

Setting the Stage for Transformational Change

By Robert Hohler, Melville Charitable Trust



Photo by Kevin Kovaleski, www.kevinkovaleski.com

We almost lost a great American city. Books have been and will be written about the flooding of New Orleans in 2005. Looking back over the past year, surely the most astonishing aspect will be how long it took to fund and begin a viable rebuilding process. With hundreds of thousands of New Orleanians still scattered across America, diaspora has become a fact of life. And, of course, the problem of homelessness and lack of rootedness is felt intensely—Houston alone still harbors more than 100,000 New Orleanians. The worst is yet to come, as the housing assistance for these families and individuals will inevitably run out.

Despite the devastation, New Orleans is steadily coming back from limbo, and many parts of it—the downtown business district in particular—are up and running again. This is due in no small measure to a

Community Foundation, ably led by Ben Johnson. This foundation has been the pivot point for community engagement and involvement; among many other things, it has created a Community Support Foundation to manage a development effort that is matching technical assistance teams with resident groups to rebuild their communities. The hope is that this intense citizen engagement at the grassroots level, informed by a sense of urgency, will deliver fair, equitable, smart, and coherent neighborhood development.

For all of our philanthropic partners, a transcendent issue is that these rebuilding plans assure affordability and accessibility for those at every income level. We're particularly concerned about the most vulnerable families and individuals—those most in need of assistance to become self-sufficient. *(continued on page 14)*

remarkably resilient core of women and men in the city's public and private sector who refused to let the city die. Another bright spot has been the way funders—local and national—are playing an effective partnership role in the city's recovery.

A great deal of the activity funded by philanthropy—the technical assistance, the consultant planning, the research and evaluation, the predevelopment money—has flowed through the Greater New Orleans

IN THIS EDITION

Setting the Stage for Transformational Change: New Orleans and the Philanthropic Challenge	1
Warming Up to Environmentalism: A Changing Climate in the Politics of Evangelicals	2
Making Environmental Justice a National Priority	6
Whose Environment Will be Funded? Balancing Popular Appeal and Community Accountability in Workplace Fundraising	10

Warming Up to Environmentalism: A Changing Climate in the Politics of Evangelicals

By Kevin Kovaleski, NCRP

In early 2005, NCRP published *Funding the Culture Wars: Philanthropy, Church and State*, which analyzed the philanthropic influence of evangelical Christians. The report's author, John Russell, defined who evangelical Christians were and their emerging influence in the state of philanthropy. Russell concluded,

"Whether planned or as a side effect of [the recent] weakening of government, evangelical Christian leaders seek to *subordinate government to religion*. Based on the previous success of their supporters at conservative foundations, it is not unimaginable that they might succeed." (emphasis added)

Today, more evangelical organizations have added their voices to an unexpected cause: environmentalism. With a year of gas prices skyrocketing, a summer of record heat, the increased instability of our oil supply, and even Al Gore exclaiming in his box-office hit *An Inconvenient Truth*, "This is really not a political

issue of environmental stewardship in the public debate. Because of evangelicals' lack of a unified position on environmentalism, and because of the historically close ties of many evangelical organizations to the Republican Party, some progressives understandably have been skeptical of the evangelical commitment to environmentalism.

A few traditional environmental groups have shown hesitation to collaborate with the evangelical voice, mainly due to the traditional evangelical insistence that climate change is an individual, rather than governmental or business, issue. Evangelical leaders understand this reality, and some have dedicated their moral message of "creation care" to include pressuring political leadership on environmental issues. In doing so, these leaders have broken from political and religious stereotypes and articulated that faith includes moral imperatives ignored by the Christianity promoted by President Bush. One example of such leadership is the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN). As its name suggests, EEN devotes its

entire mission to the cause of environmentalism. The Rev. Jim Ball, Ph.D., the executive director of EEN, has been highly visible in the mainstream press in the past year. He was recently

This new [environmental] movement challenges previous stereotypes about evangelicals and enjoys support from *both* progressive and conservative groups.

issue so much as a moral issue," evangelicals' growing interest in protecting the environment might be peaking at a time when more Americans are ready to listen. This new movement challenges previous stereotypes about evangelicals and enjoys support from *both* progressive and conservative groups. Until recently, evangelical Christians have been relatively deaf to the warnings of climate change and relatively silent on the

named a "Climate Change Innovator" by *Time* magazine, and in *Time's* April 3, 2006, issue on climate change, *Time* wrote of Ball, "[He] practices what he preaches (he drives an energy-efficient Toyota Prius) and he came to his environmental beliefs honestly: through Scripture and concern for the living and the unborn."

Ball and EEN have communicated their message of creation care through media-savvy campaigns and

Responsive Philanthropy is the quarterly journal of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy

2006, Issue No. 3
Yearly subscription: \$25
(free to members)
ISBN: 1065-0008



national committee for
responsive philanthropy

© 2006 National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy
2001 S Street, NW, Ste. 620, Washington, DC 20009
Phone 202.387.9177 • Fax 202.332.5084 • E-mail: info@ncrp.org

NCRP STAFF

Ambreen Ali	Communications Associate
Rick Cohen	Executive Director
Andrea M. DeArment	Finance Director
Kevin Faria	Development Associate
Omolara Fatiregun	Senior Research Associate
Jeremy Holt	Administrative Associate
Jeff Krehely	Deputy Director
Elly Kugler	Research Assistant
Kristina Moore	Communications Associate
Rachael Swierzewski	Research Assistant



meetings with highly visible politicians. In 2002, they launched the “What Would Jesus Drive Campaign,” a self-regulatory effort to educate evangelicals on the need for more fuel-efficient and hybrid vehicles that emit low levels of carbon dioxide. Similarly, through the Evangelical Climate Initiative, EEN published *Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action*, an eight-page declaration affirming the commitment to creation care by prominent figures in the evangelical movement. The release of *Climate Change* was launched in February 2006, with a Senate breakfast and press conference sponsored by, among others, Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.), Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.), Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), and Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine). The cadre of high-profile senators from both sides of the political aisle hints at a potential bipartisan environmental agreement framed in morality.

