

# NETWORK NEWS

## Immigration Law Changes: What Can Funders Do?

by Pamela Galpern, Latino Workers Center

***"Punitive immigration laws and increased enforcement measures don't address the root causes of migration and global economic conditions."***

In 1996, Congress passed the most-anti immigrant legislation seen in the US in decades. The welfare "reform" law gains 44% of its savings by denying benefits to legal immigrants. The Anti-Terrorism Act allows for the deportation of immigrants who have served time in prison. And the immigration reform law penalizes documented and undocumented immigrants and makes it near impossible for hundreds of thousands of people to legalize their status. These laws will have a negative impact on wages and working conditions for immigrants and consequently, for U.S.-born workers as well.

### Immigration Law Closes Doors to Legalization

The new immigration law proposes to deter illegal immigration by increasing militarization at the border and stepping up enforcement in the workplace. This will not only fail to stem the flow of immigrants. It promises to accelerate the expansion of a low-wage, intimidated immigrant workforce, which in turn brings down wages, working conditions and organizing possibilities for workers across the board.

"The INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) workplace raids and the new Immigration Law contribute to a growing trend: the criminalization of immigrants," says Sasha Khokha of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, headquartered in Oakland, CA. "Punitive immigration laws and increased enforcement measures don't address the root causes of migration and global economic conditions. People are compelled to migrate for work. These laws create a climate in which people's human, civil and labor rights are violated."

### INS Steps Up Workplace Raids

"I feel like a rat, holed up in my apartment. But I'm afraid to leave. I go to work, come home, and go to sleep. This is no way for a human being to live," says José, a Mexican immigrant worker in New York City.

The undocumented live in increasing fear of being arrested and deported by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). In 1996 the INS stepped up its campaign of workplace raids. Thousands of immigrants in California, New York,

New Jersey, Maryland, Washington, Virginia, Texas and other states were arrested at work by the INS; many were immediately deported.

"I was working at the factory," says German, a Mexican immigrant arrested by the INS in New York City. "Ten or fifteen INS officials came in and blocked all three doors. A lot of people started to cry because we've never had an experience like that before. It was as if they were looking for criminals or drug dealers. But we were just working. If we were criminals we wouldn't have been there working!"

### Employer Sanctions Drive Down Working Conditions

The employer sanctions law of 1986 requires employers to verify workers' immigration status. Ironically, this law gave employers a powerful weapon to intimidate undocumented workers. Rather than deterring employers from hiring undocumented immigrants, employer sanctions indirectly encourage the practice, since employers are almost guaranteed a more intimidated workforce. The actual threat of sanctions for employers is minimal. In 1996 the INS collected less than \$5,000 from employer sanctions in New York City.

Sasha Khokha argues that employer sanctions and INS raids "create a climate of fear where workers are increasingly reluctant to contest violations of their rights in the workplace setting. This fear jeopardizes organizing possibilities for other people in the workplace—documented or native-born. It is more difficult to come together and do an organizing drive."

In Los Angeles, Roy Hong of Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates (KIWA) says that as "legitimacy" becomes more difficult, "People who are in that predicament are going to stay trapped, and that means they're . . . going to be even more exploitable. As long as there's a group that's more exploitable, that has a negative impact on the rest of the working poor."

### Pitting Poor People Against Each Other

It is no coincidence that welfare reform and immigration reform passed in the same year. Both sets of laws blame poor people for their hardship and pit poor people and people of color against each other. Perhaps the most blatant example of this is in Virginia. In November, 1996, Governor George Allen announced the inauguration of a plan to place welfare recipients in jobs "left vacant" by undocumented immigrants following INS raids. Under the program, "Virginia's Jobs for

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Virginia's Workers," the INS informs state social service administrators when they raid workplaces; the state workers then send welfare recipients to fill the positions.

"It's all about creating a quasi-legal workforce of people who are forced to work for \$2 an hour," says Jon Liss of the Tenants and Workers Support Committee in Alexandria, Virginia. "Workfare and high publicity [INS] raids tie in together to keep this quasi-legal body of labor in check."

Funders are taking action in a variety of ways. In September, 1996, George Soros gave \$50 million to establish the Emma Lazarus Fund, which provides legal immigrants in the United

States with naturalization assistance and legal services. Antonio Maciel, founding Executive Director of the fund, says, "The 1996 welfare legislation so unjustly impacts immigrants that Mr. Soros decided to establish the Emma Lazarus Fund. This emergency fund provides grants to organizations helping immigrants affected by these changes to the social safety net, primarily through naturalization and legal assistance. In the process, we hope to send a

clear message not only that this legislation unfairly targets America's newcomers but also goes against the spirit of open societies." Other funders interviewed contend that this support has freed up resources which can now go to grassroots organizing efforts.

The latest anti-immigrant sentiment has fueled the division between legal ("good") immigrants from illegal ("bad") immigrants. Margie Fine is executive director of the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock, a faith based foundation which funds organizing in immigrant communities. She says, "We look to support organizing efforts which don't divide documented from undocumented immigrants. Families don't divide up that way, nor do communities."

