

ON WHICH BONNIE AND ELIZABETH VISIT THE FUNDRAISING SCHOOL AT IUPUI

Fundraising from Foundations and Grant Management

IUPUI The Fundraising School: Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

<https://philanthropy.iupui.edu/professional-development/courses-seminars/the-fund-raising-school/proposal-writing-and-grant-management.html>

Day One

Bonnie:

En route from Delaware after two hours of driving I stopped at the Levi and Catherine Coffin house for a guided tour by an Indiana State Museum representative.

[Levi & Catharine Coffin House - Indiana State Museum \(indianamuseum.org\)](http://indianamuseum.org)

It was inspiring to hear the history of the home and its use by the Coffin family to house over one thousand freedom seekers on the Underground Railroad for twenty years. The Coffins were a couple grounded in their Quaker identity, holding true to their values. He was considered the President of the Underground Railroad and their house was also called Grand Central. One of my favorite quotes by Levi was *“I HAD ALREADY RISKED EVERYTHING IN THE WORK – LIFE, PROPERTY, AND REPUTATION – AND DID NOT FEEL BOUND TO RESPECT HUMAN LAWS THAT CAME IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE LAW OF GOD.”*



Crawl space where over ten people could hide was covered by a large chest or piece of furniture.



Contemporary Quilt



False bottom wagon. People hid underneath and then grain bags would be piled up on the end so that it appeared to be only bags piled high. If stopped, Levi would say he was making a delivery. His faith tradition did not allow him to lie, but in fact, he was delivering people to freedom.



One more hour of driving with a stop for a quick hike in Holliday Park before meeting Elizabeth in Indianapolis for a very tasty dinner at Axum Ethiopian Restaurant.

[Home - Holliday Park Foundation](#)

[Home | Axum Ethiopian Restaurant \(axumindy.com\)](http://axumindy.com)

Elizabeth:

Travel day. Indianapolis is an easy drive from the Columbus area. About 2-3 hours, traffic dependent, straight across on I-70. It is oh so challenging to get away from a busy life full of responsibilities, but the conference feels worth the effort; and travel is always good for changing perspective.

The recommended hotel is only a 10-minute walk through greenspace from the conference center. Clean, comfortable, and quiet. Ahhh!

Bonus for college athlete fans: the workshop is in the NCAA headquarters.



Feet go up after a long day of preparation and travel!



Conference Center Entrance



Green space next to the White River State Park

Day Two

Bonnie:

What a gorgeous weather day! Powered by some strong Ethiopian coffee refrigerated from last night I woke up way earlier than I prefer. However, I was really excited to learn how to fund activities to benefit our world! Our instructor is excellent, and began the course by telling us that the Philanthropy is Greek for the “love of brother,” and how there are many people who know that a change is needed in the world, but they don’t know what to do. They want to give of their time and money to those with ideas and the energy to try to make a difference. Understanding how another’s philanthropic views are aligned with the values your own organization or the organization you are working for hold can help you develop a connection resulting in philanthropic behaviors which result in others donating their time, wealth and voice (advocacy). She defined fundraising as “the gentle art of teaching others the joy of giving” and explained how endorphins are released when you give...and when you see the final results of your gift. Many organizations accept proposals from nonprofits, including governmental organizations, individual corporations, fraternal organizations, churches, etc. 69% of monies raised in 2019 were given by individuals and 17% by Foundations (or 75.69 million), with another 10% given through bequests (or 43.21 million) which are often left to foundations. So taking this course on Fundraising specifically with Foundations seems like a reasonable step toward funding some of

the ideas/visions I have in my head which could be done in my community! We learned about what differentiates the different types of grants foundations give, trends regarding foundational giving and how an organization can be prepared to meet the needs of funders (strategy). We were advised to start with the dream or vision we have, consider the cost of that effort, and find those who share that vision in the community. We learned about how to logically develop our case for programming and projects, develop a budget and budget narrative, project timeline, communicate with funders, evaluate our efforts and create an excellent proposal. We learned SO much in one day and my brain was truly full. So we went for a walk downtown to get Mediterranean food! :)



Wide awake and ready for a seven hour training!!

