

Planning for Good – *because sustainability is a gift*

Private Foundation Recognizes that Building Capacity translates to Building Endowment

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Many of the board and staff of organizations we talk with about sustainability realize their capacity dictates what they are able to do in their fundraising and endowment building efforts. As we work to increase that capacity, we are encouraged by powerful examples of building capacity that significantly increase resources, including endowments.

A story about the Bernard Osher Foundation got our attention in August. The Osher family has strong ties to Maine, and many projects and programs have benefitted from various family members' philanthropy. A Philanthropy News Digest story on August 15, 2008 described how the Bernard Osher Foundation was making not only scholarship funds available for Community Colleges in California's Bay area, but also "pushing the colleges to address their fundraising infrastructure needs" with a \$25M challenge grant to match \$1 for every \$2 raised by the colleges. That translates into potentially \$75M for increased fundraising capacity. That's a lot of infrastructure for fundraising. See *Osher Foundation Challenge Spurs Bay Area Colleges to Woo Donors*, PND, August 15, 2008.

The story went on to describe how the City College of San Francisco has seen its endowment grow from \$1.3M to \$20M in the eight years since they hired their first full-time fundraiser and support staff. It noted that the colleges that have not increased their fundraising capacity – and their endowments thereby – would now have greater opportunity to build their resource development capacity with the Osher challenge.

We are pleased to see private philanthropy working in this way, akin to "teaching people to fish" and create greater organizational sustainability. Our "hats off" to the Bernard Osher Foundation for recognizing that sustainability is supported by robust resource development, including endowments.