Introduction

IN 2007, THE FORAKER GROUP worked with the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at The University of Alaska Anchorage to develop the first comprehensive study of the nonprofit sector’s impact on the Alaska economy. In 2010, the second study was completed and published in early 2011. A precedent was set. Foraker is now committed to monitoring the nonprofit impact on the economy, philanthropy and public policy every three years, using the best available data and our own analysis to help sector leaders address current concerns as well as plan for the future.

This study confirms that nonprofits are adapting to a shifting world—leaders are more aware of and taking action in the environment that has developed since the 2008 recession. This “new normal” continues to evolve, and we see many Alaska nonprofits transforming their strategies and structures to collectively carry out the missions that serve the state. We celebrate and highlight a few stories in this report where nonprofits have explored new structures and partnered to achieve greater community impact than any one of them could achieve on their own.

It’s critical that policy makers—and nonprofit leaders themselves—understand the positive impact of the sector not only on communities, but also on the overall Alaska economy. A major purpose of this report is to give all of us the knowledge we need to tell our story of broad community impact.

We encourage you to read the report, and then decide how you can use the information to make your voice stronger as you work with other nonprofits, business, and government leaders. We play an important role in creating and sustaining healthy communities in Alaska—and we have important stories to share.

Dennis G. McMillian
President and CEO, The Foraker Group

GOALS OF THIS REPORT

Validate nonprofit economic impact to inform public policy through greater understanding and appreciation of the sector.

Activate nonprofit board and staff leaders to use the information to educate, inspire, and connect.

Monitor trends to assist nonprofits to effectively plan and make informed decisions using the Foraker Nonprofit Sustainability Model*.

*For more information on the Foraker Nonprofit Sustainability Model, please go to our website—www.forakergroup.org—and click on Sustainability Model on the home page.
Why are nonprofits important in Alaska?

We are part of everyday life – your electric company, centers for artistic expression, and religious congregations.

We fill the gap between government services and critical community needs – your preschool, health care provider, and pet rescue service.

We bring activities to our citizens in ways that aren’t supported by commercial endeavors – your civic associations, grassroots movements, and political parties.

We are at the forefront of building communities, creating change, and driving innovation.

When we combine our work to focus on the greater good and our impact on the economy, we become a powerful and influential voice on important public issues. The more we understand and can articulate this, the more support we will gather to create meaningful impact in our community.

Bring the Kids Home
ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST

Imagine having a child with severe emotional challenges. And imagine having to send your child to another state to get help. That was the situation for many families until 2004 when a group of Alaska nonprofit organizations, working with the Alaska Mental Health Trust (AMHTA), initiated Bring the Kids Home. Today, because of Bring the Kids Home, the picture is vastly better. The number of children sent to other states for care has dropped dramatically. More kids are being treated in Alaska, where they are close to their families and communities. Parents have more opportunity to participate in their children’s care, and treatment programs are better able to reflect the cultures of the families that need help.

– Jeff Jessee
CEO, AMHTA
Gathering the data for this study

While this is Foraker’s most comprehensive study to date, and we better understand how to compute and use the data, consistency and timeliness of the data continue to be a concern—not just to us but also to organizations around the country that conduct similar research. One consistent set of relevant data from the same source simply does not exist. For example, as in previous reports, we made allowances to ensure all Alaska nonprofits were included in the study, going so far as purchasing the complete file of Alaska 990s so we could better analyze data and assure no organization was missed. By doing this, we immediately discovered a glaring omission from the State of Alaska statistics. Our largest nonprofit organization—Providence Health and Services—is not included because it is registered with the State of Washington.

We are confident that we are using the best and most trusted sources available, both for raw data and research from the field. Those sources include the IRS, State of Alaska, U.S. Census Bureau, Chronicle of Philanthropy, Giving USA, National Center for Charitable Statistics, BoardSource, and the Institute of Social and Economic Research at UAA.

