership – from defining their leadership needs and requirements, to developing entire teams of loyal, dedicated high-performers, and everything in between. Jim Zaniello is president and founder of the Washington, D.C.-based

firm which focuses on serving the leadership needs of associations, non-profit organizations, hospitality and destination marketing industries nationwide.

In this interview, Mr. Zaniello provides his first-hand perspective on the current state of recruiting for non-profit organizations and his expectations for the future.

Jim, how has your past experience at non-profits helped you in your executive search career?

Because I have worked within the association and non-profit sector, I have deep appreciation for the impact of organizations that help advance industries, professions, causes, and communities. It was exciting, rewarding work then and why I feel so strongly about recruiting talented leaders for the industry now. I have sat in the CEO seat, run communications and other departments, and serve on non-profit boards even today, which gives me a unique perspective I bring to our clients. I have real-world understanding of what it's like to be in their shoes and feel a true connectedness to their success.

What are some challenges facing non-profits today?

Possibly the No.1 challenge faced by non-profits today is how to adapt their business models to succeed tomorrow, especially in a world that has changed so dramatically over the past few years. These adaptations span from how they handle finance, IT, and marketing – in some instances moving to a shared services approach with other related organizations. Second, donors, who in some respects have more money to give, are even more selective when it comes to where they invest in organizations. The workforce pipeline also has been a challenge for some time now. When it comes to DEIA, some organizations are very advanced in their journeys, yet many still struggle with how to effectively engage their publics in a more meaningfully inclusive way. Lastly, as we start to see more organizations serving the same space, conversations are underway about potential mergers.

When searching for senior executives for clients in this sector, where do you look for candidates?

The short answer is that we look everywhere that a qualified candidate might be found. We do a lot of CEO search work, as well as hiring for communications and government relations executives. For each of these three areas, we start within the association and non-profit sectors; yet, we also search intensely into the professional verticals. For example, we look to communications and public relations firms, government affairs shops, on Capitol Hill, and

within the corporate sector. We are finding that making a move to the non-profit industry is appealing for corporate executives, particularly for those who are interested in aligning their work with their passions. This is happening more than ever before.

Compared to other industries how does the non-profit sector fare in terms of diversity and inclusion?

Because the non-profit sector is mission-driven and community based, we find that the sector tends to be more diverse than others in terms of personnel. Similarly at the board of directors level. That said, I think we would all agree there is so much more work to do to ensure a truly inclusive world.

How has your search process changed with the pandemic behind us, are you traveling as much as before the pandemic? Do you think these changes are here to stay?

We're still using technology as much as we did during the height of the pandemic. Technology allows us to move more people quickly through the interview process and certainly helps clients as well. Yes, I am back to traveling as much as pre-pandemic, largely to be with clients at the meetings our clients attend. I absolutely think the technological and other changes are here to stay and also think the executive search community has a responsibility to champion what comes next to advance the hiring and retention of top talent. We shouldn't simply go back to business as usual but continue to find new ways to help clients review and assess talent to take them into the future.

What is the pace of recruiting senior leaders for non-profits?

The pace of recruiting of senior leaders within the non-profit sector is strong. Boards are looking for innovative and entrepreneurial CEOs to lead their organizations through and beyond the times we're living and operating in today. CEOs are seeking talented leadership teams, including experienced and forward-thinking communications executives to help shape and tell their stories to the audiences that matter most to them. They're also looking to add well-connected and strategic government relations executives who can lead the advancement of their industries' interests on Capitol Hill and state legislatures. Prolific fundraisers who are able to identify and convert donors are also highly sought after so that organizations can deliver the services their missions dictate. The business, cultural, and political climates we are all experiencing right now make these positions more critical than ever

Are non-profits thriving?

So many different types of non-profits are thriving right now because their missions are extremely relevant to help identifying and providing solutions to the nation's many challenges. The first type that comes to mind are trade associations, membership organizations that work on behalf of industries, their partners, and supporters. Among many other things, trade associations advance their members' ability to conduct

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business, ensure the public and other stakeholders understand why the industry is important, and encourage their professionals to use share their skills to benefit others. Second, professional societies are thriving, particularly in the scientific and health and medical communities, but really they are succeeding across the board. This type of non-profit brings members of a profession together to share knowledge and develop tools and resources to share that knowledge all over the world. For example, when a new medical breakthrough is discovered, the society would find qualified individuals to share the information with members of the profession globally. Third, we have seen an increased need for direct support organizations, ones that help people in their communities every day solve a particular problem. While there has always been a need for these types of organizations, today, for many reasons, they are even more crucial to our society's well-being.

