



**PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM**  
PROVIDING EXCELLENCE IN RECRUITING NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

# CURRENTS

TO OUR CLIENTS AND FRIENDS,

In this issue, we are highlighting new models of leadership in the nonprofit sector in our interview with Richard Buery. Recently named President and Chief Executive Officer of The Children's Aid Society – one of the nation's largest agencies providing critical services to children and their families – Buery is the youngest leader in the agency's 157-year history.

We also wanted to give you a brief snapshot of our team members' varied activities, and to fill you in on some of our most recent searches.

## Selected Recent Searches

American University in Cairo – President  
Arcus Foundation – Executive Director  
Atlantic Philanthropies – Senior Web Strategist  
Burchfield Penney Art Center – Director  
Celebrity Series of Boston – President and CEO  
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation –  
Program Director – Medical Research  
Girls Inc. – President and CEO  
Groundwork, Inc. – Executive Director  
Honolulu Academy of Arts – Director  
Museum of Arts and Design – Director of Development  
Nation Institute – President and CEO  
National Religious Partnership for the Environment –  
Executive Director  
Prospect Park Alliance – Executive Director  
Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art –  
Director  
SCO Family of Services – Executive Director  
Scholastic Inc. – Board Director  
Thomas Moran Trust – Executive Director  
Union for Reform Judaism – COO  
US-Mexico Foundation – Chief Executive Officer

## Around Phillips Oppenheim

John Schaefer's daily WNYC arts program featured **SARAH JAMES** on its recent program about "the Changing Market for Arts Executives." She was joined on the show by Robin Pogrebin of the *New York Times*. Discussing the salaries of the highest-paid arts executives, Sarah commented that for nonprofit leaders "pay is not as important as the mission. Moreover, boards are responsive and do not wish to offend the people they serve. They believe in their organizations and seek to find the best person to lead them." Sarah observed: "At a nonprofit, mission, not pay, gets you through a bad day."



Sarah James

**JANE DONALDSON** was recently honored by the ACKERMAN INSTITUTE FOR THE FAMILY, where she received the Arthur Maslow Distinguished Service Award. Jane joined the Board in 2000. She is the third recipient of the award which is presented to an individual who has contributed to



Jane Donaldson (L) and Susan Meade (R) at the Ackerman Awards Dinner

Ackerman in significant ways. During her tenure as Board Chair, she successfully guided the Institute through strategic planning and a change of leadership, steered it through the current economic downturn, expanded its international presence, and helped attract vibrant new Board members to help shape the Institute to meet the challenges of the future.

**BECKY KLEIN** was quoted in a recent *Bloomberg* article on New York City Opera and its compensation package for general manager Gerard Mortier. Asked to provide perspective on compensation for leaders of cultural organizations, she also shared the importance of balance between artistic vision and institutional reality. In regard to Mortier's departure, she suggested: "His grand plans were not going to fit into the budgetary constraints." Becky worked with the Metropolitan Opera to recruit **Peter Gelb** as its General Manager and early in her career was a member of the staff of the Santa Fe Opera.

**SUSAN MEADE** discussed careers in the nonprofit sector at a meeting of former senior executives from the financial guaranty insurance industry. Susan was joined at the meeting by Susan MacEachron, Deputy Director of ReServe – a nonprofit that recruits active retirees and carefully matches their skills and experience with public service jobs that pay a stipend.

In other news...**PAUL SPIVEY** completed his first Ultramarathon on Catalina Island, California. Paul was one of 150 starters and 135 finishers in the 50-mile Avalon Benefit run. For over six months, Paul trained for the marathon by running 70 to 80 miles a week. He finished the run in a little over 11 hours.



Paul after finishing the race.

### Richard R. Buery, Jr.

*President and Chief Executive Officer of The Children's Aid Society, one of the nation's largest and most innovative non-sectarian agencies. Founded in 1853, it serves 150,000 of New York City's neediest children and their families.*



*Recruited to The Children's Aid Society in October 2009 by Phillips Oppenheim, Buery is its first African-American leader. Before joining Children's Aid, he was Executive Director of Groundwork, Inc., a non-profit organization he co-founded in 2002 to help children living in neighborhoods of poverty achieve the same educational, professional and personal success as children growing up anywhere. A graduate of Harvard College and Yale Law School, Buery was an attorney at the Brennan Center for Justice and co-founder and executive director of iMentor, a program that connects middle and high school students with volunteer mentors. In 2009, Crain's New York Business named Buery one of its "Forty Under 40" New Yorkers who have excelled in their fields.*

#### **What are the major challenges you faced and some of the changes you've initiated?**

Though the size of Children's Aid creates different challenges than those I faced at Groundwork, I think fundamentally the skills are the same. Whether you're running an organization of 200 or 2,000 people, you're not working directly with them. You're working with a team of folks, who themselves are leading teams.

What's more fundamental than size is going from being a co-founder of an organization, where I was intimately involved in every part of its growth and development, to an agency which has ways of working and programs that have a life well beyond anything that I've had anything to do with creating.

Throughout Children's Aid there's a deep commitment to doing the best quality work. But different programs have different capacities for actually measuring effectiveness and improving their practice accordingly. So one initiative is to determine how we can more effectively define, track and manage outcomes on the basis of data about our services and their impact. Some programs are doing this very well, but we need this to be universal.

Children's Aid offers a vast array of services, but it's not always easy for an agency this large and complex to maximize the resources available when a family comes in the door. Another

initiative is to better integrate services across divisions, departments, and programs so we're in a position to offer truly seamless service. Since there are some neighborhoods where we do this very well, we have a real model to work with.

A third initiative focuses on development and marketing. At Children's Aid we have a great tradition, a great brand. But a lot of people don't know what we do. We need to find ways to communicate about the great work that we do to our clients and potential clients and also to funders and donors. This is a very dynamic organization with truly creative people in youth development, education and child welfare. We're really pushing the envelope on how you serve the most vulnerable children.

#### **You are a somewhat unusual candidate. What brought you into the search mix?**

At Groundwork, we've been able to build a strong, high-quality organization in a short period of time, so I think that our reputation based on its good work is one factor – along with my role as a leader in co-founding the agency. Another key is relationships: I knew Paul Spivey of Phillips Oppenheim from our mutual work in youth development.

#### **How would you describe Phillips Oppenheim's approach to the search process?**

Deliberate. Thorough. Intentional. They made sure I was well prepared and well informed. I imagine the search committee at Children's Aid would say the same thing. I think Phillips Oppenheim was less interested in making a placement than in making a *good* placement.

Part of the role of a search firm, particularly when you have a non-traditional candidate like me, is communication: translating skills, breaking down what the organization needs, breaking down what you actually bring to the table. It's a lot of work. It's communication, translation, planning. It's not just about running a good interview or managing resumes; you have to understand organizations and understand people.

I was given a very strong introduction to The Children's Aid Society. Part of that was the search process itself and part was a transition process. I received a good grounding in the work, culture and the leadership before I came on board.

*To find out more about the work of The Children's Aid Society, visit its Web site at [www.childrensaidsociety.org](http://www.childrensaidsociety.org).*

#### **Our Consulting Team:**

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