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Photo courtesy of NPA.



Beyond Collaboration: Bringing Strategic Thinking to Long-Term Alliance Building

For more than 40 years, National People's Action has been rallying everyday people in cities, towns and rural communities to participate in civic life through community organizing, campaigns and direct action to advance economic and racial justice. But, until six years ago, NPA did not have deep relationships with other community or worker orga-

nizing networks. This was the product of a longstanding pervasive orthodoxy – no permanent enemies, no permanent allies – that defined our tradition of professional community organizing.

Certain that this orientation was a barrier to structural change, we began to experiment by building deep alliances with a set of national organizations that do community and worker organizing. It was clear that to amass the power necessary to create the change that our members needed, we would all have to give up some control to have more impact.

Among the lessons we learned from this experimentation was that successful collaboration and long-term alli-

By George Goehl

ance building starts with a clear understanding of what you are trying to accomplish. If the goal is to increase power to win a specific policy victory, you might survive without deep, long-term alliances. Making structural transformations to the political economy, however, requires a strategic division of labor that builds coordinated power for the long haul. Ultimately, clarity of purpose is what motivates us to push through short-term barriers to long-term organizational alignment.

Today, we work in varying levels of alignment with PICO National Network, National Domestic Workers Alliance, Jobs (continued on page 13)



challenging grantmakers
to strengthen communities

A Message From the Executive Director



Dear Readers,

I believe that smart philanthropy draws from many voices. Our latest initiative launched earlier this month called “Philamplify” harnesses the knowledge, wisdom and power from the collective to improve the impact of philanthropy in our communities. If you haven’t had a chance yet to visit the website and check it out, I hope you’ll do so.

As NCRP and its allies continue our efforts to help solve the tough problems our society faces, it behooves us to remember that philanthropy supporting relationship-building has the opportunity to take limited dollars further. Many of the articles in this edition of *Responsive Philanthropy* show how strategies like this can succeed.

Our cover story by National People’s Action executive director George Goehl, “Beyond Collaboration: Bringing Strategic Thinking to Long-Term Alliance Building,” explains how NPA’s move from a “no permanent enemies, no permanent allies” philosophy has allowed it to respond more quickly and effectively to critical issues. George recommends that grantmakers invest in nonprofits whose initiatives are as defined by relationship-building as they are clear objectives.

In “CPSD’s Campaign to Raise the Minimum Wage for Disabled Workers,” Allison Wohl describes the Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination’s recent successful campaign to include disabled workers in President Obama’s executive order to raise the minimum wage for federal employees. Still, work remains to be done in this fight for equality, and Wohl explains how CPSD’s partnership with the Ruderman Family Foundation will continue to be crucial.

Charlie Bernstein, former executive director of Maine Initiatives and a community organizer, illustrates how national organizations and campaigns can hurt – or help – local groups. In “It’s How, Not Whether,” he points out the long history of dropping national organizers into local groups to bolster issue campaigns – even though these campaigns don’t always benefit local communities, or even fully make use of their capabilities.

Riki Wilchins’ “A Lesson in Feminine Norms: Why Philanthropy Matters to Educational Outcomes” explains how gender norms hurt female students’ performance in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subjects. Riki gives tips on how foundations can take a gender transformative lens to their organizational approaches, yielding more effective results than if they ignored the influence of feminine and masculine norms.

Finally, our Member Spotlight delves into the work of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a U.S. think tank providing policy analysis and research to benefit communities of color.

We hope you’re inspired by the many different voices represented in the following pages, and find information that’s useful in your own work. We’re always interested in hearing from our readership. Send us your thoughts at readers@ncrp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to be "AD", written over a light green circular graphic element.

Aaron Dorfman

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CPSD's Campaign to Raise the Minimum Wage for Disabled Workers

By Allison Hassett Wohl

During his 2014 State of the Union address, President Obama announced an executive order to raise the minimum wage for federal contractors to \$10.10 an hour. The next day, January 29, Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of Labor Tom Perez held a regularly scheduled outreach call with the disability community to discuss administration activities of interest.

Though it was not on the call agenda, one of my colleagues from the Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination (CPSD), Ari Ne'eman, president of the Autistic Self-Advocacy Network (ASAN), asked whether federal contractors paid less than the federal minimum wage would be included in this

executive order. Ari was referring to the fact that thousands of federal contractors are paid subminimum wages because they have disabilities, due to an arcane provision that exempts businesses holding special wage certificates from the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. This allows these businesses to pay workers with disabilities subminimum wages, sometimes as low as mere cents an hour.

Perez replied that the White House did not have the authority to prevent subminimum wages for workers employed by employers with 14(c) certificates. We challenged this suggestion during the call, and immediately began to craft an advocacy campaign



President Obama signs the executive order to raise the minimum wage for federal contract workers. Photo courtesy of CPSD.

to educate the administration about the archaic law it was defending and urge it to include workers with disabilities in the executive order. As the former Department of Justice civil rights division chief who enforced the 1999 Supreme Court decision *Olmstead v. L.C.*, which mandated that Americans with disabilities must receive services in the “most integrated setting,” we knew we had a champion in Perez.

Our approach was twofold: first, to build a broad coalition of disability, social justice, civil rights and labor advocacy organizations. This served two purposes: to get the administration’s attention and to prevent the infighting that too often plagues individual constituencies, including disability groups. By preventing these internal quarrels over technical issues, we were able to focus on confronting the main issue of unequal rights for people with disabilities. Our first step to achieve this was to produce an organizational sign-on letter that was distributed across a wide network of potential supporters.

