coffee & answers

New professional advisor breakfast series

"I used information from Coffee & Answers on a recent trip to Atlanta. I was able to make a white paper presentation simply by using things I'd learned in the session on charitable lead trusts and planned giving."

WALTER GRAY,
Financial Advisor, Ameriprise
(not pictured)

Estate attorneys are among the unsung heroes of philanthropy. So are CPAs, tax advisors, and wealth management professionals.

Although their names may not appear on a wall of honor, in an annual report, or among the program credits, they play a major role in charitable giving.

By helping their clients select the most financially advantageous and personally rewarding charitable giving vehicles, they can increase the philanthropic resources – and their impact – available to the community.

So where do these professional advisors go for advice? Often, it's The Minneapolis Foundation. For years, the Foundation has been a trusted resource for technical expertise on charitable giving.

A resource for advisors

For smaller firms, the Foundation serves as a virtual back office, allowing advisors to tap into and provide their clients a wealth of knowledge about strategic giving vehicles and opportunities, tax and legal updates regarding charitable giving, and opportunities to learn more about issues and organizations they care about.

A new breakfast networking series, Coffee & Answers, provides a quick and informal way for advisors to:

- learn more about issues facing our community and innovative efforts to address them
- network with other advisors who work with charitable clients
- gain technical expertise on a range of charitable giving vehicles

Eight events have been held, each featuring an expert speaker followed by questions and discussion. To date, representatives from 53 financial, legal, and tax firms have attended events.

Topics range from community issues like youth violence, socially responsible investments and immigration policy to more technical subjects, such as how the current interest rate environment is favorable for charitable lead trusts.

Networking and ideas

Mark Brown, a financial advisor at AON Risk Services in Burnsville, says the event he attended on All Day Kindergarten helped him make valuable professional connections.

Lori Helmer, senior vice president for Bank of America/US Trust, agreed: "it's great to meet other people out there in the business world who are doing the same work."

"I've brought up some of these ideas in conversations I've had with other professionals, nonprofit organizations, and others outside of work," said Lommen Abdo attorney Scott Nelson.

"It's useful to focus on the service that the funding supports, rather than just the technical alternatives available for generating the funds," says Nelson.

After all, professional advisors not only open the door for their clients' gifts – they are just as often major donors themselves. •

Visit MinneapolisFoundation.org for more information about our resources for professional advisors and to join our e-mail list.