Philanthropy is dead. Long live philanthropy.

The days are long gone when donors sent nickels, dimes and quarters in envelopes provided by charities in support of mission. And, in general, donors didn’t ask very many questions about how the money was spent.

Also gone are the days when transparency, accountability and data were quaint ideas about how a nonprofit should operate.

Nonprofit executives must have the acumen to understand what data means and have the ability to pivot. Partnerships are now sought, as need grows exponentially and traditional sources of funding are evaporating. Say goodbye to federal block grants and other traditional forms of contracting with federal and state governments.

It’s no longer philanthropy. It’s social good and that often involves a profit for organizations and in some cases “donors.” Impact investing and social impact bonds got off to a slow start but are now accelerating as viable funding sources. Social entrepreneurs are developing new revenue streams and are becoming integral elements of the development process.

The 50 leaders highlighted in this 20th annual NPT Power & Influence Top 50 have distinguished themselves as initiators of concepts that will have legs and are already having impact.

The 2017 honorees were selected from a group of roughly 300 top executives. A committee of NPT staff, contributors and a few executives plugged in to executive movement were involved in the selection process. This is not a lifetime achievement award. The executive must have had an impact during the previous 12 months.

There is quite a bit of turnover in this year’s roll call. There are 14 new honorees on the 2017 honor roll and seven executives who are returning to the list after a short hiatus.

Since the traditional gift for a 20th anniversary is china, the fine china will be rolled out as honorees and their guests are feted in Washington, D.C., next month during the annual NPT Power & Influence Top 50 Gala at The National Press Club. One of the honorees will receive the NPT Innovator of the Year award.

The evening always involves conversation between people who would not normally have the opportunity to interact. The honorees always stick around after the event has concluded to continue the idea swapping – or it could simply be because the bar remains open. NPT

**Social Innovation Is The Hallmark of the 20th Annual Unveiling**

**BY PAUL CLOERY**

**The 20th annual celebration of the sector’s top executives and strategists.**
WHEN THEY’RE BIDDING ON TRIPS TO PARADISE DONORS GET CARRIED AWAY.

Donors never hold back when they have the chance to travel to an exquisite island in Hawaii, spend an incredible vacation in a villa in Belize, take a culinary excursion to Paris or wind their way through California’s wine country. In fact, our risk-free Destinations of Excellence® packages, have helped nonprofits raise over $1,000,000,000.
Along with cementing new partnerships that will change the dynamic in helping the nation’s hungry and food insecure in an era of massive federal cutbacks, Aviv remains a key Washington policy insider who knows which buttons of sector leaders to push in advancement of immediate and broader, long-term goals.

Fred Blackwell
CEO
Atlas Corps
Washington, D.C.

There was a tug of war in the Bay Area for Blackwell’s services during early 2014. While many foundations attempt to react to imminent issues, his rapid response fund for movement building is an idea worth studying and replicating, especially the funding for community leadership development and timely and urgent response to events.

Jeffrey L. Bradach
Managing Partner & Co-Founder
Bridgespan Group
Boston, Mass.

While charity executives across the nation have been feverishly attempting to find economies of scale by bundling services and operations together, Bradach preaches unbundling and scaling up for impact elements that work the best. Under his leadership Bridgespan has been focused on developing the next generation of sector innovators.

Michael Brown
Co-Founder & CEO
City Year
Boston, Mass.

Even if the threatened defunding of the Corporation for National and Community Service doesn’t go through, Brown and City Year will be a leading, vital, national group. Brown has spun our nearly 25,000 alumni who have contributed more than 42.5 million hours of service and who can ramp up to deal with mentoring and other voluntary community needs.

Nancy Brown
President & CEO
American Heart Association
Dallas, Texas

While trying to deny you that cardiovascular incident you’ve always wanted, Brown is spearheading and disseminating research faster than most health organizations. She is deftly evolving the AHA’s focus as new info ties health issues together. Her collaborative nature and stature have others working together.

Phil Buchanan
President
Center for Effective Philanthropy
Cambridge, Mass.

Few in the sector can use an R.E.M. song title to explain the wrong direction in which many in the sector are moving. As usual, Buchanan is correct when he smacks leaders around in writing that the sector is “losing our religion” and that “declaring sector agnosticism in the context of pursuing social impact is not helpful or wise.”