Why are mission-driven organizations appealing for candidates?

Mission-driven organizations have become even more attractive places to work today due to having a purpose-driven focus, a meaningful and enduring reason for being that aligns with long-term needs of communities. Non-profits have always been attractive places to work and provide senior executives with the ability to do work that matters to them and people they serve. Working for a non-profit provides people with the chance to work with other talented, educated professionals who have come together through a common bond and mindset to make a direct impact on a particular population in need of service. Mid- and senior-level corporate executives see the value of their skills help others in many ways – from growing visibility for a profession, to more direct service to a population of people don't have access to what they need to thrive.

Can you share some searches you have recently completed or are currently conducting?

We are proud to be helping the San Francisco LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired replace an iconic leader who is retiring. The organization provides education, training, advocacy, and community for blind individuals in California and around the world. The LightHouse is one of the largest and most established comprehensive blindness organizations in North America, with a wide variety of programs to suit a wide variety of needs, as well as a rich network of blindness advocates and professionals. We are helping National Institute of Building Sciences replace their CEO and vice president of operations. NIBS serves as an interface between government and the private sector – one that serves as a resource to those who plan, design, procure, construct, use, operate, maintain, renovate, and retire physical facilities. They bring together experts from throughout the building industry, design, architecture, construction, and government and lead conversations to ensure buildings and communities remain safe and seek consensus solutions to mutual problems of concern. We are conducting a search to find the head of HR for the American Geophysical Union which aims to advance discovery and solution science that accelerate knowledge and create solutions that are ethical, unbiased, and respectful of communities and their values.



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5 Tips for Launching a Second Career in Non-Profit

The pandemic has left many people recalibrating their career choices. Americans quit 4.5 million jobs in March – a record. Some are burned out; others want more purposeful work. Whatever their reasons may be, many employees are looking at transitioning into a second career, experts say. “There might be some initial hiccups but finding a new line of work isn’t impossible,” said Brendan Gallagher, a managing consultant in **Korn Ferry’s** non-profit and higher education practice. “If you’re leveraging the skill-sets that you have into something different, it can work really well.” A new report from Korn Ferry offers some tips to get started.

Go Soul Searching

Before jumping into a second career, spend some time on self-reflection, says the study. “Being intentional and developing clarity about what motivates and energizes you, as well as the area in which you want to work, should be the first step you take,” said Lemise Dajani, associate principal for leadership development at Korn Ferry. It’s a crucial factor that often gets overlooked. “Create that north star, that vision of what you’re looking for,” she said, “and use that as an anchor for anything else that you do.”

Network with Everyone

Like all career-related matters, networking is key. The Korn Ferry report recommends that you connect with your current peers, senior leaders, coaches, and recruiters. “Have conversations with your colleagues, both internally and externally, to get the wheels turning on what you want to do,” said Mr. Gallagher. “If you’re switching to a new field or industry, conduct informational interviews to learn more about the required skill-sets and the types of roles and challenges you might face. If you’re making a big transition, it’s important to know what you’re stepping into and be prepared for the challenges.”

Revamp Your Resume

The Korn Ferry report says that you can revise your resume to align it with your intended new position or industry. “Create two to three versions of your resume based on the broader areas you might be interested in,” said David Power, a principal at Korn Ferry’s global fintech, blockchain, and crypto practice. “You always want to curate your resume based on the position or industry you’re going to,” he said. Highlight existing skills that may be applicable in the new industry and job. Additionally, leverage your cover letter to elaborate on any projects or experiences that can transfer to your new field of work.”

Position Your Brand

“Think about how you can sell yourself; you need to rebrand yourself and tell a story that promotes areas relevant to your switch,” said Ms. Dajani. “Talk about yourself differently and connect the dots for people, because it may not be obvious,” she said. “Identify transferable skills, be adaptable, and position yourself as someone who can fill an existing gap,” said Mr. Power. “If you’re a senior executive, he adds, you can get involved in boards and find companies in emerging industries that are scaling: Typically, they’ll need people who’ve had long careers with bigger, more established companies to advise them.”

