

## Leave a Legacy: Changing the Legacy Paradigm in Your Community

Following the initial effort by the National Planned Giving Council (now Partners for Philanthropic Planning) and MPGC (Minnesota Planned Giving Council) to remind community members of the importance of thinking of community when making their estate plan, much of the initial effort disappeared – except for several of our mid-size Minnesota communities where that initial effort resulted in groups of like-minded Attorneys, CPAs, Financial Planners, Development Officers, Planned Giving Officers and Nonprofit Organizations continued to meet on the topic and formed on-going groups.

LEAVE A LEGACY<sup>®</sup> Mankato Area was one of those groups. In fact, the Mankato group was forming at the same time as the first launch of LAL-MN program. This out-state effort began because a few visionary community leaders and professionals understood there was a potential opportunity for a unified effort to encourage philanthropy.

LEAVE A LEGACY<sup>®</sup> is about changing how people think when it is their time to have a will written and develop an estate plan. This planning effort is something that many large nonprofit organizations with development personnel and a few professional advisors do on a regular basis. The opportunity for MPGC is to now bring the Leave A Legacy concept to all communities, including the small rural areas.

### Suggested Check List for Discussion & Organization of LEAVE A LEGACY<sup>®</sup> Chapter

- ❖ Requirement to have an official LEAVE A LEGACY<sup>®</sup> chapter you must either establish status as a Planned Giving Council or seek sponsorship by **Minnesota Planned Giving Council**.
- ❖ Important to understand that MN Planned Giving Council Leave a Legacy Committee functions as a resource (as needed). It does NOT organize, plan or direct your local efforts and programs.
- ❖ LEAVE A LEGACY<sup>®</sup> chapters do NOT become a registered 501C(3) organization (national requirement)
- ❖ Use the MPGC leave a legacy website as a resource, especially “how to” questions.

### BEGINNING

#### Develop a Task Force

Contact individuals from your community that perhaps have a significant role in planned giving and can see the potential benefits of education efforts. A task force evolves when colleagues, visiting about the opportunity in legacy giving decide the idea is worth exploring.

#### Seek Community Input & Support

Share the idea and a vision. Reach out and involve persons from nonprofit organizations, professional advisors, the pastoral community, donors and potential sponsors. Take time for personal visits. Be inclusive and recognize that not everyone will see the opportunity that you do.

#### Seek Input From Other LAL Chapters & Foundations

Be sure to make contact with other MN community LAL chapters and community foundations in your area for ideas and suggestions. They are a valuable resource and can share their experiences and lessons learned.

### Make a Decision to Move Forward

After a thorough discussion and evaluation within task force and with community leaders regarding the need, effectiveness and potential support for a LAL chapter; then make that important decision to begin the official planning process.

## **ORGANIZE**

### Establish Executive Board & Purpose Statement

- Establish relationship with Minnesota Planned Giving Council
- Establish official LAL Chapter Name & Logo for community program
- Establish goals for chapter which included calendar of activities, meeting schedule & program assignments
- Confirm location for programs & events
- Identify board members, terms and balanced representation between nonprofit and professional members

### Consider a Program Coordinator

- Create a job description and determine if this is a volunteer or paid position
- Experience tells us that there must be that one person who makes sure things get done and are coordinated.
- Search for this candidate who has organizational skills and a passion for the community.
- Establish appropriate compensation for paid staff (as appropriate)

### Develop Budget & Sources of Income

- Create an annual budget and projected source of income
- Establish a Fiscal Agent (Important Priority because LAL chapters do not have 501C(3) status)
- Establish on-going sources of income through membership fees, event sponsorships and donations for specific startup expenses, advertising, printing etc.

## **MARKETING**

- Schedule Informational Meetings to promote the establishment of LAL Chapter
- Market Membership - Benefits & Educational Opportunities
- Create a Program Schedule – Seek membership input for topics and frequency preference. Consider a printed calendar-of-events for membership on annual basis.
- Develop Informational Brochure - Specific to your community that explains, educates and promotes planned giving ideas.

- Develop a Communication Plan and utilize local media (newspaper, radio, TV, service Clubs, etc)

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- Seek “Donor Stories” which are a great educational and marketing tool for LAL Chapter as well as the nonprofit organizations.
- Encourage Membership to use the LAL Chapter Logo (be sure it is in compliance) which is registered and planned giving messages in their publications.
- Consider establishing a Website for your LAL Chapter and be sure to utilize the ‘Link-In’ option with the MPGC’s LAL-MN website.
- Maintain Communication & Relationship with MPGC by providing information about LAL Chapter and utilizing possible LAL-MN resources.
- Register your LAL Chapter with National Planned Giving Organization

## SECRETS TO SUCCESS

Every community is different relative to sophistication and resources. We will learn from each other.

- **LEAVE A LEGACY<sup>®</sup> Mankato Area** (a mid-sized community) has a remarkable history of commitment by members, executive board members and a program coordinator. There is a positive commitment of a number of successful professional advisors who continue to be involved and to sharing their expertise because they care about the community, the LAL mission and the potential benefit of planned giving for the future.
- **Springfield, MN** (a very small community of SW Minnesota) works together well. Leadership in the community has been discussing and now looking at the opportunities for a possible LAL chapter in their community. They have a core group/task force exploring in more detail what a LAL chapter would look like in Springfield. Two members attended the annual Mankato LAL meeting in January 2015, invited the Mankato program coordinator to a meeting to share information and now brainstorming to decide how to make the concept work in their community given the number of professional advisors in their area. Key items being discussed are the following:
  - Are there geographically close communities that could partner in this LAL effort?
  - What would our organizational structure look like?
  - How can they access educational programs from another LAL community chapter and/or the LAL-MN program efforts?
- **St. James, MN** (a very small community in South Central MN) is looking to September or October to gather interested parties on possibilities of forming a LAL Chapter in their community.

## “BUILDING vs MAINTAINING”

The success of each individual LAL Chapter and their program efforts will be based on commitment of board members, financial support, appropriate educational programs and most important, membership interest and participation!