Our second tactic was to craft a simple message – one of fairness and decency – that appealed to all audiences: that the president’s executive order was wrong to exclude disabled workers simply because they are disabled. As Obama himself stated during the State of the Union, “If you cook our troops’ meals or wash their dishes, you shouldn’t have to live in poverty.” Though he may not have realized it, many of the workers who perform these jobs are employed through a network of providers that receive federal contracts for goods and services, and are able to profit by paying workers with disabilities less than the minimum wage.

Beyond this simple message, an important part of our effort to inform not just the White House but also the media and the public about this inequity required additional education about the life experienced by

many Americans with disabilities. It is not simply about disability, but also forced poverty, economic injustice, wage inequity and civil rights.

Most people have no idea that government policies dictating how these citizens may access their benefits serve to drive them into poverty and consign them to a life on the economic margins.

The President’s order and our campaign to broaden it allowed us the opportunity to explain how in order to access the very benefits that they need to survive, citizens with disabilities must qualify for Medicaid by applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The benefits we’re talking about include employment, housing, and transportation support, as well as the health care benefits that are still denied in many states. This program, created in 1951, was originally called “Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled,” a title that reflected the prevailing view that those with the most significant disabilities

were never expected to live long lives or contribute to society in any meaningful way and would simply be locked away in institutions, far from public view.

The lack of attention to disabled workers in the executive order was particularly striking because it came at a time when the administration was starting a national conversation on poverty and income inequality. CPSD seized this opportunity to ensure that disability was not left out of the conversation. We made our case, not only with the administration but also in the media, on everything from radio talk shows to news reports and conversations with leading columnists.

CPSD’s letter to Obama and Perez was delivered to the White House and Department of Labor and, we were told, debated internally. Our partner groups and allies sent action alerts to our grassroots membership, which responded with letters and emails urging the administration to use its authority to include workers with disabilities in the executive order. To its credit, the administration listened, and it responded by including these workers in the executive order to the extent possible under the law.

We were able to overcome the administration’s initial “no” on including these workers because we came together to strategically and collectively voice a simple and powerful message. We were able to build a broad and powerful coalition of stakeholders beyond CPSD and beyond the disability world. Without a partner that was willing to take a chance on us and to provide the funding so that we could begin to build our capacity, we would not be in a place to wage a campaign of that significance.

CPSD AND THE RUDERMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION

CPSD was created in 2007 when three family-led groups – the National Down Syndrome Society, the Autism Society,

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and the National Fragile X Foundation – came together to create a coalition that would focus on modernizing this outdated system. In just six years, CPSD has grown to 22 groups.

As our coalition has expanded, our mission has evolved as well. We have come to understand that as parents, self-advocates, siblings, educators and practitioners, we have an enormous opportunity to inform and educate policy-makers, families and the media about a discriminatory system that is little known about or understood – one that creates barriers that keep citizens with disabilities trapped in lives of isolation and low expectations. These low expectations are what lead to the segregation of our loved ones, and this segregation is what leads to the forced poverty that they experience.

In July of 2013, CPSD won its first grant award from the Ruderman Family Foundation (RFF), which seeks to increase awareness of and work to improve the inclusion of people with disabilities in the United States and Israel through leadership projects done in partnership primarily with Jewish organizations. RFF provided CPSD with a capacity-building grant that, in a short time, has enabled us to expand our organizational capabilities.

Our partnership with RFF allowed us to create the CPSD Ruderman Public Policy Fellows program, through which we awarded three fellowships to outstanding professionals in the field of public policy for Americans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These fellows are helping CPSD advance and expand its expertise in public policy by bringing their academic and field experience to policy development. In addition, CPSD's partnership with RFF has allowed us to bring significantly greater reach to our communications, media and public affairs activities, which is a major factor in fueling our growth

and influence and something a small, young and growing organization desperately needs.

Several factors have made the Ruderman Family Foundation such an important part of CPSD's recent success. The organization prefers to position itself as our key partner, not just a funder. In this way, it is invested in our success because it is not simply focused on fixed outcome measures, which can limit the scope of a young and dynamic organization's ability to evolve with ever-changing external demands.

RFF has been flexible in the sense that we have had to make changes in the manner that we allocate funds; we are in a period of enormous change in disability policy and our coalition is very progressive in its policy positions. As our partner, RFF has been supportive of our need to adjust our course, depending on an ever-changing political landscape, the needs of our partner groups and external stakeholders and, most importantly, the contributions of the families and individuals whom we serve.

"I believe that all strategic philanthropic organizations are seeking to achieve maximum impact in the areas and communities of their focus," said RFF president Jay Ruderman. "By investing in public advocacy for the inclusion of people with disabilities in the United States, we feel that our foundation can achieve lasting systematic change. We took a chance with CPSD, but believe we are beginning to see the very real impact it has had on policy in the U.S. for the benefit of people with disabilities and their inclusion in our society."

Perhaps most importantly, the Ruderman Family Foundation did indeed take a chance on us. We have submitted our application for 501(c)3 status and are awaiting IRS approval. In the meantime, one of our partner groups, the National Disability Institute



Photo courtesy of CPSD.

(NDI), acts as our fiscal intermediary. Groups like ours are often in an impossible catch-22: we can't raise funds because we don't have our 501(c)3, but we need to build our organizational capacity so that we are sustainable once we are established for our exempt purpose(s). The Ruderman Family Foundation saw the opportunity to partner with us because we have enormous reach, expertise and potential.

