

Help 4 NonProfits & Tribes began in 1993, when Hildy Gottlieb and Dimitri Petropolis had the opportunity to purchase the company they'd been working at for a combined 12 years. With strong political backgrounds, strong business backgrounds, and strong community action backgrounds, the team committed that regardless of what work the company did, its central theme would always be an effort to make the world a better place.

From that commitment to work that had a purpose, Help 4 NonProfits & Tribes was born.

For 5 years, the team did textbook strategic planning and board development work, marketing and fundraising work, and in the case of tribal organizations, economic development work. They facilitated retreats and wrote reports and did it all the way everyone else did this work.

And at the end of that 5 years, they were frustrated. It seemed whether or not their clients implemented the plans they created, little (if anything) had changed in the communities those organizations served.

In 1998, the team began analyzing both the approaches used by community organizations and the approaches used by the consultants charged with helping those organizations. And they committed to develop methods that reach for what nonprofits and tribal organizations should be reaching for - sustainable approaches to improving the quality of life in their communities.

### **But That's Not the Whole Story**

To get the whole story, we have to go back to that 1st year in business, when this small firm created a Diaper Drive to give back to the community at holiday time. That first year, they collected 20,000 diapers for 2 of their favorite organizations.

Just as 5 years was the turning point for Help 4 NonProfits & Tribes, 5 years was the turning point for the Diaper Drive as well, when the 1998 Diaper Drive collected 300,000 diapers for 30 agencies.

Collecting that many diapers took time away from their business. But having learned about the impact those diapers have on the lives of those who need them, the team couldn't just walk away, leaving the community without any resources for this critical commodity.

So they took the plunge. They created the Southern Arizona Community Diaper Bank.

### **Testing New Methods**

As the Help 4 NonProfits & Tribes team worked to turn their "Diaper Drive" into a year-round "Diaper Bank," they vowed to create this new organization in the image of their dreams - an effort aimed at making dramatic improvement to the community's quality of life.

They built the Diaper Bank as a collaboration, building sustainability into its core by basing its infrastructure on the existing assets of the community. They built a board that knows its primary accountability is to the community, for providing short term benefit and long term impact, all within a clearly-stated core of values. And when it was clear they had created the only diaper bank in not only the U.S. but (they've been told) in the world, they replicated the model, creating a second diaper bank in one of the largest metro areas in the U.S. - Phoenix, Arizona.

This gave them 2 arenas for testing the new methodologies they had developed: Their clients (including arts, environmental, human service and tribal organizations) and the Diaper Banks they had built from scratch. They tested and adjusted until they proved the methods work.

### **Building an Institute**

Once the Help 4 NonProfits & Tribes team knew their approaches were practical, they set out to teach those approaches to others. What began as a workshop here and there is now becoming an international educational institute, teaching and sharing Community-Driven methods and philosophies around the globe.