

The American Radio Relay League Inc.

DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT REPORT

August 23, 2021



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INTRODUCTION

Context

The American Radio Relay League, Inc. (ARRL) is looking for opportunities to increase philanthropic support to grow its endowment and provide long term sustainability as well as fund critical programs. In addition, the ARRL Foundation (the Foundation) has focused efforts on providing scholarship support to students and educational related grants.

Currently ARRL does not have a chief development officer and before filling that position, the organization wants to take this opportunity to review current activities and develop a clear path for how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the fundraising operation. To examine existing practices and determine how best to organize its fundraising program, ARRL has asked Johnson, Grossnickle, and Associates (JGA) to conduct a development assessment. Fundraising activities from ARRL and the Foundation were examined as part of this process.

Johnson, Grossnickle and Associates (JGA) was commissioned to conduct a development assessment to explore the strengths and areas of opportunity in fundraising for ARRL and the Foundation. The timing of the assessment aligns with a vacancy in the development office, creating a good opportunity to examine overall organization and staff structure as well as how ARRL can achieve the greatest impact moving forward. JGA was honored to work with ARRL and the Foundation to complete this assessment and believe there is an opportunity to make some operational adjustments that will have a long-lasting impact on the organization.

Objectives

The objectives of the development assessment were to:

- evaluate ARRL's current development practices, procedures, and productivity;
- determine ARRL's strengths and areas of challenge in development;
- evaluate internal positioning and opportunities to increase philanthropic capacity; and
- create recommendations and next steps for ARRL and the Foundation to be better prepared for future fundraising success.

A development assessment makes it possible for ARRL to proceed strategically and sequentially in future development activities.

Methodology

The development assessment included ten interviews with key ARRL and Foundation staff members and volunteers and a review of fundraising data, reports, policies, and other pertinent resource materials.

The appendices of this report include:

- A. Interviewee list
- B. Resource materials list

Project Schedule

Interviewing and data gathering took place in June 2021. JGA drafted the development assessment report in early July and completed the report in August.

Project Team

Andy Canada, Senior Consultant and Director of Data Analytics, led this development assessment and John T. Keith, J.D., Senior Consultant and Director of Consulting Services, Tim Krull, Consultant–Data Analytics, Juli Knutson, Senior Writing Associate, and Stephenie Jay, SHRM-SCP, Director of Client Service and Project Manager, served on the project team.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the interview participants. Their candor and honesty made our work a pleasure, and we sincerely appreciate their thoughtfulness and generosity with their time. The ARRL team did outstanding work in providing resources and data that JGA utilized during the assessment. Everyone who participated in the assessment was gracious with their time and allowed JGA to proceed in a way that allowed for key challenges to be addressed in a positive manner.

FINDINGS

The following findings are based on interviews, review of resource materials, and analysis of the data that was provided by ARRL and the Foundation. The findings will be grouped by key categories.

ARRL General Observations

- 1. ARRL has a dedicated and passionate membership base.** Some call amateur radio a hobby but for many the hobby turns into decades of pursuing their passion and continually finding ways to learn new techniques or contact someone in another part of the world. Amateur radio captures people's imaginations and provides critical emergency communication capabilities that are utilized regularly during natural disasters. ARRL provides a way for members to connect with like-minded individuals, hear about key trends and ensure that amateur radio has their collective voice heard with government officials.
- 2. In recent years, ARRL has gone through a series of leadership transitions that has not allowed the organization to move forward with a clearly defined direction or unified voice.** The transitions placed additional strain on the ARRL staff and board to keep programs and projects moving forward, but new ideas and an overall vision for the organization has not been a focus in recent years. This has caused frustration with some major donors and in other cases caused donors to stop their support of the organization due to a lack of vision and internal in-fighting between board members. There is confidence the new Chief Executive Officer, David Minster, will guide the organization for years to come and bring stability back to ARRL. This will be critical to reengage major donors that have stepped away from the organization in recent years.
- 3. ARRL and the Foundation operate as separate entities and do not coordinate their efforts very well, according to interviewees.** Each organization has its own board and goals and there are justifiable reasons why the separation was created. However, it is impacting ongoing fundraising and the ability for ARRL to share its overall impact. Any outward grant or scholarship is coming from the Foundation and this is limiting ARRL's ability to show the impact that gifts to the organization is having. There are steps that ARRL can take to better educate donors on the role that philanthropy plays at the organization but most interviewees believe that a more coordinated approach and partnership between the Foundation and ARRL is needed moving forward. ARRL staff support the Foundation and spend most of their time on administering the scholarship program. The Foundation pays an annual fee back to ARRL for the staff time provided.
- 4. Fundraising has not been a priority for ARRL and the Foundation in recent years.** During the *Second Century Campaign*, ARRL was active in engaging key donors and building relationships to connect individuals with the organization. Those efforts resulted in a successful campaign and JGA feels strongly that those outreaches contributed to many of the recent bequest gifts received since the conclusion of the campaign. In recent years, ARRL has focused its efforts on annual fundraising activities and promoting the giving societies. These activities have been effective but