While this offers some optimism for the future of the environmental movement, we must consider the potential effects of including such language in a democracy historically committed to the separation of church and state. By publicly approving a biblically based message

of environmental care, are politicians favoring Christianity? And if progressives accept the religious message of evangelical environmentalism, what then gives progressives the right to condemn their religious views in other arenas?

Such questions can and most likely will be exhausted by political pundits and columnists as the environmental movement continues to generate momentum. However, conventional knowledge would remind such talking heads that because more than 30 million Americans identify themselves as evangelical Christians, their voice will undoubtedly contribute to policymaking. Kate Smolski, a campaigner for Greenpeace, one of the most well known environmental organizations in the United States, argues that the exclusion of evangelicals is counterproductive in pushing the environmental movement forward. “There is no silver bullet for how to fix the environment,” she says. “Evangelicals are part of the solution, and it is going to take many different voices to make effective environmental change.” People interested in actual environmental improvement should therefore move away from the ideological differences between

secular environmental organizations and evangelical environmental organizations, and focus instead on more substantive analysis of this emerging voice and the motives behind it.

One of the most conventional means of uncovering motives of nonprofit organizations is to understand how they generate and spend money. The surge of pro-environmental action by evangelical leaders in the past few years implies an increase in funding being channeled to such programs. NCRP has been historically successful in understanding the motives behind social action by following the financial streams between grantmaking foundations and their grantee nonprofit organizations, an approach that Russell used in *Funding the Culture Wars*. However, following the financial flows of evangelical organizations is no sim-

transparent reporting exists, meaningful analysis of organizations can start. With EEN, for example, a surprising reality emerges: Both conservative and progressive foundations are funding the programs of overtly evangelical organizations. EEN's reporting shows that progressive funders are beginning to see the value of evangelical environmentalism. For example, the Bauman Foundation—which usually donates to more liberal organizations including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; the Clean Water Fund; the Center for Health, Environment, and Justice; as well as the Sierra Club (which recently created the position of coordinator of religious outreach)—contributes to EEN. This demonstrates Bauman's belief that EEN is a dedicated ally in the cause of environmental preservation. Similarly,

Though there has not been a great deal of agreement between evangelical and traditional environmental organizations to date, there is evidence that they can collaborate.

the Nathan Cummings Foundation, which focuses its philanthropy on progressive issues of social and economic justice and equal access to healthcare by donating to EEN, also expresses at least some

ple task. Because many evangelical organizations claim the organizational status of a church, they are not required by law to file IRS 990 forms*—an example being the large and visible *National Association of Evangelicals* (NAE). For these organizations, it becomes difficult to ascertain any pattern in funding or spending. This problem, more so than the religious ideology of the organizations, should be the focus of concern: What does it mean for democracy when an organization engaging the policy process does not have to disclose its financial information to the public?

When evangelical organizations do disclose their financial information, by voluntarily filing 990 forms—and many do—we can learn much about the organizations' intentions. The Evangelical Environmental Network has been transparent in its reporting of tax documents and in disclosing major donors. When

support for evangelical environmental efforts. Currently, grants by progressive foundations like the Bauman Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation to an overtly Christian organization are not common in the world of philanthropy. However, it shows the potential of foundations' willingness to look beyond the ideological exteriors of organizations and support issues of common ground.

The Evangelical Environmental Network also received major grants from The Stewardship Foundation, a conservative organization that funds initiatives that are "Christ-centered." The Stewardship Foundation has funded conservative organizations such as the Association of Christian Schools International and Americans United for Life. In funding EEN, the Stewardship Foundation is making the claim that environmentalism is not exclusively a secular or liberal issue, but that it has Christian connections, as well. From this cursory analysis of foundation spending, it seems that though there has not been a great deal of agreement between evangelical and traditional environmental organizations to date, there is evidence that traditional secular and traditional evangelical environmentalists can collaborate.

* The IRS 990 form is the annual report for federally tax-exempt organizations. It provides information on an organization's mission, programs, and finances. The 990 form used in this analysis was filed by Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA) in 2004. At that time, the Evangelical Environmental Network was an affiliated organization, and received all funding through ESA. This information is available on www.guidestar.org.

If this interest in the environment on the part of evangelicals is not simply a trend, but instead becomes a new tenet in the political creed of evangelicals, the environmental movement might progress further than anticipated. In light of the potential strengthening of the environmental movement by the presence of the evangelical voice, it might be beneficial for those in politics and in leadership roles of both environmental and evangelical nonprofit organizations to follow the example of foundations that financially support the work of evangelical environmentalism. Embracing the organizations that are working to bridge a gap between liberals and conservatives through the message of morality in environmentalism, rather than exploit the stereotyped differences between traditionally conservative and progressive organizations, has the potential to move environmentalism to the fore of political and public policy debate.

Though evangelical organizations potentially take environmentalism in a positive direction, the question remains whether or not it is ethical for directors of pub-

lic policy to withhold financial information. Financial transparency is needed for all organizations attempting to act as movers of policy, so that potential supporters and critics alike can understand an organization's true motivations. This clarity should be a hallmark of philanthropy as well as democracy.

Until religiously affiliated organizations are required to publicly disclose financial information, evangelical environmental nonprofits like NAE should be watched with cautious skepticism. Evangelical organizations that voluntarily provide transparency in their financial reporting should be applauded, as well as carefully researched. More importantly, if progressive environmental organizations ignore, or even alienate, an accountable and transparent organization merely because of its religious affiliation, the environmental movement will have missed a valuable opportunity with an unexpected ally.

