

# NETWORK NEWS

## Progressive Grantmakers Respond to the Newt Era

by Suzanne Brown, Karen Byrne and James D. Gollin

*How are progressive grantmakers reacting to an era of smaller government, devolved authority over public welfare programs, tax breaks for the rich and declining services for the poor?*

"The era of big government is over," declared Bill Clinton in his State of the Union address in January. Republicans cheered wildly. Democrats politely applauded. And progressive funders in the television audience wondered if they were seeing the capitulation of the leader of the party of the New Deal and the Great Society to the forces of Newt Gingrich and the 104th Congress.

"We are witnessing the abdication of government at all levels from its commitment to fulfill the highest role of government: to meet human needs," says Public Welfare Foundation's Larry Kressley.

Those who support the work of activists, organizers and systemic change advocates are slowly moving past the shock of watching Congress shred the American social safety net. The progressive philanthropic community faces two daunting tasks: to assess the depth of the damage, and to build a responsive strategy of support for a diverse, disorganized movement.

Michelle Lord of the Norman Foundation says, "Our board will be seeing a lot of proposals it can't consider. We will want to help but we can't. There's no way to replace lost resources."

Pat Maher of Haymarket People's Fund puts it another way. "The level of public pain will be huge," she says. "My hope is that people will take to the streets."

How are progressive grantmakers reacting to an era of smaller government, devolved authority over public welfare programs, tax breaks for the rich and declining services for the poor? Politicians pass responsibility for the public good to state and local government, interest groups condemn the concept of entitlements, while the progressive community seems oddly inactive.

The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, in its 1995 report, *Foundations in the Newt Era*, concluded, "Despite the urgency of giving voice to underrepresented constituencies, and despite the need for political reform, the response of the foundation community has been negligible... the thinking appears small, non-strategic and non-visionary."

There is a sense that many are proceeding with business as usual.

Those we spoke with, many of them NNG members, have thoughtful, reasoned explanations for their actions and their inaction. Some have shifted focus to include funding of social services, in direct response to the budgetary and legislative attacks from the radical right. Others have stood firm, having more reason than ever to fund at the roots of the problems and progressive activism.

Most agree that, as an industry, we need to do what we do better, smarter, more strategically, and with more money.

"These times present an opportunity to push [progressive philanthropy] forward," says Peggy Saika, who sits on the Boards of the New World and Ms. Foundations. "While we are looking at a crisis, there have never been enough resources on the ground in organizing work and capacity building. In the end none of our responses will matter if there's not an ability to be more proactive in building the values that undergird the society."

Foundations focused on community organizing are attempting to widen the national debate to include voices from disenfranchised constituencies. Some hope to redesign the movement by forming funder coalitions, meeting with grantees, and offering technical advisory services to help non-profits survive in a colder socio-economic climate.

The devastating magnitude of planned government policy changes is evident when we consider the math. The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities reports that under present Republican plans, non-defense discretionary spending will fall by approximately \$450 billion over the next seven years, with \$100 billion coming from welfare, food stamps and related programs. Medicaid services and eligibility will be cut, with poor children bearing the brunt. The Environmental Protection Agency expects a 30% cut in funding, while laws protecting fragile ecosystems and endangered species are being altered to benefit industry. The Legal Services Corporation is under attack, and laws threatening advocacy work by non-profits are imminent. Meanwhile 47% of the proposed tax cuts would be funneled to the wealthiest 10% of Americans.

Where will we be if Gingrich and his congressional acolytes succeed in completing the Reagan revolution? Altogether, the government will spend six or seven hundred billion

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**We've moved – again! Our new office is down the hall in suite #105, beginning May 6th.**



fewer dollars. Compare this to an asset base of less than \$200 billion for all of America's foundations combined. Furthermore, nonprofits, many of which now provide endangered services to the public, can expect to lose as much as \$250 million in government contracts. Clearly, private foundations cannot be expected to fill in these service gaps. We simply do not have the resources.

"Foundations shouldn't buy into the cruel myth that they should take the place of government in meeting basic human needs," argues Larry Kressley. "Even if we did have the resources, our serious social problems cannot be dealt with by private largesse."

