



# Inland Empire Changing the Narrative

## Toolkit for Nonprofits

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# Section 1

## Introduction and Background

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# Your story.

**You know it better than anyone. But being able to effectively *tell* your story – particularly to funders, government grantmakers and individual donors – is a sizeable challenge for many nonprofit organizations.**

Compounding matters, in the Inland Empire, is an often unflattering regional narrative – held by people both within and outside the IE – that tends to divert attention away from the great work being done by organizations such as yours.

In late 2017, the Funders Alliance of San Bernardino & Riverside Counties set out to address these issues in an effort to elevate the profile of our nonprofit community and attract more philanthropic investment, government grants and individual giving to those nonprofits. Over the course of the following year, an extensive research and scoping process took place, during which more than 250 stakeholders – nonprofits, funders, community and regional leaders, media executives and others – were interviewed one-on-one or in group settings. Best practices from across the country were examined, ideas were tested and re-tested, and the framework was developed for a new way of looking at the Inland Empire and the nonprofit organizations that are transforming lives and the region as a whole.

This toolkit is designed to help you more effectively tell the story of your nonprofit organization within a broader strengths-based narrative about the region as you seek funding from foundations, government grantmakers and individual donors. Additional training is available through the Funders Alliance.





## ► Background

The *IE Changing the Narrative* initiative is rooted in the struggles of many nonprofit organizations in Inland Empire when it comes to securing major foundation, philanthropic and government-grant support. A 2010 study by The James Irvine Foundation showed the IE receiving an average of \$16 per capita from philanthropic foundations, compared with a statewide average of \$102 per capita.

While subsequent research shows an upward trend when it comes to the overall volume of foundation giving to nonprofits in the IE (\$61.3 million in 2013 to \$115 million in 2016, according to the California Foundation Center), the formidable demand for services in the region coupled with robust population growth has only heightened the need for greater investment.

In fact, it appears the gap has widened. Using the total volume numbers in the California Foundation Center report, while per capita investment by foundations into the IE has increased to more than \$25, the California average is now \$263, and the region continues to lag behind neighboring counties.



"California Foundation Stats," California Foundation Center: [california.foundationcenter.org](http://california.foundationcenter.org)

Our work on *IE Changing the Narrative* began in earnest in late 2017 and early 2018 with focus groups, one-on-one interviews, a comprehensive media audit and best practices research. More than 250 individuals were engaged during the process, representing a wide variety of disciplines, including but not limited to nonprofit organizations, funders, businesses, educators, government and public policy, regional planning organizations and the faith community. Participants were selected from every subregion within the Inland Empire, as well as from the Greater Southern California area

Out of all of this, several consistent themes emerged:

### Challenges

**The IE is a large, divided region** (two counties, multiple subregions). These divisions create the impression (if not the reality) that San Bernardino and Riverside counties remain in competition with one another and continue to miss opportunities to leverage the strengths of the region as a whole.

**The Inland Empire often is our own worst enemy** when it comes to talking about ourselves. If we don't give ourselves enough credit, how can we expect a positive response from others?

**The Inland Empire's nonprofit community is largely made up of smaller organizations** (67% report annual revenues below \$25,000), raising questions about their capacity to do more even if a significant infusion of philanthropic support was to come this way.

### Opportunities

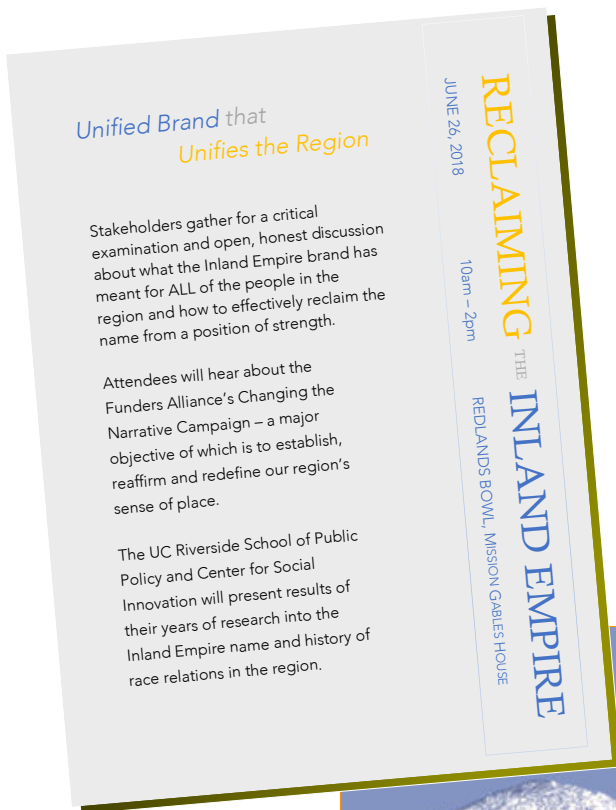
**The Inland Empire increasingly is a place where people want to be.** According to Census data, 120+ people are moving to the IE everyday, making us one of the fastest-growing population centers in the U.S.

