

Building Community Across a Nation

The National Lesbian and Gay
Community Funding Partnership

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Introduction

No Ordinary Time for Action

The last decade of the century, the 1990's, was a period of unprecedented economic growth and wealth acquisition, and in particular, a period yielding new and greater sources of philanthropic funding. In this time of great financial capacity, the challenge is to cultivate wealth with vision and values—that is, a philosophy that guides the investment of philanthropic resources to build long-lasting and positive social change. Wealth with vision and values means not only investing in the “tried and true” but taking risks and going beyond the obvious—exercising leadership in problem solving and encouraging others to do the same.

Despite our nation's bounty, our problems persist. Poverty, homelessness, violence, substance abuse, inadequate healthcare, and poor performing schools endure. Though good economic times have helped to move some people from poverty to employment, from homelessness to housing, and from illness to health, there are others for whom this path is made more difficult by bigotry associated with racial, ethnic, age, ability, gender and sexual orientation bias.

And such has been the case for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community—a community whose human and social service needs are not unlike the needs of others, but a community for whom discrimination has posed a significant barrier to having those needs met. Historically there have been very few philanthropic entities that would support programs and services dedicated to the LGBT community. To fill this void, lesbian and gay people have established their own organizations to meet the wide-ranging social, cultural and political needs of their communities. However, many of these organizations are small, volunteer-run and significantly under-resourced.

With an appreciation that the lesbian and gay community has been under-served and under-represented, and that without targeted efforts the LGBT community would not likely benefit from increases in conventional philanthropic investment, the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership (the Partnership) was founded. Organized as a project of the Working Group on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues, the Partnership was established as a collaborative funding model whereby national funders partner with local community foundations to support community-based programs serving LGBT people. The Partnership set out to increase philanthropic resources dedicated to programs and services for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. It was designed to offer a vision for the application of wealth with values, and structured to permit whole communities to become architects of their own futures.

Stories of Community Building

This publication tells the story of what happened in five communities across the country that became partners with the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. They worked together and independently on the establishment of community-based philanthropic funds for lesbian and gay programs and services. In reading these stories one begins to understand the strategic benefits of a national initiative designed to stimulate local problem-solving, and one also understands the powerful role of leadership in building strong communities.

The Mechanics of a Solid Strategy

The Partnership's strategy is a relatively new model for philanthropy—a collaborative funding model that pools resources from national foundations to support local

community foundations that then provide monies to support problem-solving strategies at the local level. Such collaborative funds allow national foundations to address problems that are national in nature but are best addressed through community-based efforts. By the mid-1990's, there were approximately 10 such collaborative funds. Frequently these funds are structured to rely on community foundations as the local partner that provides the community-based infrastructure through which monies are matched and granted. These collaborative funds have been established to address everything from neighborhood redevelopment to HIV/AIDS. The proliferation of this model reflects its promise as an effective strategy to support national community organizing efforts around a specific set of issues.

In 1994, armed with the promise of \$750,000 from the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation, along with grants from a number of other foundation and corporate giving programs, the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership was launched. The Partnership was established as a collaborative fund to encourage increased philanthropic resources for LGBT programs and services. Adopting the collaborative "national grantmaker-community foundation" model, the Partnership issued its first request for proposals in 1994. Since then, the Partnership has continued to recruit local partners and has grown to include 25 community foundations across North America.

Like other community foundation collaborative funding models, the Partnership uses a local match requirement to encourage fundraising at the community level. To accommodate different capacities, the Partnership has a three-tiered matching fund system. Foundations with high assets (\$50,000,000 and above) are required to raise a 2:1 match; medium-asset foundations (\$10,000,000 - \$49,999,999) are required to raise a 1:1 match; and small-asset foundations (under \$10,000,000) are required to raise a 1:2 match. In addition to its contribution toward local grantmaking, the National Partnership provides start-up

grants to cover administrative costs and transition grants to support local partners in assuming their independence.

The National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership set out to achieve the following objectives:

- Increase awareness and understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and issues within the philanthropic community and the community-at-large;
- Stimulate the establishment and expansion of philanthropic resources available for LGBT programs and services;
- Encourage social service agencies to develop programs and services that respond to the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people;
- Strengthen the infrastructure of existing LGBT organizations;
- Cultivate community foundations as a resource for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people including donors; and,
- Encourage a positive relationship between community foundations and the organizational and philanthropic leadership of the LGBT community.

The Partnership Process

The Partnership issues a request for proposals annually to solicit applications from community foundations interested in becoming a local site. Once accepted as a site, the National Partnership office disburses funds to the community foundation for start-up activities. While the process of launching a local Partnership varies from community to community, common elements can be seen across the majority of sites.

Initially, the local Partnership site convenes an advisory committee comprised of a range of individuals, typically including community foundation staff and/or board members, LGBT activists and other members—both gay and straight—representing the community-at-large. These advisory committees are encouraged to reflect broad diversity in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, age, ability and sexual orientation.

The advisory committee is charged with overseeing a community scan process in

which research is conducted to identify needs of the local LGBT community. The findings are intended to inform priority-setting for the local Partnership's grant-making. In most cases, the advisory committee works in conjunction with the community foundation to raise the matching funds required to be a part of the National Partnership "family." A variety of fundraising strategies have been employed across sites, from grassroots fundraising to foundation and corporate solicitations.

With matching funds in hand, the advisory committee is equipped to launch the grantmaking process. In some sites, the Partnership's grantmaking coincides with the grantmaking cycle of the community foundation as a whole, whereas others establish a different cycle for Partnership-related giving. The committee reviews submitted grants, and recommends to the community foundation trustees which projects to fund based on site-specific needs and criteria.

The Whole is Greater Than the Sum of its Parts

What follows are the stories of five different communities—Maine, Washington DC, Detroit, Santa Fe and Boulder—involved in the Partnership experience. Though the National Partnership fosters a community-specific focus among the local sites, it provides a national network—a backdrop of collective effort that frames not only the successes of each community, but the challenges as well. The National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership by its design reflects a belief that the whole truly is greater than the sum of its parts. As you read the stories that follow, you will note these themes.

- **These are not communities with large and visible LGBT populations.** From Maine to Santa Fe, the LGBT population is working at the grassroots level, solving local problems with local energy and effort.

- **Every success takes a local champion.** Whether it is a community foundation staff person or an advisory committee member, an essential ingredient is the contribution and leadership of one individual who stands ready to carry the torch.

- **Every challenge is an opportunity in disguise.** All of these sites have encountered challenges in the process of establishing their local funds, but in every case, the challenge was converted to an organizing opportunity. Passions were sparked and people were mobilized.

- **LGBT issues are everybody's issues.** LGBT issues are the same issues that receive consistent attention from conventional philanthropy: youth issues, physical and mental health, anti-violence, housing, employment, and so on.

One could argue there is nothing special about Maine, Washington DC, Detroit, Santa Fe and Boulder. They are not wealthier or more politically daring than other communities across the nation. But what does make these communities special are the people within them—people who, by their leadership, their courage, their vision and their conviction, set a standard toward which all communities might strive.¹

¹ Methodology

These stories were written and developed through interviews with key participants at each of the five sites: Maine; Washington, DC; Detroit, MI; Santa Fe, NM; and Boulder, CO. Generally, key informants represent, in their official capacities, staff at the sponsoring community foundation, members of local advisory committees, and staff of organizations that received grants from the local Partnership sites.

The Maine Equity Fund

A Project of the Maine Community Foundation

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THE MAINE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (1999 figures)

Assets \$60,446,723
Total Giving \$4,894,688
Average Grant Size \$3,770

MAINE'S LOCAL PARTNERSHIP MAINE EQUITY FUND

Total Giving \$115,661
No. of Grants 32
Average Grant Size \$3,614

Internal Champion
Executive Director
of the Maine Community Foundation

(Source: The Foundation Directory Supplement, 1999.)

POLITICAL AND LEGAL CLIMATE IN THE STATE OF MAINE, 1999

Governor Independent
ME House Democrat
ME Senate Democrat

STATEWIDE LGBT LEGISLATION

Civil rights law includes LGBT people?
No

Hate crimes law includes LGBT people?
Yes

Same-sex marriage ban?
Yes

(Source: www.nglftf.org)

STATE OF MAINE DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 1,251,762
Race/Ethnicity
98.0% White
0.6% Hispanic origin
0.6% Asian/Pacific Islander
0.4% African American
0.4% American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut

MEDIAN INCOME \$35,640

Key Industry Natural resources, farming,
sea harvesting, forestry and tourism.

(Source: 1996 and 1998 Census projections,
www.visitmaine.com, www.state.me.us)

Furthering its mission to “strengthen Maine communities by building charitable endowments, maximizing benefits to donors, making effective grants and providing leadership to address community needs,” the Maine Community Foundation (MCF) became a local partner site of the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership in 1996.

MCF’s Executive Director at the time, Marion Kane, championed the initiative, receiving encouragement from David Becker, a donor to MCF as well as a long-time gay activist and philanthropist. Kane encountered initial discomfort with the idea from MCF’s board of directors, who struggled with justifying what some members felt would not only be a risky effort but also one that “singled out the LGBT community” for special attention from MCF. Finding opportunity in the challenge, Kane proposed establishing a fund to combat discrimination more broadly in Maine, including racism and anti-Semitism, as well as homophobia.

