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Office of the State Auditor



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PRESS RELEASE

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Auditor Campbell unveils new database to identify nonprofit agencies that receive state funds

RALEIGH _ Nonprofit agencies that receive state funds can quickly be identified for any area of the state with a new database unveiled by North Carolina State Auditor Ralph Campbell Wednesday. The searchable database is an alternative to the massive listings of nonprofit agencies printed by the Office of the State Auditor annually.

By logging onto the Office of the State Auditor website, www.ncauditor.net, anyone will be able to get a listing of grants distributed by individual county, by state agency giving the grant or by the name of the nonprofit group. That search option will cover fiscal years 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03. Information on those three fiscal years has previously been released either in printed form, running to nearly 400 pages, or on-line in Excel spreadsheets.

In addition, for the first time, citizens will be able to find grants that have been made to date in the current fiscal year. That enhanced search option will allow users to sort grants by city, county, state agency giving the grant, nonprofit agency receiving the grant, by specific programs for which the grant money is intended to be used, and by total amount of grant funds received. The enhanced search will be available for fiscal 2003-04 and subsequent years.

“Nonprofit agencies perform valuable services for North Carolina, in many cases at a cost far less than it would cost the state to provide them,” Campbell said. “But when you get State funds, you automatically have a responsibility to be accountable to taxpayers and the public. We believe this new use of technology will provide an increased level of accountability by shining a bright, public light on where these funds are going.”

The current-year search initially will be limited to grants made by agencies through the North Carolina Accounting System, which covers roughly 75 percent of all grants made by the State. The Office of the State Auditor over the next several months will extend its computerized information-gathering system to other agencies that give grants to nonprofit agencies so the database will be as complete as possible.



The database is the second step undertaken by the Office of the State Auditor to improve accountability for grants to nonprofit agencies. Campbell in December appointed Angela Gunn, a veteran auditor, to the position of Nonprofit Specialist. She will coordinate grant reporting through the database, check outside audits and sworn statements required from nonprofit agencies and help train nonprofit agency financial leaders about State reporting requirements.

The General Assembly in 2003 approved updated reporting requirements for nonprofit agencies that receive State funds. Nonprofits that receive more than \$300,000 a year in public money must file a certified audit with the State agency making the grant and the Office of the State Auditor. Nonprofits receiving \$15,000 to \$300,000 annually must file sworn statements of revenues and expenses with the granting agency. All nonprofits receiving over \$15,000 must file an activities report with the granting agency detailing their work for the year. The new website also provides all required reporting forms and applicable regulations to nonprofit agencies.

In addition to making grant information easily available to the public, the database also will help State agencies track nonprofits' funding and compliance with the reporting requirements.

Campbell said the nonprofit database, like the Electronic Publication System that replaced printed audit reports with digital versions on the Internet, was developed in-house at minimal cost by Office of the State Auditor computer staff.

“This sort of data warehousing project, we have been told, could be expected to cost between \$500,000 and \$1 million to develop,” Campbell said. “I am proud of the fact that our staff, with a small amount of contracted assistance, has been able to create this system that moves us so far forward in accountability.”

The database can be reached by going to www.ncauditor.net, then clicking on the “Nonprofits” navigation button on the left side of the page. Nonprofit agencies seeking information and required forms can choose that option, while anyone wishing to track grant information will be taken to the “Search” page.