Surprises, insights, reflections

• Nonprofits have a significant, positive impact on the economy—especially in Alaska.
• The more rural the area, the more significant the impact.
• The trends we predicted in our last study—a funding crisis and the “crash of the herd”—came true faster than we expected.
• Organizations are effectively creating new structures and we need to continue working better together.
• Boards, CEOs and community decision-makers have a vital role in sharing this knowledge.
• On average, Alaskans now give at the same rate as the rest of the country.

90% by 2020
United Way of Anchorage

A 90% high school graduation rate by 2020 is a commitment by highly engaged business, education, community, and nonprofit leaders to ensure Anchorage children and youth are ready, successful, and prepared for life. Harnessing the resolve of the whole community, 90% by 2020 partners are taking action to identify, improve, and align the practices and policies that lead to improved outcomes, for every child, every step of the way. Key to our strategy is creating a common definition of success—a process that took time but will let us know we are headed in the right direction.

– Michele Brown
President and CEO,
United Way of Anchorage
The economic impact of Alaska nonprofits is significant

Alaska’s nonprofit sector accounts for **$6.5 billion in direct expenditures**. **$4.4 billion** is generated by charitable nonprofits, or 501(c)(3) organizations. **$2.1 billion** comes from other 501(c) organizations.

The sector employs **39,000 people**—or 12% of the state’s workforce—an increase of 7,000 from 2010. Nationally, the nonprofit sector makes up 10.6% of the workforce.

By comparison, in its December 2013 Alaska Economic Trends, the state reports that in Alaska local government accounts for 43,000 direct jobs; state government for 26,400 jobs; the federal government for 14,100 jobs; oil and gas for 14,700 jobs; and seafood processing for 10,600 direct jobs.
Charitable nonprofits reflect a variety of missions

Our sector is diverse—with nonprofits working on a broad range of missions. When most people think about nonprofits, they focus on the 501(c)(3)s—or charitable nonprofits with missions like health care, arts and culture, conservation, human services, animal welfare and many others. We will focus on this portion of the 501(c) spectrum later in this report.

However, it’s important to also note the other types of nonprofits because they, too, are important contributors to the economy. This study includes data on every type of 501(c), or IRS approved nonprofit.

Figure 1 represents 501(c)(4) and 501(c)(6) classifications. Organizations like Rotary Clubs, civic leagues, employee associations, and groups that promote social welfare make up the 501(c)(4) category. The 501(c)(6) category is primarily made up of business leagues like chambers of commerce. Both are economic drivers in our communities.

As seen in Figure 2, even more dramatic is the revenue generated by three other classifications of nonprofits—federal credit unions, power and telephone companies, and life insurance trusts. These organizations represent just 1% of total nonprofits, yet generate 27% of the sector’s revenue.
Economic impact extends beyond direct jobs and revenue

As with all economic studies, we calculated the direct, indirect, and induced impacts of wages and salaries on the broader economy. Focusing on the nonprofit sector, the direct impact indicates specific numbers that are a result of nonprofit expenditures in the local economy. Indirect impacts represent increases in jobs or sales in businesses that support the beneficiaries of nonprofit direct expenditures. Induced impact represents the multiplier effect caused by successive rounds of spending throughout the economy as a result of a nonprofit’s direct and indirect expenditures.

Using these standard economic indicators, the total employment impact is 63,000 people—or 19% of the Alaska workforce.

The total impact from wages and salaries is $2.5 billion. We are certain that if more complete data were available on overall sector expenditures, the impact of all nonprofit economic activity would be significantly larger.

Once again as we see in Figure 3, Alaska nonprofits have a significant economic impact.
The sector continues to outpace Alaska and the U.S. in GDP and workforce growth

The Alaska Nonprofit Sector

is growing at a faster rate any way you measure it, which is clear in Figure 4.

In Alaska, nonprofit sector revenue is an important part of the state’s GDP, making up 12% of the total. This compares to the national average where the sector makes up just 5.5% of GDP.

A much stronger impact is evident in revenue growth from 2007 to 2013. With growth from $3.5 billion in 2007 to $6.5 billion in 2013, the sector’s impact increased by 86%.

