



Mission: To enhance the well-being of all people and communities in Arizona by serving, supporting, protecting, and promoting Arizona's nonprofit sector.

Before 2005, Arizona's nonprofits had no unifying association to advance their common interests. That means Arizona's 40,000 nonprofits were:

- operating in separate silos, diluting their buying power, resources, and voice;
- duplicating efforts by separately doing things that could be centralized to save time and money;
- missing a collective voice at the Legislature, in front of regulatory agencies, and with the public; and
- unable to coordinate effectively to capitalize on their combined size and strengths.

To address these issues, Arizona nonprofits and their partners united to create a statewide organization of, by, and for all of Arizona's nonprofits: the **Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits**.

The name "**Alliance**" is strategic. More than a mere "coalition" (defined by *Webster's* as just a "temporary" grouping for joint action) and more than an "association" (defined as simply "an organization of persons having a common interest"), an "alliance" involves collective action for a purpose: "an association to further the common interests of the members." Thus, the **Alliance** is an action-oriented team of partners across the state dedicated to furthering the common interests of Arizona's nonprofits and the communities they serve.

The **Alliance** does this by *servicing, supporting, protecting, and promoting* the nonprofit sector. We:

- *Serve* the nonprofit sector by providing quality information, training, products, services and networking opportunities;
- *Support* the nonprofit sector by offering savings through group-buying discount programs and providing valuable services to promote nonprofit effectiveness;
- *Protect* the nonprofit sector by representing the nonprofit sector at the Arizona Legislature, state agencies that regulate nonprofits, and other local arenas of decision making; and
- *Promote* the nonprofit sector by projecting a collective voice to the public about the sector's essential contributions and significant challenges in our communities.

Various entities already help Arizona's nonprofits, so there is no need to duplicate them. But those resources are unknown to some and seem distant or disconnected from others. Accordingly, the **Alliance** serves as a unifying connector:

- connecting nonprofits to valuable information – through publications, roundtables, conferences, and a unifying website;
- connecting nonprofits to quality training – through focused workshops;
- connecting nonprofits to government officials and community leaders – through advocacy;
- connecting nonprofits to the national scene – through communications; and
- connecting nonprofits to each other to promote efficiencies – through listening and networking.

The **Alliance** and its members are affiliates of the National Council of Nonprofits.

Contact us at info@arizonanonprofits.org



Benefits Of A Statewide Nonprofit Alliance

About two decades ago, nonprofit leaders in several states created statewide associations of nonprofits that would serve as the equivalent of a “chamber of commerce for nonprofits” in their states. Since then, nonprofit leaders in dozens of other states have created similar statewide associations of, by, and for nonprofits. The National Council of Nonprofits reports that 41 states now have statewide associations of nonprofits and efforts are underway in at least 10 other states to create such entities.

According to a recent Council survey, although each state nonprofit association differs in terms of the precise services it provides, the range of services includes: Communications (both internal for nonprofits and external for policy-makers and the public); Cost Savings Programs (group purchasing and member discounts); Public Policy and Advocacy (“collective voice” representation of the nonprofit sector); Training and Conferences (average number of training/workshop events is 46); and Other Services and Programs (*e.g.*, 57% reported an on-line job bank; 54% had an in-house library for members; and 51% offered a consultant database).

State nonprofit associations provide far more than just the formal services identified above. They also play critically important roles in supplying, among other things: general information and referral services, technical assistance, professional development opportunities, networking forums for members to make connections and forge pathways for community collaborations, an emphasis on accountability, and increased awareness about the sector as a whole. Indeed, a state nonprofit association provides the following benefits:

Benefits for the Entire Community Include:

- Improve the effectiveness of individual nonprofits, promoting a healthy nonprofit sector by:
 - Providing citizens a means for civic engagement so people know more about their communities as they volunteer to champion the common good and serve their fellow citizens
 - Protecting taxpayers – because often services that nonprofits provide often would have to be delivered and paid for exclusively by government if nonprofits didn’t deliver the services
 - Serving as laboratories for individuals to develop their leadership skills
 - Incubating innovations that serve the community
 - Providing services to those who need them
- Promote nonprofit accountability
- Provide efficiencies and enhance effectiveness, allowing community resources to be stretched further

Benefits Provided to Individual Nonprofits Include:

- A place to save time and money by getting (a) convenient and reliable answers to questions, and (b) discounts through collective purchasing of products and services
- A place to share ideas and information about promising practices
- A place to find mission-enhancing information and services, and learn new skills
- A place that provides eyes, ears, and collective voice before policy decision makers
- A place to network for personal growth and mutual support and fellowship
- A place to promote public awareness of the value of nonprofits to society at large

Benefits Enjoyed by Foundations, Donors and Other Nonprofit Funders Include:

- Leverage contributions made by strengthening individual nonprofits as well as the sector
- Generate information about the sector so others will contribute dollars and time
- Ensure donated dollars get stretched by increasing efficiencies

Benefits Received by Governments Include:

- Provide a central contact (currently, when government officials have questions about nonprofits or want to speak to the sector as a whole, there is not a central point of contact)

Benefits Obtained by Businesses Include:

- Provide a central contact point (the 501(c)3 nonprofit sector alone is an \$18 billion industry in Arizona) for this largely untapped collective market