



# PUBLIC SERVICE

Philanthropic Fundraising  
As a Calling



Paul C. Pribbenow, Ph.D., CFRE

[www.augsburg.edu/president](http://www.augsburg.edu/president)

# Objectives today

- Engaging reflective practitioners about our philanthropic work
- Toward a more expansive understanding of philanthropy – personal, organizational and public
- Exploring how the work of philanthropic fundraising might be seen as a calling

# What is a calling?

- A theological idea with relevance for all of us – imagining our roles as something more
- What is the significance or purpose of our daily work?
- Frederick Buechner says calling is “the intersection of our great gladness with the world’s deep need”

# What is your calling?

- A holistic understanding of your life and work
- As a citizen, a parent, a sibling, a neighbor, a professional...
- As philanthropic fundraisers, what is our calling? Whom and/or what do we serve — our selves, organizations, causes, the public?

# Teach me about philanthropy...

- The lessons I learned from an international student...
- What we take for granted in the remarkable practice of philanthropy in our country
- Moments to be reflective, to celebrate, to take responsibility for our “impulse to generosity”

# What is philanthropy?

- What the word means...where we find it in our lives.
- The philanthropic dimension of our lives – how we love each other.
- “Ghettoized” in a sector, nonprofit organizations, fundraising...
- Say something philanthropic!

# The role of philanthropy in our lives

- Personally – our stories of giving, volunteering, receiving...
- Organizationally – leadership and common purpose, being philanthropic together
- In public – the public practice of philanthropy and how it shapes our democracy



# It begins with you

- You are the chief philanthropic officer in your life!
- What does that mean? How does that feel? Have you any training or preparation for that role?
- Are you prepared to tell your philanthropic story?

# Philanthropic autobiography

- What are the experiences, people, and values (positive and not so!) that have shaped your understanding of philanthropy?
- Take a few moments to recount your philanthropic autobiography – then share it with someone
- If we can't make these links, how can we hope to lead philanthropic lives?

# My philanthropic autobiography

- Rooted in a place, a community, a set of values, a religion, a family...
- Learning to be a grain-gatherer
- Understanding how my role as grain-gatherer is connected to all of us who care about the world

# A vision for philanthropy in democracy

- We then turn to our duties to lead various institutions in their philanthropic efforts...
- One persuasive vision for philanthropy is “common work”
- The story of Jane Addams and her notion of “humane philanthropy”

# The Addams' legacy

- Responsibility of being human vs. the responsibilities of wealth
- The social ethic of democracy
- The mutuality of interests and needs
- The central roles of agile and accountable institutions – working together

# Philanthropy as common work (1)

- Philanthropy as common work means that philanthropy is at the core of the mission of your institution
- Think about where philanthropy “resides” in the organizations you work with and for
- How do we integrate the “philanthropic dimension” of all aspects of our mission-based work?

# Philanthropy as common work (2)

- Philanthropy as common work means that philanthropy involves everyone in the community
- Reclaiming roles for professional staff, faculty, executive directors, volunteers, board members, alumni, students, and so forth
- Redressing the imbalance of the philanthropic community

# Philanthropy as common work (3)

- Philanthropy as common work means that philanthropy must be publicly accountable
- Since it belongs to everyone, everyone has a right to know what went well (and what did not!)
- Pursuing rather than waiting for accountability to be imposed – the lessons of 9-11



# Philanthropy as common work (4)

- Implications for the work of philanthropic fundraising:
  - The public roles of fundraisers – missionaries for philanthropy
  - The leadership roles of fundraisers – modeling common work in organizations
  - The conscience roles of fundraisers – public accountability

# The public practice of philanthropy

- One of the several practices that help to form a democracy – along with education, justice, and health
- Think about what we assume and count on as we navigate our lives together – what happens when those goods and practices are not there?

# The component parts of the public practice of philanthropy

- A sense of history – remembering
- A sense of place – rooted
- A sense of values – grounded
- A sense of hope – faithful
- A sense of service – the connection between the liberal and domestic arts

# The messiness of it all

- John Courtney Murray's wonderful phrase: democracy as the "intersection of conspiracies"
- Philanthropy and democracy as intertwined throughout history – no monolithic definition then nor now
- Evolving conspiracies mean evolving social patterns and institutional arrangements

# Practicing philanthropy in public

- Who are our role models?
- The role of civic teachers and philanthropic counselors
- Helping to promote perspectives of trust, generosity, and abundance in our commonweal

# Say something philanthropic!

- The work of citizenship – “the thronged and common road”
- Negotiating our lives with strangers
- Finding and sharing a language adequate to our needs and aspirations
- Agile and accountable organizational arrangements – common work is possible!

# Philanthropy and democracy as common work

- It is about stewardship, accountability, and changing the way we live
- It is about a new mythology for the work of being philanthropic – personally, organizationally, and in public – it's not all about economics!
- It is about being both responsible and successful

# Fundraising as a calling

- Personally, in organizations, in public...
- Where does your gladness intersect with the world's needs?
- What are the stories you tell that are woven into the fabric of our profession and its vocational work?
- We all are public servants!



# Please join us

- *Notes for the Reflective Practitioner--* musings, observations, sources of inspiration and information
- Bi-monthly email format
- To subscribe, email [augpres@augsborg.edu](mailto:augpres@augsborg.edu)
- To review current and past issues, go to [www.jgacounsel.com](http://www.jgacounsel.com)