At the heart of any effort to turn the tide away from anti-immigrant discrimination and exploitation must be immigrant workers themselves. "Change is going to come from the self-organization of those most impacted by the situation," says Liss. "It's the workers themselves who have to be fighting

to gain the right to stay here with their families, the right to a decent job, to more humane treatment," says Monica Santana of the Latino Workers Center in New York City.

Betty Kapetanakis, Executive Director of the North Star Fund in New York City, points out that immigrant communities have very clear ideas about what changes are needed. "We've found that the best solutions come from the communities themselves. Direct organizing produces the most useful, most humane policy decisions."

Direct organizing requires a long-time commitment on the part of both participants and funding institutions. "The network of people supportive of immigrants and immigrant issues has to be broadened. The most vulnerable, least protected in our society need to be able to feel more sense of their power and ability to affect their conditions," says Taryn Higashi, former program officer for the Fund for New Citizens, and currently with the Ford Foundation.

The Tenants and Workers Support Committee, KIWA, and other groups across the country are building worker-led organizations in which immigrants are learning how to defend their rights. Some are actively seeking ways to address the intersection between labor and immigration issues. The Latino Workers Center, where I work, is organizing Latino immigrant workers in New York City, combining a call for an amnesty which would allow undocumented workers to legalize their status with organizing efforts for labor law enforcement and decent salaries.

In addition, immigrant-rights groups are joining with unions and religious groups across the country to organize demonstrations and on-going activities. At a protest spearheaded by the Northern California Coalition for Immigrants Rights and supported by the California Federation of Labor in March, 2,500 documented and undocumented immigrants demonstrated their anger at Governor Wilson's stripping away of the safety net. On March 9, 5,000-7,000 people in Los Angeles turned out for a protest headed up by Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights of Los Angeles.

"It's not enough to figure out how to fill the gap in services which is being created," says Margie Fine. "We need to look at groups which are organizing workers to raise their families' wages." She points to funders' responsibility in expanding the spectrum of funders who fund grassroots organizing. "It's the responsibility of funders who are already funding organizing in the social justice arena to help get other funders to take a serious look at organizing work." ■

## NNG and Funders Tours

NNG has co-sponsored four funders tours since August, 1996. While all of our tours are centered around community organizing, each has a distinct character and flavor. They can be an effective way to, in the words of the strategic plan, "galvanize existing and new philanthropic resources for social and economic justice work." They can also bring us close to the issues we are concerned with in unexpected and even disturbing ways.

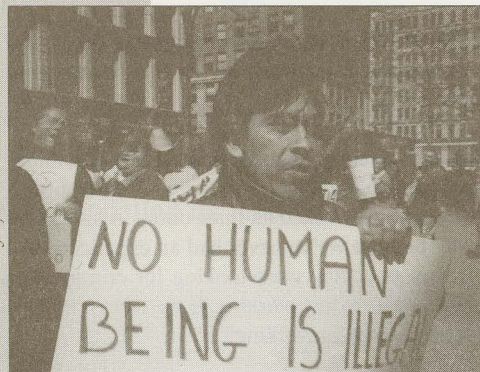
Funders' experiences on the recent, pre-conference tours of Mississippi and Louisiana were generally positive, but the evening before the tour ended brought funders face to face with the issue that pervades all organizing work in the region.

The Mississippi group had met for dinner with the Drew Voters League and, "high in spirit," in tour planner Barbara Meyer's words, decided to stop off for a drink and to talk about the trip so far. Earlier that day, two tour group members had asked a hotel desk clerk where they could have a quiet drink and were told, "The only place in town is the local VFW hall." They were welcomed warmly and invited back. Both of those group members were white.

Now, however, the group included an African-American woman. Within moments of entering, three people, including the bartender, told the group they would have to leave. The issue was not VFW membership. The issue was race.

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Photo courtesy of Latino Workers Center



Immigrant workers demonstrate in front of INS



## Queer Caucus Forms

by Mickey MacIntyre, The Gill Foundation

At the national NNG conference in Jackson, Mississippi, 35 people gathered and determined that in order for NNG to better serve their needs, a Queer Caucus is necessary. "I was thrilled, and shocked I must say, to see so many people in the room given the unfortunate hour of the meeting," said meeting co-convenor José Artiga. "The attendance and the lively discussion proves to me the tremendous interest in having a Queer Caucus."

The lively discussion José referred to revolved around what the exact purpose of the group would be or the role it would play in the participants' lives. As Joe Wilson, another meeting co-convenor, reported, "With so many good and diverse ideas on what we can be and do, it is obvious there is a void we can fill and we will have plenty of planning, organizing, and surely some good times ahead of us."

