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Notes from the Chair

By *Cornelia Higginson*
Vice President, American Express
Philanthropic Program
Chair, Council on Foundations International
Committee

The Council's International Committee convened by conference call in November to compensate for the September meeting that was cancelled following the events of September 11. We welcomed six new committee members: **Dayna Cunningham**, *The Rockefeller Foundation*; **Carol Erickson**, *The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*; **Sibongile Mkhabela**, *The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund* (South Africa); **Al Panico**, *The Waitt Family Foundation*; **Yumi Sera**, *World Bank, Small Grants Program*

Miriam Were, *Uzima Foundation* (Kenya)

We could not help but reflect on how September 11 has affected our perceptions and impacted our grantmaking activities. The events of that terrible day brought home to each of us our connection to what happens on a global level. Many of us spoke of an increased sense of identification with people around the world who are displaced by violence and who live daily in the shadow of war and oppression. We also discussed the contradictions of September 11 and how these events brought out both a spirit of unity and patriotism as well as intolerance and physical attacks against innocent individuals who look or dress a certain way.

As grantmakers, each of us has responded to September 11 differently, with programs ranging

from funding legal services for the families of victims, to convening cross-cultural community dialogues, to supporting relief organizations working in Afghanistan and among Afghan refugees. (See "A Response to September 11" on page 6.)

Predating September 11 but relevant to that disaster is a new publication entitled *Disaster Grantmaking: A Practical Guide for Foundations and Corporations*, which is now available on the Council's Web site (www.cof.org) and soon in printed form. A joint project of the Council's International Programs and the European Foundation Centre, the guide includes eight principles of good disaster grantmaking as well as many practical suggestions for making more effective and responsible disaster grants. Although this project began nearly two years ago, the events of September 11 have renewed the focus of grantmakers—most of whom have little formal expertise in this area—on being prepared to respond quickly and effectively when disasters occur. The guide was featured in the November/December issue of *Foundation News & Commentary*. It is a working document, and so, your feedback on its usefulness is most welcome.

Coming up is the Council's Family Foundation Conference, February 6–8, in New Orleans, which includes a session entitled *Small World: Successes in International Grantmaking*. Family foundation panelists will discuss their international grantmaking, various ways they do it, and what it has meant to them. Planning is also ongoing for the Annual Conference, April 29–May 1, in Chicago, where a record number of sessions will focus on international topics like globalization, racism, food security and a comparison of U.S. and European foundations.

Providing grantmakers and their associations with information and resources regarding domestic giving on international themes, U.S.-based cross-border grantmaking and the development of philanthropic structures around the world.



A CONVERSATION WITH...

Christine Sartor of the Winds of Peace Foundation

An increasing number of family foundations are engaging in international grantmaking. Even small foundations are finding their niche in this grantmaking arena. One such foundation, the Winds of Peace Foundation, is involved with direct funding in Nicaragua. Staff writer Isabelle Mack spoke to the foundation's executive director, Christine Sartor, to learn how this small foundation is making a difference.

COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE FOUNDATION'S ORIGIN AND ITS GRANTMAKING FOCUS.

The foundation started functioning in the 1980s. Originally it was called Children's Haven Inc., and began working, mostly in Mexico, providing support to children's homes. Since that time, we've changed our focus and approach dramatically. Our top priority now is to promote social, economic and environmental sustainability, while at the same time accommodating how and what we fund to the logic of the local development plan in Nicaragua. We have recently changed our name to the Winds of Peace Foundation. Our main focus is on international grantmaking, and we do about 80 percent of our grantmaking in Nicaragua, supporting local grassroots initiatives.

HOW DID THE FOUNDATION BECOME INTERESTED IN INTERNATIONAL GRANTMAKING?

The founders of the foundation, Harold and Louise Nielson, went on a travel seminar sponsored by an organization called Center for Global Education, which does travel seminars

in Central America. There, the founders had a dramatic change of heart, which caused them to realize the unjust disparity in resources and wealth. They realized immediately that they must rethink their philanthropic direction. It was on one of these seminars where the founders became interested in Nicaragua. In addition, the Winds of Peace Foundation has done funding in El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Columbia, Peru, Iran, Namibia and Kenya.