Laura Callanan
Founding Partner
Upstart Co-Lab
New York, N.Y.

In an era when government funding of the arts is under constant pressure and audiences are feeling ticket sticker shock, impact investing in the arts is simply genius. Arts is a community cornerstone. Investing will multiply impact and support evolutionary change in communities.

James Canales
President & Trustee
The Barr Foundation
Boston, Mass.

How do you get on a national influential list when you focus mostly on local issues? You see the whole board and make regional grants that have national implications. His special initiatives funding (millions of dollars) targets threats to equity and vulnerable populations. It will ripple across the land.

Daniel Cardinali
President & CEO
Independent Sector
Washington, D.C.

It’s a shame Barnum & Bailey is going out of business because Cardinali’s juggling act is worthy of the Big Top. Layoffs, a budget deficit and election results that shook the sector to its roots could have given a guy new to an underpinning advocacy organization an excuse to not keep everything in the air. So far, so good.

Emmett Carson
President & CEO
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Mountain View, Calif.

Nowhere in the nation is the gulf between have and have not more startling than in Silicon Valley and its surrounding area. Carson is pushing public policy models on housing, government intervention and how “new philanthropists” filling SVCF’s coffers are focusing on a single issue and going big.

Tim Delaney
President & CEO
National Council of Nonprofits
Washington, D.C.

While many in Washington were running around as if their hair was on fire immediately after the presidential election, Delaney and his team knew the battle ground would be in the states. He leads some of the most important information sharing and effective strategy ideas in the sector. Incredibly, not everything happens in the nation’s capital.

Susan Dreyfus
President & CEO
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Dreyfus chairs the Leadership 18 and is on the governing boards of vital infrastructure groups. A convener, she believes that the social sector must be the influencer of social change, an interesting idea from someone who made her bones in government. She knows “modern family” isn’t really a situation comedy.

Christine Essel
President & CEO
Southern California Grantmakers
Los Angeles, Calif.

Essel is a complete funding triangle, with experience in government, deep-pocketed business and philanthropy. While grant-making is about money, the conversation being started by the funders being brought together to tackle problems is pretty much unheard of in Tinseltown.
CONGRATULATIONS, POWER & INFLUENCE AWARD WINNERS!

***

Our team has great admiration for you, your worthy missions, and your heroic efforts to change the world! We're extremely proud of our 35-year history working with the nonprofit sector, and our more than a decade-long support for this prestigious celebration of your accomplishments.

Thank you for using your power and influence for the greater good!

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Brian Gallagher  
President & CEO  
United Way Worldwide  
Alexandria, Va.

When an office worker in Des Moines gives a buck a week through payroll deduction it’s not expected it will have an impact at Davos. Gallagher has transformed United Way Worldwide into a player on the world economic stage while laser focusing on local issues and opportunity gaps in communities.

Jim Gibbons  
President & CEO  
Goodwill Industries International  
Rockville, Md.

Gibbons has made Goodwill into a social enterprise that emphasizes the power of work. He’s coordinated a loan fund via foundations so new retail operations can be established and older stores renewed. He’s also pushing social impact investing that can generate an economic return for the organization and the people served.

John H. Graham IV  
President & CEO  
ASAE/The Center for Association Leadership  
Washington, D.C.

Graham took some heat from members for signing on to a letter pledging to work with the new administration. He made it clear that the cooperation needed must involve diversity and inclusion. Graham’s expert at walking the tightrope of a nonpartisan organization and has kept ASAE as a power player no matter who is in the Oval Office.

Jonathan Greenblatt  
National Director & CEO  
Anti-Defamation League  
New York, N.Y.

To say that this guy is fearless is an understatement. He was taking on the current administration before the election with a message of inclusion that demonstrates the organization’s mission to “secure justice and fair treatment to all.” That includes everything from voting rights to civil liberties.

Robert Greenstein  
Founder and President  
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities  
Washington, D.C.

Greenstein has an over-weighted influence on policy, especially for the demure size of his organization. He knows Washington, D.C., and is political enough to wedge in on issues with his widely-respected, evidence-based policy work. He is correct when he wrote “America is about to be tested.”

