

# International Dateline

July 2000 - Issue 56

## Notes from the Chair

by Cornelia Higginson

Vice President, American Express Company,  
and Secretary, American Express Foundation  
Chair, International Committee

It is an honor to succeed Woodward Wickham of the MacArthur Foundation as chair of the Council on Foundations' International Committee. This is my second tour of duty with the International Committee, which I served as vice chair from 1994-95. I am pleased to be returning to the committee, and I am counting on Bradford Smith of the Ford Foundation, our new vice chair, to help us live up to the high standards that Woody set during his tenure.

Under Woody's leadership, the Council's international activities were strengthened by the implementation of a new strategic plan, and a number of new projects were undertaken, such as the groundbreaking Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support (WINGS), which links and assists grantmaking support organizations around the world.

Interest in cross-border philanthropy continues to grow at a gratifying pace, with relatively new participants, such as family and community foundations, playing a bigger role. The membership of the International Committee reflects this institutional diversity and includes foundation leaders from 12 countries.

The Council's Annual Conference, which took place in Los Angeles in early May, featured a record number of international speakers and sessions. In addition, the Web site for the Council's U.S. Giving Abroad Program was launched at the conference.

This resource tool for simplifying cross-border grantmaking for U.S. donors and non-U.S. grantees is the culmination of the efforts during the past several years of a working group, and I would like to acknowledge particularly Richard Rappleye of the Mott Foundation for keeping this project on course. Log on to [www.usig.org](http://www.usig.org) and tell us what you think as we continue with this work in progress!

There are many challenges to effective and responsible international philanthropy. I look forward to working with the International Committee, other Council members and sister organizations around the world for the next two years to address specific issues of mutual concern.

*Editor's Note: This is my final issue of International Dateline. I hope you have enjoyed reading it as much as I have enjoyed working on it. I am leaving the Council on Foundations, but not the field of international grantmaking, so our paths will cross again.*

—Joyce Chandran

## News & Announcements

### Queen Noor Opens 51st Annual Conference

"It is a sad fact that the charitable sector, which should be based on higher virtues than baser instincts, is one of the most rife with rivalry, as different organizations scramble for scarce donor resources," said Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan in her opening plenary remarks at the Council on Foundations' 51st Annual Conference in Los Angeles. "At the very least, foundations

themselves could talk to each other, build relationships and coordinate to maximize the impact of their support."

Noor, the U.S.-born widow of King Hussein of Jordan and chair of the new foundation bearing his name, dared foundations to let go of a "paternalistic approach to charity work," to invest more in people instead of bureaucracy, to get over resisting funding core capacity building and to continue forging new partnerships with nonprofits, governments and the business sector to "find solutions to the global challenges" of the new millennium and carry out the conference's theme—transforming philanthropy.

Noor also handled a current hot potato—the five percent payout issue—saying simply, "Given the current value of the assets of many foundations and recent market return on investments, perhaps this should be reevaluated. The purpose of a foundation, if I may dare say so, is to sustain the most needy, not to sustain or enrich itself."

## **2001 Annual Conference Call for Sessions—Deadline July 14**

The Council on Foundations' Annual Conference Committee has issued a Call for Sessions to invite help in designing next year's conference. The deadline for submitting proposals for the 2001 conference—to be held April 30–May 2 in Philadelphia—is July 14, 2000.

The committee is seeking proposals for fully designed, ready-to-be-implemented sessions that will engage grantmakers and address programmatic issues as well as topics related to the effective management, governance and day-to-day work of grantmaking organizations. The committee also seeks proposals that address the conference theme of accountability in philanthropy. Because of the success of calls for sessions for past conferences, the committee will continue to dedicate a significant portion of the overall conference program to sessions designed and submitted by grantmakers through this process.

If your proposal is chosen, you will serve as the "session designer" and be responsible for inviting presenters, refining the session's content, developing its format and agenda, determining room setup and audiovisual requirements, helping prepare presenters and implementing the session at the conference. A member of the Annual Conference Committee will work with the session designer throughout the planning process.

The [Call for Sessions](#) proposal form (which includes selection criteria, instructions and a timeline) is available now. E-mail [Angelique Wilkins](#) or [Richard Salatiello](#) or call 202/466-6512 for more information.