Replacing a Longtime, Non-Profit CEO

Many a search firm has encountered the following scene, probably more than once: A frantic board chair or search committee member calls because their esteemed founder and long-tenured leader (LTL) has decided to retire. The organization has no succession plan or otherwise strong internal candidates so they must engage a search firm.

"It is never easy to replace a founder or otherwise LTL," said **BroadView Talent Partners** in a new report. "This is typically someone who many consider a legend, a leader with a distinguished career, remarkable body of work and legacy of profound impact. Accordingly, boards of directors must navigate a sometimes unenviable duality that includes exiting the retiring chief executive officer with grace, professionalism, and respect, while partnering with the search firm to recruit the right leader at this stage of the organization's life cycle. The process requires empathy, inclusivity, transparency, common sense, and foresight."

Over the years, BroadView Talent Partners has observed that a lack of cohesive succession or transition planning tends to make these situations decidedly more difficult. "Even when an LTL attempts to groom a successor, they don't always do so in alignment with the board or the organization's strategic plan," said the search firm. "Thus, even if an internal candidate emerges at the 11th hour, it is highly unlikely that the internal candidate will be championed by the board."

While an organization's search for a new CEO or executive director may prove challenging, opportunity exists, said the search firm, and putting into place a few simple best practices will build the framework for success.

A Window of Opportunity

For starters, organizations must manage the perception that "We'll never find anyone as great as our LTL." BroadView Talent Partners says this assertion is nothing more than FEAR – False Evidence Appearing Real – and is absolutely not true. "No one is irreplaceable," the firm said. "For every CEO search, there is always a cohort of 'interested and qualified' candidates. Moreover, in many instances, when you look closely at the last five years of the LTL's work, you will note a diminishment in overall performance, creativity, and innovation. This natural phenomena opens a window of opportunity, making the case for the change management and strategic vision that a new leader will need to bring."

Boards must take a good, hard look at the needs of the organization today and into the future, identifying what the new leader must tackle to take the organization to another level. "In particular, the board committees must assess the organization's weaknesses, opportunities, and threats," said the search firm. "Doing so will provide the bases for the 'must-have' competencies, characteristics, skills, and attributes that they seek in a new leader."

Being objective, fair, and open minded about the challenges the organization faces is critical. "While it's okay to be deferential to the legacy, leadership, and ac-

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accomplishments of the LTL, now is the time to craft a message both internally and externally that a new era of leadership is needed," said BroadView Talent Partners. "It is the board's job to make this happen."

It is also best to avoid creating a new strategic plan within one year of hiring a new CEO. New leaders do not wish to inherit a strategy plan; instead, they should be a part of developing it. "They are excited about their ability to bring a fresh perspective and vision to an organization that has only had an LTL," said BroadView Talent Partners. "Ultimately, this will invigorate the organization, providing an opportunity for positive change."

"Boards must take a good, hard look at the needs of the organization today and into the future, identifying what the new leader must tackle to take the organization to another level. In particular, the board committees must assess the organization's weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Doing so will provide the bases for the 'must-have' competencies, characteristics, skills, and attributes that they seek in a new leader."

Taking a Back Seat

Before the search is launched, says BroadView Talent Partners, organizations should conduct extensive stakeholder interviews. These include but are not limited to board members and direct reports as well as funders, elected officials, strategic partners, and sponsors.

BroadView Talent Partners also advises against allowing the LTL to be involved in the final decision making and selection process. While it's understood that LTLs have a vested interest in who will succeed them, they should in no way get to choose the successor or otherwise serve on the search committee, the search firm said. "In fact, the LTL must take a back seat during the search so that candidates can be duly engaged and cultivated," the firm said. "No candidate wants the LTL to be a visible part of the interview or selection process. However, it is appropriate for the search firm to include the LTL in their stakeholder interviews at the outset of the search, and integrate them into one-on-one meetings with the two finalist candidates. There needs to be a strength of conviction from both the board's executive and search committees to honor and respect these boundaries."

Founded in 2015, BroadView Talent Partners is a national executive search firm dedicated to placing leadership in affordable housing agencies, non-profit organizations, and associations, as well as middle market companies. The firm provides clients with a national network, commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a record of long-tenured placements. Its specialties include executive search, talent acquisition, retention solutions, career management, executive coaching, and board development.

Non-Profit Recruiting in the News...