Mary McClymont, of the Ford Foundation's Rights and Social Justice Program, suggests that the entire field must be rethought. "How are organizations changing their thinking and advocacy? In the face of a difficult and problematic time we have to be constructive about how we move into the future."

Jane McAlevy, of the Universalist Unitarian Veatch Program at Shelter Rock, describes one way to negotiate these tricky waters. "Our greatest priority is on funding organizing for long-term change. We have shied away from funding work strictly described as service provision, though there are times when service provision, placed in a context of organizing and base building, is perfectly legitimate. Essentially, our strategy is to fund organizing that will build a social movement strong enough to demand, and extract, services from the government."

Direct service providers are being pushed into competition with systemic change advocates for progressive foundation dollars. While this is not a new problem, the competition will come to be felt more acutely. If progressive elements in the public sector are to survive, they will have to innovate. Groups will need to extend their reach. The role of the funder is critical here - in building technological capacity, facilitating dialogue with activists, accessing new sources of money, assisting in forming strategic coalitions and funding the mechanisms of a more efficient movement. "We'll have to pick the

individuals and organizations that will survive as their colleagues drop out," says James Cummings of the Nathan Cummings Foundation. "They'll have to form new alliances and constituencies."

Joan Garner, of the Fund for Southern Communities, suggests that grantmakers should follow the same strategy. "We can no longer work in isolation around our own issue areas. Groups will need to maximize their work by forming coalitions and collaborating - whatever it takes to build on whatever they already have. We can't do grantmaking in isolation."

How did we wind up in this situation? "The critical thing to remember is that [the Contract with America] is not new," says Drummond Pike of the Tides Foundation. "Reagan ran on this platform."

Many progressive funders believe the lesson to be learned from the right's steady rise to power, and victory in the 1994 election, is that foundations should not react to this crisis with short-term programmatic responses.

The progressive activist community has long endorsed a strategy of long-term institution building. Haymarket's Pat Maher insists, "It is not the time to force special projects or initiatives on groups. Organizations need long-term support for infrastructure. Funders need to be in a position to respond, and should be challenged to fork over real money." Haymarket itself funds, among other projects, voter education, campaign finance reform and political research that assists in fighting the right.

Peter Teague, Program Officer for Voter Participation at Tides, points out that many smaller progressive foundations are now spending voter-participation dollars on something more than getting out the vote. "The right knows how to build community. We have to get people to reconnect and rebuild what we've taken for granted. It's not about winning seats in '96, but about rebuilding precinct by precinct and town by town, for a five, ten, twenty year period."

Progressive grantmakers are fighting the right on its own turf, funding efforts to inform citizens about the root causes of the politics of fear, such as global economic threats to their ability to earn a living wage and the need for campaign finance reform. They encourage grantees to train in macro-economics in order to have a better understanding of the larger forces moving local or regional problems.

"We've done a lot of long-range talking," says James Cummings, "but we haven't been as effective at long-range strategic activism." This needs to change.

But what form of long-range strategic activism should we focus on? "We need fewer funder-driven strategies," says Larry Kressley, "and fewer groups focused upon the agendas of foundations rather than the needs of communities."

Photo by Steve Cagan



The Community Kitchen of West Harlem. Photo courtesy of Joe Wilson.

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## Announcing the Donor Activist Network – A New Working Group of NNG

As many of you know, we are in the midst of an amazing "transfer of wealth" in this country. In the next twenty years, two trillion dollars are predicted to pass from one generation to the next; over one million individuals are expected to inherit at least a million dollars.

How much of this wealth will go towards progressive social change? We imagine that very little will, unless we deliberately and skillfully reach out to people with wealth and draw them into social change. A new working group of NNG, called the Donor Activist Network (DAN), has formed to do just that.

Anyone may join DAN who wants to work on helping people with wealth become active partners in social change. By this we mean inspiring people to engage not only with their pocket-books but with their hearts and talents as well - to grow as "donor-activists." DAN members include both organizations and individuals, people with and without wealth. By learning from each other and developing collaborative projects, DAN aims to help bring thousands of new donors to social change over the next decade.