Joe sought to sum up the needs articulated by the group that evening in a follow-up memo to participants. They include: "providing a 'safe' supportive environment for people who identify as queer to meet and socialize; providing a space that promotes discussion, analysis, etc. of progressive issues within a queer environment, queer issues within a progressive environment and gender justice issues within a progressive queer environment; and providing space that encourages discussion of radical (queer) approaches to increasing financial and other resources for groups committed to social and economic justice."

No matter which of these purposes, or combination thereof, the Queer Caucus chooses to pursue, it will not be replicating the Working Group on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues. Nancy Cunningham the Executive Director of the Working Group says: "The Working Group believes anything we can do to support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people working in the funding community only serves to enhance our work. The creation of the queer caucus within NNG complements the Working Group's mission to increase philanthropic resources for LGBT organizations, programs, and projects."

As for the Queer Caucus, a steering committee has been formed which will garner feedback from meeting participants and begin the formal process of making application to become an official NNG Caucus in the months ahead. All NNG members are encouraged to contact the steering committee with comments or interests. Please contact co-convenors José Artiga of SHARE at 415-882-1530 or Joe Wilson of Share Our Strength at 202-393-2925 with comments and questions. ■

## Joan Garner, New Associate Director

Joan Garner is NNG's new Associate Director. She comes to us from the Fund for Southern Communities (FSC), in Atlanta, GA, where she was Executive Director. Prior to her work at FSC, she was Administrative Coordinator at the Georgia Institute of Technology, Shareholder Relations Coordinator at the Georgia Pacific Corporation, and Travel and Tourism Department Chairperson at Phillips College. She is a founding Board member of the Atlanta Lambda Center and a Board member of the Funding Exchange.

Joan began work at NNG in April. She will remain based in Atlanta, where she will "telecommute" to work from her home. She will be NNG's presence on the East coast and in the South. Joan will be involved in membership, planning for conferences, fundraising, and technology, including NNG's soon-to-be Web site and Pocket Docket. She will staff the conference committee, Funders Who Fund in the South, the philanthropic reform committee, the People of Color Caucus, and the newly formed Queer Caucus.



NNG's East Coast office can be reached at PO Box 8419, Atlanta, GA 31106, phone 404-577-1877, fax 404-577-1778, e-mail joannng@mindspring.com. Please call to welcome her and say hello. ■

### New Directory Lists Funders of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Programs

A Directory for grantseekers published by the Working Group on Funding Gay & Lesbian Issues is available for \$15.00, with discounts for orders of more than 10 copies. The Directory lists over 240 foundations and corporations from across the country who have funded national, regional or local lesbian, gay and/or bisexual programs and projects. To order the Directory or for further information on the Working Group, please send your request.

1-10 copies: \$15.00 each; 11-25 copies: \$13.00 each; over 25: \$11.00 each. Please send request and check made payable to Astraea/Working Group to: The Working Group on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues, 116 East 16th Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10003, phone 212-475-2930, fax 212-982-3321.

In March, NNG released *Preserving the Public Trust: A Study of Exemplary Practices in Grantmaking*. A year of research and writing, supported by funding from the Aspen Institute Nonprofit Sector Research Fund, went into this working paper, a scholarly study of foundation practices. It was conceptualized and researched by the Exemplary Practices subcommittee and NNG staff, and written by Aileen Shaw, with the assistance of Terry Odendahl and consultant Ellen Furnari. One copy is free to NNG members. Copies are available from NNG for \$15, including postage. Bulk rates: (Members) 10% off 5+, 20% off 10+, 30% off 25+, 50% off 100+; (Non-members) 10% off 10+, 20% off 25+, 40% off 100+ (plus postage).



# Letter From the Co-Chairs

By Ron White

Of all the exquisite memories from the recent NNG conference, "Let's Get Strategic," in Jackson, Mississippi: stories from the funders tours, the pre-conference gathering of grantmakers and local community groups, meetings of the various caucuses and working groups (most familiar, some brand new), the innovative conference design and execution to help us "think strategically," the stories from civil rights activists and civil rights funders/fundraisers, the catfish, biscuits, grits and cornbread; and of course the blues and dancing, of all these wonderful memories I must say the best moment for me (and this will strike most of you as unlikely) the very best moment was the presentation by the strategic planning committee on their handiwork. If you were there you will recall the invigorating discussion of the highlights of the plan, its ringing endorsement by the membership and the creative suggestions for its implementation. It was a high moment of the conference and for NNG in this transitional time.

I know some on the board and the strategic planning committee have joked at if they never hear the word "strategy" for an eternity, it would be way too soon. I'm afraid those folks are doomed to disappointment, and worse, may soon have to add another word to their lists of overworked terms: "implementation". Implementation of the strategic plan is what faces our newly elected board, who will make maximum use of the energies, talents and perspectives of its new members: John Foster-Bey, Ellen Gurzinsky, David Harris, Rob McKay and Ingrid Washinawatok. NNG is especially fortunate to have at its disposal the sharp mind and dedicated heart of the new co-chair: Carol Mollner. Carol and I teamed up as co-chairs of the philanthropic reform committee some years back and I can say with confidence, there's no one I'd rather have at my side as we proceed to make NNG an even more effective and powerful instrument of support to grassroots social change groups and prod to the world of philanthropy on philanthropic reform.