And so the Maine Equity Fund was born, with a mission to “promote greater understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender issues in Maine and in so doing address issues of diversity, inclusiveness and acceptance of differences.”

Two “Maines”: A Divided Cultural and Political Context

Demographically, Maine has very little racial/ethnic diversity, with a 98% white population. Politically, the state predominantly holds independent values, with liberal pockets primarily in southern urban and certain coastal regions. Political observers characterize Maine using a series of dichotomies: urban versus rural, coastal versus inland, southern versus northern, and rich versus poor.

Negotiating its way through this divided context, the Maine LGBT community has been emerging in recent years from a long history of fear and invisibility. Despite over 20 years of steady legislative efforts to secure a civil rights bill, the emergence of a number of community organizations, and the formation of the Maine Lesbian and Gay

Political Alliance in 1983, the Maine LGBT community still operates largely at the grassroots level to develop social, political and support infrastructures.

In 1995, the LGBT community in Maine had been under political attack: anti-gay forces sought to block civil rights protections for LGBT people—or any other so-called “new groups.” The community rallied together to combat the passage of the ordinance, convening the group Maine Won’t Discriminate to organize against what would amount to a step backwards from recognition of LGBT equality. Though the ordinance did not pass, the counter-effort took its toll on the community. At the same time, the attack contributed to an environment of political uncertainty.

In the wake of the 1995 referendum, “The time was right,” Kane explains, “for an advocate to ‘step up to the plate’ in support of funding for LGBT issues. MCF became that advocate.” Through discussions with key leaders, Kane also came to appreciate the extent to which the Maine LGBT community lived in fear and discomfort. Her many years with the Community Foundation infused her with a conviction that, “No one should feel fear or discomfort in their own community.” In such an environment, Kane viewed the Partnership initiative as a concrete opportunity to channel energy and resources into building a support and service infrastructure for the Maine LGBT community while educating the larger community about LGBT issues.

“The Equity Fund provided a positive focus for people who sought to contribute to the LGBT community in Maine during a time of political attacks and an overall sense of frustration in struggling for civil rights,” states Pat Peard, Chair of Maine Won’t Discriminate and Advisory Committee member for the Equity Fund.

Becker, who also joined the Advisory Committee, recalls that “The Partnership was not an easy sell to the board. Community foundations are mainstream foundations representing all facets of a community, both conservative and liberal. This was a stretch for the Foundation.

“This was a stretch for the Foundation. They had funded a few other LGBT groups (prior to MEF), but to actually go out and get a national initiative with the L and G words in it...that was a whole new level of commitment.”

David Becker

They had funded a few other LGBT groups [prior to MEF], but to actually go out and get a national initiative with the L and G words in it...that was a whole new level of commitment.” But Kane, aware that the founding Chair of MCF’s board had been a supporter of LGBT issues, saw the Partnership as a chance to continue his legacy.

“Marion spoke very strongly for [the Partnership] and got the Assistant Attorney General for the state to come speak to the board, to say that not only is there racial prejudice, but also gay and lesbian kids are getting beaten up. This strategy proved pivotal for convincing the board this was a good idea,” Becker explains.

Kane also found an ally on the board in Marilyn Rockefeller. “Marilyn was very much an advocate, and she offered to chair [the Advisory Committee for the new Equity Fund],” Kane reports. Rockefeller’s involvement, as an MCF board member, proved to be a key component in the successful launch of the Equity Fund. “As we involved board members, they became increasingly aware of the issues. We kept feeding information back to the board about the process and the grant projects. This was an important part of helping them along in becoming more comfortable with funding LGBT issues,” Kane concludes.

“The Equity Fund provided a positive focus for people who sought to contribute to the LGBT community in Maine during a time of political attacks and an overall sense of frustration in struggling for civil rights.” Pat Peard

**“No one should feel fear or discomfort in their own community.”
Marion Kane**

"Because of all the referenda and issues related to the LGBT community in Maine's recent past, we were able to tap into support for these issues. People wanted to focus on the positive, something that was community-building." Pat Peard

The Launch

Having identified Marilyn Rockefeller as the Chair, the 15-member Advisory Committee to the Maine Equity Fund was convened in May 1996. Members of the committee represent business professionals, nonprofit organizations serving the LGBT community, elected officials, religious leaders, and youth. About one-third of committee members identify as straight. In terms of racial and ethnic diversity, the committee has been predominantly white, though African-American and Jewish members have also participated in the process.

Working together with Kane as the MCF staff representative, the committee spearheaded both the start-up phases of the initiative—including conducting a community needs assessment—as well as ongoing responsibilities such as fundraising and grantmaking.

To assess community needs, a questionnaire was distributed to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people throughout Maine as well as to service providers and community organizations serving LGBT communities. The needs assessment findings revealed the following top priorities for Equity Fund projects:

- guaranteeing civil rights and protection against violence for LGBT people;
- strengthening community education to reduce oppression and counter anti-LGBT fear;
- building the capacity of LGBT community organizations;
- enhancing LGBT community organizations and coalition-building; and
- increasing available services for LGBT youth.

These priorities guide the Fund's grantmaking and serve as benchmarks against which its achievements can be measured.

In terms of fundraising, Pat Peard reports, "We were successful at getting the matching funds and it wasn't a real struggle. I've had a lot harder things to raise money for...it was all done in a very organized fashion. Because of all the referenda and issues related to the LGBT community in Maine's recent past, we were able to tap into support for these issues. People wanted

to focus on the positive, something that was community-building." In its initial round of fundraising, donors to the Equity Fund included a corporate funder who had not previously funded LGBT issues; a foundation funder with a history of funding these issues; and individuals, both new and previous donors to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

Unlike most other Partnership sites around the country, the reach of the Maine Equity Fund is statewide, mirroring the scope of funding for the Maine Community Foundation as a whole.

The Impact

Unique aspects of the Maine Equity Fund—including its statewide scope, the focus on civil rights broadly defined, and targeted efforts to provide LGBT-serving nonprofits with technical assistance—contribute to the initiative's many achievements.

According to Becker, the Fund's statewide scope made good political sense. "It is an excellent idea because of the statewide referenda, plus the constant struggle between the various Maine factions [rural versus urban, coastal versus inland, etc.]. The statewide emphasis was good to get activists around the state to work together."

Peard recalls associated challenges yet concludes that these were worth the opportunities created: "Having a statewide reach was very challenging in the proposal review process...a lot of the proposals we got from rural groups were not put together correctly, nor properly budgeted. This actually helped to inform our later focus on technical assistance."

Ultimately, the statewide reach served to develop LGBT communities in geographic parts of the state that may not have otherwise received funding attention. "The bene-

"The benefit of the statewide reach was that we now have more people in different parts of the state that have the capacity to take on leadership to initiate projects in their own [geographic] communities." Pat Peard

fit of the statewide reach was that we now have more people in different parts of the state that have the capacity to take on leadership to initiate projects in their own [geographic] communities. They raised awareness of their local needs and they have a sense of their own success in their projects. Attention was given to usually neglected parts of the state,” Peard reports.

While on a practical level the Equity Fund’s focus on promoting civil rights across sexual orientation as well as racial/ethnic and other lines was, according to Kane, “a strategy to make the initiative palatable to the board,” the strategy’s success goes beyond the board’s agreement to participate in the Partnership on these terms.

LGBT members of the Fund’s Advisory Committee frankly describe their own process of accepting what felt to be a compromise at the Fund’s outset. “This was a subject of some painful discussion...not that we didn’t think it is all important, because we did, but at the same time it was hard not to feel like the language was diluting the impact of the Partnership for the LGBT community,” says Becker. Peard states, “For myself, it was a hard decision...but as the conversation went on, it became clear that we could only benefit from opening up the scope.”

In actuality, a small proportion of the Fund’s grant dollars (about 15%, according to Kane) went to broader civil rights projects. But each funded project furthered the goal of the Equity Fund’s broad civil rights focus: to build bridges across lines of discrimination and to promote acceptance of all. For example, the Maine Equity Fund supported the Youth Diversity Training Program, which focused on educating young people about all aspects of diversity, including sexual orientation. Another positive outcome is a newly formed joint effort between MCF and the United Way to work on diversity issues.

Identified as a priority in the needs assessment, and further supported as a primary need through the grantmaking process, the Maine Equity Fund targeted grants and other efforts on building the

capacity of LGBT-serving nonprofit organizations. These technical assistance efforts strengthened LGBT organizations in Maine, solidifying an organizational infrastructure for the community.

According to Becker, “Maine LGBT organizations are so very grassroots, we felt it was necessary. Some of the most significant progress has been to help groups get organized.” Peard agrees: “This was one of the best parts of what we did, not to take away from the other projects, but...there were so many organizations that were able to learn about basic things, including tax issues, how to raise money...we have stronger organizations, more professional. They provide better services and frankly, there are more services available now.”

One of the Fund’s strategies for providing technical assistance is a mentoring program, through which Portland Outright—a support service organization for LGBT and questioning youth under the age of 23 years—is paired with smaller and newer Outright programs around the state. “This helped to start Outrights in four parts of the state where there hadn’t been one before,” reports Becker.

