The Business of Doing Good

Is it possible to create a successful business based on helping and improving charitable giving? **Bill Strathmann '89**, **Katya Andresen '89**, Kate Olsen BMC '00, and **Benesha Bobo '03** not only think so, they're proving it.

The four bi-co alumni work at Network for Good (www.networkforgood.org), a nonprofit founded in 2001 by Yahoo!, Cisco, and AOL. Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., with offices in San Francisco, the 40-employee organization is focused on making it as easy to volunteer and donate online as it is to shop. Since its launch, the nonprofit has sent more than $300 million to 50,000 charities and recruited thousands of volunteers through its website, the "Causes" Facebook application, and other partnerships.

Strathmann became interested in philanthropy after his mother died of cancer at age 54 and he began running marathons to honor her. He built a website to allow friends and family to sponsor him and donate to the American Cancer Society, and that made him realize how much more effective small charities could be if only they had a way of reaching potential supporters online.

The Network for Good staff includes (left to right) Kate Olsen BMC '00, CEO Bill Strathmann '89, Benesha Bobo '03, and COO Katya Andresen '89.

When Strathmann joined Network for Good as its CEO in 2004, after a career in business consulting, the organization was heavily dependent on funding from philanthropies. He introduced an entrepreneurial approach, turning the nonprofit into a social enterprise by developing low-cost fundraising software and web tools to sell to other nonprofits, creating a revenue stream that now covers 90 percent of Network for Good's operating expenses.

Andresen joined Network for Good after she interviewed Strathmann for her book *Robin Hood Marketing: Stealing Corporate Savvy to Sell Just Causes*. In the midst of that interview, the two switched roles and Strathmann started interviewing Andresen—for a job. As COO, Andresen has put her marketing experience to work by expanding the number of partnerships and charities using the organization's donation platform (including an initiative with actor Kevin Bacon called SixDegrees.org), and enhancing training for nonprofits to help them become better fundraisers.

Olsen and Bobo are both recent arrivals at Network for Good. Olsen, who holds M.S.W. and M.B.A. degrees, met Andresen when the COO guest taught a class in social enterprise at Georgetown University's business school. Olsen now works to attract new corporate partners. Bobo calls upon her philosophy and divinity degrees and experience in the nonprofit arts sector as she advises nonprofits on the best mix of online tools to meet their donation needs.

Network for Good levels the digital playing field, says Andresen, making it easy and affordable for smaller nonprofits to find donors and volunteers. "The Internet makes a fragmented nonprofit market accessible anywhere online."

—Andrew Thompson '12

Major Grants Aid Scientific Research

The Koshland Integrated Natural Sciences Center (KINSC)—and two of its professors—have been recognized for their research and initiatives this fall with substantial grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Haverford's departments of biology and physics have received a $1 million grant from the NSF to purchase four new high-tech imaging instruments that will enhance research capabilities for faculty and students. The instruments include a transmission electron microscope, a scanning electron microscope, a confocal light microscope and a fluorescence-activated cell sorting system (FACS).

The transmission and scanning electron microscopes use electrons instead of light as sources of energy, and will allow users to view images at atomic-level resolutions, while the confocal microscope will create three-dimensional reconstructions of objects. The FACS is vital to faculty and students who study different types of stem cells and blood cells; it allows them to analyze up to nine different features of individual cells in a mixed population, and then "sort" or collect those cells that have the necessary features.

Assistant Professor of Chemistry Casey Londergan has received an AREA (Academic Research Enhancement Award) from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences—the basic research arm of NIH—for a project focusing on the structure and binding of proteins. The award provides Londergan with $202,355 for two years of work, and will also allow Haverford students to travel to the laboratories of international collaborators in France and Sweden.

Londergan's research has public health implications: His new approach to studying proteins may make it possible to understand the molecular basis of diseases associated with disordered proteins, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

Assistant Professor of Astronomy and Physics Beth Willman received $422,000 in NSF grants to support her work on ultra-faint galaxies. She will use the funds in her efforts to find nearly-invisible galaxies that orbit the Milky Way and to create computer simulations of the Milky Way's formation.

Six Haverford students are working with Willman on her research: Gail Gutowski, Dylan Hatt, Alex Warres (all '10); Jennifer Campbell '11; and Andrew Sturner and Kathryn Meehan (both '12).

—Brenna McBride