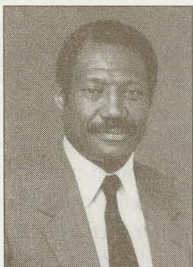
I couldn't end this without acknowledgment of the tremendous staff at NNG who not only make the organization hum but offer vision and direction as well. I want to thank all those who have left the board this term: Joan Garner, Rose Johnson, Wendy Johnson, Mike Roque, and Jenny Warburg. An extra tip of the hat goes to Mike and Jenny, who as co-chairs of the communications and publications committee have helped to shape this newsletter over the last several years. Wendy deserves our special thanks, since it was under her nurturing and wise leadership as co-chair, that NNG reached this stage in its maturation in adopting the strategic plan. All have contributed to launching the NNG of the 21st Century.

We open ourselves to your support and suggestions.

Ronald M. White

Carol Mollner

## New Board Members



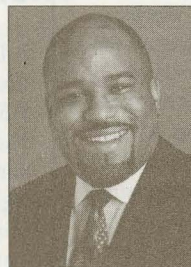
**John Foster-Bey**

is a member of the Senior Program Staff at the Northwest Area Foundation, where he is responsible for managing grant programs in workforce development and employment access for low-income people. He has been Associate Director of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur's Foundation's Community Initiatives Program, and began his philanthropic career with the Ford Foundation in 1986 as a Program Officer in the Office of Program Related Investments and in the Urban Poverty Program. Before entering the field of philanthropy, he worked in corporate finance, local government and non-profit youth programs.



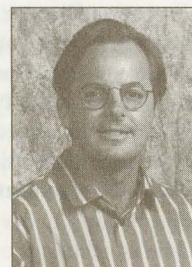
**Ellen Gurzinsky**

became Executive Director of the Funding Exchange in the Summer of 1995. Previously, Ellen served as Director of the Health Careers Opportunity Program at the Hunter School of Social Work. She has been Executive Director of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, a national organization dedicated to increasing the role of women in the labor movement, and of the Park Slope Safe Homes Project, a community based program for battered women. Ellen has been a volunteer with the Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation and has served on the Board of Directors of the Center for Anti-Violence Education/Brooklyn Women's Martial Arts.



**David Harris**

recently left the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to become Associate Director for Florida Philanthropy at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. At the Mott Foundation, he was a Program Officer in the Poverty program area, specializing in community building issues. David has worked at the CBS Television Network, as a consultant to the Nigerian government, and in the Information Systems department of Morgan Stanley & Co. In 1985 David left Wall Street to become Executive Director of Jobs for Youth, a New York City employment and training program. David was a member of NNG's Strategic Planning Committee.



**Robert McKay**

is the Executive Director of the McKay Foundation. The Foundation funds community organizing and economic development strategies in low-income communities throughout California. He is the Finance Committee Chair of the New Party and also serves on the board of the Vanguard Public Foundation, Magic Theatre, the Foundation for National Progress (Mother Jones magazine), and the Center for Community Change. Rob is a member of the Donor Organizers Network, as well as co-convenor of NNG's Electoral Working Group and Individual and Family Donor's Caucus.



**Ingrid Washinawatok**

is a citizen of the Menominee Nation in Wisconsin. Currently Director of Grantmaking at the Fund of the Four Directions, Ingrid entered the field of philanthropy in 1992. She is Chair of Native Americans in Philanthropy. Ingrid's primary background is in the area of Indigenous Peoples' rights, Indigenous Women's issues, the environment and sovereignty. She has participated in events, meetings and forums on a local, regional and international level that have addressed the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Ingrid is a former co-convenor of NNG's national conference and is a co-convenor of Funders Who Fund Native Americans.

In addition, NNG's current co-chairs were elected to second terms on the Board. Please welcome back Ronald White, Director of Grantmaking at Share Our Strength, who enters his second year as co-chair. Also, three cheers for Carol Mollner, Executive Director of the Women's Funding Network, who for the last year has served as Treasurer of NNG. Our new treasurer is Luis Solis of the Hispanic Federation of New York City, and our new secretary is Margie Fine of the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock.