Another strategy, implemented in the Fund’s second year, was to make grants contingent on groups looking to partner and to work on technical assistance efforts. “To this extent,” Becker claims, “we contributed to new networks and collaboration.”

Legacies and Future Directions

The legacy of the Maine Equity Fund reaches beyond the impact of the projects and grants it has supported to date. The Fund has become a leader in funding for LGBT issues in Maine, impacting philanthropy as a whole in the state. MCF as an institution has grown, particularly at the board level, to embrace fully a commitment to support LGBT community needs. Furthermore, a permanent endowment for the Fund is in the works to ensure the availability of support for LGBT issues into the future.

According to Becker, MCF’s participation in this Partnership provided the “Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval” for funding

**“ They [LGBT-serving nonprofits] provide better services and frankly, there are more services available now [because of the Maine Equity Fund]. ”
Pat Peard**

LGBT issues, giving permission to other funders to explore their comfort level in lesbian and gay funding. "Certainly, MCF is one of the biggest philanthropic players in Maine...I cannot stress enough the importance of the Foundation doing this," Becker adds. Kane explains that once there is a critical mass of funding available for a particular program area, "you reach the point where [other funders] feel there is enough support and they begin to feel comfortable...[Funding for LGBT issues] becomes less controversial if a leader takes a stand."

Kane reports that since the establishment of the Equity Fund several other funders in Maine have made LGBT grants. "We asked Maine Initiatives to partner with us at the outset; at the time, they said, 'No' [because of internal capacity and timing issues], but since that time they have made significant grants to LGBT projects and organizations. The leadership provided by the Equity Fund paved the way. The UNUM Foundation placed funds in MCF for a scholarship project for the LGBT community. And, MCF alone has seen a fivefold increase in giving to programs and services since the launch of the Equity Fund."

The negative reactions of some MCF donors to the Equity Fund have challenged the commitment of MCF's board to funding for LGBT issues. Kane recalls that, "Some donors, especially from the northern part of the state, questioned giving money to MCF once we began funding these issues. This reaction from donors provided the perfect opportunity to educate the board about what the role of a community foundation—to represent all factions of the community—means in real terms. In the end, the board unanimously agreed they were likely to confront these challenges on an ongoing basis. The board had to grow a lot in order to buy into and own this initiative."

Since the start of the Equity Fund, MCF's board has elected an openly gay member to its ranks, David Becker of the Fund's Advisory Committee. Becker reports, "When I was elected to the board, part of the announcement that was included in the MCF newsletter was my experience with the Working Group [on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues] and the Equity Fund. Despite some dissent, MCF has not tried to hide the steps they have taken towards LGBT inclusion."

To continue the excellent work to date, Equity Fund Advisory Committee members are committed to establishing a permanent endowment for funding LGBT and other civil rights issues. The young endowment, seeded with \$15,000, has a goal of raising \$1,000,000. "Though the endowment hasn't gotten very far yet, someone has recently earmarked their estate for the Fund, and that is a start," Kane reports.

From the standpoint of contributing to a larger LGBT civil rights movement, the Maine Equity Fund plays a key role. "This effort has advanced the agenda and generally raised consciousness [of LGBT issues]," Kane describes. "Any great movement needs to focus on its own needs before it can mainstream. You need to separate yourself before you can integrate. This is a phase all advocacy movements go through before they can say, 'We can stand on our own ground.'" And thanks to the efforts of the Maine Equity Fund, the ground on which the Maine LGBT community stands is firmer than ever.

"You reach the point where [other funders] feel there is enough support and they begin to feel comfortable... [Funding for LGBT issues] becomes less controversial if a leader takes a stand."

Marion Kane

The Bridge Builders Fund

A Project of the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region

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**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR THE
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION** (1999 figures)

Assets \$101,957,068
Total Giving \$14,068,013
Average Grant Size \$12,194

**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION'S PARTNERSHIP
BRIDGE BUILDERS FUND** (1997-99 figures)

Total Giving \$161,620
No. of Grants 30
Average Grant Size \$5,387

Internal Champion
Director of Programs for CFNCR

**POLITICAL AND LEGAL CLIMATE IN
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, 1999**

Mayor Democrat

KEY LGBT LEGISLATION

Civil rights law includes LGBT people?
Yes

Hate crimes law includes LGBT people?
Yes

Same-sex marriage ban?
No

LOCAL LGBT LEGISLATION

*Anti-discrimination ordinance includes
LGBT people?*
Yes

(Source: www.nglhf.org)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 528,964
Race/Ethnicity
63.0% African American
34.0% White
6.9% Hispanic origin
3.0% Asian/Pacific Islander
0.3% American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut

MEDIAN INCOME \$33,433

Key Industry Government and tourism.

(Source: 1997 and 1998 Census projections)

The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region (CFNCR) serves three jurisdictions: Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The CFNCR was founded in 1973 and restructured in 1992 with an emphasis on "breaking down the various barriers of wealth, race, and jurisdiction to unite visions."

The CFNCR has a history of funding diverse organizations and under-served communities. Nearly all of its discretionary grants target community-based organizations serving people of color and other special needs populations.

The CFNCR, with the leadership of its Director of Programs, became a local Partner of the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership in 1996. The Washington DC-area site named its initiative the Bridge Builders Fund to represent its unique commitment to funding projects that "build bridges" between lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and straight people across a range of communities. The following story tells of the achievements and challenges of the Bridge Builders Fund in the greater Washington DC area.

A Complex Context

As the nation's capital, Washington DC is "a complicated area with different political and legal structures to deal with," explains Bob Bayer, Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee for the Bridge Builders Fund. Demographically, DC's population is very diverse along race/ethnicity lines. The area's high proportion of immigrant communities also contributes to its great cultural diversity.

According to Lisa Sullivan, a long-time area resident and the founder and President of grantee organization Local Initiative Support, Training and Education Network, Inc. (LISTEN, Inc.), "There are two Washingtons: the federal, inside the beltway Washington and the local neighborhoods of indigenous people. Federal Washington is white, and the overwhelming majority of indigenous local people are African American. Each represents totally

"In presenting the idea to the board, some members came forward with their own stories about friends and family members that are gay. Those were moving meetings for all of us."

Sally Rudney

"People said, 'Let's do it differently, let's build bridges across all communities.'"

Sally Rudney

different points of view. According to a report published by the Brookings Institution, 16th Street is the dividing line in the Washington Metropolitan region. East of 16th Street is where people of color live and where poverty in the region is disproportionately concentrated, while west of 16th Street is disproportionately white and wealthy. Those who make policy and control the resources of the region live west. The nation's capital and its region are racially and economically segregated."

Similarly diverse, the LGBT community in the DC area is comprised of "lots of different people and different organizations," according to Sally Rudney, Director of Programs for the CFNCR. Within this complex context, the Bridge Builder's Fund has navigated its way towards its mission of breaking down barriers and unifying communities across traditionally dividing lines.

The Launch

The four years following the 1992 restructuring of the CFNCR marked a period of substantial growth. Between 1992 and 1996, the Foundation's assets doubled to \$50 million. In 1996, the CFNCR was managing 114 separate funds and participating in major regional and national funding collaboratives, such as the National Collaborative on Violence Prevention and the Washington AIDS Partnership. The Foundation was ready to become a Partnership site, having "newly emerged with the capacity and leadership to support a fund for the lesbian and gay community."²

"The reason the Community Foundation applied to become a Partnership site was staff interest," recalls Sally Rudney. "It got my attention. I went to William B. Hart, Jr., the President of the Foundation at that time, and said I would like to explore the idea with the community. Hart said, 'Let's do that!' He very much supported the initiative. In presenting the idea to the board, some members came forward with their own stories about friends and family members who are gay. Those were moving meetings for all of us," reports Rudney. With the approval of its board of directors,

the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region became a Partnership site in 1996.

Rudney did much of the organizing to bring together early supporters to help shape the initiative: "When I first convened the 'Friends' group to talk about whether to apply to the Partnership, people said 'let's do it differently, let's build bridges across all communities.'" Out of these meetings came the title of the local Partnership—the Bridge Builders Fund—as well as the idea that the co-chairs of the Advisory Committee should exemplify building bridges. Thus, the co-chairs represent both the LGBT and straight communities as well as communities of color and the white community.

Co-Chair Marcia Duvall, an African-American lesbian, explains, "If I can applaud any one dimension of this [advisory] board, it is the investment in creating a board that is a real reflection of diversity. Where we are now is one of the most honest representations of diversity that you could come up with, in terms of race, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation. The current mix of the [Bridge Builders Fund Advisory Committee] is a result of members recruiting friends and associates based on our own commitment to recruit like and unlike people. It has not always been easy, particularly because we are meant to raise funds. This can make it difficult to recruit members from particular segments of the community because fundraising in the philanthropic sense is not second nature to us all."

One powerful benefit to the focus on Advisory Committee diversity is in modeling the kinds of coalitions they are seeking to fund. The focus of the Bridge Builders Fund is on collaborative efforts between communities across traditional lines of division, such as sexual orientation, race, nationality, class, ability, gender and age. Applicants must have a collaborative partner that helps them to cross these "bridges," and several grants have been made to straight organizations serving the LGBT population.

In the community, the launch of the Bridge Builders Fund "has created excite-

² The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region application to the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership, 1996.