DAN's current project is a "Welcome to Philanthropy" booklet. This will be a user-friendly guide offering for the first time an introductory yet comprehensive "map" of progressive philanthropy - who is doing what, and what help is available to people who want their giving to become more meaningful and effective. We will distribute the booklet so it is not just "preaching to the choir" but gets widely out into new hands.

## People of Color Caucus ... Strategies for Tomorrow

by Luis Solis

The past year has brought many changes to the landscape of philanthropy, changes that will no doubt affect the way we do business for many years to come. As government has re-defined its contract with communities and withdrawn support for critically needed services; as corporate America's downsizing has shrunk the pockets of traditional charitable supporters; and as foundations have retrenched to meet growing expectations and tighter budgets, it has become increasingly necessary for those at all levels of the philanthropic community to define strategies to meet tomorrow's needs.

In this vein, the People of Color Caucus has embarked on a challenging task. At the NNG meeting held in Albuquerque, New Mexico last November, the Caucus took its first steps toward the development of a strategic plan. The Caucus hopes that this year-long process will lead to the creation of a comprehensive work plan.

Originally called the Third World Caucus, the People of Color Caucus was founded to create a supportive network for people of color in a largely white philanthropic environment, and to foster the development of strategies to increase fund-

Within NNG, we hope DAN can also serve as a catalyst for constructive dialogue about class, classism, and the role of people with wealth in social change. NNG is a rare place where people of all class backgrounds - including many people with wealth - work side-by-side towards building a more just and sustainable world. This offers the unusual opportunity to have explicit discussions about the class differences among us, how they feel to us, what they mean, and how to address class issues in social change. Stay tuned for some of this in upcoming meetings. ■

We welcome your feedback, ideas, concerns, and involvement in any aspect of DAN. Contact Ellen Furnari at (802) 482-2022 or [FurnariE@aol.com](mailto:FurnariE@aol.com).

### DAN Steering Committee:

Joanie Bronfman/Threshold Foundation and Tides Canada; Harriet Denison; Tracy Gary/Resourceful Women; Merede Graham/Namaste Foundation; Melissa Kohner/NNG; Christopher Mogil/Impact Project; Marcia Gallo/Funding Exchange; Lynne Gerber/Peace Development Fund; and Jackie Schad/Tides Foundation.

**The Next NNG Conference  
is Scheduled for  
March 14-15, 1997  
in Jackson, Mississippi.**

ing opportunities for communities of color. Over the years, the Caucus has been a strong voice, ensuring that the needs and concerns of people of color continue to be addressed by the grantmaking community.

In a lively discussion among the thirty participants at this year's gathering, caucus members and guests from the grantseeking community agreed that strategies should be developed in three key areas: Structural/Organizational Development, Resource Development to Communities of Color, and Workplace Issues. As a follow-up to the November meeting, caucus members have undertaken a strategic analysis of the identified issue areas. These committees are being staffed by volunteers. Your participation is strongly encouraged. To volunteer, please contact Luis Solis at the Hispanic Federation of New York City at (212) 742-0707.

This year's meeting also gave members the opportunity to hear an update on the National Fund for Community Leadership. The NFCL is a national grantmaking initiative to increase philanthropic support for community organizing. Its strategic goal is to develop the indigenous capacity of communities of color to address social, environmental and economic issues from the local to the national level. This capacity building initiative includes research and evaluation components to identify or develop effective models of organizing for social change in communities of color. For more information, please contact Mike Roque of the Chinook Fund at (303) 455-6905. ■



## Changes in the Network

### News from Members

■ Karen Byrne has left the Angelica Foundation as its Executive Director to become an independent consultant to nonprofit organizations in San Diego. She can be reached at (619) 259-1394. We wish you well, Karen.

■ Anne Dowley has recently been promoted from Program Associate to Associate Director of the Abelard Foundation-West/Common Counsel. Congratulations, Anne!

■ Jeff Glebocki, former Program Officer of the Nord Family Foundation, is now an independent consultant to foundations and non-profit organizations on program research and design, proposal review, organizational and management development and dispute resolution. You can reach him in Cleveland, Ohio at (216) 671-2452.