## Changes in the Network

### News

- Adriana Ballén has left the MacArthur Foundation to start the Community Consulting Network. She is also serving as a consultant to the Abya Yala Fund. She may be reached at the University of IL, College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, 400 S. Peoria St., Room 2100, Chicago, IL 60607-7035, phone 312-355-0994, fax 312-996-5766.
- Ann Dowley has been promoted to Executive Director of the Abelard Foundation-West and Common Counsel. We wish her the best in her new position.
- Jeffery Glebocki has joined the George Gund Foundation as Education Program Officer. He can be reached at 45 Prospect Ave. West, Cleveland, OH 44115, phone 216-241-3114, fax 216-241-6560, e-mail jglebocki@gundfdn.org.
- David Harris has become the Associate Director of Florida Philanthropy for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. He can be reached at 4400 PGA Blvd., Suite 900, PO Box 109680, Palm Beach Gardens, FL, 33410-9680, phone 561-626-4800, fax 561-624-4948.
- Terry Lowe has returned to working as a consultant to foundations and non-profit organizations. She can be reached at 1029 Stannage Ave., Albany, CA 94706, phone 510-527-4237.
- Isabel Olivera-Morales has joined the Grantmaking Committee of the Chinook Fund.
- Victor Quintana has joined the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock as Program Officer. Prior to his appointment Victor directed an economic development and community service program sponsored by Columbia University's Graduate School of Business. He also served for nearly ten years in various positions in New York City government. Welcome, Victor!
- Frank Sanchez is now a Program Officer at the Needmor Fund. He can be reached at PO Box 2501, Roswell, NM, 88202, phone 505-627-9251, fax 505-627-9252.
- Cinthia Shuman has joined the Aspen Institute's Nonprofit Sector Research Fund as Associate Director. Congratulations Cinthia!
- Marty Teitel, Executive Director of the C.S. Fund up to January 1997, has become Senior Fellow of the Fund. He has announced his intention to follow his wife, a newly-ordained Unitarian Universalist minister, as she enters the active ministry.
- Former Associate Director of the C.S. Fund, Roxanne Turnage, has been promoted to Executive Director. Congratulations Roxanne!

### Address Changes

The following address changes have been received by NNG since the publication of the 1997 Grantmakers Directory. All other addresses and phone numbers in the Directory should be current.

- Common Counsel has moved. The new address for Common Counsel, Abelard Foundation-West, Acorn Foundation and Windcall Resident Program is 655 13th St., Suite 203, Oakland, CA 94612, phone 510-834-2995, fax 510-834-2998, e-mail ccounsel@igc.apc.org.
- FACT Services Co., Inc. is now on the West Coast. Their new address is 303 Sacramento St., 4th floor, San Francisco, CA 94111, phone 415-288-1305, fax 415-288-1311.
- Tracy Gary has left Resourceful Women. Her new address is Community Consulting Services, PO Box 428 - 40 Redwood Dr., Ross, CA 94957. Her phone number is 415-461-5539, fax is 415-925-9411.
- The phone number listed in the Grantmakers Directory for Grassroots International was incorrect. Please change the phone number listed to 617-524-1400.
- The McKay Foundation's new address is 303 Sacramento St., 4th floor, San Francisco, CA 94111, phone 415-288-1313, fax 415-288-1320.
- RESIST has moved to 259 Elm St., #201, Somerville, MA 02144. Phone and e-mail address remain the same.
- The Shefa Fund has moved to 805 W. Willow Grove Ave., #2D, Philadelphia, PA 19038, phone 215-247-9704, fax 215-247-1015.

The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (NCRP) has published *Moving a Right-Wing Agenda: the Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations*, a study which shows the substantial role that conservative foundations have played in "reinvigorating" the institutional base of American conservatism. The study follows the giving patterns of twelve conservative foundations to think tanks, conservative print and broadcast media, legal theory and philanthropic reform. NCRP has conducted a number of briefings and presentations for funders, affinity groups and regional associations of grantmakers, to discuss the findings of the report. Copies of *Moving a Right-Wing Agenda* are available for \$25 from NCRP, 2001 S St., NW, Suite 620, Washington, DC 20009. To organize a briefing in your area, please contact Beth Daley of NCRP at 202-387-9177.



## Donor Organizers' Network Members as of May 1, 1997

The Donor Organizers' Network is a working group of NNG which has its own membership dues and benefits. DON aims to serve and increase the number of people and organizations taking leadership in helping people with wealth become partners in progressive social change through increased giving, volunteerism and activism. For more information, contact Jennifer Ladd, DON Coordinator, at 413-585-9709.