"What's interesting to me about this is that we are drawing the most funding from the straight community, not the LGBT community. Looking at individual donors, about 60% of the monies come from the straight community."
Bob Bayer

ment around the new Fund, bringing in 'bridge building' proposals from predominantly straight organizations. Funding like this was unheard of, so we created a lot of excitement with this new source," Rudney details.

Co-Chair Bob Bayer, a straight white male, noted that not only are proposals coming from the straight community but many of the Fund's donors are straight as well. "What's interesting to me about this," asserts Bayer, "is that we are drawing the most funding from the straight community, not the LGBT community. Looking at individual donors, about 60% of the monies come from the straight community—and we're increasing funding from the straight community more than the LGBT community. This is the signature piece." Even the funds raised are crossing bridges between communities.

Fundraising can also be seen as a form of outreach and education. "Most of the money comes from Advisory Committee members soliciting it, and they solicit funds from people they know," says Bayer. For straight Advisory Committee members, this often means soliciting money from straight friends and acquaintances. "This alone is a bridging action, a form of outreach in its own right," Bayer claims. "I've gone through this for a couple of years, and I am asking a wider circle of people I know, and I'm spreading the word as I do so."

The Impact

DC is the only local Partnership site where grants are made almost exclusively to projects that collaborate across LGBT/straight lines, though grants also have been given to straight organizations offering services to the LGBT community. "Because we are the Bridge Builders Fund, we don't have a broad purpose of increasing funding for LGBT community needs exactly. Our goal is to bring together straight and gay people to do community problem solving and to bridge differences in the process. This is more a social change angle rather than a service provision angle," explains Sally Rudney. "We said let's get organizations working differently together—let's see if

"Our goal is to bring together straight and gay people to do community problem solving and to bridge differences in the process."
Sally Rudney

"The Latin American Youth Center trained its staff mentors, and youth leaders around issues of sexual minority youth and reached out to educate parents as well." **Bob Bayer**

that angle makes a small amount of money go further."

The results have been very positive. For example, within the Latino community, the Bridge Builders Fund's grantmaking has helped bring together straight and gay Latinos. La Clínica del Pueblo, a public health organization that serves the Latino community in the Washington DC area, had not previously addressed the particular health needs of the LGBT community. With a grant from the Bridge Builders Fund, La Clínica has started to do so by training staff in LGBT health issues and doing outreach into LGBT communities of color.

Similarly, the Latin American Youth Center, a nonprofit organization with a client base of Latino youth, had not been serving the needs of LGBT youth in its target population. As Co-Chair Bayer explains, "The Latin American Youth Center trained its staff, mentors, and youth leaders around issues of sexual minority youth and reached out to educate parents as well. Both organizations are providing visibility to issues that people were not discussing."

The Washington DC-area American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) applied for a Bridge Builders grant to bring together members of various racial and ethnic communities, as well as members of the LGBT community to work on a project about police mistreatment of all people. "The Partnership project was perfect for them to bring different groups together. With a new Mayor, there was a real chance to make a difference on this issue with a group that might not have come together otherwise," describes Rudney.

Bridge Builders grants do more than encourage disparate groups to work together on common issues. Even the act of seeking a grant can have a catalyzing effect on organizations. Rudney explains, "I was very moved by an arts organization in Washington DC that is pretty mainstream;

"Pursuing the Bridge Builders grant placed the issue of sexuality on the table for my staff...It forced our staff to embrace our mission entirely—we are committed to ALL urban youth 14-29, not just the straight ones."
Lisa Sullivan

it gets a lot of local foundation support. They wanted to do a Bridge Builders project, but they didn't apply. They told us that when they went back to their staff they discussed all kinds of gay-straight tension below the surface, things they needed to work on first before applying." Rudney was impressed: "I thought this was really powerful that thinking of applying had an impact on the organization."

Lisa Sullivan of LISTEN, Inc.—an initiative to provide support, training, and networking opportunities among 14-29 year-old urban youth to strengthen their capacity to be leaders involved in community problem solving and civic engagement—agrees. "Pursuing the Bridge Builders grant placed the issue of sexuality on the table for my staff, forcing the issue internal to our organization around anti-homophobia training. It forced our staff to embrace our mission entirely—we are committed to ALL urban youth 14-29, not just the straight ones," says Sullivan. "Not all of us were on the same page, so before we even got started, we had to do our own work. The entire organization had to embrace the work of this particular project, beyond the immediate and committed staff."

LISTEN, Inc. has also benefited from the Bridge Builders Fund beyond the dollars received. Explains Sullivan, "This was very healthy for us as a young organization. I think that kind of grant is precisely what a lot of African-American organizations need to push them into dealing with their homophobia...the opportunity to obtain funding that allows them to continue to work in the African-American community but cross the lines of sexuality."

Legacies and Future Directions

With its unique focus on building bridges between communities, the Bridge Builders Fund has affected some noteworthy changes in the Washington DC area. Impacts of the Fund have been felt both by organizations as well as individuals. Organizationally, the Bridge Builders Fund has developed new collaborations, as the Fund's grantmaking efforts operationalize its vision to bring LGBT and straight

"I believe that this fund has given us the opportunity to unlock the door of creating a legacy for our children, grandchildren, and friends. Now the challenge is in keeping the door open."

Marcia Duvall

organizations together. Also at the organizational level, the Fund stimulated new projects that broadened the reach of some organizations. Bayer reflects, "This feels good to know that we are stretching the civic fabric of community. These standards are what we see as the benchmarks of moving in the right direction."

Noting the impact on the lives of those involved with the Bridge Builders Fund, Co-Chair Duvall asserts, "I believe that this fund has given us the opportunity to unlock the door of creating a legacy for our children, grandchildren, and friends. Now the challenge is in keeping the door open."

In addition to affecting grantee organizations and those directly connected to the work of the Bridge Builders Fund, the initiative has expanded the CFNCR's definition of community. "The Community Foundation went from being an organization that, as far as I know, had no board or staff who were openly gay and had no real history of funding gay programs. Now the Bridge Builders Fund is part of our institution. It is part of board discussions, front and center, in discussing grants, in talking about it in the community year after year," explains CFNCR's Sally Rudney. "This has been a big change."

The next steps for the Bridge Builders Fund include finding ways to bring the work of the Fund into communities that they have not yet been able to reach. "We're looking for bridges to the Asian and Islamic communities," offers Bayer. "It is on our agenda to build bridges between the gay and straight elements of these communities, as we have begun to do in African-American and Latino communities."

"We're looking for bridges to the Asian and Islamic communities. It is on our agenda to build bridges between gay and straight elements of these communities, as we have begun to do in African-American and Latino communities."

Bob Bayer

"This is a cutting edge focus, as it is facilitating the dialogue in African-American communities, and communities of color, which I believe is the next frontier for the LGBT movement," says Lisa Sullivan of LISTEN, Inc. "I think that [the Bridge Builders Fund] can have a special impact in diversifying the LGBT movement, which to date has largely been a white movement. Just like this nation is coming to grips with racial and demographic shifts, so must the LGBT movement. In the 21st century, communities of color will in their own ways be forced to address issues historically associated with the predominantly white LGBT movement. It is important for organizations serving youth in communities of color to address these issues through the organization and its mission. I am excited to get this discussion on the table in communities of color. It's literally a matter of life and death."

"I think the Partnership understands that this is a very long-term agenda," says Co-Chair Bob Bayer. "This is not a flash in the pan initiative. This is one where you plant seed money and nurture it and hope you get a strong tree. But you don't get a strong tree immediately. We have not made a big difference here yet, but we have made important small differences."

The Advisory Committee is creating an endowment fund to continue its work of bringing straight and gay people together across a diverse array of communities as defined by race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender, ability, age, class, and national origin.

The Bridge Builders Fund stands as an emblem of how a vital vision, backed by local action, can sow the seeds of change for a future where diverse communities live together in unity and equality. The Fund's diverse Advisory Committee itself is, as Marcia Duvall concludes, "as much a microcosm of the Fund's vision and mission as [it is the mechanism for] identifying and funding those efforts in the community-at-large. This is not a single event—it is a process and a journey." Indeed, the journey for LGBT equality in the DC area will be more easily traversed with the aid of the bridges built by the Bridge Builders Fund.

"I think that [the Bridge Builders Fund] can have a special impact in diversifying the LGBT movement, which to date has largely been a white movement. Just like this nation is coming to grips with racial and demographic shifts, so must the LGBT movement."
Lisa Sullivan

"[The Fund's diverse Advisory Committee itself is] as much a microcosm of the Fund's vision and mission as [it is the mechanism for] identifying and funding those efforts in the community-at-large. This is not a single event—it is a process and a journey."
Marcia Duvall

The HOPE Fund

A Project of the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan

16

**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR
SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN** (1999 figures)

Assets \$260,467,819
Total Giving \$19,570,502
Average Grant Size \$25,000

SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN'S LOCAL PARTNERSHIP
(1994-99 figures)

Total Giving \$457,824
No. of Grants 38
Average Grant Size \$10,000

Internal Champion
Community Foundation President
and Program Officer

**POLITICAL AND LEGAL CLIMATE IN
THE STATE OF MICHIGAN, 1999**

Governor Republican
MI House Republican
MI Senate Republican

STATEWIDE LGBT LEGISLATION

Civil rights law includes LGBT people?
No

Hate crimes law includes LGBT people?
No

Same-sex marriage ban?
Yes

LOCAL LGBT LEGISLATION

*Detroit and Ann Arbor Anti-discrimination
ordinance includes LGBT people?*
Yes

(Sources: www.nglrf.org and the Community Foundation for
Southeastern Michigan)

SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 4,770,002

Race/Ethnicity

74.0% White
21.0% African American
2.0% Hispanic origin
2.0% Asian/Pacific Islander
0.4% American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut

MEDIAN INCOME \$41,124

Key Industry Automobiles, automobile parts,
processed foods.

