

GIST

GRANTMAKERS INCOME SECURITY TASKFORCE

Briefing for Grantmakers

December 6-7, 2007

Washington, DC

MEETING SUMMARY

DIVERSITY & LEADERSHIP: AN EXPLORATORY DISCUSSION

This session examined the barriers to achieving diverse leadership in the nonprofit sector and explored innovative approaches to developing diverse organizations in the policy, research, and advocacy fields. For the purposes of this session, the discussion was limited to racial and ethnic diversity with a note that this was a starting point and that the issue diversity and leadership will continue to be explored by GIST in future meetings.

- **Benita Melton**, Co-Chair, Grantmakers Income Security Taskforce (Moderator)
- **Fred Davie**, President, Public/Private Ventures
- **Eric Griego**, Executive Director, New Mexico Voices for Children
- **Ashima Saigal**, Director, Nonprofit Leadership Institute, Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership at Grand Valley State University.
- **William Spriggs**, Professor and Chair, Department of Economics, Howard University

What Do We Mean by the Terms Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity?

- **Diversity**: bringing different people and perspectives to the table
- **Inclusion**: giving those different people and perspectives some consideration during decision-making
- **Equity**: equal weight is given to all contributors in all decisions.

What is the Value-Added of Diversity?

- Diversity brings new perspectives and questions to the table. It allows us to look at issues with a more thorough and complex lens. This is particularly important in the research field so that we can begin to ask questions and arrive at solutions that are relevant to all segments of the population.

Barriers to Diversity

- Hostile or non-welcoming environments do not allow nonprofits to recruit or retain diverse staff and leadership.
- Pools of diverse applicants exist; nonprofits simply do not have the skills, time, money or networks to recruit diverse boards and staff. In addition, they often do not guarantee placements or offer competitive salaries.
- The career ladder of the nonprofit sector is difficult to understand and often varies across organizations. In the corporate sector, these steps are clear, concise, and consistent.
- A poor image of nonprofit leaders exists; they work hard, have low salaries, and must often deal with difficult board issues.
- In some cultures, the nonprofit sector is considered less "honorable" or stable than the corporate or professional sector.
- Long-serving executive directors can make it difficult to bring in new leadership. However, in the *Daring to Leave* report, it was noted that 65-70% of nonprofit Executive Directors are planning to leave in the next 5 years.

- Many people leave the nonprofit sector to make money in the corporate sector and never come back (“golden handcuffs”).
- There are high levels of burnout in the nonprofit sector and nonprofits do not invest enough in the training and development of their staff to retain them.

Innovative Approaches to Achieving Diversity

- Foundations can begin by diversifying their own boards and staff and require the same of their grantees. The staff and leadership of our organizations should match the demographics of our communities.
- The nonprofit sector can mentor and recruit diverse leadership very early on through internships, fellowships, and other targeted outreach efforts. The totality of the experience counts. Recruitment is an ongoing task and should occur at every meeting, conference, and gathering to build a pool of potential candidates.
- In order to retain diverse leadership, the nonprofit sector needs to provide advanced professional development and training, debt alleviation programs, and a welcoming environment.
- We need to have more discussions like these to create a consciousness and place a burden on the nonprofit sector to achieve more diverse leadership.
- There may be a role for philanthropy to create a nonprofit recruitment agency for mid-level professionals. Such an agency may also provide training for the nonprofit sector on creating a welcoming environment, mentoring and networking, as well as work with colleges and universities to increase the exposure to and reputation of the nonprofit sector. One existing resource is *The Nonprofit Sector Workforce Coalition*, which connects talented, skilled, and diverse young people to nonprofit sector careers, and helps nonprofit organizations recruit, retain, and cultivate the diverse leadership.

PREPARING FOR THE NEW ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS

This session explored how funders can help inform, influence and shape the agenda of the next President and Congress.

- **Michael Laracy**, Co-Chair, Grantmakers Income Security Taskforce (Moderator)
- **Bruce Katz**, Vice President and Director of *Metropolitan Policy*, The Brookings Institution
- **John Podesta**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Center for American Progress

Talking Points from Bruce Katz

1. Personnel is policy. Identify and suggest potential candidates to staff Cabinet, Sub-cabinet, Agency, and Civil Service positions. What is the contingency plan for those institutions, particularly if a Democrat wins?
2. Provide each institution with a concise memo on the top 3-5 key items they should be concerned about and the political minefields that exist. Grantees can help inform this process.
3. Campaign promises will define early policy priorities and guide tax and spending decisions.
4. Climate and infrastructure are two non-income security related areas where there will likely be a lot of focus in the next Administration and Congress. Find ties and allies in these areas.
5. Secretaries are motivated by their budgets. Access details on each agency's budget including where it has been and where there are clear demands.
6. Chairs and ranking members of Congress are key and oversee agendas. Identify potential allies.
7. Utilize the voices from below. Innovative state, community and civic leaders in the field should be our voices and advocates for change at the federal level. Corporate and conservative voices for change can also be powerful alliances. Consider organizing a Summit for these leaders in 2008 to build consensus around a core agenda.

Talking Points from John Podesta

1. There are no easy sources of money. Policies that do not impact the federal budget (e.g. the minimum wage) might be the most appealing.
2. The President spends more time with White House staff than Cabinet staff.

3. Get candidates locked down on campaign promises as these will inform and define policy priorities. Campaign staff often becomes White House staff.
4. Mayors are a powerful political ally; work with the Conference of Mayors.
5. Target ranking members and committee chairs along with moral leaders (Jim McGovern).
6. The progressive plate of issues is full. We need to collaborate and create a common strategy with existing priorities on the agenda:
 - Immigration (e.g. push for benefits for undocumented workers will affect low-wage workers as well)
 - Global Warming and energy policy
 - Healthcare reform
 - Iraq and the position of the US in the world
 - Dealing with the housing crisis
 - Financial Services
 - Economy
 - Adult Education
7. The carbon tax is a potential source of revenue.
8. The voices on the ground are our backbone; give them a voice.

Key Points from Q&A Session

- Get advice from the Hill about how to align efforts with existing agenda priorities and the sequencing of those efforts (action is being taken on energy and financial services issues now).
- Center for American Progress is developing “wikki reports” which will provide transition recommendations for each agency and be available to the public in late summer or after the election.
- Demonstrate political feasibility and enlist the support of institutional organizations. There is an enormous return on investment for state-level infrastructure. Look at examples in Virginia and Ohio.

FRAMING OUR WORK: A NEW VISION FOR MOVING FORWARD

A panel of experts presented the most current research and analysis on the benefits and challenges of using frames to address issues of poverty, economic opportunity, and social inclusion and discussed the implications and potential uses of this research. Copies of the presentations were distributed at the meeting and will be posted on the web site.

- [Ed Hatcher](#), President, The Hatcher Group (Moderator)

Presenters

- [Meg Bostrom](#), President, Public Knowledge
- [Guy Molyneux](#), Partner, Hart Research Associates
- [Matthew Nisbet](#), Assistant Professor, American University School of Communication

Discussants

- [Wade Henderson](#), President and CEO, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
- [Alan Jenkins](#), Executive Director, The Opportunity Agenda
- [Karen Kornbluh](#), Policy Director, U.S. Senator Barack Obama
- [Margy Waller](#), Director, The Mobility Agenda and Co-Founder, Inclusion