



Seventh-day Adventist Church  
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION



Philanthropic  
Service for Institutions

## Finding Meaning in the Mysterious—Careers in Fundraising (Part Four)

It is the organizations of the nonprofit sector that touch the lives of ordinary and extraordinary citizens alike in ways that the other sectors aren't obligated to affect or simply cannot.

Nonprofit organizations aren't in the business of making a profit; therefore they are often designated as not-for-profit.

While successful nonprofit organizations need to be profitable in order to survive, this is not their primary purpose. They provide for the interests and needs of all Americans—educational, social, artistic, cultural, physical, environmental, spiritual, and professional. Hospitals, schools and universities, museums, human service agencies, and others provide services and benefits for all citizens. It is a “sector of opportunity,” as described by Dennis Young.[1] It is a sector of organizations entrusted by donors and constituents to meet public needs and address causes.

A unique factor of fundraising as a career is that at the end of each day, the professional has engaged in a journey worth sharing because, whether or not the results of that day's efforts are visible now or are long-term, the professional can take pride in the nature of the work.

Fundraising or development or advancement, as some prefer to call it, is a fundamental part of the process that makes institutions successful. The genuinely committed professional feels a “calling” to the work of fundraising. The satisfaction is derived from results, often intangible as well as those that aren't visible for some time in the future, not from recognition.

Job satisfaction is generally high among fundraising professionals. A 26-year-old Harvard University graduate who co-founded Peace Games believes that jobs in nonprofits can be as rewarding as those in the high-tech world. He is quoted as saying, “What I can offer folks is something they can't get at Microsoft: the ability to help kids be peacemakers.” The satisfaction of working with human needs, interesting and worthwhile causes, and achieving results that go beyond the bottom line of financial gain has attracted many young people, among excellent professionals who have made the switch from other sectors.

Next time we'll look at how to enter the field and achieve professional progress.