**The demand for services provided by nonprofit organizations remains significant.** The economy is growing, but many of the new jobs coming into the region don't pay enough money to keep pace with the cost of living. Poverty rates remain disproportionately high, and the gap between haves and have nots has grown.

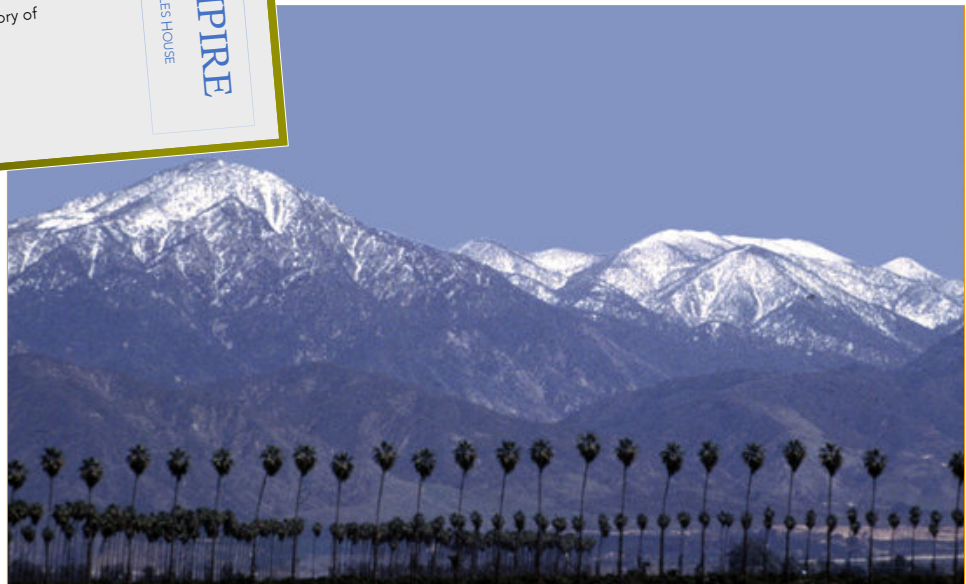
**There is greater shared visioning and collective impact throughout the region,** which creates long-term opportunities and underscores even more the role of nonprofits as agents of change. Important groundwork is being laid to establish the Inland Empire as an innovation hub in areas such as civic engagement and education.

## ► Reclaiming the IE

During the summer of 2018, the *IE Changing the Narrative* team collaborated with the University of California-Riverside Center for Social Innovation for a *Reclaiming the Inland Empire* session at the Redlands Bowl – the purpose of which was to unpack historical concerns that continue to negatively impact the “Inland Empire” brand.



That session reinforced what many of our stakeholders had been telling us: That the IE brand has value and provides a sense of place that is embraced by many residents, businesses and nonprofits alike. Reclaiming that brand in a bigger way will allow us to **better tell our story from a position of strength.**



## ► Message Framing

What does the IE stand for? How do we see ourselves? How do we want others to see us?

These questions helped form the basis of our message framing – a process from which our ultimate narrative would flow. When stakeholders were asked to describe what distinguishes the Inland Empire from neighboring counties and regions, here are some of the words they used:



After testing these messages further, the following frames stood out:

**THE INLAND EMPIRE IS ...**

Innovative	Collaborative
Beautiful	Unpretentious
Resilient	Self reliant
Richly diverse	Original

*A Land of Opportunity*

Ultimately, however, the story of the IE is the story of people.

As a nonprofit organization that is helping people experience a better future, you've got a great story to tell. So does our region. This toolkit, and the accompanying training, will empower your organization to speak with confidence about both.



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# Section 2

## IE: The New California

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# Sense of Place.

Funders are investing not just in you, but the community – and region – you serve. They want to know that their dollars will have an impact and serve a greater need. The better informed they are about your community, the more connected they're likely to feel.



Whether you're applying for a grant, interacting one-on-one with a potential funder, or thanking donors for their support, being able to demonstrate your value in the context of the bigger community or region will serve you well.

The narrative pieces that follow are designed to help you tell the story of the Inland Empire in a meaningful way. In pulling this together, we kept the following **guiding principles** in mind:

**Understanding what *IE Changing the Narrative* is and is not.** It is an ongoing messaging strategy – a bottom-up approach shaped and owned by all of us. Its success will be determined by how much we and you are willing to put into it. It is *not* a top-down marketing campaign.