Elizabeth:

Class begins at 8 am. Bobbie Donahue, our instructor, has been teaching with the Lilly School of Philanthropy for 20 years (wow!). There are folks from all over the United States attending this two-day course - working in all sorts of places from small, rural hospitals to large, international organizations like The Nature Conservancy.

Agenda for the day: Expectations, Organizational Readiness, Developing the Package, and The Story.

The most important note I wrote on the TOC page was: *Are they inspired by our idea? Do they think we can do it?* Again and again today Bobbie emphasized the importance of clear articulation of our purpose and our attention to fully understanding what we can, or cannot, do. If we cannot articulate a clear understanding of our own vision, then grantmakers will not be able to support us. And they want to support us!

With a massive amount of information shared today, we covered topics ranging from understanding the nature of the philanthropic landscape in the United States to how to develop the case for addressing the particular need our organization will focus on.

Bobbie said a grant writer must have all one's "internal ducks in a row" before starting to look for grants. Be forthright in what you intend to accomplish and what you do not.

We ended the day at 5 pm with the nuts and bolts of how to prepare the grant proposal. Again, Bobbie emphasized that grantmakers want us to succeed - they have funds to give and they want people with good, well-planned ideas to give this money to. It's a match! However, when proposal officers read through hundreds of proposals, the easiest proposal to pass on is the one where grant writers fail to follow directions. It's a tight and rigid track to follow, but it can make all the difference. Pay attention to the small details - only give what is asked for in the foundation's guidelines.

We ended our day walking to dinner on a beautiful spring evening and then sharing this blog post with all of you!

Day Three

Elizabeth:

Good night's sleep, but feeling ready to be back home. Two nights away and the heart drumbeat of home is getting loud! It's spring so this morning we are back to chilly and rainy weather, a different kind of beauty as these sweet spring flowers drink up. :-)

Today our agenda includes: Matching Funders, Finding Funders, Proposal Review, and Grant Management.