Jacob Harold  
CEO  
GuideStar  
Washington, D.C.

GuideStar can no longer be considered a “watchdog group” since Harold doesn’t run in front of the media every 37.5 seconds as some others do. He has molded a good idea into a trusted information center for donors, nonprofits and researchers. The data is now integrated into many sector platforms.

Stephen Heintz  
President  
Rockefeller Brothers Fund  
New York, N.Y.

Heintz has said that if philanthropy isn’t failing some of the time, it’s not doing its job. He’s had his share of those, such as the National Purpose Initiative, but also knows how to lead. Pushing the fund to divest fossil fuel investments takes a long view and the new Urgent Opportunities Fund is taking on immediate projects.

Eileen R. Heismann  
President & CEO  
National Philanthropic Trust  
Jenkintown, Pa.

A sought-after international lecturer on philanthropy and particularly donor-advised funds (DAF), she created a marketplace with private label branding DAFs. Tax reform might turn everything upside down but she’s partnered with some of the world’s largest financial firms and their lobbying muscle.

Susan Desmond-Hellmann  
CEO  
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Seattle, Wash.

Given the foundation’s focus on worldwide health, it is good to have a doctor in charge. She diagnosed and treated an internal ill – a well-healed, chaotic effort. She has written the most important thing is “taking the drive, power, and intellect of our people and partners, and uniting them to use every resource we have as effectively as possible.” The change has had a ripple effect in the sector through its funding.

Melanie L. Herman  
Executive Director  
Nonprofit Risk Management Center  
Lexington, Va.

One of the most prolific writers and lecturers on the topic of nonprofit risk, she is the architect of the risk glasses of some of the nation’s largest nonprofits. Smart leaders turn to her before trouble hits. It’s not about having insurance. It’s about common sense and things you’d never even considered but she has vanquished.

Raj Jayadev  
Co-Founder  
Silicon Valley De-Bug/A.C. Justice Project  
San Jose, Calif.

Jayadev is spearheading a process he calls participatory defense, a process for poor people sitting in jail often for minor offenses because they are broke and the public defender system is at a breaking point. He’s drafting community organizing principles into the criminal defense process via the media, community organizing and entrepreneurial collective.

JoAnn Jenkins  
Chief Executive Officer  
AARP  
Washington, D.C.

It didn’t seem possible that AARP could get stronger but Jenkins is driving it into every aspect of the lives of people 50 and older. It’s a case study in remaining relevant as your constituency evolves and muscling up at the same time. You think that Medicare and Social Security are getting crimped soon? Think again.

Cristina Jiménez  
Executive Director & Co-Founder  
United We Dream Network  
Washington, D.C.

Jiménez attended high school and college as an undocumented student and then founded a network that now works with 100,000 immigrant youth and more than 50 affiliate organizations. She has been a non-partisan thorn in the side of administrations that don’t recognize the worth and relevance of immigration. She is the epitome of an opportunity agenda.

Patrick W. Lawler  
Chief Executive Officer  
Youth Villages  
Memphis, Tenn.

Part of President Donald Trump’s transition team for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Lawler’s development of Youth Villages Continuum of Care is an inspired unpinning in more than a dozen states and 72 locations. The organization just launched an expansion citing job creation as part of the community solution.
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Enterprises that create reliable income streams for people striving to get out of poverty. The giving and investments arms are now linked. Partnerships and shared value make a difference for kids around the world. Those pushing for charitably designated money to get to work sooner. Those making a living from the processes, not surprisingly, don’t agree.

Before the presidential election, though a different outcome was expected, Markham targeted immigration and refugee services as a priority. She’s a national strategic thinker for combatting the impact of the expurgated federal budget. Her words: “Our commitment to care for those who are most vulnerable resides at the core of our faith.”

McGhee questions the way America’s leaders on both sides make decisions. She is playing a key role in helping to link disparate civil society movements such as Black Lives Matter with the Women’s March, Indivisible, etc., to create something greater than the sum of the parts.

McGhee remains the clarion voice for minority opinion in the country. People Power initiative brought a national focus to describe the organization and her bare-knuckled battles when defending one client -- the Constitution of the United States. It’s education instead of confrontation (unless it is required).