Diversified Search Group | Koya Partners Tapped by the Washington Research Library Consortium to Find New Leader



Diversified Search Group | Koya Partners has been called in by the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC) to lead its search for a new executive director. Spearheading the assignment

are managing director Beth Schaefer and senior search associate Marisa Chock. The firm seeks a dynamic, creative leader to provide innovative and thoughtful leadership, and to advance the mission of this member-driven not-for-profit organization composed of nine libraries in the greater Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. This leader will partner with consortium libraries to maximize opportunities for resource sharing, collaboration, and advocacy. Candidates should have an entrepreneurial spirit and show a strong commitment to exploring all ideas that are brought to the table.

McDermott + Bull Recruits CEO for the Chicano Federation

McDermott + Bull has placed Elizabeth Ramirez as the new chief executive officer of the Chicano Federation in San Diego, CA. The search was completed by McDermott + Bull partner Sue Waterbury. "Elizabeth's passion and voice for the underserved



will serve as a guiding light as the organization seeks to expand its impact and increase the visibility of its programs throughout greater San Diego County," the organization said. Ms. Ramirez previously served as chief impact officer at Promises2Kids, an organization providing support for foster children in San Diego County. She was raised on both sides of the border in the Imperial Valley and comes from a low-income, immigrant, and first-generation household. "Her passion and voice for the underserved will serve as a guiding light as the organization seeks to expand its impact and increase the visibility of its programs throughout greater San Diego County," said the Chicano Federation.

Moran Company Seeking CEO for the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement



The Moran Company, an executive recruitment firm that specializes in the non-profit sector, has been enlisted to find a new chief executive officer for the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement (CLM),

a social and emotional learning program. Scarlett Lewis, who founded the organization shortly after her six-year-old son, Jesse, was murdered during the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012, will be stepping down from the top leadership role. Senior search consultant Gretchen Kunkel is leading the assignment for the search firm. The Choose Love Movement seeks a seasoned, highly skilled, and collaborative leader to take the organization and movement to the next level, said The Moran Company.

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...More Non-Profit Recruiting in the News

Greenwich Harbor Partners Assists in Recruitment of New CEO for the Mitchell Institute



Greenwich Harbor Partners recently assisted in the recruitment of Jared Cash as the new president and CEO of the Mitchell Institute, a Maine non-profit founded by George J. Mitchell, a former

U.S. senator from Maine, with the goal of improving college outcomes for students from the state. He replaces Meg Baxter who announced her plans to retire earlier this year after leading the Mitchell Institute for 10 years. "We are very pleased to welcome Jared as the new leader of the Mitchell Institute," said Mr. Mitchell, founder and honorary chair of the institute board. "His deep commitment to Maine and its students, extensive knowledge of the education landscape, and strong belief in our mission makes him the right person to continue the success of the organization in supporting scholars and improving communities."

CarterBaldwin Assists M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust with CEO Search



**M.J. Murdock
CHARITABLE TRUST**

Following a national search, **CarterBaldwin Executive Search** has helped to place Microsoft executive Romanita Hairston as CEO of the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust in Vancouver, WA. The assignment was led by partner Andrea McDaniel Smith and consultant Ted Wieber. "Romanita brings a robust leadership profile that is uniquely suited to the mission and work of the Murdock Trust," said trustee Jeff Pinneo. In conducting the search, CarterBaldwin engaged hundreds of candidates from across the non-profit and for-profit spectrum. Murdock Trust said it was Ms. Hairston's unique collection of experience providing leadership in the non-profit, for-profit, and philanthropic sectors, coupled with deep roots in the Pacific Northwest, that elevated Ms. Hairston as the ideal candidate to lead the Murdock Trust.

Kevin Chase Executive Search Group Seeks Leader for Stepping Stone of San Diego



Los Angeles-based **Kevin Chase Executive Search Group** has been enlisted to find the next executive director for Stepping Stone of San Diego, a non-profit drug and alcohol recovery center that provides inpatient, outpatient, and transitional living programs

for the LGBTQ+ and HIV communities. Cheryl Houk, who served two stints as executive director, the latest lasting seven years, is retiring. Leading the assignment are Kevin Chase, managing partner, and Catie DiFelice, senior consultant. The California-based non-profit's new executive director will take on the organization's primary operating and oversight responsibility and will be expected to work closely with board, staff, and community partners, said the search firm.