With the end of the year just around the corner, now is an excellent time for you to review your plans. You might want to make a list to ensure that you have taken full advantage of all of the tax-saving deductions available to you. Here are some ideas for year-end planning that can help support our cause and benefit you.

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS
A simple gift of cash or an unneeded asset can assist our work and provide you with valuable tax savings.

GIFT OF LIFE INSURANCE
If you are a bargain hunter, you might consider making a year-end gift of life insurance. By naming a charity like ours as the beneficiary of an unneeded policy, you can spend dimes to give dollars and receive tax savings. Because of competition in the life insurance industry, rates are at all-time lows. Once you have given the policy, you can achieve additional income tax savings by making a gift each year in an amount equal to the premium payment.

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER
Since Congress made the IRA Charitable Rollover permanent in 2015, you can transfer up to $100,000 directly from your IRA to a qualified nonprofit without paying federal income tax. Contact us if you are interested in making a gift utilizing your required minimum distribution (RMD).

ADDITIONAL TAX SAVINGS
Be sure to review your mortgage, medical, education, business and other miscellaneous expenses to determine if there are additional ways you can save on taxes this year. Check your list against your advisor’s recommendations to avoid missing any significant deductions. Congress has changed the rules in recent years. If you haven’t visited your attorney to review your estate plan, you should make an appointment before the end of the year or early in the new year. Your plans may need to be updated, particularly if you have experienced life changes.
When you make a gift of an appreciated asset, such as stock, to a qualified charity, you can benefit in the following ways:

- Receive an income tax deduction for the value of the transferred stock.
- Avoid capital gains tax, regardless of how much your stock has appreciated.
- Avoid the healthcare tax on net investment income.

There are many advantages to investing and owning stocks—regular dividends, increased income and accumulation of wealth to name a few. Yet, your stocks can work for you in a way you may not have considered.

When you make a gift of stock rather than cash to us, you can use the cash you would have given to purchase more of the same stock. Then you will have made your gift, but you still own the same stock, only now with a higher basis.

If you own stock you no longer need and wish to sell and are looking for a way to avoid owing capital gains tax, consider making a gift of your stock to help further our mission. Your gift could have a big impact on our work!

Please contact us if you need assistance with making a stock transfer. We can provide you with transfer instructions to make your gift easy and effective.
One of the best-kept secrets is that there are many ways to create your legacy at NAM and anyone can do so. Most of you have spent hundreds of hours volunteering within our program areas in addition to your generous gifts annually. In the few weeks that I have been at NAM, I am amazed by the stories that truly demonstrate the commitment of this community and the willingness to lend a helping hand.

~ Lindsay C. Roh

GROWING THE ENDOWMENT

There is a misconception that you must be a millionaire and have no family or loved ones to leave an estate gift to NAM. My role as Chief Advancement Officer is to discuss with you the various opportunities you have to make a gift to the NAM Endowment Fund and take care of your loved ones. As we continue to grow as an organization, it is very important that we grow the NAM Endowment Fund (NEF) for sustainability in the future. This can be accomplished by naming NEF in your Last Will and Testament, as a beneficiary of a retirement asset or life insurance policy or creating a more complicated gift such as a charitable remainder trust. Regardless of which vehicle utilized, you can designate the specific area that you would like to support or allow it to be unrestricted.

CURRENT GIFT TO NEF

If committing to an estate gift is not something you would like to consider now, you can always begin your legacy through a current gift to the NEF. This allows you to see the immediate impact as the earnings from your investment support our programs and services. Our goal, regardless of the gift vehicle, is to increase the financial capacity of the organization to ensure that NAM will be here for future generations.

If you have already included NEF in your estate plan or would like more information about different options, please contact Lindsay Roh. As the name of our newsletter suggests, what truly matters in life is your impact so please consider being the Individual Making Plans As Creative Trailblazers for NAM.

END-OF-YEAR HOUSECLEANING

Now is a great time to review all your assets. If you own an old life insurance policy or other asset you no longer need, you can make a gift to support our cause, receive tax savings and start the new year with an updated streamlined portfolio.

Lindsay Roh, NAM’s new Chief Advancement Officer, comes to us with more than five years of Gift Planning/Major Gift experience. Lindsay looks forward to helping you create your legacy at NAM. She can be reached at 281-885-4608 or via email at Lroh@namonline.org.
Dear Savvy Living,
My mom recently retired and applied for Social Security benefits. It is taking longer for her to receive her benefit than expected. When will the first payment come?

Generally, Social Security retirement benefits (as well as disability and survivor benefits) are paid one month after the month the benefit is due. So, if your mom’s first benefit payment is due in September, she should receive her September benefit in October.

DATE OF BENEFIT PAYMENT
The specific day of the month that a beneficiary can expect to receive their benefit payment, however, will depend on the birth date of the person from whose work record a beneficiary is collecting their benefit. If a beneficiary is applying for benefits as a retiree, the benefit payment day will be determined by the retiree’s birth date. But if a beneficiary is applying for spousal or survivors benefits based on a spouse’s work history or, if married at least 10 years, an ex-spouse’s work history, the benefit payment date will be determined by the spouse’s birth date. Here is a schedule of when a beneficiary can expect to receive the monthly check:

- Birth date is 1st through 10th of month, payment will be second Wednesday of each month.
- Birth date is 11th through 20th of month, payment will be third Wednesday of each month.
- Birth date is after the 20th of the month, payment will be fourth Wednesday of each month.

There are, however, a few exceptions to this schedule. For example, if the day the Social Security check is supposed to be deposited happens to be a holiday, that check will be deposited on the prior day. And, if someone is receiving both Social Security benefits and SSI payments, the benefit check will be deposited on the third day of the month. While this is not applicable to recent retirees, Social Security beneficiaries who started receiving benefits before 1997 will have their Social Security checks paid on the third day of the month. To get a complete schedule of 2015 payment dates, visit ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10031-2015.pdf.

Savvy Living is written by Jim Miller, a regular contributor to the NBC Today Show and author of “The Savvy Living” book. The articles are offered as a helpful and informative service to our friends and may not always reflect this organization’s official position on some topics.

Copyright © 2015 Crescendo Interactive, Inc. Used by permission.