**Authenticity.** IE Changing the Narrative is based on reality. We have a great story to tell. Pretending we're something we're not ultimately will backfire.

**Consistency.** The more aligned our messaging is, the more believable and impactful it becomes.

**Adaptability.** The regional narrative must be done in a way that allows nonprofit organizations to tailor it to their specific needs.



## Narrative Summary

### ***Inland Empire: The New California***

Southern California's Inland Empire (San Bernardino and Riverside counties) comprises one of the fastest-growing population centers in the United States. Located 40 miles east of Los Angeles, the IE is rich in diversity, culture, history and economic opportunity. It's also home to innovative, resourceful, mission-driven nonprofit organizations that work in partnership to transform lives, communities and the region as a whole.

While significant challenges remain, the Inland Empire's nonprofit community has shown the collaboration, creativity, commitment and capacity needed to positively impact lives throughout a region of 4.5 million people. What these resilient, highly efficient organizations need is capital – the financial support that will allow them to help California's newest population center fulfill its extraordinary promise and potential.

For foundations, government grantmakers and donors looking to make a difference, the IE's 11,000 nonprofits and the growing region they serve offer a unique opportunity. The support of elected leaders, businesses and forward-thinking educational institutions helps ensure that philanthropic dollars spent here will achieve the desired outcomes.

A growing number of entities are putting money behind this close alignment between nonprofits, influencers and decision makers:

In the past year, the **California Strategic Growth Council** has awarded two grants totaling \$55 million for community revitalization efforts in the IE that will help residents in impoverished neighborhoods rebuild their lives.

A partnership between public schools, colleges and universities in the two counties received a \$5 million **Governor's Innovation Award in Higher Education** to improve workforce training with an eye toward increasing economic attainment and career opportunities.

**Philanthropic foundations** have significantly increased their investment in the Inland Empire over the past several years, from \$61.3 million in 2013 to



\$115 million three years later. Foundational investment coming in from outside the region more than doubled during this period, from \$46 million to \$98 million. Even so, the IE continues to lag significantly behind the rest of California when it comes to foundational support per capita.

The IE can embody a new California Dream – one where the opportunity for a better life is very much within reach. Challenges or not, more than 120 people a day are moving to the IE. Join them and us as we seize the California Dream!

We are the IE.

We are the New California.

## ► IE By The Numbers

Data points you might be able to use or customize to your needs:

### Our Nonprofits

**11,000:** Number of nonprofit organizations in the Inland Empire.

**\$115 million:** Annual contributions from philanthropic foundations to IE nonprofits as of 2016 – an increase of 85% from 2013 (\$61.3 million).

**\$98 million:** Annual foundation investment coming in from outside the region as of 2016 – more than double the 2013 total (\$46 million).

**\$25.55:** Per capita foundation spending on nonprofits in the Inland Empire.

**\$262.99:** Per capita foundation spending on nonprofits in throughout California.

**\$2.5 million:** Amount raised from individual donors in the IE during one-day annual web-athons (Give Big Riverside County, Give Big San Bernardino County) over a five-year period.

**67:** Percentage of Inland Empire nonprofits with annual revenues below \$25,000.



Resources  
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Turn To

Funders Alliance of San Bernardino & Riverside Counties: <http://www.iecapaciteria.org/funders-alliance>

U.S. Census Quick Facts : <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/>

California Foundation Center: [california.foundationcenter.org](http://california.foundationcenter.org)

San Bernardino County Community Indicators Report: [http://cms.sbcounty.gov/Portals/21/Resources%20Documents/CIR\\_2017\\_report.pdf?ver=2018-03-23-132312-883](http://cms.sbcounty.gov/Portals/21/Resources%20Documents/CIR_2017_report.pdf?ver=2018-03-23-132312-883)

Riverside County Community Indicators Report: <https://www.thecommunityfoundation.net/community-indicators-report-download>

## Our Region

**4.5 million:** Population of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

**120+:** Number of people moving into the IE every day.

**7 million:** Projected population of the IE within 30 years.

**1 in 9:** Proportion of California residents who live in the Inland Empire.

**27,000:** Number of square miles comprising the IE – larger than 10 states. San Bernardino County is the largest geographic county in the U.S.

**52:** Number of cities in the two-county region.

**56:** Number of School Districts in the two-county region.

**832,000:** Number of K-12 students attending school in the two-county region.

Resources  
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Turn To

U.S. Census Quick Facts: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts>

California Department of Education Data & Statistics: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/>

U.S. Conference of Mayors Research: <https://www.usmayors.org/category/reports/>

Southern California Association of Governments Research: <https://scag.ca.gov/DataAndTools/Pages/Home.aspx>

UC-Riverside Center for Economic Forecasting: <https://ucreeconomicforecast.org>

UC-Riverside Center for Social Innovation: State of Immigrants: <https://socialinnovation.ucr.edu/research/immigrants/>

### *We're Young and Diverse ...*

**32:** Median age in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties – five years younger than the California average and six years younger than the U.S. average.