■ Congratulations to Susan Lloyd, who recently assumed the position of Associate Director of the Community Initiatives Program at the MacArthur Foundation. She was previously an independent consultant to the non-profit sector in Chicago.

■ Congratulations to Terry Lowe, who has moved from Interim Director to Executive Director of Abelard Foundation-West/Common Counsel.

■ Idelisse Malave, currently Vice-President of the Ms. Foundation, has been appointed Executive Director of the Tides Foundation. She will begin work there in mid-May. Congratulations!

■ Marianne Philbin will step down as Executive Director of the Chicago Foundation for Women in spring to pursue half-time work and spend more time with family. We wish her well. The CFW is in the process of recruiting for Marianne's replacement.

■ Welcome to Sharon Ramirez, the new Membership Director of the Women's Funding Network. Sharon brings many years of experience to this position, including work with nonprofit organizations that focused on women's issues and diversity. Most recently, Sharon was employed at Rainbow Research, Inc., where she conducted program evaluations, led strategic planning processes and provided technical assistance and training to community-based groups and other nonprofit organizations.

### Changes at NNG (Board)

We welcome two new members of the NNG Board of Directors.

■ Alice Ito has many years of experience as a consultant to nonprofits. She has also worked with organizations receiving progressive foundation dollars. Currently, she is Grants Program Coordinator at A Territory Research in Seattle.

■ Jenny Warburg lives in Durham, NC. She is co-chair of NNG's Communications/ Publications Committee, acting at times as photographer for NNG events. She is a Trustee of the Bydale Foundation.

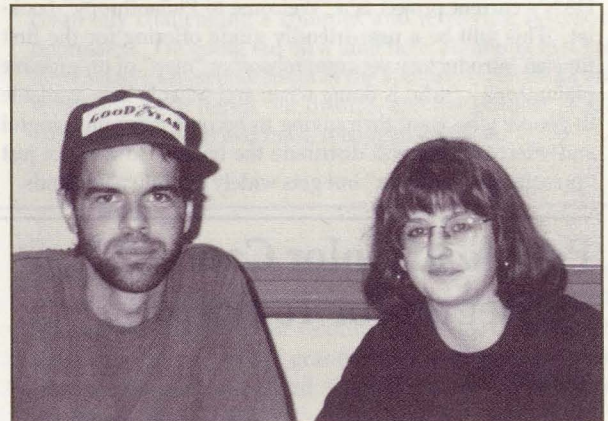
### Changes at NNG (Staff)

■ We are sorry to say goodbye to our Membership Co-ordinator, Gilda Martinez. We will miss her.

Last month, because of growth in our membership, NNG hired two new staff members. Both are recent arrivals to the San Diego area.

■ Elizabeth (Eli) Briggs joined NNG as an Administrative Assistant in early March. Her area of specialization is Member Services. She will also be involved in planning the 1997 NNG conference. Prior to joining NNG, Eli worked for over two years in the areas of membership services and meeting planning for 501 Management, Inc., an association management company in Durham, North Carolina serving mainly non-profit organizations. She also served in a volunteer capacity as co-chair of one of the political committees of the North Carolina affiliate of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League. Eli was a 1992 graduate of Earlham College. She lives with her partner, Earl Triplett, their dog, Sammy, and cat, Wedge.

■ Gerard Holmes left New York City recently, and likes to gloat about the weather to friends back east. Most recently, he was an office coordinator at the Park Slope food co-op in Brooklyn. He was put to work right away editing the newsletter you're reading. He will work in the area of Program and Operations, whatever that means.



*New NNG staff members, Eli Briggs & Gerard Holmes*

### New Members

■ Frank Acosta, Senior Program Officer of the California Wellness Foundation in Woodland Hills, CA.

■ Jose Artiga, Executive Director of SHARE Foundation: Building a New El Salvador Today in San Francisco, CA.

■ Melissa Bunnan of Atlanta Georgia, Director of the Norman Foundation in New York, NY.

■ Tanya Dawkins, Senior Vice-President of the United Way of Dade County in Miami FL.

■ Todd Dietterle, Program Director of the Woods Fund of Chicago in Chicago, IL.