the major and planned giving portion of the program has suffered over time. Board members for ARRL and the Foundation do not actively participate in fundraising activities, and in some cases, do not believe the organization should be actively soliciting its membership base because of an underutilized endowment. Some board members that ask members in their region for support but it is a small portion of the board.

5. **Interviewees feel there is a natural tension between maintaining and growing the membership base of ARRL and actively fundraising.** ARRL actively encourages members to renew their annual membership and works to obtain new members. The messaging can be confusing when individuals also receive solicitations and requests to join promoting the Diamond Club, an unrestricted giving society that includes an annual membership. The concept is to get members to increase their involvement with ARRL, make a philanthropic gift to ARRL, and receive special recognition. Interviewees believe it is a good system that has demonstrated the importance of giving back to more people but has also created confusion about membership dues versus private support. They feel better communication is needed about value of membership levels relative to the benefits provided as well as more clarity on how private support allows ARRL to maintain those levels. In addition, many shared that when membership lapses, special discounts or perks are offered to entice the lapsed member to rejoin, causing many members to wait for the discounts to renew their membership and Diamond Club support. They recommend developing new strategies so people can't predict and wait for the best deal every time.
6. **Currently the Foundation is not actively soliciting new gifts on a regular basis.** Individuals or groups that want to support scholarships are directed to the Foundation, but in general they are not promoting the Foundation as a place to make a gift. The board serves as the scholarship and grants selection committee and that is their primary role. Conversations with a newly formed external foundation have taken place and resulted in significant support over the past two years. The Foundation has taken the lead on these interactions and this partnership could have a significant impact on ARRL's ability to support programs and scholarships in the future.

Data Analysis from ARRL and the Foundation

This section analyzes historical philanthropic giving to ARRL and the Foundation for the fiscal years FY 2016 – FY 2020. Collective total results for both entities were reviewed. It is important to note that, in some cases, the numbers do not total accurately based on how gifts have been entered and the ability to pull information from the data. A separate finding and recommendation will be included that focuses on the database, but for the purposes of this assessment, JGA believes the numbers shared below provide a helpful overall picture of key trends.

7. **ARRL and the Foundation have collectively raised an annual average of \$2,595,698 in philanthropic revenue over the five-year period of FY 2016 – FY 2020.** Giving peaked at \$3,937,348 in FY 2020. Over the five-year period philanthropic giving has increased by an average of 5.87%.

When pulling out realized bequests, ARRL and the Foundation have averaged \$2,169,868 in outright contributions over the same time period.

Table 1: Combined Philanthropic Revenue, FY 2016 – 2020

Philanthropic Revenue	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	5-Year Average
Contributions	\$ 2,243,010	\$ 2,886,197	\$ 1,339,153	\$ 1,397,340	\$ 2,983,640	\$ 2,169,868
Bequests	\$ 828,506	\$ 149,634	\$ 106,119	\$ 91,183	\$ 953,708	\$ 425,830
Total	\$ 3,071,517	\$ 3,035,831	\$ 1,445,272	\$ 1,488,524	\$ 3,937,348	\$ 2,595,698

- a. Breaking the data down further by each organization, ARRL raised an average of \$2,273,569 in philanthropic support over the five-year period of FY 2016 – FY2020.