## **WINGS Up and Running**

The Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support (WINGS) project is up and running. The Coordinating Committee met in Los Angeles in April to review and plan the program of activities for the next two years.

Three working groups met—Peer Learning, Information and Communication and the International Meeting of Associations Serving Grantmakers (IMAG) II—and made recommendations in each of these areas. There will be at least three Peer Learning meetings held during the next two years for CEOs and senior staff members of grantmaker support organizations. Additionally, internships and technical assistance visits will be offered.

The [WINGS Web site](#) is under construction and should be fully operational in July 2000. IMAG II is tentatively scheduled for the fall of 2001. A request for proposals has been sent to all

associations in the WINGS network. WINGS will be sending out a survey questionnaire in June to update its contact information and gather substantial baseline data about the organizations in the WINGS network that can be used in planning various program activities. The next WINGS committee meeting will be held in September in conjunction with the European Foundation Centre meeting in Poland.

The Community Foundations component of the WINGS project, WINGS–CF, held a successful meeting in May in Ottawa, which involved more than 50 participants representing 17 countries. There were multiple concurrent peer learning sessions on a range of issues including governance, training and technical assistance, information technologies, building partnerships and financial sustainability. In addition, WINGS–CF working groups developed plans for producing case studies on best practices in community foundations, a worldwide directory of community foundations, a "map" of funders, a list of resource people and a compendium of resources for community foundations.

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#### **Grantmakers on-line!**

Check out [United States International Grantmaking](#), created to facilitate international grantmaking by providing access to

- recommended forms with instructions
- country reports and laws
- other informational materials and resources.

The site serves both grantmakers and grantseekers to support and facilitate the process of making grants overseas. For more information e-mail [usig@cof.org](mailto:usig@cof.org).

#### **Cross-Border Grantmaking Regulations on Treasury Radar**

The Treasury Department's 2000 workplan includes a detailed set of recommendations submitted by the Council on Foundations regarding grantmaking outside the United States.

Council Senior Vice President and General Counsel John A. Edie has been working since last summer on the recommendations, which were developed in partnership with the U.S. Giving Abroad Committee and submitted with the help of outside counsel at Caplin & Drysdale. The recommendations seek to reduce significantly the paperwork and administrative burdens of making international grants. Several private and corporate foundations wrote letters urging that the recommendations be made part of the plan, which was announced March 20.

"The Department of the Treasury has been interested and generally sympathetic to our ideas so far, but we are still in the preliminary stages," says Edie. "We're greatly encouraged that this inclusion in the workplan will improve the chances of our getting some helpful guidance this year."

For more information contact International Programs at 202/466-6512.

## **Philanthropic Foundations in the United States: An Introduction**

What is philanthropy? How much money does the average foundation hold? What is the relationship between foundations and government? What is the outlook for foundations? In a five-part analysis, this book answers 38 fundamental questions that provide a comprehensive picture of the U.S. philanthropic sector. It delves into the sector's origin, purpose and importance in society, as well as its governance, regulatory parameters and future.

(Order #107; members and nonmembers: \$25 plus shipping and handling.)

### **To order, contact**

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(Mon.–Fri., 9 a.m.–5 p.m. EST)

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[Council Publications](#)

## **Rockefeller Foundation's New International Health Initiative**

The Rockefeller Foundation announced a new initiative to help reduce the health burden of tobacco on poor people in developing countries. By building local research and capacity, this program will help developing countries respond to the threat of tobacco consumption.

Initially the foundation will concentrate its resources on Southeast Asia, with particular attention to Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Cambodia. It is anticipated that the foundation will provide up to \$10 million in support during the next five years through projects related to the "Trading Tobacco for Health" initiative.

This program marks a new chapter in the foundation's efforts in international health. As foundation Executive Vice President Dr. Lincoln Chen remarked, "While we recognize and continue to work on the unfinished agenda for communicable diseases, the international health community cannot ignore the rising toll from the tobacco epidemic in developing countries. To avert tomorrow's tragedy, we must act today."

Drawing on proven effective practices, the Rockefeller Foundation will support locally generated research and interventions. The evidence-based strategy will include, for example, efforts to reduce smoking initiation among youth, support for effective adoption of comprehensive tobacco-control policies (such as smoke-free public spaces) and an examination of the effect of tobacco on the livelihood of poor people.