**26%:** Percentage of the population in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties under the age of 18. The state and national averages are less than 23%.

**68%:** Percentage of IE residents who are people of color.

**51%:** Percentage of IE residents who are Latinx.

**41%:** Percentage of IE households in which a language other than English is spoken at home.

**20%:** Percentage of adults in the IE who have a four-year college degree or higher (versus 32% for California and 30% for the nation as a whole).

## Real Cost Measure

**United Ways of California** recently released a county-by-county analysis of the amount of income required to meet basic needs for a given household type in a specific county. The analysis showed San Bernardino and Riverside Counties continuing to fall behind when it comes to individuals and families being able to meet basic costs of living.



**36%:** Percentage of IE households that fall below the Real Cost Measure (lack income to meet their basic needs). This is 3 percentage points higher than the California average.

**369,301:** Number of households in the IE that fall below the Real Cost Measure.

**\$68,945:** Income needed to sustain a family of four (2 adults, 1 infant, 1 school-age child) in Riverside County. Such a family would need more than 3 full-time minimum-wage jobs to achieve economic security.

**\$51,922:** Income needed to sustain a family of four (2 adults, 1 infant, 1 school-age child) in San Bernardino County. Such a family would need more than 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs to achieve economic security.

**42%:** Percentage of San Bernardino County households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing (Riverside County: 41%).

Resource  
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United Ways of California: <https://www.unitedwaysca.org/realcost>

## Discussion Items

In what ways is your organization's current narrative aligned with the Narrative Summary outlined above?

Which of the IE messaging frames align most closely with your organization's vision, mission and core values? Provide examples of the ways your organization demonstrates the messaging frames you selected.

\_\_\_ Innovative

\_\_\_ Beautiful

\_\_\_ Resilient

\_\_\_ Richly diverse

\_\_\_ Collaborative

\_\_\_ Unpretentious

\_\_\_ Self reliant

\_\_\_ Original

\_\_\_ Land of opportunity

- Within any regional narrative are subnarratives specific to a community or subregion (e.g., High Desert, Coachella Valley). Which data points and/or resources would you explore to better tell the story of your community? Which data points are still missing that would be helpful?



# Section 3

## Telling Your Story

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# Impact. Persuasion.

Effectively demonstrating the difference your organization is making in your community is a critical first step in convincing funders that you are worthy of their investment.

Connecting your narrative with that of the IE and the specific community or subregion you serve will help funders more easily visualize the good things that could happen by partnering with you. Collectively, too, speaking about our region with a similar strengths-based narrative will help attract the kind of positive attention that will attract further investment.

It's just as important to understand – and align with – the funder's narrative: What is it passionate about and what are its stated values and guiding principles? What types of organizations and causes has it supported in the past? In the case of a corporate foundation, what are its social responsibility priorities – and how do you fit into those?

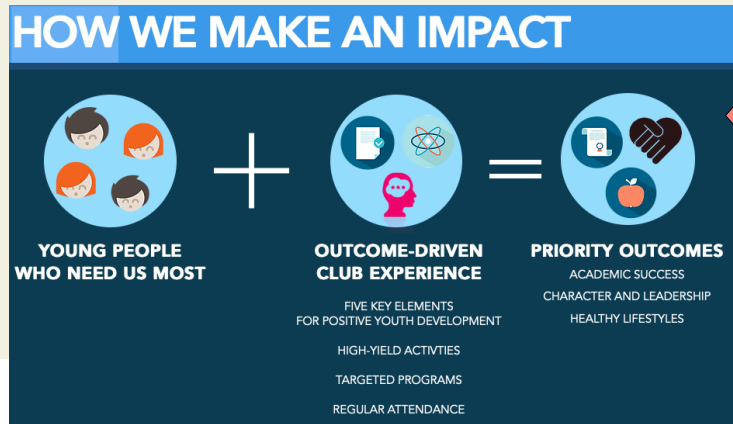
## Best Practice S.F. Bay Area

The San Francisco Bay Area attracted more than \$5.7 billion in investment from philanthropic foundations in 2016 – an astonishing per capita rate of \$735.

While much of that can be attributed to the presence of large locally based foundations (\$3.6 billion of the \$5.7 billion), the Bay Area has done an exceptional job of engaging and promoting nonprofit organizations as agents of positive change – in line with how the region has positioned itself.