(Source: 1996 and 1993 Census projections,
www.detroitchamber.com)

Established in 1984, the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan (CFSM) makes grants to nonprofit organizations throughout seven counties in southeastern Michigan, including Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Washtenaw, St. Clair and Livingston Counties—a region of nearly 5 million people.

The Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan is one of the faster growing community foundations in the United States. It is grounded in its commitment to “work across the boundaries that divide the region.” Based on this commitment, the Community Foundation saw the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership as an exciting opportunity to further expand its outreach and services to a population that is under-served by local grantmaking programs.

Lynette Campbell, a former Community Foundation Program Officer, and Jan Stevenson, a local community leader, provided the leadership to apply to be a Partnership site. The Community Foundation's Board of Directors approved the initiative, entitled, Helping Others through Partnership and Education—the HOPE Fund.

The HOPE Fund was accepted as a local Partner of the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership in 1994. Allan Gilmour, who at the time was Vice Chairman of Ford Motor Company, was an enthusiastic supporter of the effort, and he became Chair of the HOPE Fund's Advisory Committee.

The Cultural and Political Context

Traditionally, southeastern Michigan has been a strongly Democratic region with Democratic strongholds in Metropolitan Detroit, college town Ann Arbor, and the corridor between the two. In the surrounding affluent suburbs and rural counties resides a mix of Democrats and Republicans, with recent elections showing a trend towards a Republican majority.

The Launch

The HOPE Fund commissioned a needs assessment that helped clarify the portrait of the local LGBT community. While southeastern Michigan had a few organizations serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, the needs assessment demonstrated that the social service, health, educational, legal and advocacy needs of the community outstripped the capacity of these organizations.

Based on this finding, the HOPE Fund's Advisory Committee set about "to increase services to the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community; to strengthen community-based lesbian, gay, and bisexual organizations in southeastern Michigan; and to expand financial resources to meet the needs of this community." To build organizational capacity, the Advisory Committee established a "set aside" of funds for technical assistance grants for organizations. These grants would be offered on an as-needed basis, and would be distinct from program or service grants.

According to HOPE Fund Chair, Allan Gilmour, "Many organizations do not have the financial resources to accomplish their goals. Through its fundraising efforts and grant process, the HOPE Fund provides financial resources to organizations that might otherwise not be able to offer much needed services to the LGBT community."

With its sights set on fundraising and building organizational capacity, the HOPE Fund took off. The Advisory Committee was organized into a grant advisory committee to award grants, and a fund development committee to raise money—which it does with great success.

The Impact

The HOPE Fund is distinguished from other sites by the unusual achievements of its fundraising efforts, which allow the Fund to provide more than the average amount in grants to meet LGBT community needs. Since its inception in 1994, the HOPE Fund has raised more than \$625,000, awarding more than \$450,000 in grants thus far to organizations serving the LGBT community.³

Through its grantmaking, the HOPE Fund has helped improve and increase a variety of services for the LGBT community in the Detroit region—from services for gay men of color, to safer schools initiatives for LGBT and questioning youth, to expanded programs in the local LGBT community center and beyond. The Fund has provided financial support for services as well as technical assistance grants to strengthen organizations.

"The HOPE Fund has helped us build capacity; it has provided funding for our speaker series, helped us secure valuable [staff] training, and provided training for our board. We've been able to spread the money very far," asserts Cornelius Wilson, Executive Director of Men of Color Motivational Group, Inc., an organization that works to promote health and well-being among HIV-positive African Americans in Detroit. "The Men of Color Speakers' Forum now sends people throughout the city to talk about issues facing gay and lesbian people of color."

Cindy Woodbury, former Executive Director of Affirmations Lesbian/Gay Community Center, Inc., agrees. "The HOPE Fund allows us to take steps forward with every grant—we've been able to reach more people, do new programs and reach a different segment of the population." With support from the HOPE Fund, the Center has expanded its Lesbian and Gay Helpline and group service offerings.

The HOPE Fund is also a risk taker, funding services that other funders may not be willing to support. "The HOPE Fund is vitally important because there are not a lot of mainstream funders who are willing to make an investment in the gay community," explains Karen Fenwick, former President of Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays/Detroit (PFLAG/Detroit). The HOPE Fund supports PFLAG's "Making Schools Safe" program that trains teachers and administrators in the challenges facing LGBT youth. "Administrators have always had a moral responsibility to protect lesbian and gay students," says Fenwick. "The HOPE Fund allows us to take our programs into the schools."

"Many organizations do not have the financial resources to accomplish their goals. Through its fundraising efforts and grant process, the HOPE Fund provides financial resources to organizations that might otherwise not be able to offer much-needed services to our community."

Allan Gilmour

"The HOPE Fund is vitally important because there are not a lot of mainstream funders who are willing to make an investment in the gay community."

Karen Fenwick

³ The difference between the dollars raised and dollars awarded consists of funds not yet distributed as of August 2000 and funds in the endowment, as well as fundraising and publication costs, and early staff costs that are now donated by the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan.

"The HOPE Fund has helped us build capacity; it has provided funding for our speaker series, helped us secure valuable [staff] training, and provided training for our board."

Cornelius Wilson

Companies supporting the HOPE Fund include:

- Comerica Incorporated
- Daimler Chrysler Corporation Fund
- Ford Motor Company Fund
- IBM Corporation
- Morgan Stanley Dean Witter
- Northwest Airlines

As part of its effort to make schools safer for LGBT and questioning youth, the HOPE Fund also funds the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network in Detroit (GLSEN-Detroit). GLSEN-Detroit used their HOPE grant to distribute the publication "Bruised Bodies, Bruised Spirits," to over 1,000 educators throughout schools in southeastern Michigan. The publication documents the effects of hostile school environments on LGBT and questioning youth. "The HOPE Fund is making it possible to get this important lesson through to teachers and administrators in southeastern Michigan schools," says Frank Colasonti, Jr., former Co-Chair of GLSEN-Detroit.

With a commitment to continuing its grantmaking to meet LGBT community needs, the HOPE Fund's Advisory Committee underwent an intensive planning phase in 1996 to decide whether to establish a permanent endowment. The committee took care to meet with community leaders and nonprofit organizations, being concerned about not infringing on the funding base of the nonprofit community it was trying to serve. In meeting with local leaders, the committee explained the way an endowment would operate and how it could support the community over the long term. Confident that there was both a need for and support of an endowment, the group committed itself to raising funds for an endowment and continued grantmaking.

The HOPE Fund has been unusually successful in raising funds from the business community—a significant accomplishment for a lesbian and gay initiative. Among the companies from which the HOPE Fund has received support are the following: Comerica Incorporated, the Daimler Chrysler Corporation Fund, Detroit Edison, The Ford Motor Company Fund, IBM Corporation, Jaguar-Saab of Troy, Leer Corporation, MCN Energy, Miller Brewing Company, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, Northwest Airlines, Bank One, Phillips Pontiac Oldsmobile, Inc., and Seagram Americas.

According to those involved, the key that unlocked the door to corporate support was HOPE Fund Chair, Allan Gilmour. As former Vice Chairman of Ford Motor Company and a respected member of the business community, Gilmour was able to attract broad support from the corporate sector. He chairs both the Grants and Fund Development portions of the HOPE Fund's Advisory Committee. "It speaks volumes to the business community that Allan Gilmour decided to take this on," asserts Mark Neithercut, Vice President of the Community Foundation and staff to the Grants Advisory Committee.

Legacies and Future Directions

One clear legacy of the HOPE Fund is that it is helping to ensure that the organizations serving the LGBT community will be there over the long-term. "I think what we've done is sustained existing programs, get them reinstalled or reinstituted when they have gotten weak. The essential management, leadership and financial strength of the various LGBT organizations in Detroit were weak. We have consistently sought to spend and give money to build the strength of these service organizations," reports Gilmour.

In addition to helping create a more durable infrastructure of nonprofit organizations serving the LGBT community, the HOPE Fund has brought greater visibility to LGBT community needs. "I think some people thought 'Well that's a lot of attention!' as [the HOPE Fund] was featured in the local newspapers," says Gilmour. "Whether it was controversial or not, there is a greater understanding of LGBT community needs, perhaps among the corporate giving program staff and to some extent among other foundations. The HOPE Fund has served as a catalyst to get attention and money focused on these issues."

While continuing its outreach efforts to the corporate sector, the committee participated in a technical assistance training of its own to bring members up-to-date with fundraising options such as planned giving. The HOPE Fund Development

"There is a greater understanding of LGBT community needs... The HOPE Fund has served as a catalyst to get attention and money focused on these issues."
Allan Gilmour

"We thought we'd have trouble fundraising without a match or incentive so we created one. This has gotten some donors to give larger amounts... People love a challenge and they love a match."
Mariam Noland

"We are now funding LGBT issues forever. And we're setting a tough standard for grant-seeking organizations to be better equipped to compete for grants elsewhere."
Mariam Noland

Committee also created a new matching grant system to inspire community members to continue to give or to give for the first time.