Between 1990 and 2020 the world death toll from tobacco will rise from 3.0 to 8.4 million people per year. This annual increase is expected to occur almost entirely in developing countries. Now responsible for one in ten deaths, tobacco will claim one in six by 2030—ten million lives a year. Put in perspective, during the next 30 years the number of people expected to die from tobacco-related illnesses will exceed the number of people who will die from AIDS, tuberculosis, maternal mortality, homicide, suicide and automobile accidents combined.

Reinforcing the foundation's focus on equity in health, the initiative will emphasize tobacco's effect on poor people and ways to respond to this disproportionate burden of disease. Tobacco use is more prevalent among poor people, and it amplifies other health problems. Tobacco-related disease can be a major precipitant of medical impoverishment. And tobacco consumption

exacts a high opportunity cost on poor households, limiting resources available for feeding the family.

"By supporting networking, research in the local context and access to expert resources, we can help bridge the lag in globalization between the trade of tobacco and the developing country response to it," said Professor Gordon Conway, president of the Rockefeller Foundation. "With this support, we hope that developing countries will themselves be better positioned to tackle the challenges of tobacco use over the long term and on their own terms."

Conway remarked that globalization—whose benefits have accrued to a very small fraction of humankind and often at the expense of the world's poor—has accelerated the trade and promotion of tobacco. "Trading Tobacco for Health" is an attempt to redirect the currents of globalization to benefit the world's poor.

"Trading Tobacco for Health" comes just over ten years after several Asian markets, including Thailand's, were forced open to U.S. cigarette imports. With its passage of strong tobacco-control policies and its active nongovernmental efforts to reduce smoking, Thailand has lowered smoking prevalence during the past decade. Campaigns to raise public awareness of the health hazards of smoking, increased excise taxes on tobacco and the establishment of a health promotion foundation set an example for the developing world. The program will benefit from the regional expertise this experience has afforded.

The Rockefeller Foundation stressed that this new initiative can be only a small part of the platform of support necessary to reduce tobacco use among poor people in developing countries. To achieve substantial and sustainable long-term gains, the Rockefeller Foundation will work to encourage other organizations to make tobacco control an important part of their funding strategies.

For more information contact the [Rockefeller Foundation](#).

## **Philanthropy Around the World**

### **Looking Out for Others in Mexico**

MIRA por los demás (Looking Out for Others) is an educational program of the Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía, which promotes a more philanthropic and socially responsible culture among citizens of Mexico and the Mexican business community by encouraging individuals and companies to donate time, talent and money to the cause of their choice. MIRA por los demás' concrete objectives are

- to increase the number of donors in Mexico
- to increase the number of volunteers and time donated
- to increase donations by encouraging giving at a minimum standard of one percent of gross income for individuals and corporations.

The challenge is to change the attitudes, and in turn the behavior, of the Mexican people. Working as a catalyst, MIRA is designed to stimulate citizens and enterprises to have a more active role in supporting their communities through volunteering and financial backing.

To implement the objectives of the program, MIRA has developed two strategies for reaching out to all the sectors of the population:

1. Construct networks that will multiply the Mira message and transmit it to all Mexicans: media and communication networks, nonprofit organization networks, entrepreneurial networks and networks of leaders of opinion.
2. Develop programs and professional mechanisms for companies, nonprofit organizations and citizens in general, focused on promoting donations and volunteer work as a new lifestyle and a new entrepreneurial behavior.

If MIRA increases the attention individuals and enterprises give to social causes, it can realize its goals. MIRA will create a more receptive audience for nonprofit organizations and the social causes that require financial and human resources.

### **Current Activities**

A cause-related marketing campaign called "Héroes Anónimos" (Anonymous Heroes) was designed by the MIRA program. Its purpose is to acknowledge exemplary volunteer work performed by Mexican citizens to benefit their communities. Wal-Mart Mexico launched the campaign on May 15, 1999, and it lasted 45 days. 630 acknowledgments were given in a simultaneous ceremony across the country. Wal-Mart planned to repeat the campaign annually for five years and carried out the second campaign from April 14 to May 31, 2000.