The **Boys & Girls Club of Silicon Valley** makes the community's narrative part of its own storyline:

"Silicon Valley's future prosperity is dependent upon growing a middle-class workforce ready to meet the global demands of a knowledge-based economy. We know that the path to building our future workforce is preparing local youth with the skills required to succeed in college and a career. We aim to help close the opportunity gap to achieve greater economic, political and social equality among disadvantaged youth and the communities in which they live."





Best Practice  
**Pittsburgh**

*Pittsburgh's transformation from a struggling Rust Belt city to a robust employment and population center is credited in large part to the collaboration of nonprofits, funders, businesses, government entities and educational institutions, aligned behind common goals and objectives and a unified narrative.*

**"No longer just charities, Pittsburgh nonprofits have an extraordinary influence on the economy, development, government."**

*Pittsburgh Post Gazette*



Resource  
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Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership: <https://forbesfunds.org/about-gpnp>

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## ► Nonprofit Impact Statement

No matter your nonprofit's size, being able to effectively articulate the organization's impact on the Inland Empire and the specific community you serve will help you gain traction with funders. Research and experience clearly show that impact is the No. 1 consideration for funding – more than the nonprofit organization's mission, financials and history.

Impact research, therefore, must be a critical part of your communications with funders. Here's what to consider when developing your impact statement:

### 1 Sense of place matters.

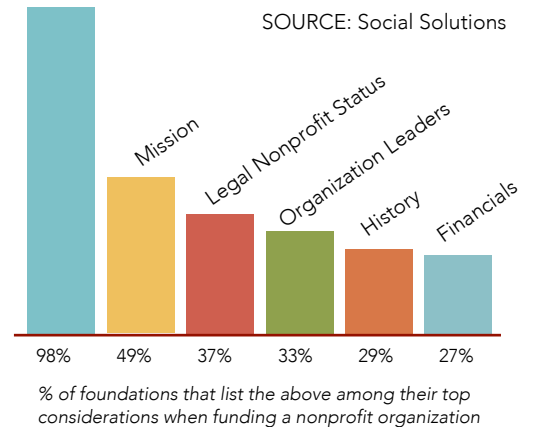
Funders want to know that the work you're doing is uplifting the community and region you serve.

"Why are foundations investing in Detroit?" The Chronicle of Philanthropy: <https://www.philanthropy.com/article/Why-Our-Foundations-Are/153777>

*"We hope our involvement may bolster the spirit of positive engagement and creativity in Detroit, catalyzing others to invest strategically across the region."*

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### What funders say matters most in grant applications



### 2 Use data to show the impact your organization is having.

While it's great to talk about the number of meals served or backpacks provided, it's more important to quantify how these kinds of efforts are transforming lives and the community.

#### Examples:

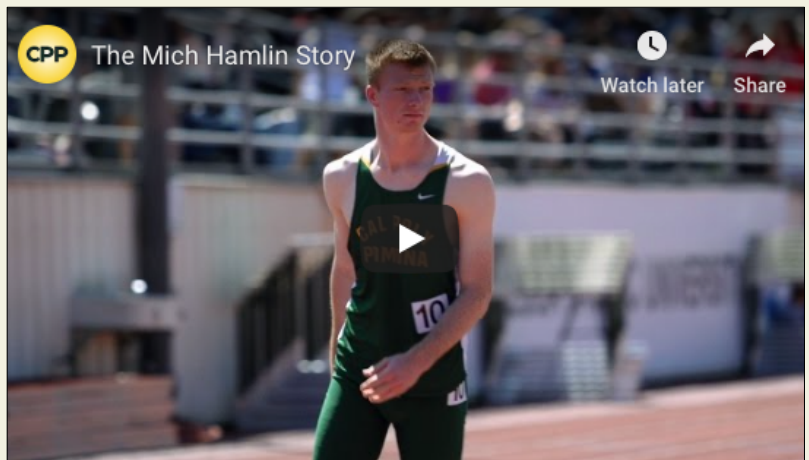
*How many of the children that you serve go on to college?  
Have suspensions or expulsions dropped due to your efforts?*

### 3 Measure the impact your volunteers are having.

Quantifying the benefits your volunteers create – freeing up staff time, improving overall output and raising awareness of your mission (through social media shares, for example) – will better position you as an efficient, mission-driven organization worthy of investment.

## 4 Find real people to validate your impact.

The people you help are often your best storytellers. Better still are stories of people whose lives were forever changed through your efforts. This is also an effective way to create an additional sense of place within your organization's narrative.