The time to change the circumstances of those with disabilities is now. It is one of the last great fights for civil rights and social and economic justice. ■

Allison Hassett Wohl is the executive director of the Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination, a coalition of 22 national groups advocating for the full inclusion of citizens with significant disabilities. She is the mom of three boys, the youngest of whom has Down syndrome.

It's How, Not Whether Issue Campaigns Can Help or Hurt

By Charlie Bernstein

These days, democratically run grassroots organizations, from small, unstaffed groups to statewide organizations and national networks, are constantly invited, encouraged and enticed to take part in big issue campaigns. The reasons to include them are sound, and when such involvement is done right, it works. People working together gain power. When it's done poorly, when groups built through painstaking long-term organizing get bought or rented for purposes other than their own, it hurts them. And – the concern of this article – it hurts the movement for social progress.

Issue campaigns that work successfully with grassroots community organizations have two characteristics:

- They work on an issue the grassroots organization is already involved with.
- They offer help – not instructions, orders, hoops, critiques or demands for deliverables.

National People's Action (NPA) has worked for many years on national issues that bubble up from the work of local community groups. PICO, a national faith-based network of community organizations, has achieved impressive “trickle-up” vertical integration, with leadership and issues that work their way up from the neighborhood to Washington and Wall Street and have members who make and act on decisions at every level. Ohio Organizing Collaborative has learned to connect grassroots organizing with broad issue

campaigns and gets impressive results, turning out as many as 20,000 people to its public actions.

But we're seeing a drain of dollars for the community organizing that has made those groups successful. On the religious side, Catholic Campaign for Human Development is raising and giving millions less than it once did. On the secular side, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation has stopped funding

organizing altogether, at least for now. More “progressive” dollars are flowing to short-term issue and electoral campaigns and fewer are going to long-term cultivation of community power.

Much of this is fueled by national foundations, unions and donors who have come to embrace a “pay-them-to-play” approach. Groups that sign on to national campaigns – for instance, around such issues as immigrant rights, affordable health care, safeguards against toxic chemicals or wage theft – agree to a concrete list of so-called deliverables and receive money to do the work for as long as the deliverables are delivered and the funders continue to be interested in the issue.

Reforms are sometimes won, but even when they are, there's a cost. When grassroots organizations take their cues from funders rather than from their community leaders, the organizations – and the communities they serve – can lose power. Grantmaking that demands deliverables while starving deep organizing and grassroots leadership development is not good grantmaking. Campaigns should not ask grassroots community organizations to sacrifice good organizing at the altar of the cause of the month.

Rather than second-guess current efforts, let's step back a few years to find some answers.

HOW GOOD ISSUES GO BAD

More than a generation ago, the Hill-Burton Act was passed to give hospitals federal dollars to pay the bills of

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patients who couldn't afford treatment. But some hospitals began using the money to pay off bad debt rather than to serve the poor. As a result, people who should have benefitted were forced into debt – some even losing their homes to the very hospitals receiving the federal money that should have paid the patients' expenses.

So a national effort by low-income people's organizations was launched in the 1970s to fix the problem. (The George C. Scott/Diana Rigg movie *The Hospital* used that community agitation as a backdrop for the mystery.)

In the course of that NPA-driven national campaign, the organization I worked for, a chapter of a statewide membership group in New England, agreed to take part. After all, it was a prominent poor people's issue and an opportunity to align with the NPA network.

But our organization wasn't working on health care issues, and no one in my chapter had even heard of Hill-Burton. Nonetheless, I dutifully (and naively) stopped everything for several weeks to achieve the deliverable I was assigned: filling a bus with welfare moms for a trip to a federal building to raise a ruckus for the media. In the end, national reforms were won, but it could hardly be because of my work. And none of my protesters joined the organization, because they had no sense of owning it. And beyond disrupting my usual work, the campaign's short timeline required that I neglect building relationships with key community contacts, causing repercussions felt for several years. Bottom line: Taking part hurt the organization and didn't help the national cause. It was a distraction from the issues our members were already immersed in.

"HOW CAN I HELP?"

Compare that to another national campaign we took part in just a few years later.

If we had no experience with health care issues, we had a rich history of

progress on utility rate reform, which was an ongoing priority of the members who made up the group's elected local and statewide leadership.

Because there was a direct connection between our utility reform work and that of the national Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, our statewide leadership voted to join the coalition. A C/LEC organizer soon came to visit our local chapter office, shook hands with everyone, took off his coat, and said, "How can I help?"

We had a lot of neighborhood members, but we hadn't made many inroads with local unions. So we explained that one of our highest priorities was connecting with labor. And because C/LEC's president was the former leader of the International Association of Machinists and headed the National Council of Senior Citizens, it was easy for the C/LEC organizer to pick up the phone and arrange a meeting for us with the presidents of the local labor council, the IAM local and the local NCSC chapter.

It was a prayer answered. People who had been politely aloof became partners and leaders, and the relationship lasted. The door was finally open. One IAM officer became our president. Many retirees found that being a member of our community organization was fun and fulfilling. Thanks to the machinists' president's mother, an 80-something who ran the Italian parish bingo, we also were able to strengthen our relationship with the Catholic Church.