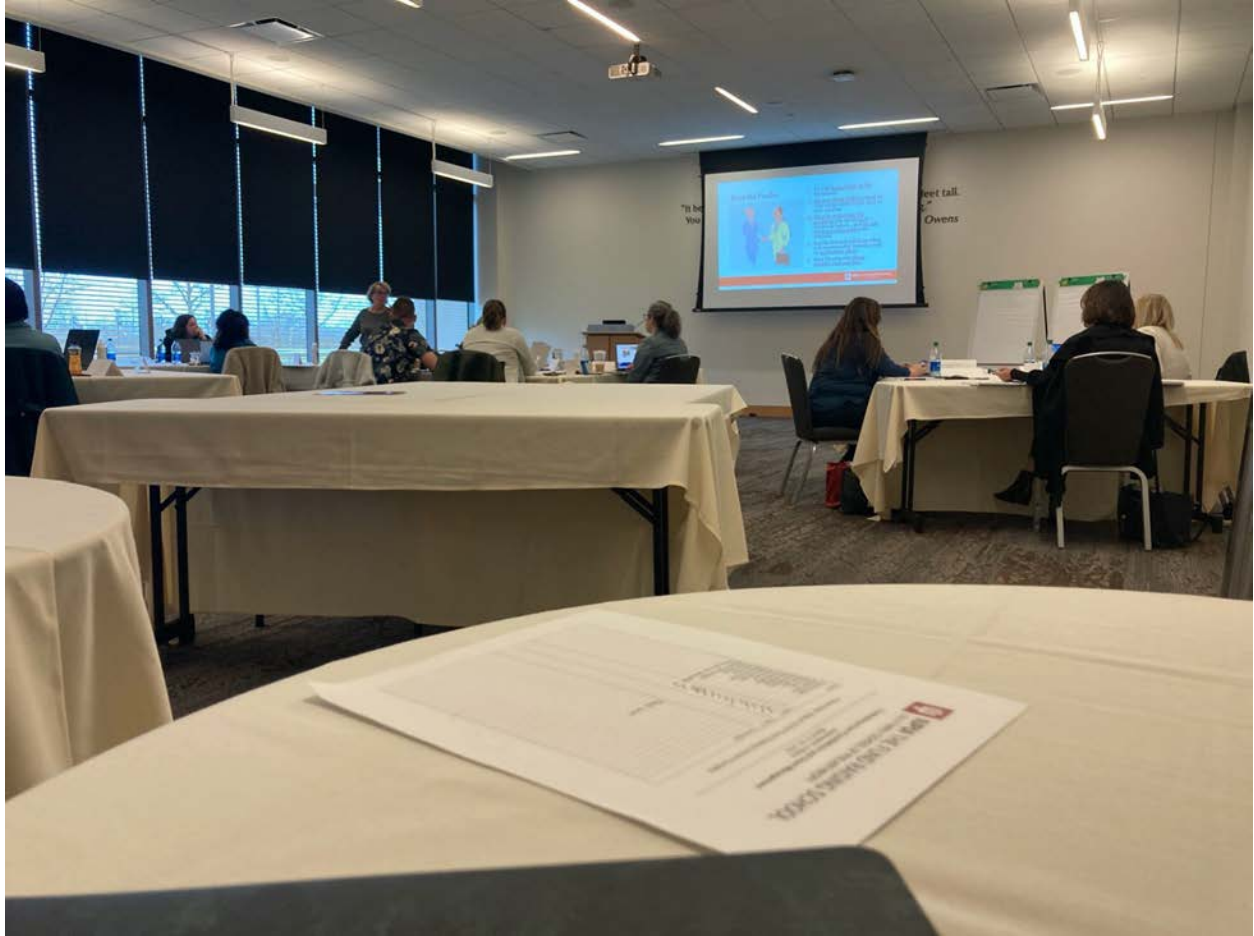
One website our small group explored for finding funders was FDO Quickstart (<https://fconline.foundationcenter.org/fdo-search/member-index/>) It is a searchable, online foundation directory. This website has all the IRS tax documents (called Form 990) so a grant writer can see who has money to give away, which organizations have been given grants previously, and if that might be a fit for your organization's needs. In other words, is it a fit? (Online dating metaphors abound here...) In other words, you can look for foundations, endowments, or charitable trusts in your geographic area, your area of specialization, or other factors. Here's a takeaway: rid yourself of a scarcity mindset. There is money out there in foundations or (endowments or charitable trusts) that is waiting for someone with a great idea and good organizational readiness to come along and ask for support.

We did some great case study samples of looking at whether or not grantmakers would be a good fit for a pretend case. This was really helpful to hear how other students thought through the decision making process.



Rainy day lunch at the hotel

My brain is overfull now with new information. This two-day course has enough information to chew on for a solid year or more.



Yep, it's a fluorescent-lit conference room...be prepared. Bring eye drops.

Bonnie:

Rainy Indianapolis Day, walk from hotel to training



Our AMAZING teacher Bobbie.

Today we wrapped up our training. We learned about what databases to use to research potential funders and quick tips on how to find best matches. The 990 tax form is a great tool to

research funder history, and most local libraries have subscriptions you can use with Candid. We did an exercise where we worked to assess the match of a particular nonprofit with a funder and discussed whether or not we felt it was worthwhile to create a proposal. Bobbie explained to us how to effectively communicate with a potential and current funder. We even switched roles and roleplayed as program officers trying to determine whether or not we should fund particular proposals. I was surprised by how tough my tablemates were! They were very critical of the missights of the author of the case we were assigned. Bobbie said that if we do not take anything away from the course, we must remember to FOLLOW DIRECTIONS. Next, we learned how to manage a grant project, create reports and hopefully a long lasting sustainable partnership!



Elizabeth with her certificate of completion!

After the class was finished we received certificates of completion and I spent some time one on one in conversation with Bobbie about my program ideas. She has an incredible wealth of information and offered to be available, even years later, to email communication. In summation, this was an incredible couple days of new information that I consider very worthwhile, and I recommend the Fund Raising School to anyone who may be interested. And they have many other classes, some leading to certificates one can earn, even a PhD program in philanthropy! [The Fund Raising School: Courses & Seminars: TFRS: Lilly Family School of Philanthropy: IUPUI](#)