Figure 5 shows a similar pattern in the nonprofit workforce. At 12% of total employment, the sector exceeds the U.S. average of 10.6% and outpaces overall growth in the Alaska workforce.

Nonprofit sector jobs grew from 30,000 in 2007 to 39,000 in 2013—a 30% increase—while jobs in the state as a whole increased by only 7.5%. As is also shown in Figure 5, the majority of jobs in the sector are in the health care field.

**Figure 4**
Nonprofit revenue growth exceeds Alaska and U.S. rates

**Alaska GDP**

- 2007: $3.5 billion (15%)
- 2011: $4.5 billion (29%)
- 2013: $6.5 billion (44%)

**Total Alaska nonprofit revenue**
- $51.1 billion (15%)
- $51.5 billion (1%)

**U.S. Average**
- $6 billion (5.5%)

**Figure 5**
Growth in nonprofit workforce is accelerating

**Alaska workforce growth**

- 2007: 30,000 Jobs (10% of workforce)
- 2011: 32,000 Jobs (10% of workforce)
- 2013: 39,000 Jobs (12% of workforce)

**Total Alaska workforce**
- 23,700 Health Care Jobs
- 2013: 39,000 Jobs (12% of workforce)

**U.S. Average**
- 10,600 Health Care Jobs

**12% of workforce**
- 2013: 39,000 Jobs

**Generating Economic Impact 2014**
The nonprofit sector provides jobs in all parts of Alaska

The map in Figure 6 indicates the concentration of nonprofit employees in various parts of the state. In some areas, the percentage is higher than others. But only in a small area is the percentage less than the national norm of 9%. At the higher end—from the Yukon-Kuskokwim region to Canada—almost 50% of the workforce is in the nonprofit sector. In fact, in most of rural Alaska, nonprofits account for more than 25% of the workforce. These findings validate the critical role the sector plays in the economy of rural communities.

Keeping it Local

Localism is a core value for public radio. But in small communities, keeping everything local is expensive. Our solution is to share services like financial management, engineering, and fundraising among seven stations in five Southeast communities. Increased regional support means we are better able to meet the mission of providing responsive local service.

– Mollie Kabler
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
COASTALASKA

FIGURE 6
Nonprofits provide rural jobs

FIGURE 7
Nonprofits create jobs throughout Alaska

% of labor force share
- 1.95% - 8.59%
- 8.6% - 15.82%
- 15.83% - 22.78%
- 22.79% - 35.75%
- 35.76% - 57.18%

39,000 Jobs

Jobs

Anchorage 18,000
Fairbanks North Star 4,300
Kenai Peninsula 3,000
Juneau 2,100
Matanuska-Susitna 2,000
Bethel 1,700
Ketchikan Gateway 1,000
Nome 1,000
Valdez-Cordova 900
Sitka 880
North Slope 750
Kodiak Island 710
Northwest Arctic 590
Dillingham 570
All others 1,500
Federal funding to Alaska continues to decline

It’s no longer a trend—it’s now established. Funding from the federal government to all sectors in Alaska, not just the nonprofit sector, is declining—and all indications are that it will continue to decline. Figure 8 shows the changes in all types of federal funding. With the exception of direct payments, all categories are down, with total revenue to Alaska declining from $8.3 billion in 2009 to just $5 billion in 2013.

More specifically, Figure 9 shows the decline for various recipients of federal grant payments, with a decrease from $3.3 billion in 2010 to $1.5 billion in 2013.
Charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofits reflect a variety of missions

FROM HERE FORWARD, this report focuses on 501(c)(3) organizations—or charitable nonprofits—which represent the largest number of 501(c)s, both in the U.S. and Alaska. They are the nonprofits we know best and are dedicated to missions like health care, arts and culture, conservation, human services, animal welfare and many others.

Figure 10 shows the breakdown by mission of Alaska’s registered charitable nonprofits. They make up 73% of the total sector with the largest number of organizations falling into the human services category.