Table 2: ARRL Philanthropic Revenue, FY 2016 – 2020

Philanthropic Revenue	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	5-Year Average
Contributions	\$ 2,090,855	\$ 2,798,156	\$ 1,185,835	\$ 1,236,768	\$ 2,488,997	\$ 1,960,122
Bequests	\$ 828,506	\$ 132,766	\$ 104,315	\$ 9,000	\$ 492,646	\$ 313,447
Total	\$ 2,919,361	\$ 2,930,922	\$ 1,290,150	\$ 1,245,768	\$ 2,981,643	\$ 2,273,569

- b. The Foundation has raised an average of \$322,129 in philanthropic support over the previous five years. FY 2020 had a significant impact on the average giving to the Foundation due to a substantial bequest gift and an outright gift from a foundation that provided scholarship support.

8. In combined philanthropic revenue, ARRL and the Foundation received the most funds from individuals, at 93.6% when including outright and bequest giving. Outright giving from individuals accounted for 77.2% of all giving. This percentage is above the national average of 68.7% of support coming from individual donors. Total board member giving for all board members at each organization is extremely low, at .8% of the total. Every board structure is unique, but it is critical for boards to make philanthropic gifts to the organizations they serve. Overall board giving and participation is a key characteristic that other donors look at before determining if they will make a gift and specifically when considering major gifts.

Giving from matured bequests is at 16.4% of the total giving, well above the national average of 8.9%.

Table 3: Combined Philanthropic Revenue by Source, FY 2016 – 2020

Source	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	5-Year Average	% of Total	Natl' Avg*	JGA Client Avg**
Individuals									
Board Members	\$ 63,711	\$ 12,278	\$ 12,232	\$ 12,494	\$ 9,160	\$ 21,975	0.8%		
Other Individuals	\$ 2,017,651	\$ 2,712,543	\$ 1,224,184	\$ 1,275,170	\$ 2,676,247	\$ 1,981,159	76.3%		
Total Individuals	\$ 2,081,362	\$ 2,724,821	\$ 1,236,417	\$ 1,287,665	\$ 2,685,407	\$ 2,003,134	77.2%	68.7%	38.2%
Corporations	\$ 148,046	\$ 150,972	\$ 93,370	\$ 94,104	\$ 85,568	\$ 114,412	4.4%	3.6%	15.1%
Foundations	\$ 13,602	\$ 10,404	\$ 9,367	\$ 15,572	\$ 212,666	\$ 52,322	2.0%	18.8%	18.5%
Bequests	\$ 828,506	\$ 149,634	\$ 106,119	\$ 91,183	\$ 953,708	\$ 425,830	16.4%	8.9%	7.3%
Other	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	0.0%	0.0%	20.9%
Total Philanthropic Support	\$ 3,071,517	\$ 3,035,831	\$ 1,445,272	\$ 1,488,524	\$ 3,937,348	\$ 2,595,698	100%	100%	100%

* Source: *Giving USA 2021: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2020*, Giving USA Foundation

** Data from JGA social services clients collected since 2010

9. ARRL has experienced significant fluctuations in the number of donors above \$50,000 over the past five fiscal years. It reached a high of 12 in FY 20 and low of 0 in FY 18. This drastic fluctuation could point to the transitions in leadership over time but it is a critical giving segment that needs constant attention moving forward.