"We thought we'd have trouble fundraising without a match or incentive from the National Partnership so we created one. This has gotten some donors to give larger amounts. It not only gives credibility because of those people's names attached to the Fund, it encourages giving—people love a challenge and they love a match," explains Mariam Noland, Community Foundation President, who works closely with the HOPE Fund Advisory Committee. The money raised from this new matching challenge is divided between the HOPE Fund's current grantmaking and the HOPE Fund endowment. In this way, the HOPE Fund is able to continue to make grants while securing future funding through the endowment effort.

The HOPE Fund has been able to attract donors within the LGBT community, providing a place for the community itself to invest its resources and leave a charitable and philanthropic legacy. "Much of the money raised currently comes from within the LGBT community. The HOPE Fund is providing added support to the community and over time will provide a permanent resource," asserts Noland.

Because of the endowment, the HOPE Fund is now a permanent part of CFSM. "We are now funding LGBT issues forever. And we're setting a tough standard for grant-seeking organizations to be better equipped to compete for grants elsewhere," says Noland. In June of 1999, Allan Gilmour joined the board of CFSM, extending his leadership and expertise to an even broader effort.

The HOPE Fund is meeting its mission. And now, with the creation of the HOPE Fund endowment and annual campaigns, it will do so for years to come.

The Santa Fe Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership

A Project of the Santa Fe Community Foundation

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SANTA FE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (1999 figures)

Assets \$10,847,521
Total Giving \$1,300,000
Average Grant Size \$8,000

SANTA FE'S LOCAL PARTNERSHIP: THE LESBIAN AND GAY COMMUNITY FUNDING PARTNERSHIP (1998-00 figures)

Total Giving \$110,500
No. of Grants 17
Average Grant Size \$6,500

Internal Champion
Community Foundation President

POLITICAL AND LEGAL CLIMATE IN THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO, 1999

Governor Republican
NM House Democrat
NM Senate Democrat

STATEWIDE LGBT LEGISLATION

Civil rights law includes LGBT people?
No

Hate crimes law includes LGBT people?
No

Same-sex marriage ban?
No

LOCAL LGBT LEGISLATION: SANTA FE

Civil rights protection for LGBT people?
No

Hate crimes law for misdemeanors?
Yes

(Sources: www.nglrf.org and Coalition for Equality in New Mexico)

SANTA FE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 124,228

Race/Ethnicity

51.0% Hispanic origin
45.6% White
3.0% American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut
1.0% African American
0.8% Asian/Pacific Islander

MEDIAN INCOME \$25,453

Key Industry Tourism and government.

(Source: 1999 Census projections, 1997 Bureau of Business & Economic Research, New Mexico Economic Development Department)

The mission of the Santa Fe Community Foundation (SFCF) is "to build and manage permanent community endowment funds to provide grants that enhance the quality of life in Santa Fe and northern New Mexico, now and for future generations." The Foundation's priority is Santa Fe County, but it also considers proposals from Rio Arriba, Los Alamos, Taos, San Miguel and Mora Counties.

In 1997, the Santa Fe Community Foundation, with the leadership of its President, applied to become a local Partner of the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. To boldly mark the focus of the initiative, the Santa Fe site elected to use the words "lesbian and gay" in its title. The following tells the story of the achievements and challenges of SFCF's Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership.

The Cultural and Political Context

Founded four centuries ago, Santa Fe is a crossroads of languages, customs, cultures, traditions, and aesthetic interests.⁴ Much of the six-county funding area of SFCF was originally populated by Native Americans, who were joined in the 1500s by descendants of Spanish Colonials.

Today, the town of Santa Fe is considered a progressive cultural and political center. Surrounding the town to the east and west are counties that tend toward more conservative social views. The LGBT population in Santa Fe is visible and enjoys a degree of acceptance in Santa Fe that is not as typical in the outlying areas of northern New Mexico. Politically, the LGBT community in Santa Fe is fairly well organized. "There were a couple of advocacy organizations... people got together to work on gay marriage legislation, and two hate crimes galvanized people," reports Elizabeth Bremner, President of SFCF. While the LGBT community has some political structures in place, there is little infrastructure to provide services. There were no nonprofit service organizations specifically for the LGBT community.

⁴ Source:
The Santa Fe Community Foundation
application to the National Lesbian
and Gay Community Funding
Partnership.

"By announcing this initiative and raising a large pot of funds for [the LGBT] community, it said 'it is OK to serve this community.'"

Elizabeth Bremner

The Launch

Elizabeth Bremner spearheaded the drive for SFCF to become a Partnership site in 1997. "The Partnership came at an interesting time. It was really an opportunity at the perfect moment. We already had three endowments that had either an LGBT focus exclusively or that included LGBT youth. The largest was \$80,000, so they were small, but this meant that we had a donor population with an interest in these issues. We had a mini track record that we were able to build on," explains Bremner. "By announcing this initiative and raising a large pot of funds for [the LGBT] community, it said, 'It is OK to serve this community.'"

The Santa Fe Partnership's kickoff event was a public forum designed to gather community input and to inform the work of the Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. The forum was advertised widely and held in a public library. "The public forum was very exciting. The room was full of energy. It gave us in the Community Foundation a vehicle to learn about the issues facing the LGBT community, and we matured in the process," recalls Bremner.

The public forum was helpful in a number of ways. It helped to articulate the goals for the initiative at an early stage; recruit Advisory Committee members; recruit focus group participants for the needs assessment; and start a "buzz" about the Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership in the Santa Fe community. This "buzz" and excitement was exactly what Bremner wanted to kick-off her unique approach to fundraising for the local Partnership.

In most cases, local Partnership sites assemble an Advisory Committee to raise the matching funds required to participate. This group also oversees the needs assessment and makes the grants. In contrast, Bremner, with a few volunteers, raised all of the required match before convening the Advisory Committee.

Bremner explains, "I am a true believer in momentum. I thought it important for the Community Foundation to demonstrate

its commitment to the LGBT community by raising the funds first. This presented an unencumbered initiative to the Advisory Committee members-to-be, and allowed them to focus on funding the community needs." After the first grantmaking cycle, the Advisory Committee then took full ownership of the fundraising function. It was easy for Advisory Committee members to commit to additional fundraising because of the momentum that had already been established.

Members of the Advisory Committee come from two main sources: the individuals who had already created LGBT-related funds in the Community Foundation, and individuals brought in by the public forum. The Advisory Committee has two co-chairs. In its second year of funding, the committee created a subcommittee to raise funds for direct grantmaking and for the endowment.

To identify the mission and goals for the Partnership, the Community Foundation performed a needs assessment using a series of focus groups. Unlike any other site in the country, all of the needs assessment data were collected through focus group discussions. The Santa Fe Community Foundation did extensive outreach in conducting these focus groups which served an important community organizing function. In addition, the groups were key to defining the mission for the Partnership which is "to raise awareness around issues affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in northern New Mexico and provide funds which significantly improve the well-being of LGBT people within our community."

The Impact

The Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership has had an impact on the culture and vision of the Community Foundation itself. When the Foundation joined the initiative, some board members had discomfort, but, "the board's commitment was clear that the Santa Fe Community Foundation has to exist for all members of the community," says Bremner. This commitment guided them through the

"The Rape Crisis Center wouldn't have been able to fully realize the goals of GLYPH without a local funder willing to fund and support gay and lesbian work."

Sandra Wechsler

early uneasiness into fully supporting the initiative. "It is very courageous of the board to say 'We want to serve the whole community.' This gives me a greater personal commitment to the organization...I see that they are stretching their personal beliefs. Just saying the words 'lesbian and gay' initially was tough for people!"

The Santa Fe Partnership's impact on the community is significant with grants reaching a range of LGBT community members, from LGBT and questioning youth to older community members. The Partnership is careful to reach the most under-served—such as homeless youth, seniors, rural residents, and people of color—within this traditionally under-served community.

In addition to its own grantmaking, the Foundation has worked to encourage other funders to make grants to the LGBT community as well. SFCF staff have met with staff of other Santa Fe area foundations to educate them about the needs of the LGBT community. "When we finished the focus groups for the needs assessment, we worked with the local foundation community, presenting the findings and our plan. We said they should be prepared for the proposals they are likely to get. Then we went back to tell them about the grants we made," explains Bremner.

Gay and Lesbian Youth Preventing Homophobia (GLYPH), one of the first projects funded by the local Partnership, created an anti-hate curriculum which is presented in schools throughout the Santa Fe area. GLYPH was the first LGBT program established by the 26 year-old Santa Fe Rape Crisis Center. "The Rape Crisis Center wouldn't have been able to fully realize the goals of GLYPH without a local funder willing to fund and support gay and lesbian work," explains Project GLYPH Supervisor Sandra Wechsler.

After a lengthy process to obtain approval from the school board—a process that the Rape Crisis Center's other in-school curricula did not have to undergo—GLYPH was granted permission to develop the curriculum and then to train the teachers. With support from students,

"[Anti-homophobia] training is happening in the schools all the way down to the janitors... Everyone can point to this and say, 'Kids should be safe in our schools.'" Elizabeth Bremner

parents and SFCF, GLYPH received unanimous approval from the school board to present its anti-hate curriculum, by invitation, in classes. In addition, the school board pledged to consider mandating GLYPH for the 2001-2002 school year.