FIGURE 10
4,800 501(c)(3) organizations reflect a variety of missions
Health care drives economic impact

As seen in Figure 11, health care nonprofits, while fewer in number compared to other categories, account for the most revenue and jobs generated in the sector. The 501(c)(3) segment of the sector is dominated by health care. Revenue from health care nonprofits is $2.6 billion or 61% of all charitable nonprofit revenue. The vast majority of that is earned revenue because health care organizations are based on a revenue-driven business model. Often Alaskans don’t realize that they receive health care from a nonprofit hospital or clinic. But in fact, three out of four of all health care jobs are generated by nonprofits.

Health care organizations also make up the top 501(c)(3)s in the state as measured by their assets. Of the organizations noted in the top 10, all but the last—Rasmuson Foundation—are health-related. Providence Health and Services and Banner Health are both registered outside Alaska but strongly contribute to the state in employment and expenditures.

FIGURE 11
Health care drives financial impact

Top ten 501(c)(3)s by assets

1. Providence Health and Services
2. Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
3. Southcentral Foundation
4. Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
5. Banner Health
6. Tanana Chiefs Conference
7. Central Peninsula General Hospital, Inc.
8. Norton Sound Health Corporation
9. Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium
10. Rasmuson Foundation
Regional Alaska Native nonprofits grow in economic influence

When we look at the top ten private foundations in the state, a trend has emerged that is important for all of Alaska as well as Alaska Native communities. Alaska Native foundations are increasing in total assets and have become an important component of charitable support available in Alaska, especially in the field of education. Alaska Native education foundations (highlighted in orange) are investing in many aspects of Alaska, including cultural and language preservation and education of the next generation of leaders.

### Alaska Native nonprofits rank high among Alaska’s top ten private foundations

The numbers below reflect total assets in 2013, with the exception of the Benito and Frances C Gaguine Foundation, whose assets are based on 2012 reporting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation</th>
<th>Assets (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rasmuson Foundation</td>
<td>$627,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The CIRI Foundation</td>
<td>$56,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Atwood Foundation</td>
<td>$32,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Arctic Education Foundation</td>
<td>$30,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Benito and Frances C Gaguine Foundation</td>
<td>$19,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Doyon Foundation</td>
<td>$16,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Alaska Kidney Foundation</td>
<td>$12,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Harvey Samuelsen Scholarship Trust / Carr Foundation</td>
<td>$11,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Bristol Bay Native Corporation Education Foundation</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Koniag Education Foundation</td>
<td>$6,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education is Essential**

**KONIAG EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

Kodiak Island is home to the great Kodiak bear, a strong salmon industry, legendary beauty and vibrant Native people with a strong culture and pride in our heritage. Education is essential to our communities and economy. In just over 19 years, we have given more than $3.7 million in scholarships to our Alutiiq people. Still it takes more than money to educate a student. Our mentors are a critical part of our program and help ensure student success.

—Ryan Hayes  
Executive Director, Koniag Education Foundation
The trends are set and will continue

When we reviewed data from the first study to the second, three trends emerged that were, in turn, validated in this study. Those were:

**FUNDING CRISIS**
Nonprofits are beginning to adapt to the reality of less government funding by increasing the more reliable sources of earned revenue and charitable giving. This shift is continuing to shape our nonprofit economic business models.

**CRASH OF THE HERD**
Even though this study shows a slight decrease in nonprofits, we still have too many for our population. We simply do not have enough of the right people to serve on the boards and staffs of all Alaska’s organizations.

**NEW STRUCTURES**
Nonprofits must be more adaptable and creative in working collaboratively in business models that will maximize human capacity, strengthen financial position, and allow for the greatest positive impact in each community.

The next few pages provide new understanding of these trends today—indicating where we see progress and where we see areas for more improvement.
Alaska nonprofits are adapting to the “Funding Crisis”

Managing the sector’s “funding crisis” will take the creative energy and determination of everyone involved with a nonprofit. It will be difficult to achieve the appropriate balance between government funding and individual philanthropy or earned income that will help organizations become financially resilient. The Alaska Community Foundation (ACF) is an example of one organization that has taken great strides in encouraging Alaskans to develop their own personal philanthropy programs.