Table 4: Combined Giving Levels to All Organizations, FY 2016 – 2020

Gift Range	FY 2016		FY 2017		FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020		* FY 2021	
	# Donors	Total \$	# Donors	Total \$	# Donors	Total \$	# Donors	Total \$	# Donors	Total \$	# Donors	Total \$
\$50,000 +	5	\$ 817,506	11	\$ 1,396,728	0	\$ -0-	1	\$ 54,183	12	\$ 1,524,645	5	\$ 636,431
\$25,000 - \$49,999	5	\$ 105,467	2	\$ 50,056	7	\$ 213,100	2	\$ 94,743	9	\$ 319,215	3	\$ 94,715
\$10,000 - \$24,999	16	\$ 203,188	15	\$ 189,892	11	\$ 141,478	11	\$ 135,507	13	\$ 146,750	9	\$ 116,410
\$5,000 - \$9,999	27	\$ 144,908	34	\$ 192,667	22	\$ 129,350	27	\$ 146,733	32	\$ 180,375	10	\$ 51,000
\$2,500 - \$4,999	26	\$ 77,497	37	\$ 104,250	28	\$ 83,569	72	\$ 215,118	34	\$ 97,375	14	\$ 41,341
\$1,000 - \$2,499	173	\$ 203,643	211	\$ 246,938	163	\$ 194,959	181	\$ 215,765	186	\$ 220,655	67	\$ 83,652
\$1 - \$999	8,764	\$ 627,091	9,165	\$ 693,387	7,833	\$ 564,465	8,651	\$ 630,355	7,988	\$ 575,653	2,716	\$ 208,723
Total	9,016	\$ 2,179,299	9,475	\$ 2,873,919	8,064	\$ 1,326,921	8,945	\$ 1,492,405	8,274	\$ 3,064,668	2,824	\$ 1,232,272

-* Partial year

a. Total dollars raised do not match with previous charts due to differences in tracking gifts.

10. Looking at the solicitation methods used by ARRL (the Foundation does not track this information), direct mail accounts for 57.1% of all dollars raised, and personal solicitation accounted for 1.9% of all giving. This low number is indicative of limited major gift cultivation in recent years and a reliance on direct mail. Nearly 30% of all gifts were placed into the “other” category because the gifts were not coded in the system by how they were solicited. This is an area that should be a focus moving forward so ARRL can better track what strategies work in soliciting gifts.

Table 5: Combined Gift Totals by Solicitation Method

Solicitation Method	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	5-Year Average	% of Total
Personal Solicitations	\$ 38,909	\$ 74,939	\$ 51,656	\$ 62,509	\$ 98,700	\$ 65,343	1.9%
Direct Mail	\$ 7,245,684	\$ 809,525	\$ 567,421	\$ 710,333	\$ 594,628	\$ 1,985,518	57.1%
Online	\$ 213,174	\$ 375,319	\$ 505,391	\$ 270,481	\$ 328,869	\$ 338,647	9.7%
Special Events	\$ 185	\$ 270	\$ 540	\$ 4,246	\$ 370	\$ 1,122	0.0%
Grants	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	\$ -0-	\$ 200,000	\$ 40,000	1.1%
Matching Gifts	\$ 14,602	\$ 12,604	\$ 9,617	\$ 18,322	\$ 19,547	\$ 14,938	0.4%
Other	\$ 1,147,472	\$ 1,601,235	\$ 411,012	\$ 246,412	\$ 1,761,509	\$ 1,033,528	29.7%
Total	\$ 8,660,026	\$ 2,873,892	\$ 1,545,636	\$ 1,312,302	\$ 3,003,624	\$ 3,479,096	100%

11. On average, ARRL’s and the Foundation’s combined return on investment (ROI) for development was 474% from FY 2016 to FY 2020 (FY 20 expense numbers were estimated for this portion since the final numbers were not available), and the cost of fundraising per dollar raised (CRD) was \$0.17. It is important to note that for the Foundation, the expenses included are an estimated \$16,000 for the fee paid to ARRL for staffing support.

Research shows that the ROI is generally between 200% and 400% when major gift fundraising is operating at a high level and climbs above 500% during a campaign. The overall average of 474% is a solid number especially when considering the decreased staffing in the development department. In JGA’s experience we want to see the cost of fundraising around \$0.20 or lower. Significant bequest giving is a key element of the numbers outlined above. The bequest gifts should be included in the totals as outlined above, but it is also important to recognize those gifts will be difficult to replicate or predict in future years.

