

# Women fund the programs, men fund the politics



**Diane Mack**

VIEWPOINT

On Sept. 19, fundraiser and political educator Nancy Bocskor will be in Pensacola to lead a workshop for the Institute for Women in Politics of Northwest Florida. She took time from her travels for a short interview.

A professor at George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management and president of the Nancy Bocskor Co., Bocskor has contributed her expertise to the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers, the Women's Campaign School at Yale, the Moscow School of Humanitarian Studies, American University in Cairo, and many other national and international venues.

**Do women have a hard time asking for money as political candidates or for nonprofit causes? If so, why?**

There's a real gender gap in fundraising between nonprofit and political giving. About 6 percent of the U.S. population votes and contributes money to a political cause. Men donate about 70 percent of all money in politics with women lagging behind at about 30 percent. High-profile women candidates such as Hillary Clinton and Elizabeth Warren drove that percentage to 30; in the past only about 25 percent of women contributed to politics.

There are many reasons, including that for many years women didn't have the earning capacity of men. But as in most aspects of fundraising, women just weren't asked! Lisa Spies, who raised money for GOP nominee Mitt Romney, started "Women for Mitt" with a goal of raising \$10 million for the Romney campaign. She raised \$23 million. It was an untapped market.

In nonprofit fundraising, women donate about 70 percent of all charitable giving. Studies and my own experience show: Women fund programs; men fund politics. Women want results: a cure for breast cancer; books for libraries; and help for the homeless. Men are more motivated by access and power – take a look at the crowded GOP presidential field.

**How did you develop your facility for and expertise in fundraising?**

My parents were always active in my hometown of Vandalia, Ohio, a suburb of Dayton. Giving back to the community was part of our lives. Mom headed up Girl Scout cookie sales and volunteered. Dad was a Lions Club member and a sales manager for a company. He was always the top salesman for the Lions — roses, fruitcakes, brooms. He had no fear of asking. I grew up in a fundraising family and translated those



Bocskor

## Want more info?

This "Relationship Fundraising" workshop is part of the Institute's continuing series of offerings in leadership development and is offered to women and men. Registration information may be found at <http://iwpflorida.org/workshop-resources/relationship-fundraising-workshop/>.

For questions, contact the Institute at 438-0207 or [contact@iwpflorida.org](mailto:contact@iwpflorida.org).

skills to politics.

**Who are some of the women who have benefited from your fundraising assistance?**

I've helped women around the world develop storytelling and fundraising skills so they can achieve success in their communities, whether in politics or nonprofits. I worked with NGOs in Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, and taught them how to connect with potential donors. They raised enough money to buy sporting equipment for two primary schools — a first!

**What can participants expect to gain from the Sept. 19 workshop?**

They will learn how to ask for money even if they hate to. I will help them create messaging that connects with donors, focus on how important finance committees are to achieve fundraising goals, and how to organize events that actually make money.

We will focus on relationship fundraising because your ability to make emotional, personal connections with potential donors can move them from concern to passion to cash. Your heart is closer to your wallet than your head, and I must capture your heart to persuade and inspire you to contribute.

Diane Mack is president of the Institute for Women in Politics of Northwest Florida and founder of the Women's Civic Forum. She served on the Pensacola City Council 2009-2010.

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**NANCY BOCSKOR**  
FUNDRAISER AND POLITICAL EDUCATOR