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## NNG's Strategic Planning Process

A nine-person Strategic Planning Committee has been created to formulate a long-range plan for NNG. The Committee is being co-chaired by Miyoko Oshima, a former Board Co-Chair, Alan Rabinowitz, a long-time Board member, and reflects the diversity within NNG's membership in terms of grantmaking experience, skills, and geographic location. Assistance throughout will come from consultant Nancy Franco.

During the first six months of 1996, the Strategic Planning Committee is conducting interviews with members of the Board, as well as the various committees, caucuses and working groups, representatives of the general membership, as well as progressive philanthropists and activists outside NNG. Included in this newsletter mailing to members is a questionnaire, which asks for your input on future possibilities for NNG organizationally, as well as the external environment in

which we operate. The committee also plans to convene focus groups in cities/regions with high concentrations of members. The purpose is to elicit ideas and feelings that might not emerge as clearly from the interviews and questionnaires.

The consultant will use the interviews, returned questionnaires, and focus group ideas to draft a report for discussion at a Committee retreat on September 29 and 30, 1996, in Chicago. The Committee will then revise the report and present a final draft to the NNG Board of Directors for discussion at a Board/Strategic Planning Committee retreat on December 13 and 14 in San Diego. The Board will review the Committee's recommendations for the organization's mission and major goals for the next five years. The strategic plan that emerges from the December meeting will be sent to the membership for comments, the results of which may prompt further revision. The Committee hopes that the plan will be formally adopted at the Annual Membership and Board meeting at the NNG conference in March 1997. ■

## A Letter From the Co-Chairs

This spring's celestial phenomena, a comet seen only once every 37,000 years and a lunar eclipse of spectacular coloration, seemed intended to draw our attention to the far horizons, reminding us of the universal grandeur to which humanity is heir. But equally compelling here in our small corner of the planet is the rivetingly ugly scene of police beating Mexican immigrants; the Hartford, CT City Council's extension of a moratorium on all new services, whether private or public, for the poor or disabled in the city; and the Council on Foundations sponsoring the hate speech of FAIR's executive director Dan Stein at its annual meeting. These down to earth events remind all people of conscience how hard we must continue to struggle with our resources to claim our heritage as a civilized people.

NNG has always led in that struggle. And now, with the initiation of NNG's strategic planning process, ably led by Alan Rabinowitz of the Pequot Fund of the Tides Foundation and Miyoko Oshima of the Tides Center, we are poised to examine fundamental questions about NNG's structures and strategies for deepening social change among hundreds of grantmakers and in thousands of local communities with our community organizing allies. Miyoko and Alan bring a wealth of experience, both with NNG and in strategic planning, and are being assisted by Nancy Franco of the Management Assistance Group and the strategic planning committee: Adriana Ballén of the MacArthur Foundation, Larry Kressley of the Public Welfare Foundation, Peggy Saika of the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Chris D'Arpa of the Crossroads Fund, David Harris of the C.S. Mott Foundation, Carol Mollner of the Women's Funding Network, and Frank Sanchez of the Needmor Fund. The chairs and committee will be looking to you as members of NNG to assist them at each step in providing thoughtful and timely comments as the process continues.

Because NNG will be devoting considerable time and resources to its planning efforts, there will be no annual conference this fall. Instead we will hold our conference in the spring of 1997 in Jackson, Mississippi. After some general consultation and long discussion, the Board has recommended that the switch to the spring for our annual conference be permanent, commencing in 1997. All change is disruptive, but we believe this is one change which will be better for NNG and its members.

Finally, we say a sad goodbye to two board members, Cynthia White and Peggy Saika. Both resigned for personal reasons in December. Their perspectives and experienced guidance will be missed. This spring we welcome the fresh energies of two new board members, Alice Ito, Grants Program Coordinator for A Territory Resource, and Jenny Warburg, a Trustee of the Bydale Foundation. They join us through a special election by the board, stipulated in our bylaws, to fill the two vacancies. We on the board look forward with great anticipation to their contributions in this critical year, as we look to the horizons with our feet firmly planted on the ground.