WHAT GOES INTO THE FOUNDATION'S DECISION TO FUND A PROJECT? HOW DO YOU KNOW WHETHER THE ORGANIZATION IS LEGITIMATE?

One of the main criteria is that the community has participated in the project, so that it's a grassroots effort. Everything we fund must meet at least one of three criteria: [The project must involve] women, indigenous peoples or rural populations. In addition, our goal is to work with partners who have a sustainable development component inherent in their work. Another criteria for funding is that the project addresses or works toward systemic change.

In determining whether the organization is legitimate, we use a similar strategy that one would use in the United States: we do site visits; we require all the necessary background information and proposal information; we do reference checks with other funders and those in their network; we do follow-up site visits; and we require evaluations. We consider the relationship with the organization as a partnership and work in solidarity

with them. We must take a certain leap of faith, just as we do when we fund projects in the United States. Every project we've ever funded directly in Nicaragua has been successful.

HOW MANY ARE ON STAFF AT THE FOUNDATION, AND WHAT IS THE AVERAGE GRANT THAT YOU MAKE?

The Winds of Peace Foundation is currently managed with six persons on the board of trustees and an executive director—me. The executive director is the only full-time paid staff, and I've been with the foundation for almost six years. For the past seven years, we've contracted a person in Nicaragua [to work part-time] so that we have a person on the ground. We also recently contracted a part-time Nicaraguan Spanish translator. In addition, the foundation is provided pro bono services of the family business's secretary. We do small grants, with the average grant being \$10,000.

WHAT DOES YOUR LOCAL GRANTMAKING CONSIST OF?

Our local [U.S.-based] grantmaking goes for projects that are working on international issues. For example, we have done some funding with the Latin American Working Group, which works on U.S. policies related to Latin America. Another project is with the Resource Center of the Americas, which is a fabulous resource on Latin America. So, even our local grantmaking is related to international issues, even though the grantees are located in the United



States. We also work extensively with Grantmakers Without Borders, which is a network whose focus is to promote international social change philanthropy.

HOW DOES YOUR STAFF SIZE AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO DO SITE VISITS AND EFFECTIVELY EVALUATE YOUR GRANTEE'S PROJECTS?

The fact that we have someone on the ground in Nicaragua helps immensely. He is able to talk with the grantees almost any day of the week, and he does a site visit for every single project that we fund. We've never funded anyone whose site we haven't visited, and as far as evaluating them, he's able to do site visits during the course of the project and at its completion. In addition, one of our foundation board members, who is also the president and founder, travels to Nicaragua once every year or two to look over projects. Also, I travel to Nicaragua to do site visits at least once or twice a year. So, although it's tough with a small staff, we've found ways to make it work.

DO YOU HAVE OCCASION TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER FOUNDATIONS?

We've just started to do so because of our involvement with Grantmakers Without Borders, which is an affinity group of the National Network of Grantmakers. Through that network, I've found a few organizations that are doing grantmaking in Nicaragua. We share information about good partners in Nicaragua, and the Winds of Peace Foundation has funded a few projects from my contacts within that network. A goal of mine this year is to organize an informal network of all the Nicaraguan grantmakers in the United States and to start an e-mail

list service, so we can start sharing information and collaborating on various projects.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES THAT YOU FACE IN WORKING IN NICARAGUA?

The challenges that we face are minor compared with those of our partners in Nicaragua. Some of the biggest challenges I see include the extreme poverty, environmental disasters and having a corrupt and unresponsive government in Nicaragua. It's necessary for project partners to continually devise completely different strategies because of this. I am ever astonished and humbled by the resourcefulness and persistent hope of our Nicaraguan partners when they're faced with seemingly overwhelming obstacles.

HOW HAS YOUR INTERNATIONAL GRANTMAKING IN NICARAGUA AFFECTED YOUR LOCAL GRANTMAKING?