- Jaime Babson of South Hadley, MA, Member, Threshold Foundation.
- Patrick Boase of Glasgow, Scotland.
- Suzanne Brown, President, Angelica Foundation, Rancho Santa Fe, CA.
- Josephine Cole of San Francisco, CA.
- Chuck Collins, United for a Fair Economy, Boston, MA.
- David Corbett of Ottawa, Ontario.
- Beth Daley, Vice President, National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, Washington, DC.
- Harriet Denison, Trustee, Ralph Smith Foundation, Portland, OR.
- Barbara Dobkin, Trustee, Dobkin Family Foundation, New York, NY.
- Laurie Emrich of Washington, DC, Grants Committee Member, Threshold Foundation.
- Jean Entine, Executive Director, Boston Women's Fund, Boston, MA.
- Diane Feeney, Board Member, FACT Services Co., Inc., San Francisco, CA.
- Marcia Gallo, Director of Donor Programs and Development, Funding Exchange, New York, NY.
- Tracy Gary, Community Consulting Services, Ross, CA.
- Steve Goldin, President, Northern New Mexico Grantmakers, Santa Fe, NM.
- Susan Hoffman, Associate Director, Shefa Fund, Philadelphia, PA.
- Peter Kent of Silver Spring, MD.
- Melissa Kohner, Member, Resourceful Women, San Francisco, CA.
- Jennifer Ladd, Board Member, Peace Development Fund, Northampton, MA.
- Mickey MacIntyre, Project Director, Gill Foundation, Lovettsville, VA.
- Doug Malcolm, President, Maine Initiatives, Portland, ME.
- Robert McKay, Executive Director, McKay Foundation, San Francisco, CA.
- Barbara Meyer, President, Bert & Mary Meyer Foundation, Winter Park, FL.
- Nancy Meyer & Marc Weiss of New York, NY.
- Christopher Mogil, Director, Impact Project, Arlington, MA.
- Carol Mollner, Executive Director, Women's Funding Network, St. Paul, MN.

- Andrea Wolf Rabinowitz, Board Member, A Territory Resource/Threshold Foundation, Seattle, WA.
- Alan Rabinowitz of Seattle, WA.
- David Rosenmiller, Executive Director, Solidago Foundation, Northampton, MA.
- Rosemary Santos, United Black and Brown Fund, Providence, RI.
- Michael Shuman of Washington, DC.
- Sarah Stranahan of Brewster, MA, Board Member, Needmor Fund.
- Chet Tchozewski, Executive Director, Caribou Fund, Boulder, CO.
- Leonie Walker of Portola Valley, CA, Community Funding Panel Member, Astraea National Lesbian Foundation.
- Jane Marie Yett of Santa Cruz, CA, Vanguard Public Foundation.
- Karen Young, Board Member, Boston Do Something, Somerville, MA.

Through NNG, the Donor Organizers Network working group (DON) has published *Welcome to Philanthropy: Resources for Individuals and Families Exploring Social Change Giving*. The pamphlet is intended as a means of encouraging people with wealth to become social change funders, as well as a resource guide for those who have decided to do so.

*Welcome to Philanthropy* was written by DON members Anne Slepian and Christopher Mogil, whose Impact Project has long worked on these issues. *Welcome to Philanthropy* is available from NNG for \$25.

### Bulk rates: (DON members):

10% off 5+, 20% off 10+, 30% off 100+ (plus postage); (Non-members): 10% off 10+, 20% off 25+, 40% off 100+ (plus postage).



# Post Conference Reflections

Janna Stieg, Chinook Fund

This was my first NNG conference. I probably wouldn't have been able to attend without the scholarship I received. I am grateful for that, to NNG and to those who contributed to the scholarship fund. The conference was a great opportunity for me to meet representatives of other foundations. It was fun to get to know people with whom I speak regularly on the phone.

For me, the highlights of the weekend were the opening reception, the Civil Rights panels, and Friday's group workshop on strategic social change.

The opening reception was held at the Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center, which is located in the building that housed the first school for African-American children in Mississippi. The reception featured Charles Payne, Professor of African-American Studies at Northwestern University. As Payne began to talk, our rowdy crowd settled down and listened carefully to his thoughts on organizing and how it has changed since the 1960s. Following Payne's talk, we were blown away by the Anderson United Methodist Church Sanctuary Choir. It was too bad that we were packed into the room too tightly to really move with the music.

The Civil Rights panels were comprised mainly of people who were activists in the South during the Civil Rights movement. It was interesting to hear their perspectives about what it means to be working against racism today. The panelists have moved away from social change work somewhat, and are now working on education-focused activities, though all agreed that education can itself be social change work. David Dennis now is Project Director for The Southern Initiative of The Algebra Project, an organization working to improve math skills of youth of color. Sophia Bracy Harris is now the Executive Director of the Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama, which advocates for children from low-income families. Hollis Watkins is Executive Director of Southern Echo, a coalition of progressive grassroots groups in Mississippi.

The structure of the main body of the conference was somewhat unusual. Instead of dividing into separate workshops, conference participants worked together in one room. When discussion was necessary, we broke into small groups, then returned to report. Since I am pretty much a left-brained person, I appreciated group facilitator U.T. Saunders's systematic style, although I know that this approach was frustrating for some of the more creative-minded people in the group. I think that the success of this approach depended largely upon the combinations of people who broke into small discussion groups. Friday's workshop was more helpful for me, because I ended up with like-minded people who are working on similar projects.

I can't write this article without mentioning Sweet Miss Coffy - the blues singer who brought some class to our gathering in her head-to-toe sequins. She was great.

Overall, this was a valuable conference and a fun weekend. I appreciated the focus on the Civil Rights movement, especially since this was my first trip to the South. I liked the



Charles Payne speaks at opening reception at NNG conference

structure of the conference. It was a good idea to keep the entire group together in the process. And I was glad to have the chance to meet colleagues from across the country and to hear about their work in pushing for meaningful change.

