

Philanthropy:

Founder of charity offers tips for making sure charitable donations are used wisely

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Wednesday, March 7, 2012 - 2 a.m.

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Heather duBoef, founder of [Nevada Women's Philanthropy](#), says smart giving begins with thinking in business terms.

She ought to know. Her organization's members put up \$5,000 per year and then — after rigorous analysis — [vote on which charities should receive the group's pooled grants](#). Many members are also donating their time to causes, she said.

In sharing what she has learned about giving, duBoef told last week's [Philanthropy Leaders Forum](#) that members of Nevada Women's Philanthropy are good Samaritans who care about the community but added, "We think strictly in business terms."

"We're just a large group of community investors. We're very practical. We're interested in measurable results," she said.

The group donates cash and time based on the "best impact for our dollars," which organization members determine through the following methods:

- Screening applicants. This includes touring charity operations and talking with their executives, obtaining organizational charts and biographies of charity directors and executives, and reviewing such financial information as budgets and data on the charity's donor base.
- Screening grant applications. Factors studied include whether the applicant is ready and able to effectively use the money requested. Other factors include whether the money would address a critical need, whether the money requested is the best solution to address that need and whether there would be a measurable result from the requested donation.
- Disbursing grant dollars according to a schedule over time – as opposed to all at once — to ensure the recipient is using the funding as agreed.
- Monitoring how grant dollars are spent to ensure the Nevada Women's Philanthropy's investment goals are met.

Besides hearing from duBoef and other officials in the philanthropy and public/private partnership fields, attendees of the Philanthropy Leaders Forum each received a book called "Giving 2.0" by Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen.

The book has been praised for showing volunteers and donors how to get the most out of their giving.

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