*Mich Hamlin grew up on the streets of Montclair, eventually moving in with a foster family. His turnaround began when he was introduced to the track coach Montclair High School, who convinced him that a better life was out there. Through Cal Poly Pomona's Renaissance Scholars program for students transitioning from foster care, he attended college and graduated with honors. Today, he is a graduate student at USC.*

*Mich has been very forthcoming with his story, which has helped elevate the profile (and generate support for) Renaissance Scholars as well as Montclair High's Miles for Montclair program to assist homeless students.*

### Best Practice Success Story

Nonprofit Pro identifies these four elements of an effective success story:

- The Subject** (who is the story about?)
- The Conflict** (what challenges are they facing?)
- The Resolution** (how did you address this issue?)
- The Result** (how was your service received?)

Resources  
You Can  
Turn To

"Creating Compelling Success Stories for Your Nonprofit," NonprofitPros: <https://www.nonprofitpro.com/post/creating-compelling-success-stories-nonprofit/>

"Multiple programs came together to shape me; they made the impossible possible," Cal Poly Pomona: <https://www2.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/student-success/Profiles/Pages/mich-hamlin.aspx>

"From Homeless to Hopeful: Chasing Down a Dream," TedX: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=potiKyS2Ubl>

## 5 Position your organization as a positive contributor to the future of the Inland Empire

A glass-half-full approach is far more effective in generating support than one that portrays the glass as half empty. Our region has its challenges, but our nonprofit community is creating solutions and driving opportunity.

### Best Practice Messaging Tone

*WHW, formerly known as Women Helping Women, is addressing a critical need in Orange County – growing economic disparity in one of the most expensive communities in the United States. The group's collateral materials deliver a consistent solutions-oriented message around helping the county become an even better place.*

#### Our Vision

WHW envisions a day when every person in Orange County who wants to work enjoys gainful employment!

#### The Problem

According to recent studies, the four biggest issues facing Orange County are:

- **Stable Housing** – 26,000 Orange County school-age children are homeless
- **Sustainable Income** – 350,000 Orange County residents don't know where their next meal is coming from
- **Healthcare** – 1 in 4 Orange County residents live in poverty with no healthcare
- **Education** – 2,311 Orange County students drop out of school every year

#### WHW's Solution

A good job is more than a paycheck. It is essential to creating a stable, safe and educated community. And for many, it is a lifeline.

With a good job families can afford safe housing; they can have access to quality healthcare; they can provide healthy meals to their children and teens can stay in school to get a good education, rather than dropping out and going to work to help support their families. A good job is not the solution to every problem in our society, but a good job is the solution to many of them. And WHW is proud to be part of that solution.

Our job seekers come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including survivors of domestic violence who are trying to put their lives back together; veterans attempting to transition into civilian life; at-risk youth looking for jobs as a way off the streets... and your neighbors, your brother or your aunt or your child who may be facing unemployment for the very first time.

Rather than offering a pre-designed schedule of services, WHW's staff and volunteers provide comprehensive, tailored employment solutions to job seekers, walking the journey with them and ensuring that each one gets what they need to be successful in obtaining employment. Programs include Employment Readiness Workshops, Computer Training, Job Placement Assistance, Employment Retention Support and Professional Apparel.

The return on the investment of those who partner with us is impactful. With over 2,000 volunteers who contribute more than 25,000 hours of service every year and 100% of every dollar donated going directly to impact, almost 80% of our job seekers obtain a good job within three months and 90% of those keep that job, which increases their household income by over 560%.



## Discussion Items

In what ways does your organization's current impact statement align with the five points addressed above?

Regional context?

Impact data indicators/metrics?

Quantifying volunteerism

Personal storytelling

Positioning you as a positive contributor?

What Changing the Narrative messages could move your impact statement forward?

## ► Social/Digital Media

Practically every nonprofit organization today has a website and social media presence. If funders and donors aren't currently among your priority audience targets, they should be. Consider:

One of the first places funders will turn to when a grant request is made is your website.

Funders often are among your most avid social media friends or followers. You, in turn, can follow them.

Social/digital media are an ongoing opportunity to talk about your positive impact on the IE.

### 'Where' we are matters

Connecting the regional narrative to your social media posts will give funders and donors a greater sense of place and provide important context to the work you're doing.

This can be as simple as a hashtag (e.g., #MakeADifferenceIE), a repost of a positive media story about the region or an excerpt from the regional narrative that connects back to what you do: (*IE nonprofits work together to positively impact the lives of 4.5 million people ...*).

(See **Discussion Item** below for more on hashtags and sample social media posts)

Resource  
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Turn To

### Using Social Media to Fundraise

Social media is an increasingly effective vehicle in raising funds from your community.