As a foundation director for several recent years, I heard tales of both scenarios: the national foundations, unions and issue campaigns that impose deliverables (of any quality: the 5,000 phone calls can be good or bad as long as they're made) and the funders and campaigns that ask how they can help. The first type is in ascendance these days, exemplified, for instance, by a group that one organizer

New and Renewing Members

Arcus Foundation
Association of Black Foundation Executives
Center for Effective Philanthropy
Children's Movement of Florida
The Clowes Fund
CODEPINK
Communities for a Better Environment
Deaconess Foundation
Dyson Foundation
Eisner LLP
Foundation for Louisiana
Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
Hagedorn Foundation
James Irvine Foundation
Justice at Stake
Kansas Health Foundation
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation
Melville Charitable Trust
National Institute on Money in State Politics
National People's Action
Northwest Area Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Southern Coalition for Social Justice
Surdna Foundation
Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock
Walter and Elise Haas Fund
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation



friend calls “two white guys in Washington sitting around deciding what to tell the rest of us to do.” The second type, according to many grassroots leaders and funders I talk with, is an endangered species. Carefully quantified and charted deliverables (known among grantees as “the holy grid”) have become the coin of the realm.

FIFTEEN ORGANIZERS?

I live in Maine, a rural state. We have fewer people than San Diego and more moose than anyone. The best-selling new car here is the Ford F-150 pickup truck.

But national funders invest heavily here because we often elect moderate Republicans to Congress.

So when a national campaign dropped 15 “organizers” for health care reform into our state a few years ago, people expected big things.

The national entity was pouring mon-

ey lavishly into our state and others for the priority *du jour*, which evolved into support for the so-called public option, a federal health insurance program that would compete with private insurers. There were dozens of house meetings and several rallies. But in the end, the targeted U.S. senator, who, at a seemingly pivotal rally, pledged her support, ultimately voted against the public option. Maine failed to deliver the Senate vote, and the 15 organizers disappeared. Without notice. Overnight.

While the campaign was in full swing, my mom, then in her 80s, went to several of its meetings. My wife and I hosted two house meetings. But there was no attempt to connect with us beyond getting our friends and us to write some letters, no effort to learn what skills we had to offer, what our interests were, what activities might make sense to us, what issues mattered to us. In the

course of six one-to-one meetings with my wife and me, none of the field staff ever asked us about our experiences, backgrounds or interests. They might have liked to know that my wife had 30 years of community organizing experience. They might have already known that I ran a grantmaking social justice fund, but they never brought it up. They asked no open-ended questions and never probed. Their conversations were one-way with us and with the friends we invited to our house meetings.

In short, they weren’t organizers. Conversation, except at its most superficial, just wasn’t in their script, training, method or mission. We weren’t members, we weren’t people. We were what they called “activists”: a commodity, units to be mobilized, counted and discarded. No local leaders emerged, but that didn’t appear to concern the national campaign. It already had its leaders within its own progressive bureaucracy. And I’m sure our senator, a reasonably smart person with reasonably smart staff, understood that there was no real grassroots movement afoot in Maine – just a paper tiger that would be (and was) gone tomorrow.

SO WHAT WORKS?

Grassroots organizations suffer when they’re asked to jump (and, via money, coerced into jumping) through hoops. They lose momentum when the process of cultivating relationships and helping members learn together and agree on issues and strategies is short-circuited. And they thrive when funders and campaigns that seek their participation respect their ability to make decisions, strategize, act and build their bases.

This is a working class nation, and that’s a strength. But issues of wealth, privilege, position and power make it tempting for large, well-funded organizations to simply treat smaller working class organizations as hired help. But in the long run, (continued on page 12)

A Lesson in Feminine Norms: Why Philanthropy Matters to Educational Outcomes

By Riki Wilchins

“My grantees and staff ‘get’ race and class but where’s the gender analysis? What I want to know is: what happened to gender?”

– Senior program officer

“Gender impacts every issue funders address, but program officers are seldom challenged to do innovative grantmaking around gender [like they are race and class].”

– Loren Harris, former program officer for U.S. Youth, Ford Foundation

Two decades of research have found that when young people buy into rigid ideas of masculinity or femininity, they have measurably lower life outcomes in everything from reproductive health and education achievement to economic empowerment and health and wellness.¹

I explored this issue in a recent blog post² for NCRP about gender norms – that is, those ideals, scripts and expectations we all begin learning practically from birth for how to “do” boy and girl, woman and man.

Studies show that young women who buy into traditional feminine ideals of beauty, desirability, passivity, motherhood, dependence and conflict avoidance are more likely to equate self-worth with male attention, to worry about their weight and bodies, to have early and unplanned pregnancies, to defer to male sexual prerogatives and tolerate abusive partners and to develop eating disorders or depression.

In education, they’re not only more likely to leave high school early, but also more likely to drop out of STEM courses – or those in science, technology, engineering and math.

STEM literacy is particularly impor-

tant for girls in low-income communities, because STEM-related professions continue to generate some of the fastest-growing and highest-wage jobs in the emerging knowledge economy.

The STEM field has done a great job of addressing a host of external and interpersonal barriers to girls’ participation, including the lack of role models, parental attitudes, unconscious teacher bias, “chilly” (or sexist) classroom climate and “stereotype threat.” Despite these important efforts, STEM’s well-known “leaky pipeline” begins leaking in earnest in middle school, when even girls who previously got high grades and reported enjoying STEM subjects suddenly begin expressing lack of interest and avoiding STEM electives.

What changes in middle school? We think one answer is feminine norms.

Middle school coincides with what some call the gender intensification period, when interest in traditional feminine norms begins to accelerate and belief in them starts to solidify.