"[Anti-homophobia] training is happening in the schools all the way down to the janitors. GLYPH sponsors forums and teacher trainings—everyone can point to this and say, 'Kids should be safe in our schools,' which is a goal that the Santa Fe community can get behind," asserts Bremner.

While the GLYPH grant is beginning to make headway into the school system towards creating an accepting environment for LGBT youth, another Partnership grant is having an impact on other institutions and how they treat LGBT youth. Santa Fe Youth Providers uses a Partnership grant to offer diversity training to sensitize law enforcement agencies, members of the judiciary and other youth provider agencies to the issues facing LGBT youth.

Through a grant to the People of Color AIDS Foundation (POCAF), the Partnership reaches rural LGBT youth and LGBT youth of color—populations that traditionally have been under-served in rural northern New Mexico. POCAF is using its grant to provide support groups and a gay youth network with trained adult and youth facilitators. Its programs address issues of isolation and sexual identity, aimed at supporting the mental and physical health of rural LGBT youth.

But it is not only the Partnership grants that are effecting change. The grantmaking process itself is changing the way organizations do business, fostering collaboration and communication between organizations to better meet LGBT community needs. As a part of its grantmaking process, the

**" [The Santa Fe Community Foundation] provides an environment in which grantees can help each other—and talk about how the community foundation can help us."
Sandra Wechsler**

**" We lost some donors, which was really hard—but we have also gained significant new donors."
Patricia Garcia Salazar**

Partnership brings grantees together for periodic meetings, to discuss the work each is doing. Grantee Sandra Wechsler of GLYPH finds these meetings to be an added benefit to the financial support. "It provides an environment in which grantees can help each other—and talk about how the Santa Fe Community Foundation can help us."

The Community Foundation is also witnessing the fruits of greater communication and collaboration. Bremner observes that, "Nonprofits serving the LGBT community are talking much more, both in Community Foundation-structured meetings and on their own." This has led to organized collaborations, some of which have been funded by the Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. One example of a collaboration that came out of the grantmaking process is a support group for homeless LGBT youth. The support group is provided through a partnership between the Youth Shelters and Family Services agency and Dana's After Dark, a Santa Fe youth service organization. The support group enhances the services already offered by Youth Shelters and Family Services, which include dedicated shelter space for LGBT homeless youth at the shelter's Transitional Living Program, case management and counseling. The Santa Fe Community Foundation's approach to communications for the Partnership has been confident and strategic. From the Partnership's inception, SFCF has been very open and "out" about its purpose, using the words "lesbian and gay" in its literature. In fact, even though SFCF has given its other programs equal billing, the Partnership grants received a great deal of media attention while other grantmaking areas were ignored.

Bremner explains, "The Community Foundation isn't 'sexy' or provocative. It doesn't get much press. The lesbian and gay initiative was the only press we were getting. This was a challenge to get attention for all the Community Foundation's work and grants." To address the challenge, the Foundation decided to align its Partnership funding schedule with the schedule of the rest of its grants. This successfully harnessed media attention for

other grantmaking at the Foundation, where there was little to no media attention before. "This is a byproduct of the initiative that has strengthened the Community Foundation," claims Bremner.

Legacies and Future Directions

The Santa Fe Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership has provided services that impact the lives of LGBT youth and adults in the Santa Fe and northern New Mexico counties. Since the Partnership's formation, there has been a commitment to create a permanent endowment to continue to fund much-needed programs and services for the LGBT community.

"The endowment was never a question. There was always the assumption that it was necessary," explains Garcia Salazar. "We have only scratched the surface of the work we could do and the impact we could have. There is so much work yet to be done. We have to fund ongoing support in order to keep the momentum going."

While the board made a commitment to the Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership, some of its donors were less enthusiastic when the Community Foundation announced the initiative. "We lost some donors, which was really hard—but we have also gained significant new donors," says Garcia Salazar. New donations that have come as a result of the Partnership include several estate plans with seven-figure gifts. One lesbian who was a donor in small amounts previously is now giving \$10,000 annually in unrestricted funds. But new donations aren't coming strictly from the LGBT community.

"Since the establishment of the Fund donations have been received from the straight community, including some board members, and I can assure you it is the first time [that they have given to a LGBT

**" The endowment was never a question. There was always the assumption that it was necessary. We have only scratched the surface of the work we could do and the impact we could have."
Patricia Garcia Salazar**

initiative],” reports Bremner. “One board member came into my office looking very serious. He handed me a check and said he was new to these issues but really wanted to support the work. The concept of being inclusive feels good to people. There is a level of compassion people feel when they hear about new issues in an organization and context with which they are familiar.”

As Garcia Salazar recounts, “There is something intangible that we have gained. The Santa Fe Community Foundation has taken a stand, and publicly and openly embraced the LGBT community and taken a leadership role. We are not in a gray area with our commitment.”

An open lesbian now serves on the Santa Fe Community Foundation’s Board of Directors, and serves as Co-Chair of the Partnership. Bremner explains that in bringing on the new, openly lesbian board member, “The board wanted to diversify its membership so that it was truly representative of the community. That was a big step, and she is doing great work. We have a list of board members and their partners, and her partner’s name is now on that list. That stretches us! This initiative gives us courage and helps clarify the purpose of the Community Foundation.”

The changes brought about by participation in the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership may show up in small ways, as in adding a board member’s same-sex partner to the list of spouses of the Foundation’s board of directors. But its impact has been large. Through its work with the Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership, not only is the Santa Fe Community Foundation meeting its goal to enhance programs and services to meet LGBT community needs, it is meeting its commitment to represent the Santa Fe community in its entirety.

**“This initiative gives us courage and helps clarify the purpose of the Community Foundation.”
Elizabeth Bremner**

The Open Door Fund

A Project of the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County

27

**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SERVING
BOULDER COUNTY** (1999 figures)

Assets \$7,200,000
Total Giving \$1,754,923
Average Grant Size \$2,000

**BOULDER'S LOCAL PARTNERSHIP:
THE OPEN DOOR FUND** (1997-99 figures)

Total Giving \$138,718
No. of Grants 54
Average Grant Size \$2,569

Internal Champion
Community Foundation President

**POLITICAL AND LEGAL CLIMATE IN
THE STATE OF COLORADO, 1999**

Governor Republican
CO House Republican
CO Senate Republican

STATEWIDE LGBT LEGISLATION

Civil rights law includes LGBT people?
No

Hate crimes law includes LGBT people?
No

Same-sex marriage ban?
Yes

LOCAL LGBT LEGISLATION: BOULDER

Anti-discrimination ordinance?
Yes

(Sources: www.nglhf.org and www.co.boulder.co.us)

BOULDER COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 278,085

Race/Ethnicity

89.0% White
7.0% Hispanic origin
3.0% Asian/Pacific Islander
0.9% African American
0.5% American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut

MEDIAN INCOME \$41,676

Key Industry High technology, automobile parts, processed foods, rolled steel, alarms and automation systems.

(Source: 1996 Census projections, 1993 Census projections, www.co.boulder.co.us)

The mission of the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County is to encourage and strengthen philanthropy, provide opportunities to improve the quality of life in Boulder County communities and benefit future generations. By combining human and financial resources, the Foundation serves as a responsible steward for permanent endowments and creates partnerships in philanthropy.

In 1996, under the leadership of its President, Josie Heath, the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County became a local Partner of the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. The Foundation established an Advisory Committee for the initiative, and the committee named the initiative the Open Door Fund. The achievements and challenges of the Open Door Fund in Boulder County, Colorado follow.

The Cultural and Political Context

Boulder County sweeps from the grassy plains at the western edge of mile-high Denver, through the city of Boulder, then up into the wooded foothills, and climbs up alpine tundra to the Continental Divide on the summit of Long's Peak. Greater Boulder is a mix of liberal and conservative values, where people with fundamentalist religious beliefs live next door to environmentally-conscious liberals. The City of Boulder is heavily Democratic, while the county has a mix of Republicans and Democrats.

In the mid-nineties the political climate in Colorado was characterized by strife in the aftermath of Amendment 2, a statewide referendum that barred lesbians and gay men from being protected by civil rights legislation. With the attitudes behind the passage of Amendment 2 as both an impediment and a motivation, the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County considered establishing a local lesbian and gay funding initiative as a way to improve services while creating a positive focal point for the community. The Community Foundation hoped that the Partnership would begin to "heal the wounds" caused by Amendment 2.

The Launch

"It was a bold initiative as it was one of our first public efforts. It was one of the first things to appear in the paper about the Community Foundation."
Margaret Katz

The Community Foundation demonstrated courageous leadership in applying to be a Partnership site both because the community was in the middle of heated political battles, and because the Foundation was relatively new, having only been established in 1991. In fact, the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County is one of the youngest community foundations involved in the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. At the time the Community Foundation submitted its proposal, it had only one full-time and one part-time staff member and assistance from a consultant. "It was a bold initiative as it was one of our first public efforts. It was one of the first things to appear in the paper about the Community Foundation," reports Margaret Katz, a Program Officer for the Community Foundation.