Table 6: Foundation Costs of Fundraising, FY 2016 – 2020

Costs of Fundraising - Combined						
	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	4-Year Avg
Total Development Expenses	\$ 425,529	\$ 424,215	\$ 492,836	\$ 458,493	\$ 460,000	\$ 452,215
Philanthropic Revenue (Cash Receive	\$3,071,517	\$3,035,831	\$ 1,445,272	\$ 1,488,524	\$ 3,937,348	\$2,595,698
Cost of Fundraising	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.34	\$ 0.31	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.17
Return on Investment	621.8%	615.6%	193.3%	224.7%	755.9%	474.0%

* FY 20 development expenses were estimated.

Note: The ROI 5-year average is calculated based on the Development Expenses and Philanthropic Revenue 5-year averages.

Development Messaging and Structure

12. ARRL has not consistently shared the impact of philanthropic gifts with donors and prospective donors over the years. Unless donors are very involved with the organization, they are not able to fully understand how their gift is utilized. In many cases, they feel membership fees should cover the expenses of the organization and ARRL has not done a good job of tracking how gifts have been used. The Foundation promotes the scholarship recipients when they first receive the

awards but does not provide follow-up on the students later on. Interviewees feel it is critical that a stronger story be shared on how private support is impacting ARRL and amateur radio.

- 13. Some interviewees believe ARRL needs to limit the number of requests for various projects and select a few key programs on which to focus.** They feel this approach would allow ARRL to demonstrate how the funds were utilized and build energy around certain areas.
- 14. The Foundation focuses on its scholarship program and its grant program.** The vast majority of the scholarships are restricted based on the criteria of the donors and the pool of funds for education grants is fairly limited. The Foundation caps the grants at a maximum of \$3,000, which makes sense based on the available funds but limits the impact the Foundation can have in supporting important projects in amateur radio. Currently the Foundation does not support initiatives or needs of the organization. Some interviewees believe that a portion of the unrestricted funds of the Foundation should be used to support ARRL.
- 15. ARRL has three employees who focus on development activities.** The Development Manager oversees two Development Associates and reports to the Chief Financial Officer. The Development Associates focus their time on gift processing, providing stewardship to donors, and assisting with mailings. The Development Manager works in partnership with the CFO to set the overall direction of the program, develops the calendar of activities, and partners with the Foundation during their scholarship and grant selection process. The team is spread thin, especially during the Foundation's scholarship process, and the ability to try new strategies has been limited. The Foundation's reliance on ARRL does create challenges because the Development Manager is pulled in multiple directions. The team size was reduced from four to three members in 2015, which has impacted the team's ability to personally connect with donors and to roll out new initiatives to better engage donors and prospects.
- 16. Donors receive recognition of their gifts within a week from when the gift is made.** The team processes gifts in batches for the week, because in most cases they including a token of appreciation for the donor's support along with the acknowledgement letter . Over the years, ARRL has provided donor premiums that include coffee mugs, plaques, badges, and other items. The premiums have been well received by the donors, but it does add additional staff time to process the gifts and slows down the acknowledgement process. A few interviewees feel the quantity of premiums has become too much for most donors. They believe there is a segment that still wants the items but that ARRL could reduce the overall number of items.
- 17. ARRL giving solicitations are connected to specific initiatives or giving societies in most cases.** Donors receive specific appeals to support key areas such as the Spectrum Defense Fund, the Education and Technology Fund, the WIAW Fund, and the Diamond Club Giving Society. In most cases, a solicitation is geared toward a specific funding area and in general the overall message and impact of ARRL is not shared.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are intended to provide high-level strategy for ARRL and the Foundation to follow in order to move the overall impact of private support forward, as well as tactical steps to be implemented to make the program more effective and efficient.