Mastering gender norms is a rite of passage for every adolescent. Young people come under intense social pres-

sure from peers, family members and sometimes adults to master and conform to traditional notions of manhood and womanhood.

Little girls who were confident, outgoing and active can morph into anxious, withdrawn and self-conscious tweens, perpetually worried about their looks and hair and contemplating their first diets.

In terms of STEM, girls entering these years face a double bind: they feel they have to choose between being good at science and math and being seen as feminine and girly. In this contest, STEM loses.

To try to learn more about this, my organization, TrueChild, partnered with the Motorola Solutions Foundation³ to explore the impact of feminine norms on girls’ STEM interest, participation and achievement.⁴ We hosted a series of focus groups with young women. At first, they claimed that they could be both smart and feminine. So they knew the “right” answer – how things were supposed to be.

But they immediately described a classmate with long hair who “no one sees as a pretty girl in that class because

she is so smart – she’s like a nerd.” So they knew the reality, too – how things really were.

When we asked specifically if girls could be feminine, smart and popular with boys, they answered, “Yes, but not in junior high!” [laughter] – because as they became more interested in boys, they had to “dumb it down” (a response that is as good as any at showing how a strict philanthropic focus to help girls should not ignore boys).

When we asked them straight out about studies that show that girls stop doing as well in math and science

around third grade, they explained:

- “[That’s when] girls start giving up [on math].”
- “It’s when they start noticing the boys [all agree].”
- “[This is when they] start thinking ‘I can’t be pretty.’”
- “Girls focus more on, ‘Oh, he wants me to be pretty.’”

In short, brainy girls who are good at chemistry, can program software or get top grades in trigonometry can be intimidating, or simply unfeminine and unattractive, to boys. And girls know it.

We’ve developed a model mini-curriculum with what expert Geeta Rao Gupta called a strong “gender transformative” focus: it aims to highlight, challenge and ultimately change rigid feminine norms.

Together with our two Motorola Solutions partners – Chicago’s Project Exploration and SUNY’s TechPREP – we’re piloting and refining it and hope to scale it up next year.⁵

And, yes, we hope to develop a similar mini-curriculum that addresses how boys’ attitudes about girls and STEM can hold young women back. This seems to be a big gap in the field.

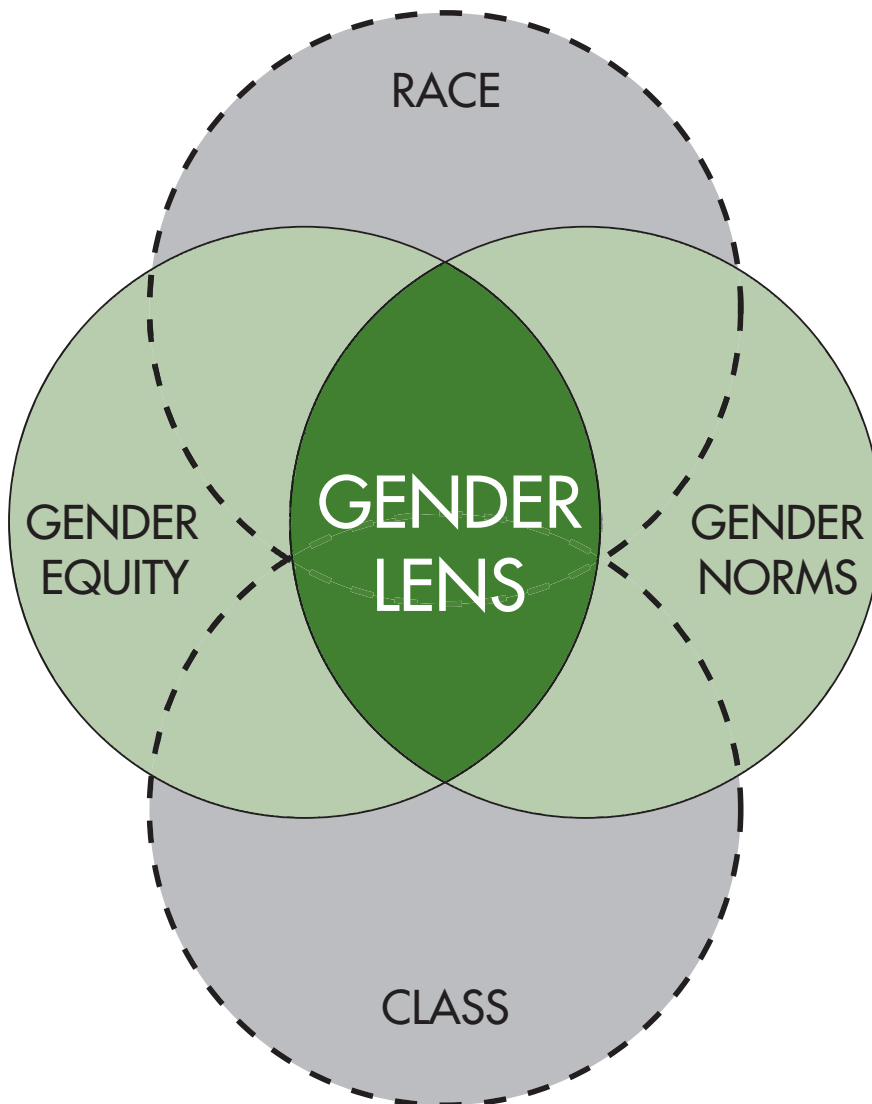
It’s not that I harbor any illusions about how difficult it can be to change a 12-year-old girl’s mind; I have trouble persuading my 7-year-old daughter to enjoy reading instead of turning on Nickelodeon.