## Steve Cheifetz, Stewart R. Mott Charitable Trust

Leaving the festivity of New Orleans, nine NNG members and I began a somber trip up the Mississippi River to our annual meeting in Jackson. Along the way, we were sustained by the camaraderie in the van, gracious "southern hospitality," and the indomitable spirits of the people we encountered. At the opening dinner/context-setting session, Barbara Majors of the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond warned that we would confront a "conspiracy of politeness," a racism that looms beneath the surface. Throughout the Louisiana portion of our trip, the environmental threats to life were so overpowering one begins to understand how racism could become a secondary issue.

Toxic wastes know no color or class barriers. Yet it is poor people of color who are left in communities boxed in by the river, refineries, chemical plants, and grain elevators. It is poor people of color who wait for promised jobs that never appear; sleep under night skies that glow red from smoke-stack fires; regurgitate their meals because the toxic air and

*Continued on page 8*

In February, NNG hired Victoria (Vique) Chavez as Administrative Assistant. The rest of the staff wonders how we ever got along without her. Many of you have already met Vique at the national conference in Jackson. Others have communicated with her by phone, fax and e-mail. Vique comes to NNG with an extensive background working in the non-profit field, and has done advocacy work on issues of disability. She recently received certification as a Sign Language Interpreter, and is currently working towards her B.A. in Social Work.



*Post Conference Reflections... Continued from page 7*

water assault all their senses; watch their children flounder in playgrounds outside the fences of refineries; bury their children who die of supposedly rare diseases that occur in numbers defying all statistics.

Stranded on these lands that were once plantations, it is poor people of color who remain enslaved by the collusion between business interests and the government. Some want to flee the land. Others remain behind to fight for autonomy and the right to incorporate their communities - taking control of the forces that determine their lives. These are the people who daily fight the giants of industry. They are the Davids fighting our Goliaths.

These are some mechanisms of racism subjugated by daily struggles. But daily struggles bring their own layers of racism as these communities organize and reach out to resources beyond themselves. They struggle to keep control of their issues and empower themselves as they learn to work with regional and national organizers and resources. Often white people who have their own agendas control the regional and national resources. There must be a trust that those with access and power are there to provide a bridge for these communities to develop their own empowerment. In these communities, we saw the dynamics we would examine at the annual meeting under the guidance of U.T. Saunders and Erin Dayle: the relationships between funders, practitioners, and end users.

Once in Mississippi the racism bubbled up to the surface. In a small-town VFW Hall, a second tour group was asked to leave because it included an African-American. Hatred in all forms confronted us and was an intimate part of everybody's work. The Federation of Southern Cooperatives, a network of farm cooperatives, is working with VISTA volunteers to document the conditions in communities that contribute to church burn-

## Guatemala Partners Organizes Funders Tours to Guatemala

Guatemala Partners has taken several foundations to Guatemala, to meet organizations seeking funding. The Agostino Foundation and the Levi Strauss Foundation have met first-hand with Guatemalan groups, and have gone on to support some of the groups they met.

To organize a trip for your foundation, or in collaboration with other foundations, contact Guatemala Partners at 1601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 612, Washington, DC 20009, phone 202-783-1123, fax 202-483-6730, e-mail [manos@igc.apc.org](mailto:manos@igc.apc.org).

ings. To get to Camp Sister Spirit (a feminist retreat in Overt, MS, founded by a lesbian couple, Brenda and Wanda Henson) we rode through Uncle Ray Tucker's Last Stand - a living monument of hate and intolerance. Besides being the kind of neighbors any one should want, the Hensons practice a model of organizing that empowers a community. About their work improving the economic autonomy of indigenous women in Colonia La Gloria, Mexico, the Hensons describe themselves as "midwives" who help the community in "birthing" their projects.

The experiences shared during this trip will focus my attention on the roles that end users fulfill as I bring NNG's strategic plan into my work. The value of meeting with community groups and leaders on their own turf can not be underestimated, even if you do not fund at the community level. As a funder of national organizations I looked for the impact my grantees have (or should have) in the communities. Nor can we continue to automatically associate practitioners with the communities they represent. The tenants of the St. Thomas Housing Project in New Orleans recognized that the lack of impact service providers made on their lives was not because of inadequate funding. They realized that service providers need to be accountable to the community as well as funders. The work we experienced reinforced my belief that communities do know what is best for them. Our role to is to empower communities to achieve their dreams and not to dream for them. ■

## The Ownership of Life: When Patents and Values Clash

A working seminar for environmental, health and human rights funders. June 10, 1997, 10:00-4:00. To be held at: The Nathan Cummings Foundation, New York City, 1926 Broadway, Suite 600. For more information, please call: Harriet Barlow, HKH Foundation, 612-374-1559 or Marty Teitel, CS Fund, 707-874-2942.