Kevin Kovaleski is a research intern at NCRP.

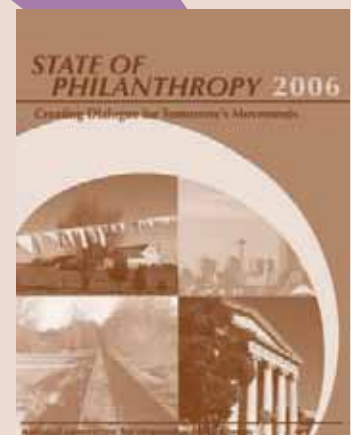
NCRP Announces the Release of

State of Philanthropy 2006: Creating Dialogue for Tomorrow's Movements

Nonprofit and foundation **experts** confront the **issues** facing philanthropy today and **initiate** conversations for tomorrow's progressive **change**

To order visit www.ncrp.org

State of Philanthropy 2006 is available to NCRP members for \$15 (\$30 for non-members). To become a member, fill out a form on our website, www.ncrp.org.



Making Environmental Justice a National Priority

By Albert Huang, Dimple Chaudhary, and Patrice Simms, Natural Resources Defense Council

Environmental justice (EJ) is, in many ways, local in nature, but national environmental groups can make valuable contributions to ongoing EJ efforts if they approach this work with the appropriate respect for local organizations' and communities' goals and priorities. It is a movement which recognizes that communities of color and poor communities are disproportionately affected by toxic pollution in the places they live, work, play, and pray. EJ is realized when

communities are empowered to achieve social change. In light of the tremendous need for additional resources for EJ struggles, and the shrinking pool of money available for community-based EJ efforts, national green groups must renew their commitment to working with local organizations and serving the communities that disproportionately bear the brunt of our nation's toxic pollution. Collaborative relationships with EJ communities will serve to strengthen national green groups, and provide opportunities for transformative alliances that connect with and are of service to a broader social movement.

National green group participation in EJ efforts, however, should move beyond the traditionally limited role of case-specific litigation support to reflect a longer-term commitment to EJ. National groups should offer a broader range of institutional resources to support EJ initiatives, including legal resources, policy advocacy, communications support, and scientific and technical expertise.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a 35-year-old national environmental organization with 1.2 million members and activists, is working to implement a sustainable partnership model for collaborating with local EJ advocates and community groups. Lessons learned from NRDC's partnership with community organizations in New Orleans have helped refine this partnership model, and may provide a useful case study to inform future EJ work.



Katrina: A Disaster of Unparalleled Proportion

Hurricane Katrina, and subsequent flooding in New Orleans and elsewhere, has been called the worst disaster in U.S. history. The storm displaced millions; left an entire city inundated with sewage, toxin-laced floodwaters, and contaminated sediment; and caused unhealthy levels of mold in hundreds of thousands of homes across the Gulf Coast.

In the wake of the storm, authorities received reports of some 575 oil and toxic chemical spills. Analysts conservatively estimate that the oil spills alone released more than 8 million gallons of harmful pollutants into the environment. Additionally, Hurricane Katrina was responsible for generating more than 100 million cubic yards of debris—enough to cover 1,000 football fields six stories high.

Hurricane Katrina disproportionately affected low-income communities and communities of color. As we approach the first anniversary of this tragic event, these communities are still carrying a disproportionate share of the long-term burden, including the weight of environmental and human health threats. Unfortunately, in the city's recovery process, EJ concerns have been neglected and even exacerbated.

Among other things, state and federal authorities have refused to clean up toxic sediments, or to even conduct a detailed analysis of the human health risks presented by these materials. In addition, state and local authorities have failed to aggressively pursue sustainable strategies for dealing with the enormous quantities of debris left behind by the storms. For example, they are rubber-stamping approvals for solid waste disposal landfills—including the Old Gentilly and Chef Menteur sites, which are ill-equipped to handle the wastes they are receiving and are located dangerously close to large populations and sensitive environmental areas.

Many other uncertainties remain, such as the quality of tap water, safety of school buildings in flood-affected areas, and the seriousness of localized contamination from isolated chemical spills and other toxic releases. In the meantime, Gulf Coast communities, especially low-income communities of color, continue to remain in harm's way from environmental threats that state and federal authorities could have eliminated or reduced.

The Call to Action in New Orleans

After the levees broke and the city of New Orleans flooded, NRDC moved quickly to establish contact with local groups, offer assistance, and learn about residents' needs on the ground. Local partner groups identified the issues that were of most concern to residents, provided a liaison with affected communities, and shared the historical and political context for the current environmental and public health crisis. Partners such as the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, Advocates for Environmental Human Rights, Louisiana Environmental Action Network, the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association, Common Ground, All Congregations Together, the Louisiana Bucket Brigade, Louisiana Physicians for Social Responsibility, and the People's Hurricane Relief Fund identified mold, contaminated sediment, debris removal, and safe drinking water as issues requiring priority attention. NRDC supported these local priorities by providing environmental testing and data analysis, advocacy, media outreach, and direct financial support.

Our work relies heavily on strong ties to local communities. These relationships make it possible to implement the following guiding principles. EJ initiatives

- > must derive from and be accountable to the local community groups with which we collaborate;
- > should involve multidisciplinary support, incorporating an array of NRDC expertise and resources;
- > should include a commitment to build short- and long-term institutional capacities within local and regional organizations, so that EJ initiatives can become self-sustaining; and

- > should be considered part of a larger movement, and adhere to the movement's established principles ("Principles of Environmental Justice," adopted during The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in 1991).

Ultimately, relationships with local community and EJ partners will complement and strengthen the local groups, and create new opportunities for national green groups to address important environmental and human health issues in communities that bear the brunt of the nation's toxic pollution.

