

# Creative minds go sleepless to perform nonprofit make-overs

By Katie Toussaint

In three days, Woodstock brought peace and music to 500,000 people who flocked to a New York farm in 1969. In just one day, Goodstock brought public relations and marketing advice to five nonprofit organizations in Charlotte in 2012.

In lieu of guitars, drums and drugs, the creative minds of Luquire George Andrews pulled out pajama bottoms, bunny slippers and Snuggles as they poured their energy into their projects. Luquire George Andrews (LGA), a local agency with a focus on advertising, public relations and brand strategy, was ready to make a difference. And the nonprofits were poised for change.

"We publicized our first Goodstock to let nonprofits in Mecklenburg County know we were offering these free services to a group of the community's neediest nonprofits based on the RFPs," said Judi Wax, Executive Vice President and Director of Public Relations for LGA. The directors of LGA reviewed nearly 30 applications trying to figure out which nonprofits had the greatest needs, as well as which could actually be helped within the 24-hour period. That year, nine organizations were selected, with LGA professionals working on more than one project at once, infusing them with creativity and thought that doesn't typically happen overnight.

In 2012, the group of nearly 60 LGA professionals was divided into five teams to address the needs of each of the nonprofits, which had applied to participate. Daily, the professionals exemplify the agency's expertise in new product and brand launches, brand discovery and revitalization, and multimedia campaigns. Daily, the professionals revamp websites, online advertising and public relations strategies for clients ranging from local companies to such international brands as Starbucks.

On this day, the integrated teams represented the way LGA approaches any client by dispatching experts on client service, writing, designing, digital work and more. The applicants represented those that were most in need – directors outlined proposals to depict their stories and what they needed, whether it was an improved brochure or logo, a format for telling their story or a way to approach people for



Nate Smith, Margaret Bond, Elizabeth Bond, Kate Daughtry, Corrine Spain and Brad Ward

fundraising.

"This year, the whole agency voted on the organizations we picked," Wax said. "Then each person was assigned a project based on his or her interests." Suddenly, it became more personal.

"Aside from having the privilege

to work with LGA's clients throughout the year," said Christine Eubanks, Vice President of LGA, "Goodstock is hands down my favorite LGA activity. We are always in awe of how much Charlotte's nonprofit organizations do with so little. To be able to come alongside their leaders for

24 hours and take care of their marketing wish list is an honor."

The professionals reviewed their assigned nonprofit's materials the week before Goodstock and the 24-hour timer started at 9 a.m. on a Thursday morning in November. It was time for representatives



Jane Duncan, Steve Dunkley and team work on Junior Achievement of Central Carolinas



Pete Marco after midnight



Christine Eubanks works on KinderMourn

from Community Culinary School of Charlotte, A Child's Place, Carolina Waterfowl Rescue, KinderMourn and Junior Achievement of Central Carolinas to arrive.

## The morning

The recipients walked into the LGA office to meet with their respective creative teams. Annabelle Suddreth, Executive Director of A Child's Place, was shocked to find an entire team of about 12 people waiting for her in a room. "I was immediately humbled by the level of resources that were being put in this effort," Suddreth said. "And then I was further humbled when I learned how much research they had already done about our

agency and the children that we serve. We were treated like the best clients that LGA has."

That day, representatives of Community Culinary School of Charlotte were filled with anticipation. The nonprofit's Executive Director, Ron Ahlert, said: "LGA has such a historical, well-known name and they've done so much for the Charlotte community, working with some of the bigger industries and business in Charlotte – who wouldn't want to have any kind of guidance from them?"

## What can be done in a day?

On a Friday in November 2012, the hands on the clock ticked to 9 a.m. The representatives from each organization



Jon Cain blows off a little steam in the middle of the night



Todd Aldridge work on Carolina Waterfowl Rescue



Crandall Turner and Elizabeth Lilly pitch in on Carolina Waterfowl Rescue