

COVER STORY

SECONDact

NEW LEADERSHIP LOUISVILLE MENTORING PROGRAM TAPS BUSINESS LEADERS TO HELP NONPROFITS SOLVE REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES

BY MARTY FINLEY
mfinley@bizjournals.com
502-498-1942, @BFLouMarty

The word "encore" can be defined as a second act, and in Louisville, it's the name of a new mentoring program that connects seasoned members of the business community with nonprofits seeking strategic planning help.

The Encore Louisville program, launched in December by the Leadership Louisville Center, asks retired or nearly retired businesspeople to share their business acumen with nonprofits.

Thus far it's drawn 35 volunteers, all Leadership Louisville Center members over the age of 50, who've been divided into teams of four or five people. Seven projects are currently under way, said Aaron Miller, Leadership Louisville's director of programs.

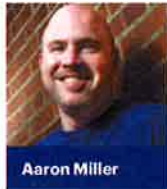
For example, Big Brother Big Sisters of Kentuckiana wanted help developing a plan to partner with small businesses, with the goal of building an active and sustainable team of volunteers.

The agency has been paired with a team led by Janet Sims, a retired Yum! Brands Inc. executive. (See related story, page 7.)

For the Food Literacy Project at Oxmoor Farm, the issue is understanding how to prepare for growth while maintaining program quality. A mentoring team led by Luckett Davidson of TouchStone Coaching and Consulting has been working with the group.



Cynthia Knapik



Aaron Miller



Gordon Strauss

The first participants

Three cycles, each lasting a few months, are planned this year, with the first set to wrap up this month. Mentors work with a different nonprofit each cycle.

The volunteers' estimated time commitment for each cycle is 10 to 15 hours per volunteer, Miller said, and all 35 volunteers have agreed to be available for a year. They can continue into next year if they choose.

Because some participants may spend part of the year in locales such as Florida or Michigan, they can rotate in and out of the program as their schedule allows, said Leadership Louisville president Cynthia Knapik.

"Next year we will go to another round of recruitment," she said by email.

The cost

The Community Foundation of Louisville provided \$18,000 in seed money, which allowed Leadership Louisville to research the program and figure out how to structure it, Miller said.

The organization concluded that projects that drag on too long are unlikely to attract participants, while those that end too quickly provide too little return on investment for participating nonprofits.

So the center opted to run the individual service projects for a few months.

"Most (volunteers) don't want another full time job, but they are capable of much more than volunteering on the phone bank," Kna-

BEST OF LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The Leadership Louisville Center is hosting its second annual Best of Leadership Summit this month. The leadership conference features more than 20 speakers and includes panel discussions, interactive learning workshops and storytelling presentations. Here are the details:

When: Monday and Tuesday, March 16 and 17

Where: Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts, 501 W. Main St.

Keynote speaker: Tom Rath, author of five best-sellers, including "How Full Is Your Bucket?"

Closing keynote speaker: Brendan Canavan, president, UPS Airlines

Registration: \$250 for members, \$300 for nonmembers. Tickets and more details are available at leadershiplouisville.org.

Details: The conference focuses on three tracks: Develop Yourself, Build Your Team and Lead Your Community.

pek added. "We think this program hits that untapped sweet spot, giving these talented (Baby) Boomers something challenging to work on without requiring a long-term commitment."

Miller expects 15 to 20 service projects to be completed this year and said Leadership Louisville will continue to actively recruit nonprofits for future projects.

The first-year budget of \$35,000 includes underwriting from ARG Financial Group, and the volunteers pay a \$150 tuition fee for the year. Miller said the budget isn't fully funded and the center is still seeking underwriters.

The merits

Gordon Strauss, a professor of psychiatry and director of Student Psychiatric Services for Campus Health Services at the University of Louisville, is the facilitator for a team helping the St. John Center for Homeless Men. (See related story, page 8.)

He said the Encore experience has been gratifying because it has taken him out of a classroom setting and given him a chance to apply his experience to real world challenges.

Keeping the projects tightly focused, he added, allows the volunteers to offer specific recommendations without dedicating large chunks of time to a single project.

"It struck the perfect balance," said Maria Price, executive director of St. John Center, which was looking to expand public awareness of its mission. "It was exactly what I needed." ■

'We think this program hits that untapped sweet spot, giving these talented (Baby) Boomers something challenging to work on without requiring a long-term commitment.'

CYNTHIA KNAPIK, Leadership Louisville

COVER STORY

Colon cancer project identifies action plan to reach new communities

BY DAVID A. MANN
dmann@bizjournals.com
502-498-1979, @BFLouDavid

Working with volunteers from the Encore program has helped the Colon Cancer Prevention Project reach out to new communities – which is even more than it initially expected.

The Colon Cancer Prevention Project is a Louisville-based organization that was founded in 2004 by local gastroenterologist Dr. Whitney Jones. (If that name sounds familiar, it's because he's also an investor in North End Cafe and a player in the real estate development world locally.)

The Colon Cancer Prevention Project's mission is to eliminate preventable colon cancer death and suffering, specifically in Kentucky and Indiana. It got involved with Encore because executive director Andrea Shepherd has been involved with some Leadership Louisville programs – such as 100 Wise Women – and knew of their value. "Leadership Louisville is one of those groups that you pay a lot of attention to and you follow in Louisville because they're doing a lot of great things," she said. "We knew this (Encore program) was a great opportunity for us."

Leveraging opportunities is important because the Colon Cancer Prevention Project is a small nonprofit, with just three full-time employees. That said, it has seen a lot

of growth lately: Some new programs have been implemented, and the organization is getting set to add a new position in the next two months.