But we can and must begin teaching girls to think critically about feminine norms and their impact on the educational choices they make. We need to at least offer them tools to armor themselves against the intense pressures we know they face.

Gender transformative approaches go beyond STEM. For instance, in partnership with the Heinz Endowments, we’ve been researching and documenting feminine norms’ impacts on health and wellness among young black girls (the report is available on TrueChild’s website),⁶ and are now developing a model mini-curriculum.

And EngenderHealth, a TrueChild strategic partner, has been researching, testing and refining an innovative model teen pregnancy program called Gender Matters.⁷

International organizations have shown that gender transformative approaches can work on a host of issues, from reproductive health and partner abuse to fatherhood and infant and maternal care. Now, a growing core of major funders such as the California



Endowment, Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Nike Foundation and Overbrook Foundation – as well as the U.S. Office on Women’s Health – have awarded grants with a strong, specific focus on challenging harmful gender norms.⁸

We believe gender transformative philanthropy is poised to become the leading edge of best practice in U.S. grantmaking.

When it does, its emergence will underscore many of the principles that define NCRP’s approach to responsive grantmaking: flattening issue silos, making funding more evidence-based, addressing at-risk communities and finding low-cost ways to leverage the social return on our philanthropic investment.

For funders seeking to integrate a gender transformative focus into their own strategies, we often suggest a four-step pathway that many of our partners have used:

1. Sponsor a paper and/or training to help spark a community conversation on gender, and develop familiarity and comfort with the terms, concepts and key findings.
2. Support some simple research (focus groups, interviews) to gain a better feel for the local gender culture.
3. Develop a set of simple exercises (or adapt the many existing ones) that grantees can integrate easily into their existing programming without a lot of cost or dislocation.
4. We often recommend a TrueChild Gender Audit[®], which examines websites, printed materials, current programs and organizational policies. We look for “hooks” where a strong gender focus could easily be incorporated so it becomes part of an organization’s DNA.

For those who aren’t ready for such a deep dive, but still would like to start getting their feet wet, there are plenty of

A Dozen Steps Donors Can Take

Within Your Foundation

1. Improve your understanding by speaking to experts from groups doing gender transformative work, such as: The Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities, Futures Without Violence, International Center for Research on Women, Men Can Stop Rape, Ms. Foundation for Women, Promundo/US or TrueChild.
2. Familiarize yourself with findings of some of the latest studies (you can find a list at truechild.org/ReadTheResearch.)
3. Fund the development of model curricula that challenge young people to think critically about gender norms.
4. Host a presentation on gender transformative work to educate your board and staff.
5. Get a gender audit of your institution’s policies, website and materials to uncover places a gender analysis could be added easily or an existing one made stronger.

With Funder Peers

6. Elevate awareness by hosting a webinar or presentation on the gender lens.
7. Organize a workshop on the impact of gender norms at a funders’ conference.

With Grantee Organizations

8. Add content on gender norms to funding guidelines and letters of intent (LOI).
9. During site visits and interviews, ask grantees questions about gender norms and how they affect their target populations.
10. Fund the development of model curricula that challenge young people to think critically about gender norms.
11. Commission capacity building that helps grantees integrate a gender analysis into their work.
12. Commission focus groups and interviews to learn more about the specifics of the local gender culture among populations you serve.

positive steps you can take. We've developed a simple introductory "gender 101" for philanthropic officers.⁹ And page 11 shows a list we hand out at trainings and presentations, "A Dozen Steps Donors Can Take."¹⁰

For more information on TrueChild's gender approach, be sure to check out our upcoming presentations in Washington, D.C., next month. We'll be at the JAG Unity Summit on June 6 and the reception of the Council on Foundation's Philanthropy Exchange on June 9. ■

Riki Wilchins is the executive director of TrueChild, an action-tank devoted to reconnecting race, class and gender for donors and grantees. The author of three books on gender theory, TIME selected her one of "100 Civic Innovators for the 21st Century."

Notes

1. See <http://www.truechild.org/ReadTheResearch>.

2. Riki Wilchins, "Why Philanthropy Should Address Gender Norms," Keeping A Close Eye ... NCRP's Blog, March 14, 2014, <http://blog.ncrp.org/2014/03/why-philanthropy-should-address-gender-norms.html>.
3. See <http://responsibility.motorolasolutions.com/index.php/solutions-for-community/com02-foundation>.
4. See <http://www.truechild.org/STEM> and <http://www.truechild.org/STEMresearch>.
5. See <http://www.projectexploration.org/> and <http://www.stonybrook.edu/techprep/>.
6. See <http://www.truechild.org/Heinz>.
7. See <http://www.engenderhealth.org/our-work/major-projects/gender-matters.php/>.
8. See http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/ta/experience_expertise_wilchins.pdf.
9. See <http://www.truechild.org/funders>.
10. Developed by Matt Barnes, The Houston Endowments and Rahsaan Harris, Atlantic Philanthropies.

Issue Campaigns

(continued from page 8)

that's not what our country needs. What a grassroots community organization does best is build a base of informed, engaged people. And what every national reform movement benefits from most is a base of informed, engaged people. In social observer Robert Putnam's terms, we bowl better when we bowl together. Depleting what Putnam calls "social capital" for the sake of short-term policy gains hurts our chances unity, connection and social progress over the long haul.