Kris Norosz, ACF Board of Directors & Legacy Society Member, shares her story.

“I care about what happens in Alaska and in my community. Leaving a legacy gift with ACF is my way of giving back to a state that has provided me with many wonderful opportunities. I want to do more than just give now. As a legacy member I can make a real and meaningful impact on the future of Alaska and its nonprofits. It is gratifying to know my gift will keep giving long after I’m gone.”
THE INTRIGUING NEWS in this study is that the charitable sector is compensating for the shift in funding we anticipated—at least it has so far. **Figure 12** shows the changing proportion of revenue, with earned revenue for Alaska charitable nonprofits meeting the national average in 2013. Interesting, too, is that the percentage of income from government grants versus earned revenue has shifted when you compare 2007 to 2013, while the percentage of contributions has remained essentially the same.

**Figure 13** demonstrates the trend in actual dollar amounts, showing the decline of federal grants to charitable nonprofits from $1.94 billion in 2007 to $1.48 billion in 2013. At the same time, earned revenue has increased from $1 billion to $1.74 billion.

This shows us that Alaska charitable nonprofits are adapting to the funding crisis by finding new sources of earned revenue to add to the decline in federal grants.

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**Alaska nonprofits are adapting**
The smallest source of unrestricted revenue—charitable giving—still represents less than 10% of the total. That compares to the national norm of 19%. However, total charitable support grew from $280 million in 2007 to $330 million in 2013.

One example of charitable giving among Alaskans is Pick.Click.Give. As we can see in Figure 14, pledges increased from just over one-half million in its first year in 2009 to almost $2.8 million in 2014. Another way to celebrate this success is to understand that from 2009 to 2012 total charitable giving grew 9% nationally and 11% in Alaska. So while charitable support as a percentage of total revenue has not yet increased, thanks to the organized commitment to build a culture of philanthropy in Alaska, charitable giving is gaining momentum.
For the first time, we are able to break out individual giving by census area. The source for this data is the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, which analyzed census reports and tax returns. While those tax returns don’t capture all individual giving because some people don’t itemize their donations, we now have a good comparison by borough of those who do itemize. A remarkable finding is that people who file itemized returns in many regions of rural Alaska give a higher percentage of their income to charity than those in urban areas—and they give more dollars.

The information in Figures 15 and 16 are derived from itemized federal income tax returns and then broken out by census areas, which in most cases in Alaska are aligned with borough designations.

Figure 15 shows how giving in rural Alaska is outpacing the U.S. average (based on itemized taxes). The Southeast Fairbanks census area leads the state. The regions around Nome, Northwest Arctic, and North Slope are close behind. Figure 16 shows the median individual contribution in Anchorage is $3,860, or 4.3% of discretionary income. In the Southeast Fairbanks census area it is $10,109, or almost 5.9% of income. Granted, in a small community a handful of donors can set a trend while in larger communities a minority of generous donors is lost in the trend. Still, as a whole, those in smaller communities give more.
Giving in rural Alaska outpaces national average

*Figure 17* shows how giving in Alaska compares to the U.S. average, which is represented by the vertical line. Again, these statistics come from itemized federal income tax returns and are broken out by census areas.

We can see that in most boroughs, households in rural communities give at a higher rate than those in urban ones. This information shows us that great potential exists to develop individual philanthropy in high income households across Alaska.

**FIGURE 17**

Percent of households giving above and below U.S. average

- **Alaska**
- **Anchorage**
- **Bethel**
- **Fairbanks North Star**
- **Juneau**
- **Matanuska-Susitna**
- **North Slope**
- **Southeast Fairbanks**

- up to $25,000
- $25,000 up to $50,000
- $50,000 up to $75,000
- $75,000 up to $100,000
- $100,000 up to $200,000
- $200,000 or more

U.S. Average
What the data tells us about “Crash of the Herd”

Retaining engaged and talented leadership is key to a highly functioning sector. In a state like Alaska with many organizations and a limited number of people available to run them, keeping good leaders, staff and board members is a challenge. With anticipated transitions in leadership at several conservation nonprofits, the Alaska Center for the Environment (ACE) worked with the other groups to reform under the ACE umbrella.

