

Vermont Global Exchange Fourth Call – Dec 8, 2011

How to Reach Millennials for Mission and Donating?

Present: Nina Meyerhof, Rick Peyser, Megan Camp, Ann Martin, Karen Diop (Director of Development at PH International invited by Ann), Curtis Koren, Fran Stoddard, Craig Smith, Stuart Comstock-Gay, Tom McMakin, Jackie McMakin.

Good news from Curtis Koren: Our program was run under the Sharon Academy 501c3. Now teaming up with The Mountain School. Incorporated as LC3 organization. Easier than 501c3. This form started in Vermont. Will probably link back with Sharon Academy to do one specific thing. Will also link with other schools and colleges. Expanding. The team we've assembled has lots of expertise. Tom has an article on the **LC3 form**.

Curtis: Our audience is all young people. We oldsters are not as adept at social media as we should be. Sending things out via email doesn't always work. Looking at how to be better at social media.

Stuart: A new language we need to learn. Social media as a second language. We don't understand what we don't understand. Makes it difficult to understand. It's not enough to say we'll do a few things. We need to really understand. **Young people in our organizations can help us understand and lead us in this if we ask them to do this.** Fortune 500 company partners senior execs with new employees whose job is to teach them new ways of learning about the world.

Fran: I have heard that if you have young people look at your org they can be incredibly helpful.

Stuart: Our people were at Tuck class that looked at our operation and said, "Why the hell are you not on Facebook?" Within a week, we had our Facebook page up.

Ann: We've been on a fast track using these tools. A lot driven by young people we work with across the world. Students asked for Facebook and other platforms to talk with and learn together. **We've hired staff who speak that language fluently.** Have listened closely in terms of how we reach out and build community using digital tools. **Elizabeth Metraux** is one of our staffers skilled at this. We've learned that there is a consulting/training market in Vermont for how to do this. **We are open to talking with anyone who is interested in contracting for services.**

Rick: We have a pretty strong presence with Facebook. Difficult to measure impact of presence yet.

Karen: Another social media tool that is being used by orgs is **UTube**. Millennials pass this around a lot.

Megan: **UTube Social Media Revolution**. UTube the largest search engine. Been using Facebook quite a while. Have seen payback. Moved from print, to mail, to email. 40% of members – don't have email accounts. A number of young friends of the farm. Fellowship program with young people – that's the way they communicate. You have to balance it – an endless amount of time you can spend.

Nina: Young people are using UTubes. I have a sense that with Facebook there will be different parameters. Looking for **websites that are interactive, as short as possible, 1, 2, 3**. We are creating a **core of young people who will take over stewardship of Children of the Earth**. They are interested in open space, never know where it is going, always evolving – not interested in hierarchy. We are working on how we are part of a global face.

Megan: Importance of openness and inclusivity. No centralized power.

Ann: **Caution. That kind of openness can create danger for young people we're working with**. We're always trying to balance the vision of openness with the importance of educating kids and getting parental permission. The more you get into programmatic activities, it gets complicated. Political implications. Creates a risk.

Karen: Azerbaijan. Has a big brother aspect to culture. Kids and parents participated in an on-line program with kids from countries at war. Journalists were sent to jail. Parents and staff became afraid. Also related to age – you don't want to put younger kids at risk.

Fran: Could not have Israelis present in Mid East consultation. The org I worked with couldn't take the risk.

Tom: Who has experience using social media to drive fund raising?

Rick: Two years ago started investigating orgs that provide potable water to countries. One org was **Charity Water**. Visit their website. Started by a bar tender who was being paid \$2000 a week to mention certain brands. Went to Brazil and the level of poverty changed him. Took a hospital ship as a photographer and found that many diseases caused by poor water. Started Charity Water. **Raise a lot of funds on line through social media**.

We ended up working with Water for People. They have lower key approach. Monitor systems 9 years after installation.

Karen: We're using social media as a tool for building our community for the ultimate purpose of getting some money from them. Still in the community/engagement phase. One of the challenges for longer term larger scale programs, easier to raise funds for discrete actions than for softer work that PH is involved with.

Tom: Several talked about young people wanting individual projects that they can run and be accountable for, but that doesn't undergird the overall mission.

Stuart: The funding community are long past days from when people gave money and trusted beneficiaries to run with ball. **Now interested in specific outcomes, more tangible, seeing something specific happen.** Harder to build cadre of donors who trust you.

Tom: Be high touch and de-centralized in funding but how to have an organization that supports those projects?

Ann: Georgia. Central goal: improve teaching of civics and engagement in community. Having a lot of success with – **Georgia Initiative** – an on line site that involves thousands of students. They are posting projects on line. Businesses are connecting with them with resources to support – with money or people who can help.

Huge success with this.

That type of strategy is a gateway opportunity for people to think of their role and use on line tools to further it. People in Georgia very excited by this.

Craig: Were you using the model of the cooperative of sharing overhead expenses?

Ann: Hired **David Nassar** to give you advice on social media. Did the first ever social media conference in the Caucasus. Came to Board retreat. International consultant. **Hot Spot Media.** Helped MeetUp in Obama Campaign. Developed a strategic plan incorporating social media. Talked about challenges and opportunities. Left our board thinking it is a priority – how use social media to support our mission, not eating up time/resources but get good results. Have a lot more work to do it. Have been learning about social media in program side, but how to use it for organizational development – we're learning.

Karen: **When you have a strategy designed to meet certain outcomes, allow outcomes to help decide what tools, how measure progress.**

Stuart: Tempting to think that social media is an end; **it's a means to an end.** Just do a blog. Not thinking **what's the strategy and outcome we hope to get from a blog.**

Ann: Offices in 5 overseas countries. When one of our offices says it wants to set up Facebook presence, we require **an application process to answer:** Why, how manage, key questions.

Curtis: **KickStarter.** Frustrated with filling out applications. KickStarter crowd funding. Looking for arts ideas, not social change ideas. Get inspired everytime I look at this. They are raising large amounts. You send in a video to apply. A sparkly way to raise money. I'm intrigued by it. **A great piece in the Times about it.**

Karen: My nephew is raising money to make his first album

Curtis: Grilled cheese picture of Jesus into sandwich.

Nina: What is the key to engaging young people in projects and programs. Our whole org is by and for youth. When I go to India, I work with a young person who may go with us. **Give the platform to the young people so they are empowered to be the voice, to realize their visions, to live a life of commitment.**

Fran: Next step. **This generation wants to make a difference. Give them something to make their lives meaningful.** They'll be all over it.

A number of things going on:

A data base 100 orgs doing work abroad, where they are working.
Valuable for state to understand what we're doing.
How have a physical presence.

Our Face to Face meeting will be exciting. ISC will share lessons learned on finding your organizational niche, board effectiveness including fund raising, non-traditional partnerships, and relationship building.

Stuart Comstock-Gay of the Vermont Community Foundation will lead a next steps conversation:

- Continued best practice exchange
- Common web, print presence
- Building a common organizational presence – an alliance, coalition
- Common data base
- Supportive relationship with state and congressional offices
- Media attention

Invited guests to include government representatives, reps from our two sister networks, and the intern creating our data base.

Many thanks to Tom and PIE for giving us an incredible gift, helping us link together, and helping us to share our questions and best ideas.