Wendy Johnson

Ron White



# NNG COMMON GRANT APPLICATION

## NNG Common Grant Application – It's Good for You, and It Looks Good, Too

by Shannah Kurland, Executive Director, DARE Direct Action for Rights & Equality

So what's the big attraction with NNG's Common Grant Application, anyway? I asked myself that question the first time I filled one out. After all, the questions are almost the same as that funder's old application. In fact, the questions were pretty damn close to nearly every grant application we fill out.

As I struggled to cut and paste, and rephrased answers to fit what each question was really asking, I wondered what made this application any easier than the five others our small staff had assembled and sent off that month. All of a sudden it dawned on me - this could be the last application I prepared for six months. Imagine: just hit the print command, check the mailing address, and hand the sucker over to the US Postal Service. I started to daydream about how I would use the extra time - have a talk with one of our congressional leaders about how to deal with welfare reform? Knock on doors with a new organizer? Maybe I could get those donor visits scheduled, or even - gasp - go home and do a workout tape!

We all know that a few sheets of paper aren't a window into an organization's soul. Still, most funders have said that you

want decent-looking, easy-to-read proposals. You might be surprised to discover how many community groups agree with you on that point. We'd much rather deliver a crisp, complete document than a hurried, misspelled piece of crap. Preparing a few grant applications each year, instead of rushing to get three distinct documents fedexed on the same day, will result in a more readable application arriving at your desk. We're organizers, not journalists. Though many of us enjoy writing about our work, we'd prefer to be out on the streets doing it.

Even with the Common Grant Application, the problem isn't completely solved. You can't ask ten additional questions without losing some of the good will you engendered by using the CGA in the first place. And, even in its purest form, it's not a substitute for the hard work funders need to do to really get to know an organization, let alone a magic potion for accountability in grantmaking.

Everyone involved in the struggle has to make their peace with the too-much-to-do-too-little-time dilemma. One innovation in funding isn't going to solve the problem for all time. But think about how you want us to spend our time. You want us to help fulfill your institution's mission by building strong organizations, by developing skilled leadership, by creatively challenging a complex and terrifying system of oppression. I'm going out on a limb here, assuming that you don't want us to spend hours at the computer, rewriting and reformatting our hopes, our dreams, and our passion. You'd rather see us go out and make it happen, right? ■

## The CGA: A History

by Robin Kroft, Member of the CGA Subcommittee

The National Network of Grantmakers' Common Grant Application (CGA) simplifies the grantseeking process by eliminating the need for grantseekers to start from scratch with every grant application. The project, which is in its pilot year, narrows the gap between activists and funders by increasing access to grantmakers working in the arena of social change.

The CGA was created by teams of over forty grantmakers and grantseekers, each working on aspects of design and review, who identified and consolidated the best aspects of eight regional common applications. The teams focused on broad appeal, responding to the needs of diverse areas of grantmaking, from the arts to healthcare. The CGA has the potential to open the way for a wide range of new requests, which most funders agree has made the project worth the effort. At present, the CGA is accepted by more than thirty grantmakers. One funder has observed that the CGA has resulted in better applications, especially from fledgling grantwriters, because it requests such a well-rounded package. The CGA has not resulted in a flood of inappropriate proposals, as some had feared it would, since grantseekers must still ensure their projects fit funders' interests.

When the cost of fundraising decreases, organizations can funnel more of their budget directly to social change work. Widespread acceptance for vehicles such as the CGA helps to demystify the process of grantwriting, which is becoming increasingly professionalized - carrying a hefty price tag for grassroots organizations.

The CGA can help to meet the mutual needs of grantmakers and grantseekers interested in social change. The only way the CGA can work, though, is if many groups accept it. The Foundation Center has posted a CGA which can be easily downloaded from its Internet site at (<http://fdncenter.org>). The National Network of Grantmakers can be reached at (619) 231-1348. ■

**The Fund of Haiti will host a one week Funders' Delegation to Haiti, May 12 - 19, sponsored by Lambi Fund of Haiti, Witness for Peace, and Mouvement Payzan Papaye (Peasant Movement of Papaya). The trip will include visits to the Central Plateau and Jacmel, and will feature meetings with peasant, women's and other organizations of the grassroots sector. The cost is approximately \$1000, not including airfare. For more information, contact Lambi Fund at (202) 833-3713 or (800) 606-9657 or e-mail [lambi@igc.apc.org](mailto:lambi@igc.apc.org).**



## *Progressive Funders . . . Continued from Page 2*

"Funders need to walk a balance beam," says Peggy Saika of New World. "We shouldn't be defining the agenda, but we should be there at critical moments to facilitate the effort." The New World Foundation funds organizations focused on community organizing.