Executive Director Polly Carr picks up the story of how they successfully avoided a “crash of the herd.”

“Alaskans care about preserving our natural resources, including our world class salmon—for fishing, hunting, recreation, and for healthy communities. This takes sustained leadership. Recognizing that we could better nurture new leaders and provide adequate staffing into the future by working together, we merged with two other entities—the Alaska Conservation Alliance and Alaska Youth for Environmental Action. Each of us now is stronger and our voice is unified—making us more effective in rallying supporters to take action for a healthy environment that will sustain a variety of unique cultures and communities.”
In 2010, we reported that approximately 7,000 nonprofits were operating in the state, or one nonprofit for every 100 Alaskans. That number has declined in this report. Figure 18 shows that approximately 5,700 nonprofits are operating in the state, or one for every 127 Alaskans. That’s a decrease of 18% from 2010.

We can easily identify 800 organizations that account for the decline. Those are ones that neglected to file 990s after the IRS started implementing a new rule in 2010 that removed nonprofits from the rolls for failing to file their 990s three years in a row. That step happened again in 2013 and will continue in the future.

In addition, our experience is that more nonprofits may have merged and/or gone out of business. At the same time, we know that many new organizations formed in the last three years. Therefore, with the data that’s available to us now, we cannot account for the remaining decline in numbers. It’s likely these numbers will rise in the future because of new simplified IRS application forms, which we expect will result in increased incorporations.

Another caution from 2010 was the shortage of board members—a problem facing both large and small organizations around the state. Identifying, recruiting and retaining board members continue to be among the biggest concerns of Foraker Partners. The scale of this problem may not be fully understood as long as people from the Baby Boom generation stay on boards. When they leave their board seats, however, we fear efforts to satisfy the demand may be too little and too late.

**Figure 18**

Total number of Alaska nonprofits is declining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Nonprofits</th>
<th>501(c)(3) Nonprofits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>5,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>4,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18% decrease from 2010 to 2013
Transforming our work for greater impact

The third trend that surfaced in 2010 and is now established is that organizations need to look at new models to achieve mission. These models can take the form of program partnerships, back office consolidation, mergers, or coalitions, to name just a few examples. Little national, state, or local data is available that allows us to track how frequently nonprofits are establishing new structures in which to work. However, we do know that during the past three years—compared to the first nine years of Foraker’s work—we have had more calls and done more work to assist nonprofits to establish creative collaborations, to merge, or to go out of business.

Enlightened leaders understand that bold action is often the only way to preserve a mission when enough human and financial resources aren’t available to successfully steward an organization. As former AYA Executive Director Heather Harris relates in her story, the AYA mission is a critical one and needed to be preserved—even to the point of restructuring the way it was being fulfilled.

“AYA has a 40-year history of offering the chance for a healthier life to young people who have little or no family support, often have quit school, may suffer from abuse or addiction, and have few places to go but the streets. Our POWER Teen Center in downtown Anchorage is a refuge for youth who need a safe place to get together, share their experiences, and help each other. But we knew there was a way to be more efficient and effective in providing what these young people needed. So we merged with Anchorage Community Mental Health Services to provide a stronger comprehensive support system to our most vulnerable and at-risk youth. The merger resulted in greater capacity and strength to help young people find their path to a productive life.”
Restructuring the sector is inevitable because of shifts in funding and demographics. And it simply makes the most sense in achieving greater impact. Foraker has taken the lead in assisting nonprofits with mergers and creative collaborations through our programs like human resources and financial shared services, interim executive director services, and a number of peer support cohorts. We also have launched Sultana, a Foraker shared service that provides fiscal sponsorships for organizations that are in the preliminary stages of their development.

Innovative collaborations are taking place around the state, and they come in many forms as we see in this report and characterized in the examples below. The success of these efforts is encouraging and a testament to the creativity of sector leaders in finding effective ways to deliver mission.