"(Encore) just seemed like a perfect fit," Shepherd said.

A four-person team of Encore executives, led by J-R Curtin, senior fellow at 4Civility Institute and Connected Learning Network Inc., began working with the Colon Cancer Prevention Project in December. Initially, the project's leaders thought they'd have the Encore team help them get the most out of Colon Cancer Awareness Month, which is in March.

"But then we had our first meeting with J-R and our mouths just kind of dropped," Shepherd said. "(The team) helped us look at what we were doing in a very different way."

The team members started talking about big challenges, including getting people who don't have insurance, or regular access to health care, to seek colon cancer screenings.

Members of the black community are often in this situation, Curtin said. So the Encore team started thinking about ways in which the project could get involved with organizations in the black community – through churches, for instance – to push for more screenings. After all, Curtin said, "there's still a big gap between people hearing that they should (get a screening) and going and doing it."

Andrea Shepherd, executive director of the Colon Cancer Prevention Project, holds up pledge cards that are designed to resemble underwear.



PHOTOS BY TIM HARRIS

COLON CANCER PREVENTION PROJECT

Location: 217 Payne St., Suite 306

Services: The Colon Cancer Prevention Project's mission is to eliminate preventable colon cancer death and suffering by increasing screening rates.

Year founded: 2004

Executive director: Andrea Shepherd

Contact: www.coloncancerpreventionproject.org; 502.290.0288

Encore team: Facilitator J-R Curtin, Connected Learning Network Inc. and 4Civility Institute; Stephanie Bateman, Semonin Realtors, Jefferson County Public Schools (retired); John Mura, The Courier-Journal (former); and Jane Younger, Jewish Hospital/Sullivan University (retired)

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Business First's next **What's Brewing?** breakfast will focus on the Federal Communications Commission's recent approval of net neutrality rules.

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After the interview with our panelists, the audience gets a chance to ask questions, and we'll print a story in an upcoming issue about the discussion. There will be a continental breakfast and, of course, lots of coffee!

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Norman Schippert - CEO of BluegrassNet

Hal J. Singer - Principal at Economists Incorporated, Senior Fellow at Progressive Policy Institute, Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business

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COVER STORY



Maria Price, executive director of the St. John Center for Homeless Men, said the center already has made changes based on its Encore team's advice.

Day center for homeless men wanted to improve its tours

BY MARTY FINLEY
mfinley@bizjournals.com
502-498-1942, @BFLouMarty

Maria Price, executive director of the St. John Center for Homeless Men, turned to the Leadership Louisville Center's new Encore program for "a short term infusion of creative input and brain power from leaders in the community."

Specifically, Price was looking for honest feedback on how the center could improve the facility tours it leads for potential donors, volunteers and board members.

Her staff loves to talk about what goes on inside its doors, she said, but wanted to make the tour a more "powerful experience" that effectively conveys key information about the center. The day shelter and social services center, which complements the work of overnight shelters, is open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and works to help clients access the resources they need to escape homelessness.

The center was matched up with a five-person team of business leaders led by facilitator Gordon Strauss, a University of Louisville psychiatry professor.

Some teams may opt to gather information from their nonprofit before starting research, Strauss said, but his team took the St. John's tour without prior input. Team members wanted to experience it without preconceived notions, he said.

The team took the tour in early January, then met to discuss their individual ideas before offering recommendations to Price and her staff.

For instance, the team advised explaining parking options in advance so visitors are prepared when they arrive for a tour, and they suggested that Price or other staff members address tours at the outset to explain the center's history and provide statistics on homelessness in Louisville.

The team pushed for creating several stops along the tour during which clients, volunteers, staff or social service agencies that work with the center could share their stories, and Strauss said they also wanted to see the tour wrap up with a clearly articulated message about what the center offers and what it needs from donors. That's the point at which a gentle request for financial assistance would fit, he added.

The group also has looked at how the tour could be integrated into fundraising events such as Raisin' the Rent, the center's largest annual fundraiser.

Price said the center hoped to raise \$150,000 during this year's party, which was held recently.

Price noted that some of the group's recommendations had been part of tours in the past. For example, tour leaders once offered a sign-up sheet to gather the names and addresses of visitors. That's been reinstated.

"I didn't tend to that detail," Price said, "and shame on me." She also has begun giving visitors a brochure and an updated wish list, and added a welcome sign.

And the center has added a pre-tour briefing to provide details on the center and get more people interacting with the tour guides.

Strauss said the team is still finalizing its full list of recommendations but hopes the center will emphasize some of its services, including that it's a place where homeless men can receive mail. Claiming an address there, he said, gives them the option of voter registration.

The center also can do more to promote its efforts to help clients find permanent housing, Strauss said.

The first round of Encore Louisville's service projects wraps up later this month, and Strauss and his team members plan to take another tour to see how their recommendations have been implemented. ■



Gordon Strauss

ST. JOHN CENTER FOR HOMELESS MEN

700 E. Muhammad Ali Blvd.

Year founded: 1986

Executive director: Maria Price

Number of men served in 2014: 1,815 clients who visited the center 62,401 times

Contact: www.stjohncenter.org; 502.568.6758

Encore team: Facilitator Gordon Strauss, University of Louisville; James Callahan, Ford Motor Co. (retired); Ken Johnson, IBM/Lexmark (retired); Ken Middleton, Middleton Consulting, WHAS-TV (former); and Anne Walker, Anne Walker Studio