*Funders Tour Group at the Mississippi River*

Photo by Millie Brobst



## NNG and Funders Tours... Continued from page 2

At the next day's "debriefing" lunch attended by both tour groups, several members of the Mississippi tour group raised the issue. It was seen both as a blow to the strong good feelings experienced by the group to that point, and as emblematic of the persistence of racism in the region. The funders felt it deplorable that one member of the group bore the brunt of such a demonstration. A number of responses have been suggested. NNG is taking action, writing a letter of protest to the national VFW. The staff and tour planners hope that this incident can be addressed in a way that results in redress for the participant who was singled out for this outrage.

This tour was planned by the NNG working group, Funders Who Fund in the South. One van began in New Orleans, the other in Jackson. The first group made its way up "Cancer Alley," along the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. They met with local community groups facing off against the huge multinationals which have moved in to take advantage of Louisiana's lax environmental laws and easy access to shipping.

Meanwhile, the Mississippi group met with several groups affiliated with Southern Echo, an umbrella group for Mississippi activists. Funders were impressed with the spirit of the groups they met. Many practitioner groups prepared food in anticipation of the funders' arrival, which gave their presentations an informal, plate-supper feel, and put everyone at ease.

"The Power of Community" grew out of a partnership with the National Organizers Alliance (NOA), as part of the "Funders and Organizers" project, funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation. Planning for this tour was shared by funders and organizers in San Diego, Tijuana and Los Angeles. The tour itself was ambitious.

Funders met with San Diego activists at a dinner and briefing by Harley Shaiken, Professor of Social and Cultural Studies, UC Berkeley. The next morning, a boat ride in the harbor showed the massive military presence and attendant environmental hazards. Crossing the border to Tijuana, the bus visited a maquiladora and heard stories of labor abuses, land-rights protests, and environmental degradation.

The next day, the group went north along the Alameda Corridor, an industrial zone between San Pedro and Los Angeles. In LA, funders were briefed by Manuel Pastor, Professor of Latin American and Latino Studies, UC Santa Cruz, and shown the wide range of community organizing projects there, centered around issues including civil rights, environmental justice, the "living wage" movement, homelessness, and community empowerment.

August 20 - 27, 1996, NNG co-sponsored a tour of Montana and Idaho. Despite being targeted by the extreme right, the Northern Rockies maintain active and creative organizing around many issues, including Native American, gay and lesbian, environmental and labor rights. Since the tour was spread over eight days, the group was able to devote considerable time to each site visited. For example, an entire day was spent at the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. Credit for planning must go to Jan Strout of the Funding Exchange, who summarized the tour for the Fall, 1996 Network News.

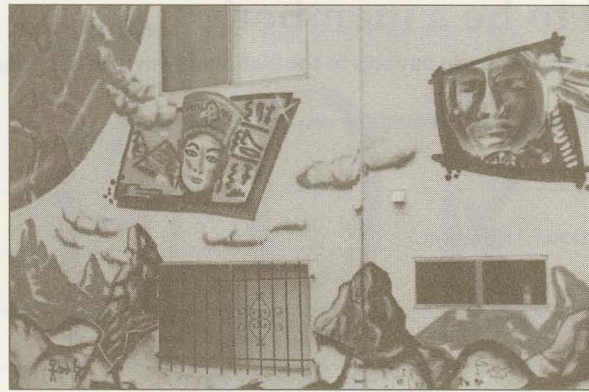


Photo by Millie Brobston

Reclaimed alleyway, City Heights, San Diego

The Northern Rockies tour also included planned discussion time, with the larger group broken up into smaller focus groups to address specific issues. General themes emerged, dealing with the rural nature of the region and its effects on coalition building and fundraising. A draft report of this session is available from NNG.

Tours will continue to be a part of the work of NNG. Currently, two have been proposed through 1998. A tour to South Africa, suggested by NNG's International Working Group, would be co-sponsored with the Funding Exchange. Planning has begun. Also under discussion is a tour to Puerto Rico and Cuba, proposed by the Funding Exchange, which seeks co-sponsorship with NNG. A tour of Alaska, co-sponsored by Native Americans in Philanthropy, The National Alliance for Choice in Giving and the Women's Funding Network, is proposed for 1999.

Tours are important for a number of reasons. First, they allow groups seeking funds to speak one on one with funders. Second, funders are able to see the fruits of the group's work. For example, practitioners may join the group for mini-tours of their area. Third, the presence of funders brings groups together, encouraging coalition building. Similarly, tours have sparked discussion of funders initiatives, which leverage small, discretionary grants for maximum effectiveness. Finally, tours may be the only means available to foundation board or grants committee members to see first-hand the work they are funding. ■

**NNG**  
would like to  
announce its new  
e-mail address!

**nng@nng.org**

*This newsletter issue was prepared by NNG's  
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Diane Feeney, Co-Chair, Pam Galpern, Isabel Olivera-  
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Jill Pittsford is our designer.*



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