NRDC tried to apply these guiding principles in our post-Katrina work in the New Orleans region. Working collaboratively with our local partners, we developed "Rebuilding New Orleans: A 10-Point Plan of Action."¹ This community-driven plan continues to serve as the guiding document for ongoing EJ work in the region. In order to immediately fund the work, NRDC committed institutional funds and reached out to individual donors for additional gifts. Some of the funding helped to support local groups as they struggled to recover from the flooding of their own offices.

National green group participation in environmental justice (EJ) efforts, however, should move beyond the traditional to reflect a longer-term commitment to EJ.

As the floodwaters receded, NRDC added its voice to a chorus of local groups advocating for the right of residents to return to safe and healthy communities. We also provided scientific, legal, policy, and communications support for efforts to prod government agencies to perform comprehensive testing for toxic contaminants in drinking water, sediments, soil, and air (both indoors and outdoors), and to clean up where necessary to protect returning residents.

At the request of our local partners, NRDC completed independent scientific testing to evaluate and document the scope of post-Katrina environmental contamination. In the testing process, community members played a central role in determining where to test and what to test for. They then worked side-by-side with NRDC scientists to carry out the testing in their backyards, streets, and homes.

Over the last 10 months, our coalition has completed the following work:

1. Protecting returning residents from toxic hazards in sediment and soil

Last fall we conducted tests of toxic sediments left behind by the flooding. Results showed “hot spots” of contamination at sampling locations chosen based on the extensive knowledge and experience of our local partners. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also conducted tests, and posted its results in an almost incomprehensible format on its Web site. At the request of New Orleans community groups, NRDC analyzed EPA’s testing data, issued a report on the contamination, and made the testing data and analysis immediately available in a user-friendly format on our Web site last February.² The report, co-released with our community partners, documented the high levels of contamination in the sediment blanketing much of New Orleans and urged state and federal authorities to clean up the contamination before residents, particularly children and the elderly, returned in significant numbers. NRDC worked closely with our community partners on joint press releases and press conferences to publicize the report.

We followed up the report by issuing a public health advisory on how residents and cleanup workers can protect themselves from the environmental contamination. We also organized a coalition of more than a dozen civil rights, religious, and environmental justice groups to petition EPA, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Federal Emergency Management Administration to take immediate action to clean up the toxic contamination. Five months later, we have not received a formal response.

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and the United Steelworkers Union used the results of our sediment analysis and created the “Safe Way Back Home” project, in which they highlighted the failure of government agencies to clean up the contaminated sediment, and led an ambitious and highly successful volunteer-based cleanup effort in the community of New Orleans East.

2. Restoring safe, clean drinking water

Katrina’s impact on drinking water systems was profound. At least 2.4 million people were without access to safe drinking water in the immediate aftermath of the

storm. Even now, it is unclear if tap water in the region is safe to drink. The city has recently lifted all water advisories and declared the water safe for consumption, without providing access to its data on water quality.

At the request of our local partners, NRDC will conduct independent drinking water tests in the coming months. We will continue the collaborative approach used during the sediment testing and publish the results, along with an accessible interpretation, as quickly as possible. If the results demonstrate a potential threat to human health, we will work with our local partners to develop a strategic action plan to press federal and state authorities to take appropriate action. In addition, as before, we will issue a public health advisory that makes recommendations on how residents can protect themselves.

3. Monitoring air quality

In close collaboration with our community partners, NRDC also conducted mold sampling in various parts of New Orleans last fall. We discovered that the levels of mold spores in the outdoor air in New Orleans were high enough to pose a serious health threat, especially for people with mold allergies or weakened respiratory systems.

We also found dangerously high levels of mold spores inside homes, and discovered that simply washing walls with bleach (as many residents were being told to do) did not solve the problem. We published the test results on our Web site, conducted public presentations, and generated extensive national and local news coverage. We also issued an advisory that made specific recommendations on how returning residents can safely remove mold from their homes.

4. Demolition and debris disposal

As the city of New Orleans and other Gulf Coast communities continue their efforts to recover and rebuild, one of the most daunting challenges will be dealing with the mountain of solid waste left behind by the storm. The debris includes vegetation, ruined structures, vehicles, household items (including toxic wastes), commercial waste, and numerous other materials.

Of particular concern over the coming months will be the fate of the thousands of residential and commercial structures that need to be demolished and disposed of to make way for reconstruction. Many of these buildings may contain hazardous materials, such as asbestos and household waste. Gulf Coast officials have disproportionately depended on landfills as a means of managing post-Katrina

Photo by Erik Olson, NRDC



debris. The state of Louisiana also expressed an interest in relying on open burning as one means of disposing of demolition waste. Our coalition is concerned about the potential for serious short- and long-term public health problems that would likely result from these practices.

We have been working with local experts and advocates to support efforts to ensure that debris is managed and disposed of in a manner that is consistent with the long-term health of local communities and the principles of environmental justice. Among other things, we advocated for integrating recycling and reuse efforts in debris management planning, and for appropriately handling and disposing of any waste containing hazardous materials.

We will continue to call for proper debris disposal and support local community projects. We will also continue to work to ensure that waste management decisions are made with full public participation. Debris management decisions should not add to the human health threats and environmental injustices already suffered by many low-income and people of color communities.

The Future of NRDC's EJ Work

NRDC is committed to continuing to work with local partners to address the public health threats triggered by Hurricane Katrina and ensure that the rebuilding process embraces full community involvement, is environmentally safe and equitable, and will create a secure future for returning residents. As cities in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas rebuild after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, it is critical that local citizens be fully informed about the risks they face and lead the cleanup and rebuilding decision-making process. To this end, NRDC remains committed to seeing through the rebuilding process and continually providing scientific, legal, policy, and communications assistance, as necessary, to support communities.