The radical right has been able to pour big money into the fight. Says Jane McAlevy, "Progressives can't keep pace with the right in terms of dollars. We will never have their monetary resources. We do, however, have the capacity to win over and engage large numbers of people, a tremendous resource which we at Veatch are banking on. This means organizing, knocking on doors, and really talking to people." Current grantees of the Veatch Program receive training in a range of strategies, from diversified funding strategies to building technological capacity in the form of new modems and automated fax software.

The Cummings Foundation has been networking with other funders and grantees, "trying to streamline, avoid replication of important work and ideas," according to James Cummings. They are researching ways of building bridges between student activist groups, perhaps via the internet, and this year for the first time are accepting proposals from student activists.

The Norman Foundation Board of Directors has kept resources open and available, to respond to needs as yet unknown. Norman is focusing its resources on monitoring and advocacy around welfare issues, litigation on behalf of grassroots organizing, fairness in media, immigrants' rights and micro-enterprise alternatives for communities.

While everyone agrees that our institutions need innovations, the fact is that they also need money. Some funders are already playing a role in finding new sources of untapped dollars.

"It's a bogus argument that there is no money," argues Peggy Saika. Billions of dollars will change hands through inherited wealth. What are we, as progressives, doing to find that money?"

Progressive funders we spoke with were unanimous in calling for improved communication of the type that NNG itself tries to encourage. Ingrid Washiawatok, of the Fund of the Four Directions, suggests that NNG members "need to familiarize themselves with their issues. We should be educating each other. We need to share knowledge in an in-depth way."

Larry Kressley warns, "Organizations like NNG can do a lot of good . . . but there are limits. For thirteen years I've heard about working groups and collaboratives. But people end up doing what their foundations want them to do. At NNG there is an opportunity for us to really learn from each other and increase what we learn from the people we support."

Many look to NNG as a powerful tool for strategic planning, sharing information, and debate. Funders, seeking to become better at what they do, have asked that we, as a network, become better at what we do.

"Our task," at NNG conferences, says Jane McAlevy, "is to spend the limited time we have together strategizing, quite systematically, about how to generate new money and mobilize larger amounts from more mainstream foundations."

Progressive funders conclude that their grantmaking should concentrate on community organizing and bringing representatives of disenfranchised groups into the foundation decision-making process. Political advocacy and campaign finance reform, priorities before 1994, are all the more important now. The pool of funds available for progressive philanthropy appears, in these hard times, pathetically small. Thus it becomes urgent to convince mainstream funders to bear more of the burden. While there is no universally-accepted analysis of the present predicament, funders can come together to seed a multi-issue, multi-ethnic, gender-sensitive grassroots movement that brings the progressive agenda inside the margins of power. By doing so, we will fund a unified, powerful response to the attacks now underway in Congress. ■

## *New Members. . . Continued from Page 4*

■ Lucille A. Echohawk, President/CEO of the George Bird Grinnell American Indian Children's Fund in Denver, CO.

■ Deborah Felder, Executive Director of Maine Initiatives: A Fund for Change in Augusta ME.

■ Martha Gallo, Donor Programs Officer of the Funding Exchange in New York, NY.

■ Ruth Hersh, Program Officer of the Rhode Island Foundation in Providence, RI.

■ Ned Kassouf, President of the Kassouf Foundation in Irvine, CA.

■ Susan Lloyd, Associate Director of the Community Initiatives Program at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in Chicago, IL.

■ Joe Lucero, Program Associate, Asian American Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy in New York, NY.

■ Margaret Norman of Berkeley CA, Director of the Norman Foundation in New York, NY.

