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Why We Highlight Advocacy in Action

Every edition of this newsletter closes with an “Advocacy in Action” article designed to inform and hopefully inspire. The reasons we write these articles are many – highlighting nonprofit advocates who are talking the talk and walking the walk; providing examples of innovative advocacy tools and techniques worth trying; punctuating front-burner policy topics with real-world advocacy insights; celebrating the occasional victories of David over a Goliath; and more. Here’s a recap of some of the topics we’ve covered this year. See if you can detect the patterns and “authors’ messages.”

Advocacy Techniques

We’ve covered the importance and effectiveness of **survey** data in two articles, [From Surveys to Advocacy to Solutions](#) (5/16/2022), and [Surveying Community Needs and Priorities](#) (3/7/2022). In each, the point is clear that the few minutes it takes a busy nonprofit executive to fill out a survey are minor compared to the significant impact the survey results can have on moving the policy needle.

In [Listen, Speak, Advocate: Listening Sessions Provide Opportunities to be Heard](#) (3/21/2022), we covered the value of **listening sessions** in three separate states during which government and nonprofit leaders can come together to identify positive policy solutions.

And what review of advocacy techniques would be complete without a consideration of **direct lobbying** activities. That was the purpose of the recent article, [In Praise of Actual \(as Opposed to Virtual\) Advocacy](#) (6/27/2022), a rundown of recent lobbying on Capitol Hill as compared to the virtual Zoom/Team lobbying we've all been doing since the beginning of the pandemic. Spoiler Alert, the article reports: "For all the advances in virtual communications, actual advocacy – up close and personal – is still more effective."

Civic Engagement

[In Praise of Nonpartisan Electioneering](#) (5/2/2022) highlights several nonpartisan actions by state associations of nonprofits to connect nonprofits with policymakers and to educate the candidates about the importance of the work of nonprofits in their communities. The article presents examples of candidate forums, candidate questionnaires, voter engagement toolkits, and more.

Collaboration

It's always helpful to be reminded that each nonprofit doesn't have to go it alone; collaborations work. That's the point of two articles so far this year: [Nonprofits, Foundations, and Governments Addressing Community Needs Together](#) (6/13/2022), and [Partnering to Overcome Nonprofit Workforce Shortages](#) (1/24/2022).

Policy Campaigns - Progress Reports

It's an understatement to write that the **nonprofit workforce shortages crisis** is vitally important to nonprofits around the country and to the networks of the National Council of Nonprofits. State associations of nonprofits have been particularly aggressive in drawing attention to the issues and advancing solutions, as shown in [The Nonprofit Workforce Shortage Crisis and Child Care](#) (5/31/2022), [Partnering to Overcome Nonprofit Workforce Shortages](#) (1/24/2022) and [Refusing to Suffer Silently, Kentucky Nonprofits Speak Out on Nonprofit Workforce Shortage Crisis](#) (1/10/2022). Combined, these articles focus on advocacy tactics employed by more than a dozen state associations of nonprofits.

Another major focus this year has been (and continues to be) the effort to help nonprofits secure resources from state and local governments allocated to them via

the **American Rescue Plan Act**. This is seen most clearly in [The Role of Nonprofit Advocacy](#) (4/18/2022), an article that served both as a section in the National Council of Nonprofits [updated Special Report on ARPA spending](#) and to inspire all nonprofits. An earlier article, [Pulling Out the Stops for ARPA Funding](#) (2/22/2022), tells the story of how the once-in-a-generation opportunity presented by the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds is causing nonprofits to do what they do best: innovate.

Finally, who doesn't love seeing their hard advocacy work pay off in legislative successes? That's the point of [Investing Surprise Surpluses ... for the Public Good](#) (4/4/2022), an article in which our colleague Tiffany Gourley Carter highlighted tax policy wins this year at the state level and provided insights into how nonprofits guided policymakers to the support "good tax policy that does good."