As part of a deepening commitment to EJ that will expand to encompass critical EJ efforts elsewhere around the country, NRDC is currently engaged in more aggressive planning to expand and duplicate this Katrina model for our EJ work throughout our organization. In addition, we look forward to forging more transformative alliances with other communities engaged in EJ struggles around the country. As the influential essay "The Soul of Environmentalism" stated, mainstream environmentalism has a soul that is "deeply tied to human rights and social justice, and this tie has been nurtured by the environmental justice movement." NRDC looks forward to further nurturing the "soul of environmentalism" through our continued EJ work.

Albert Huang and Patrice Simms are attorneys at NRDC. Dimple Chaudhary is an Urban Fellow at NRDC.

NOTES

1. Available on the Web at www.nrdc.org/health/effects/katrinadata/contents.asp.
2. See www.nrdc.org/health/effects/katrinadata/contents.asp.

About NRDC: Over the past three decades, NRDC has been a catalyst for improving environmental policy in the United States. Our vision is one of a sustainable world where human communities can be maintained indefinitely without causing the degradation of the biosphere. NRDC pursues this vision by designing policy solutions for genuine, lasting change—such as reducing or eliminating toxic chemicals at the source—and putting them into place through advocacy, litigation and direct negotiations. Although NRDC remains engaged in changing national environmental policy, we have become increasingly focused on the importance of local, community-based work. In particular, it has become clear that a national organization such as NRDC has useful tools to offer to local community groups; in turn, local struggles can build critical momentum and awareness that ultimately can change national policy.

Whose Environment Will be Funded?

Balancing Popular Appeal and Community Accountability in Workplace Fundraising

By Elly Kugler, NCRP

In 2000, two nonprofits both attempted to raise money using a mechanism for grassroots fundraising known as a workplace giving fund, with very different results. The Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, which works on regional environmental justice issues, received \$10,560 in 2000 and only \$6,100 in 2002. The national conservation organization Nature Conservancy, however, received \$71,192 in 2000 and \$79,810 in 2002. Both were participants in Earth Share California, an alternative workplace fund (AF) not affiliated with the United Way that runs campaigns throughout California with the goal of “giving corporations, government agencies and small businesses an easy and efficient way to care for the environment.”¹

The disparity in the amount that these organizations earned, while potentially resulting from their geographic focus, also reveals the disparate impact of environmentally focused AFs: Large national organizations and conservation or education-focused groups are more likely to earn larger amounts of money from environmentally focused workplace giving funds than small local organizations and groups with an environmental justice focus.

As part of a soon-to-be-released study, NCRP examined 70 regionally based AFs that were formed as alternatives to the United Way, analyzing the amount of money they give away and the kinds of member organizations they give to. Created to bring a stream of grassroots revenue to movements and communities that were underfunded or excluded from other workplace giving groups, these AFs have significant financial impact. Combined, they gave approximately \$11 million to more than 2,000 nonprofit organizations during each year studied (2000, 2001, and 2002).

Of alternatives to the United Way, AFs dedicated to supporting environmental organizations annually gave away a combined total of approximately \$3.5 million to member organizations from 2000 to 2002.² But to whom were they giving that money? To get a better sense of the giving practices of the funds, NCRP analyzed the finances and activities of a random sample of 25 percent of AF beneficiaries. Looking at this sample, it is clear that certain sectors of the environmental movement tend to generate more donations from environmentally focused

workplace giving federations than others, with traditional conservationist and environmental organizations and large national environmental organizations often receiving the lion’s share.

Where Is the Environmental Justice?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Web site defines environmental justice (EJ) as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies” and adds that “it will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.”³ Similarly, a glossary of environmental terms provided by the Navy defines EJ as “the fair treatment of all races, cultures, incomes, and educational levels with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment implies that no population of people should be forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the negative environmental impacts of pollution or environmental hazards due to a lack of political or economic strength.”⁴

Implicit in both governmental definitions is the understanding that some communities are more adversely affected by pollution, waste dumping, and other negative environmental activities than others. In other words, there are certain racial and socioeconomic groups of people in the United States—specifically, low-income people and people of color—who shoulder a disproportionate share of negative environmental impacts and do not enjoy the same level of protection as other groups do from environmental hazards. The Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, for example, has within its mission the more traditional environmentalist goal of advancing environmental sustainability and improving community health, but also works to “ensure democratic decision making for communities and workers affected by the high-tech revolution in Silicon Valley.”⁵ In its research and publications, it tracks the disproportionate environmental impacts that the computer manufacturing

industry has had on low-income people of color, with a special focus on women, and in its organizing, it focuses on building the power of those affected to organize in their own interests.

Unfortunately—and surprisingly, given their historical purpose—environmentally focused AFs have low levels of EJ groups participating and proportionately lower levels of funding going to those that do participate. Scanning down the list of local and national affiliates of Earth Share affiliates and beneficiaries of other environmental federations throughout the country, several words keep reappearing: “conservancy,” “research,” and “education,” all traditional activities of the environmental movement. One way in which EJ organizations are often different from these environmental organizations is their accountability to specific communities and groups of people. Since toxic dumping, environmentally harmful factories and a whole bevy of other environmental threats have disproportionately affected low-income people and people of color, EJ organizations work to expand the power and self-advocacy skills of these communities.

One way to assess whether a group has an environmental justice focus is to examine which communities (if any) the group is accountable to. As part of the larger workplace giving study, NCRP tallied organizations that were specifically accountable to or organizing with a particular constituency. Of the 518 beneficiaries of environmental AFs in the study, only 19 could be linked to a specific constituency, and many of these organizations were only tied to a specific age group—such as the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement or the Student Conservation Association. While some environmental organizations may have smaller projects that are accountable to a particular constituency, organizations engaged with a low-income constituency of color were strongly lacking.

Why are more environmental justice organizations not beneficiaries of environmentally focused AFs? There are several possible reasons.