■ Catherine Rubenstein, Vice-Chairperson of the Magrath Foundation in Belvedere, CA.

■ Ellen Spertus of Redmond, WA.

■ Amanda Weil, Director of the Norman Foundation in New York, NY.

*This newsletter was conceived by Gilda Martinez, Terry Odendahl, Isabel Morales, Joe Wilson and Communications/Publications Co-Chairs Mike Roque and Jenny Warburg. It was edited by Gerard Holmes, with assistance from Terry Odendahl. Jill Pittsford is our graphic designer.*



# Yes! I want to be a member!

- ☐ Enclosed is a check for \$100 made payable to the National Network of Grantmakers for 1996 membership
- ☐ In addition, I am enclosing a tax-deductible contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Grantmaking Organization/Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to National Network of Grantmakers, 1717 Kettner Blvd., Suite 105 San Diego, CA 92101 Phone (619) 231-1348 Fax (619) 231-1349

## NATIONAL NETWORK OF GRANTMAKERS Board of Directors 1996-1998

Adriana Ballen (95-97)  
MacArthur Foundation  
140 S. Dearborn #1300  
Chicago, IL 60603  
312-726-8000/917-0330 FAX  
aballen@macfdn.org

Marjorie Fine (96-98)  
Board Development Chair  
UU Veatch Program/Shelter Rock  
48 Shelter Rock Rd.  
Manhasset, NY 11030  
516-627-6576/627-6596 FAX

Deb Furry (95-87)  
Membership Co-Chair  
Nat'l Alliance for Choice in Giving  
2001 O Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-296-8470/857-0077 FAX

Joan Garner (96-98)  
Annual Conference Co-Chair  
Fund for Southern Communities  
547 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Suite 100  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
404-876-4147/876-3453 FAX  
fsc@igc.apc.org

Alice Ito (96-98)  
A Territory Resource  
603 Stewart St., #221  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206-624-4081/382-2640 FAX

Rose Johnson (95-97)  
Annual Conference Co-Chair  
Sapelo Foundation  
c/o Center for Democratic Renewal  
Box 50469  
Atlanta, GA 30302-0469  
404-221-0025/221-0045 FAX

Wendy Johnson (94-96)  
Board Co-Chair  
Southern Regional Council  
133 Carnegie Way, Suite 900  
Atlanta, GA 30303-1024  
404-522-8764/522-8791 FAX

Melissa Kohner (96-98)  
Philanthropic Reform Co-Chair  
Resourceful Women  
4020 19th St. #3  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
415-865-0726/865-0917 FAX  
msk4@aol.com

Carol Mollner (94-96)  
Treasurer  
Women's Funding Network  
1821 University Ave., Suite 409 N  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
612-641-0742/647-1401 FAX

Isabel Olivera Morales (95-97)  
Secretary  
Needmor Fund  
1730 15th Street  
Boulder, CO 80302  
303-449-5801/444-8055 FAX

Alan Rabinowitz (96-98)  
Fundraising/Strategic Planning Co-Chair  
3400 East Laurelhurst Dr., NE  
Seattle, WA 98105  
206-525-7941/524-3074 FAX

Mike Roque (94-96)  
Communications/Pubs. Co-Chair  
Chinook Fund  
2418 West 32nd Ave.  
Denver, CO 80211  
303-455-6905/477-1617 FAX

Luis Solis (96-98)  
People of Color Caucus Co-Chair  
Hispanic Federation of New York City  
84 William St., 15th Floor  
New York, NY 10038  
212-742-0707/742-2313 FAX  
hispfedny@aol.com

Jenny Warburg (96-98)  
Bydale Foundation  
1106 Virginia Ave.  
Durham, NC 27705  
919-286-1721/286-1377 FAX

Ron White (94-96)  
Board Co-Chair  
Share Our Strength (SOS)  
1151 K Street, NW, Suite 940  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-541-3372/541-3322 FAX

Staff:  
Eli Briggs  
Gerard Holmes  
Terry Odendahl  
Aileen Shaw  
1717 Kettner Blvd. #105  
San Diego, CA 92101  
619-231-1348/231-1349 FAX



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