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## EDITOR'S NOTES

**I** EXTEND MY THANKS to Robert Ashcroft and Melissa Stone, guest editors of this special-theme issue devoted to the BenchMark 3.5 Conference on Nonprofit and Philanthropic Studies. They, along with former *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* editor Mel Gray and Nonprofit Academic Centers Council executive director Sean Shacklett, deserve all the credit for bringing the issue to fruition.

In order to put this special issue into context, I spent a fair amount of time reading past *NML* articles on nonprofit education. O'Neill (2005) is a good place to start to find out about the development of nonprofit education. He observed that this field was nonexistent in 1980. Crowder and Hodgkinson (1992) looked at the state of nonprofit education in a survey of seventy-five educational institutions, thus providing important historical data. The field developed in both the United Kingdom and the United States. Palmer and Bogdanova (2008) compared nonprofit education in both countries, reporting a more robust development in the United States. In the same issue of *NML*, Paton (2008) replied that Palmer and Bogdanova's comparative review was overly pessimistic regarding the United Kingdom's state of the field. This interesting exchange showed that context makes a difference between these two countries.

In a survey of 208 nonprofit managers, Haas and Robinson (1998) asked what should be taught in nonprofit education programs. The managers were in favor of nonprofit management master's degrees, but did not have a strong preference among MA, MBA, MPA, or MSW degrees. Dolan (2002) also surveyed nonprofit managers to seek their opinions about the most needed skills. The top needs were reported to be fund-raising, grant writing, and volunteer administration. Using focus groups of alumni, faculty, employers, and funders, Mirabella and Wish (1999) reported that nonprofit education should be about leadership and not just techniques. This type of abstract learning makes it very difficult to evaluate the educational impact of such programs. By comparison, it is relatively easy to show that a student of nonprofit management can read a balance sheet or know a government regulation. Mirabella and Wish called for a systematic effort to evaluate the educational impact of nonprofit education programs. This is easier said than done. Measuring the impact of a holistic education in leadership remains a challenge to this day, and will, no doubt, into the future.

*Nonprofit Management and Leadership* has a rich history of inquiry into nonprofit education. This issue continues the tradition.

Duncan Neuhauser, Ph.D.  
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