Richards has brilliantly navigated a human service organization with a target on its back, increasing its political clout while still delivering service. Watching her modernize the language used to describe the organization and her bare-knuckled battles when needed will be a case study for decades to come.

Romero is the attorney general of the resistance movement and civil society in general. His People Power initiative brought a national focus to the local level and helped to reignite and support activism. While it appears that he is battling the administration, he has spent his career defending one client -- the Constitution of the United States.

Nobody understands social innovation and “moral imagination” better than Novogratz. She knows the difference between investment and the expectation of a return and that sometimes the twains don’t meet. Her words: “People have to understand that unless social enterprise is experimental, it will not succeed in making a difference.”

Palandjian heads up one of the more aggressive voices in a still controversial funding concept, the social impact bond. The idea of paying investors for success of nonprofit services curls the toes of many in the sector. Still, the idea of tapping capital markets to achieve public policy objectives is going to get a sustained look in an era of federal budget evisceration.

Pacelle’s work. What isn’t seen is his toiling on a humane economy and how the organization through his vision and partnering with other groups is, well, training and changing corporate behavior. Saving animals from cruelty is obviously the vital element of Pacelle’s work. What isn’t seen is his toiling on a humane economy and how the organization through his vision and partnering with other groups is, well, training and changing corporate behavior. It’s education instead of confrontation (unless it is required).

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Nancy Roob
President and CEO
Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
New York, N.Y.

Roob believes that the average foundation grant of $35,000 will get society nowhere. She believes there needs to be radical change and launched within the foundation Blue Meridian Partners, willing to pump $200 million into evidence-based projects. As of this writing she raised $850 million. She wants to aggregate new capital collaboration to make national impact.

Lawrence “Muzzy” Rosenblatt
President & CEO
The Bowery Residents Committee
New York, N.Y.

Rosenblatt is leveraging money from temporary shelters to develop affordable housing with the cash that would have gone to a private developer. It’s early but an interesting concept to watch as BRC builds a $65-million project of a 200-bed transitional shelter for working adults and permanent affordable housing in New York City.

Douglas Rutzen
President & CEO
International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
Washington, D.C.

If only Michael Corleone’s consigliere had been this good. Rutzen has been an adviser on the resistance movement in Washington, D.C., and around the world. If you haven’t seen the video of his speech at Cornell University on “Defending Civil Society and Peaceful Protest Around The World,” go here … http://bit.ly/2qPc38d

Julia Stasch
President
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
Chicago, Ill.

Stasch joined MacArthur in 2001 after stints in government and finance and became boss in 2015 knowing the $6 billion foundation needed to create urgency. There are formal exit plans for 13 funding areas. She can identify gaps between communities and funding and is taking bigger, more focused risks and seeking collaborations.

Anne Wallestad
President & CEO
BoardSource
Washington, D.C.

Many leaders like to express opinions on how others should run things. Wallestad did so by example and it has restored BoardSource as a vital infrastructure organization. As she has said it’s a framework “around our vision, mission, goals, and strategic imperatives” enabling its board to be more focused and to help others do the same.

Kevin Washington
President & CEO
YMCA of the USA
Chicago, Ill.

Washington was invited to speak at the Aspen Ideas Festival’s “100+ Leaders in Health.” There was the Zoe For President (2064) branding campaign, babysitting during voting and the $15.3 million deal with Comcast to deliver low-cost Internet services. He is making Ys indispensable in communities and an evolving model.

Sam Worthington
CEO
InterAction
Washington, D.C.

Worthington was probably purposely understating when he wrote that we are in an “exceptional time of global uncertainty and fragility.” He also predicted the difficulty for national staff of U.S. international development due to predicted travel bans and thus reciprocal measures. He is a leading strategist for humanitarian aid despite it all.

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On behalf of the partners and professionals of Grant Thornton’s Not-for-Profit and Higher Education practices, we wholeheartedly commend the 2017 Power & Influence Top 50 honorees for their leadership and impact on the sector.

Visit grantthornton.com/nfp for more insights and to sign up to receive thought leadership, alerts and invitations to educational forums.