According to *Nonprofits Source*, **55%** of people who engage with nonprofits on social media end up taking some sort of action. Of that group:

**59%** donate money

**53%** volunteer

**52%** donate items

**43%** attend or participate in charitable events

\*For maximum effectiveness, consider using #donate in your social media posts

Nonprofits Source: <https://nonprofitssource.com/online-giving-statistics/#Social>



Facebook predicts that stories will overtake news feeds within the next year. Stories are growing 15x faster than feed-based sharing.

## Getting Funders to Notice You

### 1 Follow them.

A simple Internet search should help you identify funders with whom you're not already connected. Look for both foundations and the executive(s) or representative(s) whose responsibilities would include the Inland Empire.

### 2 Storify.

Generate content that tells the story of the impact your organization is having in the community and region. **Remember, sense of place matters.** You're promoting not just the work you do, but how it is bettering the community. Use *IE Changing the Narrative* to help frame your own talking points.

### 3 Post regularly.

This can vary, based on the size of the organization, but typically you should aim for 3-4 high-quality posts per week.

### 4 Incorporate video storytelling.

We've created a sample video, but with today's smart phone technology, it is easier than ever to record event highlights or pop-up interviews with volunteers, community influencers or people you are helping.

- Spontaneous Lo-Fi video works best on Instagram.
- Run a monthly Facebook Live event such as a Q&A session.

### 5 Build your network.

Seek out community and regional influencers who follow you and will share your posts. Identify who your **micro-influencers** are and include them in your strategy.

### 6 Aggregate content.

You don't have to generate everything yourself. Re-post high-quality content that speaks to your mission and the needs and opportunities in your community and the IE as a whole.

### 7 Engage and personalize.

Create a branding hashtag aligned with your values. Create a Facebook Group. Enable Facebook Messenger. Use messaging apps to streamline queries.

## Discussion Item

- Here are some potential hashtags to help nonprofits promote a more positive and relevant regional narrative. Please rank in order of preference:

\_\_\_ #MakeADifferenceIE

Can you suggest another?

\_\_\_ #WeRtheIE

\_\_\_ #IEResilient

\_\_\_ #IETheNewCalifornia

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Here are some 140-character (or less) messaging examples that incorporate (or focus on) a strength-based regional narrative.

*In the #InlandEmpire we have a #SharedVisionAndCollectiveImpact.*

*We are #AgentsOfChange, creating a #BetterFuture in the #InlandEmpire.*

*#InlandEmpire #InnovativeAndEngaged #<YourNonprofit>*

*Census: 120+ ppl are moving into the #InlandEmpire. Every. Day. #<Your Service or Nonprofit> is needed more than ever. #MakeADifferenceIE*

Compose your own and share with the group:

- What social media channels are you currently using and show the most promise? Which messaging channels are the most relevant for the type of work you do?



## ▶ Earned Media

See **ADDENDUM** for Media Contact list.

Earned media typically refers to coverage in traditional news outlets – newspapers, radio and television. It is separate and apart from advertising and is a valuable platform through which to tell your story.

In the Inland Empire, the dominant news agency is the **Southern California News Group**, which includes the *Riverside Press-Enterprise*, *San Bernardino Sun*, *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* and *Redlands Daily Facts*. The group includes seven other newspapers in Southern California, including the Orange County Register and Los Angeles Daily News, and often shares content among each of the papers.



The *Palm Springs Desert Sun* is the primary newspaper serving the Coachella Valley, while the *Victorville Daily Press* covers the High Desert of San Bernardino County. The IE also is home to a number of African American, Spanish-language and general-circulation weekly newspapers.

The Los Angeles Times provides occasional spot-news coverage of the IE, as do LA's TV network affiliates. Beyond that, there is limited TV news presence. Local network affiliates serve the Coachella Valley, and San Bernardino is home to a public broadcasting station.

In this era of social media and declining print circulation, why does news coverage still matter?

Newspaper websites generate significant readership, and in the IE are the primary source of local news.

Influencers still actively use traditional media to stay informed about their community and region.

A positive story in the media can serve as important third-party validation.

You can use the link from a positive story in the media as content for your website and social media.

## Tips for effective media outreach

- 1. Develop a point of contact and establish a relationship.** This can change regularly given the mercurial nature of media staffing today. Still, most local papers have a community news page, which typically are looking for content from nonprofits.
- 2. Use *IE Changing the Narrative* to develop storylines that connect to regional needs and opportunities.** Media gravitate toward stories that have the broadest impact and appeal.
- 3. Limit news releases to no more than 400 words.** Stick to the facts and avoid flowery language. Use quotes to fill in the blanks (why this matters to the region). Include contact information and a photo if available.
- 4. Use the newspaper's opinion and community pages to draft op-ed pieces on topical issues.** You have expertise ... share it.