As a complement to "Héroes Anónimos," MIRA launched a campaign called "Hour for Mexico" on August 11, 1999, in which it invited the people of Mexico to sign a promise to donate one hour of voluntary work a week. MIRA promoted this campaign through its networks to encourage all Mexican people to start the new millennium with a new attitude of social responsibility.

As a result of this campaign, MIRA began a program called "Manos a la Obra" (Let's Start Working), which links potential volunteers with nonprofit organizations that have requested volunteers in advance. It gives workshops for people who want to become volunteers and for philanthropic institutions that do not know how to develop volunteer programs.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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### **Outreach Networks**

#### **Media and Communication Network**

Holds events for the media for the presentation of new communication campaigns.

#### **Nonprofit Organization Network**

Designs, creates and distributes materials appropriate for nonprofit institutions (schools, churches and organizations of the third sector), so that they will support the program by spreading the message in their neighborhoods.

### **Entrepreneurial Network**

Designs and creates materials that promote philanthropy through the Mira program in companies.

### **Leaders of Opinion Network**

Designs, creates and distributes program material urging important leaders of communities to take on the challenges of the program and spread the message.

## **A Conversation With...**

### **Lisa Whiteman**

#### **International Fellow**

*The Council on Foundations launched its International Fellows Program in the summer of 1996. The 12-month fellowship provides an opportunity for the Council to host a non-U.S. citizen from outside the United States working in philanthropy. The fellowship gives the visiting person and the Council the opportunity to see the issues of philanthropic work in other ways.*

*The International Fellows Program offers a 12-month position to a professional working in philanthropy outside the United States who is interested in learning about the Council and the work of its members. The fellow will also contribute experience and ideas to the Council's work. Applications for 2002 will be accepted in February 2001. If you or someone you know is interested, contact [Isabelle Mack](#) (fax: 202/785-3926).*

#### **How did you become involved in the field of grantmaking?**

I am from Jamaica, where I worked for the ICWI Group Foundation, a member of the Council on Foundations. The foundation focuses on science education, and I worked on organizing programs in its Science Learning Centre, a hands-on science museum for primary-school children (ages 3–12). I was a science major in university, so the Science Learning Centre was a perfect blend of science and philanthropy.

#### **How did you find out about the Council's Fellows Program?**

ICWI Group Foundation's executive director Jeanne Robinson told me about it. She served on the Council's International Committee and was very supportive of my applying for the fellowship. The foundation and I both thought that this would be a great opportunity to expand my horizons and learn more about organized philanthropy in a practical way.

#### **What was your assignment during this fellowship?**

I guess I should preface this answer by saying that I have been the fellow for two years instead of the usual one year. That happened because the Council was unable to find a qualified candidate last year. So I have had a number of assignments over the two years.

My primary focus has been on the IMAG/WINGS [International Meeting of Associations Serving Grantmakers/Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support] project. This project has really evolved over the two years. When I first came to the Council, we were doing wrap-up activities after the February 1998 IMAG meeting in Oaxaca, Mexico. Since then, IMAG has evolved into WINGS, which is a set of activities geared toward bringing associations from around the world together to learn from each other.

I have also been involved in the activities of International Programs and the Council in general, but my focus has always been on WINGS.

**How has this assignment been of benefit to the work you were doing in Jamaica?**

The experience at the Council on Foundations will be of great help when I return to Jamaica. I was quite new to the foundation world when I came to the Council, and the last two years have really opened my eyes to the scope of organized philanthropy in the United States. But just as important for me has been the opportunity through WINGS to get a peek into the way philanthropy is organized around the world. Not many countries have the same scale of organized philanthropy as you find in the United States, and being able to see how smaller countries are set up in this area has given me great ideas to take home.

**What has been a major source of satisfaction in your work?**

This job has been fulfilling in a number of areas. I have acquired new skills during my stay here. In particular, I have become heavily involved in Web-site development and have enjoyed that experience immensely. The department also had a period of time when we underwent staff changes, and that provided the opportunity for me to take on added responsibilities. I guess the most satisfaction has come from watching WINGS develop and knowing that I had a hand in that development.

**Did you encounter any barriers to the work you were doing and how did you overcome them?**

I think there will be barriers to doing international work for quite a while to come. Some of these are in the mind-set of people you have to interact with, who still can't see the point of involving others outside their own country in their work. This is prevalent in some countries more than in others, but I think in all situations, with a little persuasion, they can be shown the importance of these interactions. In the age of globalization, isolation is no longer a viable option.

