LOUISIANA’S NONPROFIT SECTOR: A GROWING FORCE

Nonprofits represent a diverse and powerful labor force that has grown to meet state residents’ increasing needs for social, cultural, educational, healthcare and other services.

- In 1996 there were 14,156 nonprofit organizations in Louisiana; 6,377 of those were classified as 501(c)(3) charities or foundations.
- By 2008 there were 19,620 registered Louisiana nonprofits (13,120 501(c)(3) groups, plus 6,500 in related categories)—a **38.5% increase since 1996**, representing a **3.2% annual growth rate** that well outpaced the 2.2% national average. *(Sources: National Center for Charitable Statistics [NCCS] and the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies [CCSS]*)

In 2005, the Internal Revenue Service eased the application process for nonprofit start-ups to help speed recovery from hurricanes Katrina and Rita *(source: Congressional Research Service report, 2005)*. Yet even before the storms, the Louisiana nonprofit sector played a major economic role, as detailed in a 2003 study released by LANO and the Johns Hopkins Nonprofit Employment Data Project.

At the time of that study, nonprofit employees accounted for **5.6 percent of Louisiana’s workforce**, or roughly one in 18 workers. **Nonprofits paid nearly $2.9 billion in wages, or 4.7% of the state’s total employment income.** Illustrating the size and scope of nonprofit action, this figure exceeded by several million the entire state government payroll.

As recently as 2003, **Louisiana’s nonprofit sector employed:**
- Nearly 11 times as many workers as our utility industry
- More than 4 times our food, textile and apparel manufacturing industries
- More than 3.5 times our information industry
- Almost twice our transportation industry
- 1.5 times our petroleum and chemical manufacturing industries

**Louisiana’s nonprofit sector remains a major employer and public service provider.** The most recent estimate (2004, from CCSS) places the state’s nonprofit workforce at nearly **150,000**, a figure likely exceeded by post-Katrina sector growth. Current IRS data show that more than half of Louisiana’s 501(c)(3) public charities provide services in education and healthcare—two uniquely critical needs amid Louisiana’s current fiscal crisis.

Millions of state residents benefit daily from nonprofit charities operating in every parish. The success of the nonprofit model relies on the unmatched commitment, perseverance and generosity of its employees, volunteers, investors and partners.

**LANO is a statewide member organization that advocates for the nonprofit community and strengthens the effectiveness of those committed to improving Louisiana.**