And it's not necessary. Victories are just as possible by shifting the gaze away from deliverables and focusing instead on long-term base-building – exactly the approach of the affordable energy campaign that was such a help when I was an organizer. The advantage is that investing in healthy, active communities will result in a healthier, more democratic society further down the road.

And that's good for everyone. ■

Charlie Bernstein is the former executive director of Maine Initiatives, a fund for change.



Bringing Strategic Thinking to Long-term Alliance Building

(continued from page 1)

with Justice, the Communication Workers of America, Alliance for a Just Society, National Guest Workers Alliance and Right to the City, among others. These alliances have resulted in a more strategic division of labor that extends to campaigns, civic engagement, long-term strategy development and shaping worldview.

Some concrete results from this work include:

- Training tens of thousands of people in an analysis of our political economy and the practice of nonviolent direct action.
- Moving policy solutions, such as reducing principals on underwater mortgages, from the margins to the mainstream of the financial reform debate.
- Securing billions of dollars in mortgage relief for underwater homeowners.
- Protecting hundreds of millions of dollars in family assets annually by ending big-bank issuance of payday lending products.

Although we are proud of these outcomes, our goal is to build a permanent progressive infrastructure with the power to transform our economy and our democracy. We think the best is yet to come.

Six years into this experiment, here are a few of the lessons we've learned.

COALITIONS AND LONG-TERM ALIGNMENT ARE NOT THE SAME.

Organizers view coalitions as temporary. Coalitions tend to develop around a specific opportunity or challenge. While relationships are built within coalitions, the coalitions themselves often have set beginnings and endings. At NPA, we define permanent alignment as uniting organizations around a longer-term agenda and strategy. This approach yields organizational relationships that are designed to outlast any one effort or set of personalities.

Alignment goes beyond coordinated work on specific initiatives like campaigns, infrastructure building or strategic communications. It means aligning analysis and strategy to better coordinate planning, growth trajectories and movement interventions with our partners. It's not just working together now, but making plans to work together over the long term.

What does this mean for philanthropy?

Campaigns designed with the dual goals of winning specific victories and building long-term relationships are particularly good investments. They deliver immediate results and they also have the potential to leverage even larger impact down the road.

TO GO LONG, WE MUST GO DEEP.

Because organizational leaders come and go, alliances will remain fragile unless relationships are formed at multiple levels between the engaged organizations. Alignment limited to top leaders restricts the agility needed for multiple organizations to seize critical movement openings or challenges. Turning on a dime requires that a broad set of actors from each organization operates from a similar analysis, solid relationships and coordinated strategy.

NPA and the PICO National Network began working together in 2009. From the beginning, we involved people at every level of both our organizations. We made investments in the relationships among the directors of our affiliate organizations, our local grassroots leaders and our national staff. During the first year, we organized meetings that brought people from across our networks together to share personal stories of transformation, learn about each others' approach to the work and develop shared vision and strategy.

This deep partnership led to three critical outcomes. First, it allowed us to be nimble and to seize opportunities

that required strategic shifts. Enough people within our organizations had the shared theory of change and strong relationships needed to move on something big with limited notice.

The depth of the partnership also allowed us to move through periods when our organizations had disagreements and come out stronger on the other end. This was possible because so many people had invested time in building something that would outlast any one campaign.

Finally, by engaging affiliate organizations in the process, we paved the way for deeper collaboration among local organizations. For example, the Missouri-based groups Grass Roots Organizing (an NPA affiliate) and Communities Creating Opportunity (a PICO affiliate) have since developed a strong relationship that had not existed previously. Their relationship, along with Missouri Jobs with Justice, helped form the core of the Missouri Organizing Collaborative, founded in 2012.

What does this mean for philanthropy?

Foundations should take the long view with investments that bring members together across organizational lines. In Minnesota, members of the faith-based organization ISAIAH and Service Employees International Union locals spent years holding meetings to build relationships and deepen analysis together. The payoff from this investment may not have been immediately clear, but now there is agreement that this and related work laid the foundation for the incredible level of collaboration and policy impact taking place in Minnesota today. The return on these investments might mature at a slower pace, but the ultimate dividends can be much greater.

Collaboration in and of itself is not the objective. We must strategically tap into the collective capacity that already exists. Philanthropy can help by asking

grantees which alliances they are investing in and why. This includes engaging in productive discussions about how we are building cross-organizational alliances and infrastructure that will outlast individual personalities, how we are reaching scale through aggregation, and how we are producing the relationships needed to implement our long-term strategy together. We should be able to demonstrate the ways our work can deliver both in the short run and as part of a longer-term strategy.

GOING INTO BATTLE BUILDS STRONG TIES.

Unsurprisingly, the same activities that build relationships, trust and shared experience within an organization work across organizations. NPA's deepest experiences on this front grow out of our partnership with the PICO National Network and the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA).

NPA and NDWA held our second joint convention in April of this year. Planning for this meant our staffs

worked together for months – helping us build relationships, understand more about each other's culture and learn from one another. Just as important, our members have co-led actions on the Wall Street tax, mortgage relief and immigration reform. Planning and pulling off multiple 1,200-person events over three years developed the shared experience that allows for seizing new strategic opportunities. NPA is now teaming up with NDWA and Caring Across Generations at the state level, enabling us to broaden our engagement and draw upon our diverse strengths.

Similarly, NPA and PICO members have gone into battle together many times – ranging from negotiating meetings with former Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke to actions at big-bank offices and corporate shareholder meetings. The intensity of preparing for, engaging in and evaluating these actions created strong ties between people at multiple levels of our organizations. NPA and PICO are now exploring opportunities to do more long-

term thinking and planning together. This is possible because of the ties built through moving into action and taking risks together.