"We believed the establishment of a local fund for lesbian and gay programs and services would provide an opportunity to an embattled community to refocus its energies on a positive, affirming effort..."
Josie Heath

The Community Foundation's application to the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership was prepared and led by its President, Josie Heath, a strong supporter of human rights, and by Margaret Katz, who at the time was working as a consultant to the Foundation. Heath explains that "Much of the LGBT community's time, energy, and resources had been channeled into fighting Amendment 2, to the exclusion of meeting the community's own needs. We believed the establishment of a local fund for lesbian and gay programs and services would provide an opportunity to an embattled community to refocus its energies on a positive, affirming effort in Boulder County."

Under the terms of the Partnership relationship, one of the first responsibilities for the Community Foundation was to establish an Advisory Committee for the initiative. That committee convened with 19 members, and declared the name of the local partnership, The Open Door Fund. The unique name refers to the concept of an affirming and welcoming "open door" for all of the community's LGBT people.

Heath recruited Jo Arnold to serve as Chair of the Advisory Committee. Arnold is a former dean and professor at the University of Colorado and is an open

lesbian who enthusiastically assumed the helm of the Open Door Fund. The Advisory Committee was organized with two sub-committees, one for grantmaking and another for fundraising.

The fundraising approach used by the Open Door Fund centered around a grassroots strategy they called the "\$1K Club," whereby participants pledge to "give or get" \$1,000 each. To help meet their fundraising obligations, four of the initial 22 members of the \$1K Club decided to host a fundraising dinner for 60 people. While planning the dinner party, the four received enough donations and in-kind gifts to turn the meal into a larger dinner event and auction that sold out with 110 guests.

This event, called "Monsoon," is now hosted annually and is a major source of support for the Open Door Fund. Monsoon also serves as an outreach strategy for the Open Door Fund. One of the early keynote speakers was Jean Dubofsky, the attorney who successfully argued the Amendment 2 case before the United States Supreme Court. Advisory Committee Chair Jo Arnold notes that the dinner is well-attended and growing every year. In Boulder County, "it is becoming the place to be in November," she says. The success of this event means more word-of-mouth about the work of the Open Door Fund, and it means greater revenue for Open Door Fund grantmaking to meet LGBT community needs.

Relying on a community needs assessment to identify the issues facing the LGBT community, the Advisory Committee found a dearth of programs and services in the areas of youth, health and mental health care, legal advocacy, and community building. Through its grants, the Open Door Fund aims to provide and improve services that address these crucial community needs.

The Impact

The Open Door Fund supports a variety of mainstream nonprofits, public agencies and LGBT-community organizations to provide much needed services and programs. With support from the Open Door Fund, "Equality Colorado," a statewide LGBT

policy and advocacy group has been able to expand its Anti-Violence Project in Boulder County, providing services to victims of hate violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and random crime. Services include a 24-hour telephone information and referral line, as well as follow up and case-management services for victims.

Public agencies and mainstream non-profits in Boulder County have drawn upon Open Door Fund support to augment services to LGBT residents of Boulder County. A grant to the Boulder County Health Department, for example, allowed the expansion of the Health Department's LGBT youth advocacy program called Open and Affirming Sexual Orientation Support (OASOS). The OASOS youth program provides outreach and support to LGBT and questioning youth to address such issues as social isolation, alcohol and drug abuse, suicide, truancy, poor self-image and homelessness.

The Boulder Valley Women's Health Center has used a grant from the Open Door Fund to initiate a Lesbian Health Care Project to provide low-cost healthcare services to lesbians and to increase staff awareness and sensitivity to the unique healthcare needs of lesbian patients.

The Open Door Fund also reaches beyond the more liberal areas of the City of Boulder, into the surrounding and more conservative sections of the county. According to Jo Arnold, "We have really gone from the west to the east end of Boulder County, and from the south to the north, slowly. The first year we had no proposals from Longmont, a conservative area and the second biggest town in the county. Now we're funding a number of programs there."

The Open Door Fund has also acted to increase understanding and awareness of the issues facing the transgender community through its funding of the Boulder Gender Support Group. The Boulder Gender Support Group conducts training for both straight and gay organizations—including the University of Colorado, Boulder County nonprofits and mental health providers—on transgender issues. They also offer weekly support groups to the transgender community. According to Kim Oswalt, a

therapist, transgender advocate and one of the founders of Boulder Gender Support Group, "Receiving funding has built momentum for the group and a sense of dignity in the community. There's no question that it is making a difference."

In addition to direct services, the Open Door Fund supports outreach and education between the straight and LGBT communities. One grantee organization, Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFFLAG), uses its Open Door funding to organize an annual series of meetings with representatives of social service agencies, faith-based organizations and the business community to educate about LGBT issues and concerns. PFFLAG also sponsors a public service campaign featuring a message of tolerance and caring that is promoted on buses throughout the county.

Beyond grantmaking, the Open Door Fund provides a forum for the general community to express its support for LGBT issues and concerns. From donating goods and services to be auctioned at the annual Monsoon dinner to speaking at an Open Door Fund workshop, local businesses, organizations and civic leaders are able to demonstrate their support of the LGBT community by their involvement with the Open Door Fund. "We couldn't get along without the local business contributions—from businesses that are generally straight-owned," says Arnold.

This relationship-building function has been especially important since the Amendment 2 vote, when many members of the gay community felt betrayed by those who supported the Amendment, people who included their friends, family and colleagues. "Much healing was needed, and the Open Door Fund supplied a venue for the gay and straight communities to come together," explains Heath.

Most of the dollars raised for the Open Door Fund come from the annual Monsoon dinner event and small gifts from individuals. While this "grassroots" strategy is pragmatic because the community does not have a large number of foundations or corporate giving programs from which to raise funds, there are benefits to this approach as well.

"Receiving funding [for the Boulder Gender Support Group] has built momentum for the group and a sense of dignity in the community... There's no question that it is making a difference."
Kim Oswalt

"Much healing was needed, and the Open Door Fund has supplied a venue for the gay and straight communities to come together."
Josie Heath

**"The Open Door Fund has become a center for gay-service groups to meet each other and learn about the availability of services. That is a terrific and unexpected outcome of the Fund."
Jo Arnold**

"I think it is healthy for us to take a grass-roots approach to fundraising as people have buy-in, allowing straight and gay people to feel a sense of ownership and to be affected by the process. [The effort] has been a success due to the number of people that we are able to involve in the process," says Margaret Katz.

A less obvious yet perhaps the most important contribution made by the Open Door Fund is the building of community. The Fund brings together grantees for grant award ceremonies, workshops and fundraising events. Grantees meet and get to know each other at these events, enhancing communication and networking, and fostering collaboration among and within organizations serving the LGBT community. "The Open Door Fund has become a center for gay-service groups to meet each other and learn about the availability of services. That is a terrific and unexpected outcome of the Fund," claims Arnold.

Legacies and Future Directions

In 1999, the Open Door Fund was at the end of the National Partnership's funding support. The Community Foundation and the Advisory Committee of the Open Door Fund decided to establish a permanent endowment for LGBT issues, for which the Open Door Fund's Advisory Committee is continuing to fundraise.

In the last year of funding from the National Partnership, the Open Door Fund received a three-year matching grant from the Gill Foundation. For every three dollars raised by the Open Door Fund, the Foundation has pledged to give one dollar, up to \$15,000 annually. Funds from the Foundation are used for annual grantmaking, while the matching funds raised by the Open Door Fund's Advisory Committee are used to establish a permanent endowment for LGBT community needs.

According to Margaret Katz, "The endowment will enable us to keep giving by the end of the Gill challenge. We should continue to give \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year, we hope. Eventually we plan to give more than this and plant seeds for longer-term, more major gifts."

Not only will the Open Door Fund be able to continue its current grantmaking and its commitment to LGBT funding, the Fund has had a significant and long-lasting impact on the Community Foundation itself. According to Katz, "The Trustees had a commitment to represent all of the community, but LGBT inclusion had been a blind spot." Since then Jo Arnold, Chair of the Open Door Fund Advisory Committee, has been invited to join the Board of Trustees of the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County. She is the first openly lesbian Trustee of the Community Foundation and she is making a difference.

**Building
Community
Across a
Nation**

The National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership is providing the impetus for local communities to organize themselves around a difficult and controversial issue. In offering a national framework for local efforts, the Partnership provides the incentives, and then the practical support to sustain local motivation. Support from the National Partnership comes in the form of funding, technical assistance and convening. In essence, the Partnership is organizing a national campaign by planting the seeds for local mobilization. The stories you have read demonstrate how these local seeds are taking root, how leaders are emerging, financial support is being unleashed, and collaborations are developing to meet needs that might otherwise have gone unmet.

We hope these stories have inspired and encouraged you to support these efforts either locally or nationally. But most importantly, we hope they have given you perspective on how people, coming together within and across diverse communities, can solve local problems and tackle difficult issues against great odds.

National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership Community Foundation Partners

Featured Partners

Maine Community Foundation

245 Main Street
Ellsworth, ME 04605
207-667-9735

Community Foundation for the National Capital Region

1112 16th Street, NW, Suite 340
Washington, DC 20036
202-955-5890

Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan

333 W. Fort Street, Suite 2010
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Santa Fe Community Foundation

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