Shared Services:
- The Foraker Group
- CoastAlaska

Fiscal Sponsorships:
- Alaska Community Foundation
- Sultana

Nonprofit/For-profit Partnerships:
- Haa Aani + The Nature Conservancy
- School Business Partnership

Government/Nonprofit Partnerships:
- Bring the Kids Home Initiative
- 90% by 2020

Nonprofit/For-profit/Government Partnership:
- Housing Anchorage

Mergers:
- Anchorage Community Mental Health Services + Alaska Youth Advocates
- Alaska Center for the Environment + Alaska Conservation Alliance + Alaska Youth for Environmental Action

In 2013, Foraker and the other nonprofit state associations in the Northwest launched a five-state survey to establish a baseline of our own collective work, along with that of individual organizations in the region. What we found, as shown in Figure 19, was encouraging. Respondents say that nonprofits are coming together—with government, business, and each other—to address issues. As a sector, we are clearly learning to work with others in our field. The next step is to focus on improving our relationships with businesses and government to effect change.

The results of this survey also indicate that potential exists to “move the needle” on collaboration, especially with business and government. This is where nonprofit leaders can get involved. We all have roles in creating and guiding successful collaborations—and we must do it as often as possible.

Figure 19
We are learning to work together for greater impact

Nonprofits come together with government to address big issues.

Nonprofits come together with businesses to address big issues.

Nonprofits come together with each other to address big issues.
A significant portion of our work as the state’s nonprofit association is to help both nonprofit and civic leaders to understand, appreciate, and support the sector. To effectively accomplish this, we must speak up on our issues—that is part of our responsibility as nonprofit leaders.

Again, looking at the survey we mentioned earlier, Figure 20 shows that nonprofit leaders do believe the sector is part of the policy-making process, and that we generally function in a friendly environment. Still, favorable treatment can’t be taken for granted and working toward sound public policy can’t be left to just a few. We will only succeed when we look beyond the particular needs of our own organizations and we all speak up for the sector as a whole.

**FIGURE 20**

**Nonprofit leaders can meaningfully participate in public policy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonprofits have a <strong>voice</strong> in public policy decision-making process.</th>
<th>Nonprofits have a <strong>role</strong> in public policy decision-making process.</th>
<th>The state/local <strong>policy environment</strong> is friendly to nonprofits.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Great amount</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here’s what you can do

We encourage you to use this information in ways that support your organization, your mission, and your community. We also encourage you to use it as you become more active in speaking out for the sector.

**Become informed** Dig into the data and understand it.

**Communicate the nonprofit economic impact in your community**
Go to the Foraker website for specific information for your borough.

**Engage future leaders** Get their perspectives—bring them into your organization.

**Advocate** Start the process—speak up about the issues.
- **Start a conversation**—with business leaders, government leaders, and community leaders
- **Connect with other nonprofits**—take action for the greater good
- **Use your voice**—use the data—tell your story
Final thoughts

AS YOU REVIEW OUR REPORT and share with others what we now understand about the sector’s impact in Alaska, the important story to tell is that nonprofits make a significant contribution—both by improving our society as a whole and, especially, by adding to our state’s economy. Our sector is successfully running businesses that generate $2.5 billion in salaries and wages, contribute to 63,000 jobs for Alaska, and add total expenditures of $6.5 billion to the state’s economy. Alaska nonprofit professionals are highly skilled and carry out their missions with commitment and integrity. This, combined with the quality of products and services the sector provides, makes us an important part of Alaska’s economy.

We must reinforce this story first among ourselves—with our boards, our staff, our volunteers, and our supporters—and then take it “on the road” to share with Alaska’s policy makers. Effective public policy is based on sound data, and the knowledge and understanding that grows from the data in this study is a good place to start. When we consider the many voices spread around the state, the ability to “tell our story” will become a powerful force to influence policy for the benefit of Alaskans.

If there’s anything Foraker can do to help you, just let us know. We look forward to sharing this journey with you.