What does this mean for philanthropy?

Creating the arena for people to go into battle together and to build alignment is time-consuming and often require individual organizations to sacrifice short-term opportunities to invest in long-term impact. It requires answering tough questions about delegation of authority, lines of communication and efficient trust-building. In short, it is easy to drop. The day-to-day running and growing of an individual organization is challenging enough. Investments that reward the hard work of building alignment, while providing continued support to the individual organizations, are key to sustaining the engagement of leaders and organizations in the face of other ongoing demands.

We believe the biggest barriers to aggregating the collective power of economic and racial justice organizations come down to tensions around credit, control and money. These issues are real and won't go away. The good news is that when these tensions arise in the alliances described above, we can now navigate them in direct and productive ways. When we build relationships that are broad and deep, we are able withstand these tensions and be stronger for them.

None of this is to say that any collaboration is perfect – or that we don't have more to learn about building effective long-term alliances. We do. Yet, in this challenging economic and political moment, it is clear that building a more thoughtful and strategic social justice infrastructure is as critical as ever. There's too much at stake not to. ■

George Goehl is executive director of National People's Action.



Photo courtesy of NPA.

Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

Washington, D.C.

www.jointcenter.org

Established 1970

Q: If foundations could know one thing about the Joint Center, what would it be?

A: The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies is the nation's oldest think tank addressing the needs of communities of color, having been founded in 1970 to serve the then-nascent Congressional Black Caucus as well as elected officials of color at all levels of governments. Today, the Joint Center builds upon this rich history by conducting innovative research and policy analysis, convening stakeholders across an array of sectors and building leadership in communities of color, all with the goal of creating a more equitable, inclusive and pluralistic society. We believe this is important, given rapid demographic change and the fact that our nation's security, prosperity and international leadership depend upon our ability to harness the talents and creativity of all of our residents.

Q: How does your commitment to fostering minority political leadership fit into your overarching mission?

A: Building the capacity of leaders of color is an important aspect of our work to expand opportunity for all and to close racial and ethnic gaps in health, wealth, political participation and access to technology, among other issues. These leaders are particularly attuned to the needs of their communities and are well-positioned to dismantle the structural barriers that prevent many from achieving their full potential. We arm leaders with data, policy analysis and innovative, evidence-based policy

ideas that help them more effectively advocate for communities that have historically faced discrimination and marginalization.

Q: What aspect of your work do you believe is making the greatest change?

A: The Joint Center is proud to have helped catalyze positive change on many issues over the years, but is perhaps best known today for its innovative work to advance health equity through initiatives such as PLACE MATTERS. Begun in 2006 with the generous support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, PLACE MATTERS seeks to build the capacity of leaders and communities around the country to address social, economic and environmental conditions that shape health. PLACE MATTERS has been at the forefront of a new wave of research and action that recognizes that the spaces and places where people live, work, study and play often dictate which groups are healthy and which are

unhealthy. Because of persistently high levels of residential segregation, the places where people of color live and work tend to host a high concentration of health risks, such as environmental degradation, while lacking geographic access to health-enhancing resources, such as healthful foods, safe spaces for exercise and recreation, and even doctors and hospitals. PLACE MATTERS teams around the country have worked successfully to de-concentrate health risks and build health-enhancing resources in communities of color while applying a racial equity lens to help key audiences understand the structures and systems that tend to perpetuate and maintain racial inequality, such as residential segregation.

Q: What tips would you offer foundations interested in becoming effective supporters of the kind of work you do?

A: Foundations working to advance racial equity should 1) develop a long-term agenda, recognizing that the legacy of more than 300 years of state-sanctioned racial discrimination and marginalization will not be erased in just a few years; 2) look to tackle the structures and systems that replicate inequality, such as residential segregation, rather than merely addressing their consequences; 3) directly engage with affected communities; and 4) build indigenous leadership that will elevate the voices of these communities. Doing so will help to ensure that an increasingly diverse America remains strong and prosperous. ■



Col. Emma Coulson, Congressman Keith Ellison and Felicia Eames at a Joint Center event.



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Select Publications

The following foundation assessments were released in May 2014 as part of *Philamplify*, a new initiative that pairs expert research with crowd-sourced feedback to promote effective philanthropy.

Lumina Foundation for Education – Can a Champion for College Attainment Up Its Game? By Victor Kuo

NCRP reviewed the Lumina Foundation, finding an effective foundation with savvy policy advocacy strategies, well-respected staff and initiatives progressing ahead of schedule. However, as well as investing in policy, Lumina should invest more in local community organizations.

Robert W. Woodruff Foundation – Will Atlanta’s Quiet Changemaker Adapt to 21st Century Opportunities? By Elizabeth Myrick

This report examines Atlanta’s largest and most popular grantmaker. It found that, while the foundation makes a positive impact on the city’s physical landscape, it can do more to strengthen its social fabric. Atlanta is changing, and for Woodruff the real question is how they’re responding to these changes.

William Penn Foundation – Is Philadelphia’s Leading Philanthropy Back on Track? By Lisa Rangelilli

NCRP’s assessment of the William Penn Foundation shows a well-respected institution recently led astray by changes in leadership and strategy. Encouragingly, William Penn has signaled a renewed commitment to advocacy that engages underserved communities, indicating the foundation may yet become the proactive civic leader its constituents need.

visit: www.philamplify.org/foundation-assessments

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