

Social Worker Puts Nonprofits to Test

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OPINION/ANALYSIS:

Few things are worse than having to give up the thing you love to do most that thing, that innate gift for which you are certain deep in your bones that you were born with special skill sets to do. Sometimes, however, that personal sacrifice is for the greater good.

For Steve Butz, that special talent was working one on one with troubled Maryland juveniles. But the former social worker, like many, set aside his personal desire to help one child at a time to develop a system that he hopes will serve many more.

"It very much tormented me to get out of doing what I loved doing," Mr. Butz said. Even though he has helped more than 1,600 nonprofits improve their service delivery through his innovative technology that demonstrates their impact, he asked himself aloud, "Have I had a wider and deeper impact? I'm not entirely sure. I still wrestle with it."

... Mr. Butz's statements come amid a brewing controversy in the nonprofit sector about just who should be the recipients of charitable giving in these recessionary times. A recent report by the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, "Criteria for Philanthropy at its Best", noted by the Chronicle of Philanthropy, urged grant makers to give at least 50 percent of their funding to low-income or designated ethnic and marginalized groups.

Some funders and donors have balked, saying the committee's charge is an attempt at "political correctness," and others say their emphasis may end up hurting the people this group intends to serve.

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