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Phila.-area nonprofits unite to counter United Way funding cuts

Philadelphia Business Journal - by [Peter Key](#) Staff Writer

Seven area nonprofits that had their funding from the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania reduced have formed a group and a Web site called Give Philly to promote themselves and attract donors.

The seven are the [Boys & Girls Clubs of Philadelphia](#); the Cradle of [Liberty Council of the Boy Scouts of America](#); the [Salvation Army of Greater Philadelphia](#); the [Settlement Music School](#); [Travelers Aid Family Services of Philadelphia](#); United Cerebral Palsy of Philadelphia and Vicinity; and the YMCA of Philadelphia and Vicinity. All provide services to families and/or children.

The funding cuts, which resulted from a [change in the United Way's funding strategy](#), brought the organizations together, said Robert Capanna, the executive director of the Settlement Music School.

Once they got together, he said, they realized two things:

One was that people probably thought by giving to the United Way, they were automatically giving to them, since they had been receiving operating funds from it for so long.

The other was that, in addition to money, the United Way provided them with a way to reach people beyond their immediate constituencies in the area.

"Our thought was that through some kind of effort we could try to replicate that broad reach into the city and the strategy we came up with was this Give Philly," Capanna said.

The organizations pooled some of their marketing resources for the effort. They also got \$20,000 from an anonymous donor and have a corporate grant pending, Capanna said.

In addition to telling their tale, the organizations hope to get people to visit the [Give Philly Web site](#) and make contributions to any or all of them.

[The Philadelphia Foundation](#) is handling the process of funneling contributions from the Web site to the nonprofits, so all of the money donated through the site will get to them.

The organizations are also looking at other ways of working together, such as joint programs and joint buying efforts.

"Some of the motivation, I think, purely and simply is, 'We've got to figure out a different way or different ways we can do business,'" said Philadelphia Foundation President R. Andrew Swinney.