There are other challenges to international work that are less philosophical, that deal more with time zones and communication. In the year 2000 it would seem that this would have become trivial, but it hasn't. It is still difficult to work by global committee (which is how WINGS is run) when we are all in different time zones. We have got around this somewhat by using e-mail, but this no substitute for conference calls and other forms of realtime communication.

So the things that make international work interesting are sometimes the things that hamper it. I think the continued development of electronic communication will make some of this easier.

**What suggestions do you have for improving the program?**

This is really a great program, because it shares organized philanthropy in the United States in a very hands-on way with someone from outside this country. Currently, the program starts in September, but that seems to cause problems with visa acquisition. Looking at January, I think, would build in more time.

The program could also benefit from a bit more structure. Now that the WINGS project is off and running, it would be good to outline projects that the fellow should accomplish during the fellowship. A more formal structure would create some targets and give a sense of accomplishment to all parties involved.

## **What advice do you have for your colleagues in the field who might be considering a fellowship program?**

For a philanthropic organization: Offering a fellowship can provide a wonderful opportunity for someone who is new to grantmaking. For people thinking of applying for a fellowship: Do it! I recommend this fellowship without hesitation.

## **Letter from Rwanda**

### **Open Letter to Grantmakers Responding to Emergency Situations**

Six years ago, Rwanda experienced one hundred days of horror. The genocide of 1994 resulted in the deaths of nearly one million children, women and men. This long and terrible nightmare was preceded by a four-year civil war, which also claimed the lives of tens of thousands. Subsequent massive displacement of the population claimed as many lives.

I am not in a position to know what the foundation community in the United States was able to do to influence the decisions that determined the fate of my compatriots. Nor would I make this community any more responsible for what happened than other actors in the world. But like all Rwandans, I will always feel uncomfortable with the silence that characterized the outside world in general during the most awful genocide of the last century.

While reading Peter Uvin's essay on Rwanda "Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda," I came across one striking reality: Only a few actors, if any, make a balanced assessment of the environment they work in before and during their interventions. This gap, I believe, is one of the most important reasons why responding to Rwanda's emergencies became difficult, unsuccessful or even impossible.

How is it that genocide occurred in Rwanda, a country that a decade before was considered by many experts to be a successfully developing country, a model for Africa?

It is believed that most grantmakers refused to act in Rwanda simply because they had long before portrayed the underlying conflict as a tribal conflict. We do not have tribes in Rwanda. How could a conflict between groups speaking the same language, having the same culture, be described as tribal? Had grantmakers made an effort to understand our situation, they would easily have found out that the root of the problems in our country is simply bad leadership.

The speed with which aiding agencies respond to emergencies is critical for success. For example, during the 1994 refugee flow into Congo, it took a long time for relief agencies to get a clear sense of what was to be done. As a result, at least 50,000 refugees died of cholera, and thousands of children were separated from their families. I was impressed, however, by the way some organizations learned from this experience and reacted properly to the massive repatriation crisis that occurred two years later.

The question of sustainability of responses is something else that needs to be addressed, at least in Rwanda's case. Foundations and other grantmakers have always perceived emergencies as events that come and then go. With Rwanda, the situation turns out to be completely different: When an emergency erupts, it causes such great havoc that it takes a long time to regain normalcy. When the emergency is genocide, the recovery period may turn out to be longer than expected. The issue is being able to address the root cause of the emergency.

In this respect, one critical point needs more attention than anything else: How do grantmakers effectively get to grassroots people and get them on board? In a country like Rwanda, it is difficult to address this challenge as long as

1. local NGOs are looked at as third-level players, that is, below the government and below international NGOs
2. grantmakers continue to ignore the importance of civil society in research on major concerns of the country
3. grantmakers do not find appropriate ways to ensure the follow-up on and monitoring of activities they fund, to make sure, for instance, that the funds they provide for unity and reconciliation efforts are not being used to teach people how to shoot guns.

If the challenge is not addressed in a proper way, we will continue to have a situation where only symptoms of emergencies are treated while the root cause generates more emergencies. If things go on this way in Rwanda, the country of a thousand hills will continue to be the country of a thousand emergencies.

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