



THE DAILY

Thursday, December 2, 2010 01:50 PM

Nonprofits need 'loudest voices' to survive downturn

By Beth Fitzgerald



Nonprofits continue to face severe budget pressures, and will need to seek collaborations with one another, learn to build their organizational capacity and develop closer partnerships with the government agencies that rely on nonprofits to provide services to the public.

Those were some of the points made Thursday morning by **Chris Daggett**, president of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation; **Gabriella E. Morris**, president of the Prudential Foundation; **Irene Cooper-Basch**, executive officer of the Victoria Foundation; and **Jan Nicholson**, president of the Nicholson Foundation, during a forum on nonprofits at the Newark Regional Business Partnership, in Newark.

Daggett, who ran against Gov. **Chris Christie** last year as an independent candidate, said, "There is symbiotic relationship between the government and the nonprofit community that is not appreciated by all elected officials." For example, when the state proposed major cuts in funding for after-school programs amid the struggle to balance the budget, Daggett said there was insufficient attention to the impact this would have on the families who use these programs and the nonprofits that provide such services.

"The foundation community needs to speak up, frankly, on behalf of all of you," he told the audience of nonprofit executives. "You have only so much of a voice, but we have one of the loudest voices if we collaborate."

Cooper-Basch said the Victoria Foundation, which does almost all of its philanthropy in Newark, has been working closely with Mayor **Cory Booker** since his election in 2006.

She said Booker created a philanthropic partnership, with a liaison at city hall who works with the nonprofit sector; the result has been city partnership programs between Newark and Victoria and other nonprofits.

"We have been able to bring private resources to Newark in a way that would never have happened," she said. "We probably have \$1 million a year of our \$9 million in funding going to city partnerships."

E-mail Beth Fitzgerald at bfitzgerald@njbiz.com