Time and resources: Applying to participate in an AF can be a long process with a lot of paperwork, and participating can often require a longer time commitment from organizations than other forms of funding.⁶ Many times, organizations are required to devote significant staff time (often 50 to 200 hours a year) to working on the AF’s campaign. Some EJ organizations and small organizations may be too understaffed to be able to participate.

The perils of mass appeal: Workplace giving is a tremendous tool for accessing pools of donors, but its strength rests in being appealing to as large a range of workplaces and employees as possible. The same influences that push AFs to engage in broad messag-

Large national organizations are more likely to earn larger amounts of money from environmentally focused workplace giving funds than small local organizations.

ing around clean water and children’s health also may push them away from taking on organizations that name and fight the ways that environmental contamination is caused or perpetuated by specific companies and governmental agencies within specific low-income communities. Workplaces being solicited for support could potentially be the targets of EJ organization campaigns, or at the very least may have a strong reaction to seeing fellow companies targeted for their role in contaminating specific communities.⁷ If environmental AFs accepted more organizations dealing with these kinds of issues, they might have a harder time gaining access to new companies where they could run their fundraising campaigns. Environmental AFs may also fear that including organizations that work to fight environmental contamination and build the leadership of low-income communities of color would limit their appeal to white middle-class donors.

A “push towards the national”: The majority of environmental AFs are affiliates of Earth Share, which describes itself as a “membership federation of local,

national, and international environmental and conservation charities”⁸ with “state affiliates in 18 states.” In the case of Earth Share affiliates, besides the “perils of mass appeal” noted above, another reason for the dearth of EJ organizations in their campaigns is the arrangement that state affiliates have with the governing national body. That arrangement specifies that all affiliates of Earth Share are required to accept a long list of national and international environmental organizations as beneficiaries in their campaigns. In interviews conducted with Earth Share affiliates, several representatives mentioned their discomfort with this “push towards the national,” as one person put it. Several AF representatives felt that this policy had negatively affected their attempts to fund local environmental organizations. Since the AFs must be careful

If not the environmental AFs, where? There are limited sources of workplace funding for EJ organizations. The United Way, the largest workplace giving organization with more than 1,300 local affiliates, does not seem to be an option for most EJ groups. In response to a query regarding EJ organizations to the national United Way, Sheila Consaul, director of Media and Public Relations, responded that “all funding decisions are made at the local level; we don’t have a national policy regarding support for any organization or type of organization.” She said that “generally, the most common issues of focus for United Ways relate to the goals of helping children and youth succeed, improving access to health care, promoting independence and economic self-sufficiency, and strengthening and supporting families.” She added, “In 2003, the last year for

which we have data, United Ways contributed \$641,000—approximately 3.6 percent of funding allocations—to support programs and organizations that fall into the “environmentally related category.”

Environmental AFs may fear that including organizations that fight environmental contamination and build the leadership of low-income communities of color would limit their appeal to white middle-class donors.

about the number of beneficiary organizations they permit into their campaigns in order to maintain a high enough level of funding for all beneficiaries, each large national group they include is potentially one less space for a small local group. Including more well-known national and international groups also makes it difficult to add to workplace campaign sites local groups that are less well-known and potentially riskier.

Who avoids whom? It is unclear whether the environmental AFs stay away from EJ organizations or if EJ organizations stay away from the AFs. In one interview, a representative from an environmental AF said that the fund did not have environmental justice organizations in its campaign, and that such organizations would fit better within a Community Shares campaign or another type of workplace giving fund. In this case at least, it appears that the AF excluded EJ organizations from its definition of an appropriate environmental organization. In an interview with the beneficiary organization of another fund, the representative mentioned that the group’s environmental AF was beginning to take more interest in including EJ organizations.

Based on these standards, most environmental organizations, including EJ groups, do not qualify to receive money from the United Way. EJ organizations are doubly condemned, since most United Way chapters focus on funding direct service organizations and many United Way chapters specifically avoid admitting groups engaged in activism or community organizing. The majority of EJ beneficiary organizations found within NCRP’s study were members of Community Shares, such as Community Shares of Louisiana, or other local nonenvironmental AFs. However, Community Shares is not present in every state and region.

Getting the Lion’s Share

During the course of research on beneficiaries of AFs, a few beneficiaries appeared to stick out as unusual in a pool of primarily small, local organizations funded by workplace giving federations. These groups, called megabeneficiaries within the study, had budgets that were hundreds of times bigger than most local groups, had whole departments related to fundraising and organizational promotion, and for the most part had a national or international focus. The largest portion of

these megabeneficiaries were members of environmental AFs.

The most notable example of a megabeneficiary is The Nature Conservancy. Funded by all Earth Share groups, it received from its various Earth Share campaigns what would be phenomenal sums of money for small local organizations. In 2002, it received just over \$43,000 from Earth Share of Texas and about \$37,000 from Earth Share of Georgia. While these amounts are well above the median amount received by most beneficiaries of these funds and across the study, they are a miniscule amount for the Conservancy. Those monies combined make up less than a hundredth of a percent of The Nature Conservancy's budget.

While some AFs distributed quantities that were within \$1,000 of each other to all beneficiaries, others had gaps upward of \$100,000 between the beneficiaries who received the most and those who received the least, and environmental federations tended to have some of the greatest disproportion between most and least funded. Several factors contribute to this disproportionate distribution. Larger organizations operating in the public limelight are more likely to be immediately recognized by workplace givers, and more likely to be able to devote staff time to promoting the organization and generating a large amount of workplace giving revenue. Small organizations that may not be particularly well-known, even within their own geographic region, are far less likely to generate significant revenue unless their AF is working aggressively and creatively to promote all beneficiaries.

When megabeneficiaries such as The Nature Conservancy are competing with groups like the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, it's an unfair fight unless the AFs step in to ensure increased parity in funding.

