

## Why Annual Giving.....by Robert C. Dunlap, CPA

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When people ask me why I have supported NABA to the extent I have, I tell them because NABA has provided me with a lifetime of invaluable gifts and support I could never repay. Allow me please to briefly share highlights of how NABA and the NABA network have helped me both professionally and personally. Then, you'll understand I feel it's important to support our FY2010 Annual Giving campaign.

- 1988 – NABA REGIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE: I had the honor of attending a Regional Student Conference in Dallas (where I now live). It was a great experience; job opportunities were available and technical sessions enabled networking with other students and NABA professionals such as Odell Brown, who chaired the event and now 21 years later, still mentors me.  
1990 -- Job Opportunities: I'm a proud product of the Division of Firms where on June 1, 1990, Tom Williams Jr., Managing Partner of Williams, Adley & Company took a chance on a rather green but energetic staff accountant (after a referral from the NABA local chapter president) and two years later proudly signed my CPA certificate application. Lastly, I have been blessed to have had four additional job opportunities result from either attending a NABA National Convention or referral from a NABA member like past National President, Erby Foster Jr. who was directly responsible for my last position.
- 1994 --NABA National Convention: The NABA National Convention is a can't-miss event for me. I have attended every single convention since in 1994 in Houston, which coincidentally is the site of our 2010 convention. That's right ...17 in a row!
- 1994 – Leadership Opportunities: I have participated in various leadership roles in the San Francisco Bay Area and Atlanta Chapters and the Southern Region beginning in 1994. Since 2000, I have been associated with leadership roles on the National Board. Each of these experiences has supported my leadership development in managing people and projects including communication, confidence and strategic planning capabilities. These are skills that I easily use at work on a daily basis.

Lastly, along this journey I have participated in various CPE meetings in events above and can honestly say a good portion of my required certification hours come from NABA. I have also attended several of the training sessions now affectionately named after the late, great Ralph Grant whose firm is still located just across the street from Williams, Adley and Company.

You have recently seen in your in-box, a series of e-mail testimonials asking for your support of our Annual Giving Program. We are providing each member the opportunity to give a particular program where a real passion exists or where the need is greatest.

I had the pleasure of meeting four of our nine founding fathers during the New Orleans National Convention. They shared with me why our membership should contribute to our Annual Giving Program.



**Ron Benjamin**

*"When we conceived NABA, we wanted to help and support each other as young CPAs. With your support, NABA will continue to be a valuable resource for the new generation of accounting and finance professionals seeking to advance their careers."*



**Earl Biggett**

*"The future of minorities in the accounting and finance profession is directly tied to the future of NABA. Without one the other does not prosper or grow. Your financial support ensures that NABA and minorities in accounting and finance will thrive for the next 40 years and beyond."*



**Frank Ross**

*"Since 1969, NABA has stayed the course in supporting minority accounting students and professionals enter and excel in this profession. Your financial support is essential in order for NABA to meet the continued challenges of diversity to ensure that minorities can take advantage of the opportunities that exist in this rapidly evolving profession. "*



**Michael Winston**

*"I submit the following quote by Frederick Douglass, the forceful giant who overcame so much and fought so tirelessly during some exceedingly difficult times in his and the lives of most if not all African Americans. "It is evident that we can be improved and elevated only just so fast and far as we shall improve and elevate ourselves". "I find this quote both extremely inspiring and quite consistent and complimentary to NABA's motto "Lifting as we climb"."*

Each of these pioneers in our great organization will make a contribution to our 2010 Annual Giving Campaign and asks that you do too. Please consider NABA in your company's matching gift or United Way giving programs.

Having access to the NABA network has extended the true meaning of family. You see there have been a multitude of NABA families created over the years. A few of the unions created in addition to my own; Dan and Faye (Mitchell) Moore, James and Teresa (Wilkerson) Brown (James also was a groomsman in my own wedding and yes, the church survived), Edward and Genevia (Gee) Fullbright, Dan and Abbi

(Robinson) Hobson, Kirk and Donna (Meachum) Blackman, Jela and Hope (Jackson) Foote and the most recent duos Steven and Arica (Morris) Harris and as of December 5<sup>th</sup>, Leon and Dannetta (English) Bland. Now I move that effective January 1, 2010 any NABA created "hookups" will be assessed a \$1,000 membership tax! In all seriousness, we all have a passion for this great organization but in order for this organization to exist for another 40 years, we need each member to give back to match the benefits received throughout the years.