- 1. ARRL needs to determine if fundraising is a priority for the organization moving forward.** To build a sustainable fundraising program, it is critical that the board and leadership discuss and agree that focusing on raising philanthropic support is essential to the long-term sustainability of ARRL and its ability to fulfil its mission. Without this consensus and agreement, it will be extremely difficult to engage new major gift donors and the development operation will continue to be primarily an annual fund program. If the decision is to move forward with a focused effort on fundraising, then the following recommendations are intended to help guide the process.
- 2. Both ARRL and Foundation board members should commit to supporting the organization on an annual basis.** If the decision is made as an organization to build a stronger fundraising program, then board members must take a leadership role. JGA fully understands that the board members dedicate a great deal of their time to ARRL, but it is imperative that the board has a higher level of philanthropic support and it should strive for 100% participation each year. Making an annual gift that is meaningful within each person's capabilities should be added as a requirement to be part of the Foundation Board and strong suggestion for the ARRL Board (since these are elected positions JGA understands it cannot be a requirement).
- 3. Create an overall unified strategy for fundraising and supporting the mission of ARRL.** The Foundation and ARRL will need to work together to develop this strategy. Currently there is no duplication of efforts between the two organizations, but the potential exists for this to take place in the future. The mission of the Foundation should be expanded to also include supporting ARRL in fulfilling its mission. Right now, the Foundation does not have the funding available to make significant gifts back to ARRL but steps should be taken to ensure that pathway is possible and promoted. Over time, recruit individuals for the Foundation board who are willing to be actively involved in the fundraising process. A committee can be formed to select scholarship recipients but the board should be a primary partner with ARRL staff to identify and engage prospective donors. The Foundation should be a fundraising arm of ARRL and gifts raised can be directed to the account associated with the request or intention of the donor. A gift to either entity is a gift that supports the overall mission of both. JGA understands this will take time to implement, but as a long-term strategy is developed and new Foundation board members are appointed, their willingness to play an active role in the fundraising process should be a priority. As the overall strategy is developed, each organization should focus their fundraising efforts in the following ways:
 - a. The Foundation accounts should remain focused primarily on scholarship and grant support – both external grants and support for ARRL.

- b. ARRL accounts should focus on fulfilling the mission of the organization, including special projects that are identified by staff leadership and the board.
However, from the donor’s perspective, they should feel they are supporting the overall mission of ARRL.
- 4. **Appoint the CEO of ARRL to the Foundation board.** JGA understands the Foundation was created to have two separate entities, but in the future, it will be imperative that the organizations have a clear understanding of what each is doing and the Foundation should follow the overall lead and direction of ARRL. JGA reached out to similar organizations regarding their structure and it is very common for the CEO to serve on the board of the affiliated foundation—and in many cases, the CEO is the chair of the foundation board.
- 5. **Hire a Senior Development Director to oversee the fundraising operations of ARRL and the Foundation.** This position will drive the overall strategy development for the development program and be a primary gift officer to engage key major gift donors and prospects. The strategy development must include the Foundation Board and ARRL. The newly created position will take the lead in development and engaging key stakeholders to ensure a high level of buy-in, which will require a stronger partnership between ARRL and the Foundation. The position will continue to report to the CFO but have ample access to the CEO to discuss overall strategy. Over time, JGA could see the benefit of the position reporting directly to the CEO, but the initial proposed structure will allow for the CFO and the Senior Development Director to work in partnership to develop the plan and begin unifying the two organizations.

The Development Manager will be a critical partner and manage the internal operations of the department to ensure the Senior Development Director has the capacity to provide the overall strategy development and to be on the road meeting with donors and prospective donors. JGA would also recommend the current staff positions report to the Development Manager.

- 6. **Restart the major gift and planning giving program of ARRL.** The CEO and the Senior Director of Development should work in close partnership to travel and engage key donors and prospects. It is critical that ARRL is more proactive in identifying, engaging, and soliciting potential major and planned gift donors. Relationships need to be mended with past donors and new donors need to be identified. Steps can be taken now to begin this process and the CEO has started reaching out to key donors and prospects. Key steps in this process include:
 - a. Pull a report based on the top donors to the organization (ARRL and the Foundation)
 - i. Lifetime giving, top donors in past five years, and key donors and volunteers to the last campaign
 - ii. Engage board members to review the list and help identify individuals with whom they can assist in opening doors and connecting with ARRL.