The Challenge for Environmental AFs

To maintain a balance in groups funded and to ensure that EJ groups and small groups don't get shortchanged, environmental AFs may want to consider some shifts in policy and practice:

1) All environmental AFs may want to consider expanding their definition of what constitutes an environmental organization to include groups working in accountable collaboration with low-income communities and communities of color around specific environmental problems disproportionately affecting those communi-

ties. This may mean admitting groups that do not do work exclusively around environmental issues, but by bringing in these groups, the environmental AFs may expand their appeal to a broader audience.

2) Since the majority of the environmental AFs are affiliates of Earth Share, Earth Share may need to be involved to facilitate these changes. If the full inclusion of EJ and small organizations is a priority, Earth Share may want to consider renegotiating its contract with its affiliates to help them take on additional small and locally focused organizations—for example, by allowing affiliates to limit the number of national and international organizations required to be listed as campaign beneficiaries. Alternatively, Earth Share could form an EJ fund by drawing revenue from a percentage of the amount affiliates are required to pay to be part of the national organization, or by drawing on general monies given to Earth Share rather than to particular beneficiaries. Money from this fund could be cycled back to state affiliates that have admitted EJ organizations, or to a pool of EJ organizations selected by Earth Share affiliates.

In a time when many environmental AFs appear financially healthy and Earth Share affiliates have a strong national body to coordinate their work, it may be time for them to step up their efforts to fund environmental justice and small, local organizations.

Elly Kugler is a research assistant at NCRP.

NOTES

1. From the Earth Share of California Web site: www.earthshareca.org.
2. These AFs include both regionally based, fully autonomous environmental federations and formerly autonomous groups that became state affiliates of Earth Share, a nationwide network of nonprofit environmental and conservation organizations. The majority studied are Earth Share affiliates rather than completely autonomous federations.
3. www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/index.html.
4. enviro.nfesc.navy.mil/erb/acro_gloss/gloss/gloss_efg.htm.
5. From Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition website: www.svtc.org/about/index.html.
6. From interviews conducted with a cross section of representatives of beneficiary groups of alternative workplace giving funds.
7. One example of such an occurrence took place in North Carolina, where North Carolina Waste Awareness and Reduction Network was forced to stop participating in a workplace giving campaign due to pressure from an influential local company that the network was targeting due to massive environmental contamination.
8. From the Earth Share Web site: www.earthshare.org/about_us/aboutus.html.

New Orleans and the Philanthropic Challenge

(continued from page 1)

To address that particular need, the Melville Charitable Trust brought onto the scene an experienced team to develop a strategic plan for supportive housing. Since last October, the Technical Assistance Collaborative has been working with state and local officials to explain how supportive housing has worked in other areas of the country and urging them to include a substantial number of such housing units in their plans. This effort was bolstered by the National Alliance to End Homelessness, another Melville Charitable Trust grantee partner, which lobbied hard to ensure that supportive housing provisions were included in congressional block grant legislation.

In addition, the entire effort received significant support from the Partnership to End Long Term Homelessness (PELTH), a collaboration of funders that includes the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Conrad Hilton Foundation, Fannie Mae, and Fannie Mae Foundation. Each of these funders has made significant grants to specific initiatives in Louisiana and New Orleans. In fact, Rockefeller has assigned a staff person, Carey Shea, to work out of the Greater New Orleans Community Foundation office and to coordinate community development and investment efforts with nonprofits, such as Local Initiatives Support Corporation and Enterprise Community Partners.

One result of these efforts and collaboration was the inclusion in the block grant of a specific provision for 3,000 units of supportive housing. There are billions of dollars now available for rebuilding and supportive housing through this block grant and an accelerated low-income housing tax credit program. This would not have been possible without the seamless and effective advocacy of the groups mentioned.

If all of the supportive housing units are built, the overall impact could significantly improve and even transform the service delivery systems in the state. It can have an especially positive impact on Louisiana's struggling behavioral health system. Sadly, there is no guarantee that the units will be built.

In most communities, nonprofit developers create the housing units, usually relying on a multilayered and complex system of financing. Providers, such as local behavioral health agencies, then provide social services to residents of these units. That's the way it would work in Los Angeles or New York. But this is New Orleans.

When the area was hit by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the city was evacuated, provider organizations were forced to close down. They are still struggling to get back to normal. But even before the hurricanes, few had the capacity to take on the challenges of serving an expanding supportive housing network. In addition, the nonprofit developer community was far from robust, and two years earlier, LISC had closed its New Orleans office out of frustration with the way business was (or wasn't) done. LISC is back, but the limited developer capacity remains a pressing problem.

So who will build these units and who will provide the support services to ensure vulnerable residents can live independently and productively? Funders like the MacArthur Foundation are making significant investments—predevelopment funding, Program Related Investments, grants, and technical assistance—to strengthen the nonprofit developers in New Orleans and create a nonprofit developer network. Local leaders like Una Anderson of the New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative and Kathy LaBorde of Gulf Coast Housing Partnership are collaborating with local and national funders on this effort.

But, given the urgency of the issue, our Technical Assistance Collaborative team decided to pursue a parallel strategy. Citing a plan that was successfully implemented in North Carolina, the collaborative proposed (and the Louisiana Recovery Authority adopted) a requirement that every for-profit developer plan must set aside 5 percent to 15 percent of its units for supportive housing. Since these units will be scattered throughout apartment complexes, they will require the services of mobile provider teams. The next challenge to funders is to help develop and build out provider capacity to deliver services in new ways. People like Gay LeBlanc—who heads Jefferson Parish Mental Health, one of the state's leaders in this field—will help coordinate funder investment in building out this capacity.

What is supportive housing?

Supportive housing is a successful, cost-effective combination of affordable housing with services that help people live more stable, productive lives. Permanent supportive housing works well for people who face the most complex challenges—individuals and families who are not only homeless, but who also have very low incomes and serious, persistent issues that may include substance use, mental illness, and HIV/AIDS.

