



Kim Jones: Helping Nonprofits be Nonprofits

Kim Jones has spent most of her career working with nonprofits. She appreciates “the impact that they make ... the passion that you see, the ability to take a small amount of resources and apply them to address some need in the community and really make some direct change ... I think that it’s the passion that people bring to it, and the innovation in how they can make it work.”

Today, as executive director of The Nonprofit Village, Jones doesn’t only work for a nonprofit, she works at a nonprofit that helps other nonprofits to thrive.

The organization officially started as a nonprofit in 2006 by first offering office space that could be subleased to smaller nonprofits that might not have the budget to rent out full-priced commercial spaces.

“Now, almost 10 years later, we’ve changed the model, grown the model, expanded who we’re serving, and we started to provide a lot of other programs and services,” Jones says.

In addition to the office space in Rockville the group offers for reduced cost, The Nonprofit Village provides other services and equipment such as meeting spaces, shared printer and fax machine, volunteer and intern screening and training, and development programs.

“So many organizations are either working off of their kitchen table or out of their basement. We could probably reduce the cost of professional space for them, and the fact that they are co-located could benefit them by having some other shared surfaces,” Jones says. “We really started to pay closer attention

to how we could allow these organizations to focus more on their mission and less on what would be real estate things, like who to call when the lights burn out. We do all of that for them, and they’re focusing then on their work, whatever their mission is for their individual organizations.”

Jones joined The Nonprofit Village’s board about eight years ago, and then became executive director in 2012. Since then, the nonprofit has continued to grow. Five years ago, The Nonprofit Village had 15 organizations that served 24,000 people. Now, the group has 30 organizations that serve 88,000. Better yet, there has been a zero failure rate with all of these nonprofits.

With this growth in mind, Jones and the other officials are considering moving to a larger space, still in Rockville, in 2018 or 2019 so they can serve more nonprofits.

Another benefit to the nonprofits working in close proximity to each other is that they can collaborate or use one another as resources. Jones sees the strong and friendly relationships the organizations build with each other as one reason nonprofits thrive here.

“In Montgomery County, you see the nonprofit community collaborate a lot more than in other cities,” she says. “You just find things in Montgomery County that you wouldn’t find in other communities.”

Helping this nonprofit community collaborate and succeed motivates Jones to continue her work. “I’m doing something different every day,” she says. “Every day you walk out and know you helped somebody.”