- iii. Identify a list of the top 25 donors and perspective donors who should be engaged (this can build on the list the CEO is current working through) and build individual strategies for how to best engage and cultivate them.
 - iv. As the new Senior Director of Development is onboarded, expand the list to the top 50 to 75 and the CEO and DOD should be actively making personal outreaches to and traveling to engage.
- 7. Identify two to three primary focus areas that philanthropy can impact at ARRL.** As the new strategic plan is developed and finalized, leadership should bring a few key areas to the board for their review and discussion. These projects should have an immediate impact on the organization, its members, and the overall mission of ARRL. These programs should then be referenced in appeals, highlighted on the website, and be the focus of conversations with donors and prospective donors. In addition, ARRL should explore its own resources and investments and determine if an internal gift can be made to jump start the programs. JGA is not suggesting invading the corpus of your endowment but if there are unrestricted funds or excess revenue available, it would be extremely beneficial to show donors that you are leveraging their past support to move key projects forward.
- 8. Increase the level of segmentation within appeal mailings to focus messaging and asks more effectively.** Utilize donors' past giving history to focus requests. As an example, if a donor has made gifts to the Spectrum Defense Fund and in support of the radio station, send an appeal that references both areas and thanks the donor for their previous support. The current improvements and updates to the database must continue to move forward to make this effort more efficient, but ARRL can decrease the number of mailings that many donors receive and provide a more overarching look at the organization by additional segmenting within the scheduled mailings.
- 9. Examine opportunities to provide gift receipts and thank you notes to all donors within 24-48 hours of receiving their gift.** JGA acknowledges the challenges the staff faces with ensuring donors receive the proper premiums for their gifts but feels it is important that donors receive follow-up quicker. Best practices state that donors should receive an initial acknowledgement with 24-48 hours and then additional stewardship steps can be taken. Update the current process to send out the initial thank you note and then determine how best to send out the additional premiums, which could be done within a week of making the gift or potentially in a monthly batch. Evaluate what will be most effective for the staff and update the initial thank you note to indicate the follow-up steps.
- 10. Conduct a survey of current donors to better understand their desire for gift premiums in recognition of their gifts.** From JGA's perspective, ARRL has a higher number of premiums than most nonprofit organizations, However, it is important to recognize that every organization has its own culture so ARRL's donors might expect and truly appreciate the tokens. The survey would allow you to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations for why people support the

organization, including where premiums rank on the list. If ARRL could decrease the number of premiums, it would save the organization a considerable amount of time and resources and it would allow the messaging around giving to focus more on the impact and less on benefits the donors receive.

- 11. Increase the marketing around the impact of private support on ARRL.** Share the role membership fees play and the gap that still remains with members. As the projects outlined above take shape, provide updates on progress and how private support is moving things forward. As the Foundation awards scholarship and grants, promote them through multiple channels to demonstrate the impact of ARRL support overall. It is critical that the membership base gains a deeper understanding of how critical private support is to the organization and sees their gifts in action and the impact they have on fulfilling the mission of ARRL. Work in partnership with the marketing team to include donor and impact stories in publications and on the website and social media on a regular basis.

▼ CONCLUSION

ARRL and the Foundation have the opportunity strengthen the level of private support that ARRL receives from donors, but it is going to require a higher level of coordination and commitment than has been provided in recent years. The organization saw success during the *Second Century Campaign* and to get back to that point, the boards and senior leadership of ARRL and the Foundation need to come together and work toward one unified goal. The recommendations outlined in this report will require strategic decisions and discussion by the board and leadership to implement and sustain. JGA feels strongly that the long-term impact of these decisions will result in a higher level of gift support and a more engaged donor base. The changes will not happen overnight but the key is to be consistent and have everyone moving in the same direction.



▶ APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWEE LIST

1. Kathleen Callahan
2. Regina Galuppi
3. Mary Hobart
4. Maryann MacDonald
5. Diane Middleton
6. Brian Milesosky
7. David Minster
8. Rick Roderick
9. Melissa Stemmer
10. Dale Williams
11. David Woolweaver

▶ APPENDIX B: RESOURCE REQUEST

1. Board reports
2. Strategic plan
3. By-laws
4. Board member roster
5. Organizational charts
6. Gift acceptance information
7. Giving society details
8. Appeal samples – direct mail and emails
9. Overview of donor gifts for making gifts
10. Members levels
11. Overview of database
12. Job descriptions
13. Five years of data