For more information, visit the Corporation for Supportive Housing (www.csh.org) or the Partnership to End Long Term Homelessness (www.EndLongTermHomelessness.org).

Not surprisingly, we have found that what works for supportive housing can be modified and applied to a wide variety of affordable housing models. (Supportive housing is, after all, just a particular form of service-

We need your support to continue our work!

RENEW your membership or subscription to continue receiving *Responsive Philanthropy*

What we've produced in 2005:

- > *The Waltons and Wal-Mart: Self-Interested Philanthropy*
- > *Funding the Culture Wars: Philanthropy, Church and State*
- > *Not All Grants are Created Equal: Why Nonprofits Need General Operating Support From Foundations*

What we're working on in 2006:

- > Use and misuse of charities in the 2006 election
- > Conservative foundations and education/race-related policies
- > Increasing core operating grant dollars for nonprofits

Thank you for your past support of NCRP. We'd like to invite you to renew your membership with NCRP. Your continued support is paramount to NCRP's success, and we encourage you to renew today!

With the help of supporters and subscribers like you, NCRP is now celebrating its 30th year of operating as the nation's nonprofit philanthropic watchdog. Because 2006 is shaping up as one of our most challenging years yet, we need your support to continue and build our agenda.

As you know, we're promoting social change and social justice—as well as transparency and accountability in U.S. philanthropy. This year we plan to continue our work on conservative foundations and report on the use of philanthropy in the upcoming election.

Visit www.ncrp.org to renew or donate.

enriched affordable housing.) Creating the foundation for an effective supportive housing system strengthens developer and provider capacity across the board. It's no accident that as we've seen supportive housing gain traction across the country, there has been a concomitant surge of interest in providing resident services in many other affordable housing settings. If access to services works for the most vulnerable, why stop there? If empowerment is in a foundation's mission statement, then providing opportunities to individuals and families who could benefit from thoughtful and strategic support and intervention is surely a logical thing to do.

More and more funders are asking not only "What can we do to help?" but also "What can we do to move people along, to really help them become self-reliant?" We've found in many communities that on-site housing services that provide residents with employment and financial counseling, literacy and computer training, and a wide range of educational and social activities strengthen families and build independence. In New Orleans, we have a chance to apply these best practices on a major scale and turn a disastrous experience into a

significant social advance. This is certainly why so many funders have found New Orleans and the Gulf Coast so challenging and compelling.

New Orleans alone needs to build or renovate 100,000 units of affordable housing for those who want to come home. In the process, there are tremendous opportunities here for transformative change—change that holds on to the good in a culture and a community, while making the day-to-day far better for many people than what it was before. Philanthropy, working with the people of New Orleans, can set the table for such change. If you're interested in joining us, please contact one of the sources below:

Greater New Orleans Community Foundation
www.gnof.org

Partnership to End Long-Term Homelessness
www.endinglongtermhomelessness.org

Robert Hohler is executive director of the Melville Charitable Trust.

New from NCRP

State of Philanthropy 2006: Creating Dialogue for Tomorrow's Movements

(July 2006)

NCRP's third in a series of biennial collections, *State of Philanthropy 2006* aims to initiate conversations about creating progressive social change and increasing foundation accountability. It confronts contentious issues faced by today's nonprofit and philanthropic sectors from a variety of perspectives.

By addressing new foundation strategies, the impact of federal budget constraints on nonprofits, accountability legislation and regulations, and emerging progressive movements, *State of Philanthropy 2006* promotes the strengthening, redirecting and refocusing of foundation and nonprofit efforts to better meet the needs of the disenfranchised. This publication serves as a primer for progressive change during an era dominated by political conservatism.

Upcoming from NCRP

New Research Project on Rural Philanthropy

NCRP recently began a research project to help improve and strengthen philanthropy in rural regions across the United States, which are home to some of the nation's most distressing socio-economic living conditions. In the coming months, NCRP researchers will examine the roles that foundations play in supporting nonprofits and impoverished communities in Kentucky, Montana, eastern and northern California, and towns along the Mexico-US border. Our goal is to find and help replicate foundation best practices for rural grantmaking, and to increase the number of foundations engaged in rural regions. A report will be published in spring/summer 2007.

NCRP Board of Directors

James Abernathy	Environmental Support Center
Christine Ahn	
Gary Bass	OMB Watch
Dave Beckwith	Needmor Fund
Paul S. Castro	Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles
Lana Cowell	(NCRP Board Secretary)
Louis Delgado	Philanthropy & Nonprofit Sector Program, Loyola University Chicago
Mike Doyle	Community Shares of Illinois
Pablo Eisenberg	Georgetown University Public Policy Institute
Angelo Falcon	PRLDEF Institute for Puerto Rican Policy
Richard Farias	Tejano Center for Community Concerns
Diane Feeney	French American Charitable Trust
Deborah Felder	Maine Initiatives
Margaret Fung	Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund
David R. Jones	Community Service Society (NCRP Board Chair)
Rhoda Karpatkin	Consumers Union (NCRP Board Treasurer)
Larry Kressley	Public Welfare Foundation (NCRP Board Vice Chair)
Julianne Malveaux	Last Word Productions Inc.
Peter B. Manzo	
William Merritt	National Black United Fund
Nadia Moritz	The Young Women's Project
Terry Odendahl	Institute for Collaborative Change
Alan Rabinowitz	Peppercorn Foundation
Russell Roybal	National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
Greg Truog	Community Shares USA
Helen Vinton	Southern Mutual Help Association
Bill Watanabe	Little Tokyo Service Center

visit: www.ncrp.org/publications



national committee for
responsive philanthropy

2001 S Street NW • Suite 620 • Washington, DC 20009

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

Washington, DC
PERMIT NO. 273

