

# Travelers Championship Philanthropy Day Brings Funders & Nonprofits Together

By Nora Duncan, Executive Director, The Arc of Connecticut

Travelers Championship is Connecticut's premier sporting event. Its history is well known and rich with golfers like Arnold Palmer and Greg Norman making names for themselves, and the tournament, in greater Hartford. The celebrity involvement is just as rich. For years Sammy Davis Jr. sponsored the tournament and Hollywood heavy-hitters like Bob Hope, Bill Murray and Joe Pesci have participated. Travelers Championship and the PGA TOUR are less known, however, for their philanthropic roots and goals. With 100% of net proceeds donated to charities in the region every year since 1952 — that's over \$28 million since its inception and \$1.1 million last year alone — Travelers Championship may be the biggest and least well known philanthropic event in Connecticut. This year the spotlight on philanthropy shined even brighter.

The 2011 Travelers Championship hosted the first of its kind "Philanthropy Day." This was a first not just for Connecticut, but for the entire tour. Hundreds of nonprofit professionals attended the event, sponsored by Newman's Own Foundation, at no cost. They spent a sunny afternoon networking, learning and enjoying professional golf. The event succeeded in linking leaders in the nonprofit and philanthropic communities, and highlighted how an annual PGA TOUR tournament could help promote strong local nonprofit missions throughout the year.

"One of the Foundation's highest priorities is the encouragement of philanthropy," said Robert Forrester, president of

Newman's Own Foundation. "We were proud to partner with Travelers Championship on Philanthropy Day, providing a forum where nonprofits could network and share ideas. Newman's Own Foundation would not exist if not for the dedication of the hardworking people at charitable organizations such as these."

Travelers Championship and the PGA TOUR's dedication to philanthropy are

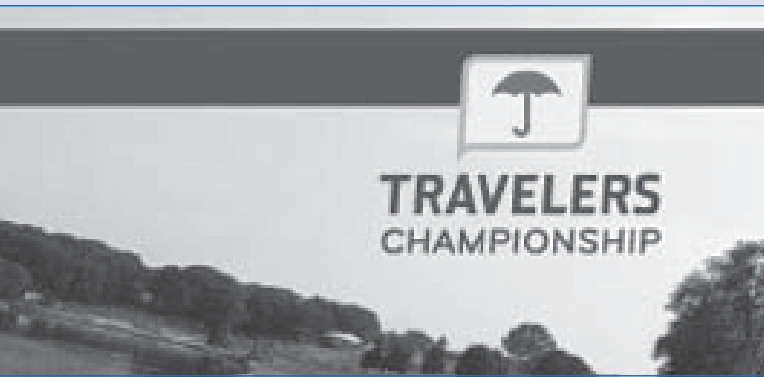


certainly clear and there is an interest in making "Philanthropy Day" an annual event in Connecticut. There is even an interest in exploring duplication of this program across the country.

"Creating a Philanthropy Day at Travelers Championship was not only creative, but beneficial to every nonprofit in the area who aspired to learn more about how to utilize the assets of the tournament

to build donor platforms and brand their nonprofits," explained Donna Fiedorowicz, senior vice president of Tournament Business Affairs at the PGA TOUR. "Shared ideas and networking opportunities set a great foundation for future meetings and helped tell the charitable story of the PGA TOUR and their overall mission of giving back."


CT Nonprofits brought together a panel of fundraising experts to reflect on trends and best practices while looking ahead to the future of philanthropy. John Brooks, the director of development and public relations for Columbus House in New Haven and president of the Connecticut Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, focused on how a nonprofit can stand out in a crowded field of worthy charities when soliciting funds in these difficult economic times. Sondra Litelmann-Dellaripa, principal consultant at Harvest Development Group and a 16 year veteran of the philanthropy industry, honed in on managing the fine line between social networking and face-to-face networking and how to do both well and with credibility. Judith Margolin, independent consultant, author and former vice president for planning and evaluation at the Foundation Center, highlighted how to approach a foundation that seems a perfect match with a nonprofit's mission but which, unfortunately, does not accept unsolicited applications. A vibrant question and answer session, which could have gone on for hours, proved that attendees were eager to tap into the panelists' collective wealth of experience and knowledge.



Travelers Championship wrapped up this great event by doing what it does best, supporting the work of community based nonprofits. Three organizations won prizes totaling \$1,000 each. They were Creative Living Community of Connecticut, Keystone House, Inc. and The Governor's Prevention Partnership.

There is no rest for the hard working staff of Travelers Championship. With the June 2012 tournament planning well underway, CT Nonprofits looks forward to working with J.H. Cohn LLP, presenting sponsor of Birdies for Charity, and other partners to continue to brighten the spotlight on philanthropy.

*Nora Duncan moderated the "Philanthropy Day" panel. Nora was the public policy director at CT Nonprofits, leaving in 2007 to join the Policy and Legislative Team at the Office of Governor M. Jodi Rell. She recently became the executive director at The Arc of Connecticut.*



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