### Best Practice Guest Column

*Greg Bradbard began writing a weekly column for the LA Times' Foothill Reader section while with Inland Empire United Way, writing about regional issues. Greg was able to accomplish this through persistence and relationship building.*

Resource  
You Can  
Turn To

See ADDENDUM for: "10 Tips for Getting Your Op-Ed Piece Placed" (Nonprofit Marketing Guide)



AmeriCorps VIP fellows are tackling a variety of community challenges across the Inland Empire.

### Building the next generation of leaders

They come from throughout Southern California and even other parts of the country. Bringing a desire to help improve communities and change lives, these young adults have made a commitment to giving the next year of their lives in service.

AmeriCorps is a federally sponsored program often described as the domestic version of the Peace Corps. With sites throughout the nation, AmeriCorps places members who volunteer to address critical community needs, such as increasing academic achievement, mentoring youth, fighting poverty, sustaining national parks, and preparing for disasters.

Here in the Foothills, Inland Empire United Way has built a team of nine AmeriCorps members who are placed within a variety of nonprofit organizations.

"They come in excited and ready to make an immediate impact for those most in need," said Dr. Felita Jones, IUW's President & CEO. "From Kids Pack to iReads to Launch Point, the AmeriCorps members are consistently breathing new life into our programs, our organization, and the community at large."

I've had the pleasure to work with many outstanding AmeriCorps members over the

See BUILDING page 2



Gregory Bradbard  
President, Hope  
Through Learning  
Foundation



## Discussion Item

- Draft an outline for a 400-word op-ed on an issue that impacts the work you do.

## ▶ Video

It's been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Video goes beyond that. It creates a sense of immediacy and excitement. It strengthens impact and (most importantly) a video will emotionally engage the audience – and hold their attention – in a way that no other media can.

In the nonprofit world, a well-done video can also give the sense of being there, allowing funders to get a real sense of what the organization does and how it helps the community.

So, if you want your potential donors to see your good work, you could arrange to meet them somewhere, give them a tour, perhaps introduce them to stakeholders and clients. Or ... you can do it more effectively with video – and manage the message so that it is consistent and always in line with your organization's values.



### A successful video for a nonprofit must:

- 1. Move at least two emotions** (sympathy, outrage, fear, joy, laughter, awe, wonder).
- 2. Tell a bit of a story** (dramatic tension, heroes, villains and victims).
- 3. Provide a spectacle that draws the viewer to respond to a call to action.**

Resource  
You Can  
Turn To

"6 Expert Tips to Create an Awesome Nonprofit Video," [classy.org](https://www.classy.org/blog/create-awesome-nonprofit-video/):  
<https://www.classy.org/blog/create-awesome-nonprofit-video/>

## What tools will you need?

Mostly just a camera. High-end equipment doesn't make your video better — you do. You can use your:

- iPhone
- Android
- Single Lens Reflex camera (such as Canon or Nikon)
- Even your grandpa's Kodak digital camera from 1998

It's all good. The key is getting the appropriate images and interviews and then arranging it all into a cohesive whole. You can stop here when it comes to equipment, or if you insist on shooting video, a few other pieces of hardware might come in handy.

- A tripod to hold the camera steady (super important)
- A gimble to get steady shots while moving (you can buy one of these for an iPhone for under \$200 and it comes with all the operating software)
- Lighting – preferably LED if indoors (natural lighting for outdoors shots works well but be aware of the position of the sun/shadows and how it might affect the video)
- If you want to get really fancy, get a droid for aerial footage
- A second fancy option – and this is being done more and more – is 360 immersive video

## You must have a story

This is the secret to success. Story. Story. Story. What is your story? You know it best. Tell it like you would tell a friend. Use your surroundings to make your story come alive.

There are many great script-writing tools. The best is Final Draft. It is not intuitive, though, and takes some getting used to. In contrast, you can also write your script on notebook paper. The key is getting to know your story and how it all fits together. Writing everything down and organizing it into a script will make your story more memorable for audiences.



Resources  
You Can  
Turn To

"11 Nonprofit Videos that Inform and Inspire," classy.org: <https://www.classy.org/blog/11-nonprofit-videos-that-inform-and-inspire/>

"The Ultimate Nonprofit Video Marketing Strategy + 5 of the Best Nonprofit Videos We've Seen," Wild Apricot: <https://www.wildapricot.com/blogs/newsblog/2018/07/20/nonprofit-video-marketing-strategy>

## Discussion Item

- Review sample video. What elements of the video could you use or customize for your organization's use?

"How to Make a Video for Your Nonprofit for Under \$50,"  
grantspace.org: <https://grantspace.org/resources/blog/how-to-make-a-video-for-your-nonprofit-for-under-50/>



Resource  
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