When we do grantmaking in the United States we want it to coincide with what's being done in Nicaragua or in the "global South" in general. That way, our local grantmaking complements what we're trying to accomplish in Nicaragua.

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR SOURCES OF SATISFACTION IN THE WORK THAT YOU DO OR IN THE WAY THAT YOU DO IT?

I think the most satisfying part is the learning process. For me, the end result is not as important as the process, and there is so much to learn through the process of doing international social change grantmaking. The Winds of Peace Foundation has benefited by being a member of the National Network of Grantmakers, which has really assisted us in working toward exemplary grantmaking practices. I can't fail to mention that I

personally derive a great deal of satisfaction in the work because we focus on international women's issues, which is one of the major things in my life to which I feel committed. The women in developing countries, in the face of tremendous oppression and despite limited financial resources, know how to organize!

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE TAKING YOUR BOARD TO NICARAGUA IN MARCH. IS THAT SOMETHING YOU DO OFTEN?

We started a new process last year of doing grantmaking, whereby we put together an advisory committee to make all grantmaking decisions. The members of the advisory committee have made a commitment to do site visits in Nicaragua every other year. So I am taking the entire seven-member advisory committee to Nicaragua in March. This will be our first trip together as a team, although all seven members have been to Nicaragua and/or Central America several times. We'll be there for a week, and we're all excited about it!

SINCE YOU DON'T HAVE A WEB SITE, HOW DO THE GRANTEE'S FIND OUT ABOUT YOU?

Most of it is through networking and word of mouth (Nicaragua is only about the size of New York State, and we only work in the western half of Nicaragua). Our contact person on the ground in Nicaragua is well connected to nonprofit grassroots organizations in Nicaragua, and so he learns of potential partners through this networking. We also do some calls for proposals over our network of international grantmakers, and we have received a lot of excellent proposals through that as well.

Continued on page 8



PHILANTHROPY AROUND THE WORLD

Causes and Effects

By Stephen Dau

In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 tragedies, foundations, like nearly everyone else, tended to focus on helping those directly affected by the attacks. Money poured into disaster response organizations, and funds were set up to administer donations to victims and their families. Rather quickly, however, some foundations began to examine the root causes and longer-term effects of the September 11 attacks.

These issues—from refugee assistance and women’s rights in Afghanistan to tolerance education in the United States and conflict resolution everywhere—have been the focus of ongoing programs for years. The terrorist attacks made these renewed priorities, and like the issues themselves, the grantmakers and their responses are eclectic.

THE GRANTS

The Bernard van Leer Foundation, based in the Netherlands, concentrates its efforts on children under eight years old. According to Peter Langharn, director of program development and management, van Leer Foundation’s grantees have noticed an increase in “violence with regard to minority populations, particularly from the Middle East and northern Africa, and [we] are seeking appropriate ways to react.” The foundation’s projects, he says, are focusing on developing respect for diversity among children and those who care for them. The Van Leer Foundation also funds projects in Israel in an effort to build bridges among often-contentious religious groups, but the current climate there is making this work exceedingly difficult.

Within a month of the attacks, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation established a \$5 million fund dedicated to several different issues: ensuring the free flow of information, analysis of the root causes of terrorism, strengthening the response to terrorism, and examining the implications for civil liberties resulting from tighter security. Grants that have already been made include \$500,000 to the Public Broadcasting Service’s Frontline series, which enabled them to quickly produce documentaries, on the background of the September 11 attacks; \$100,000 to the Monterey Institute to assess the risk posed by weapons of mass destruction; and \$65,000 to the

“Foundations are responding to issues raised by September 11 in many ways.”

Chicago Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights Under Law to focus on reducing incidents of hate crimes. The MacArthur Foundation also funded several organizations to permit them to send reporters and human-rights workers to central Asia.

Rather than establishing entirely new projects, some foundations are using their existing programs to address the issues raised by the September 11 attacks. The Guttersloh, Germany-based Bertelsmann Foundation, in conjunction with the Bertelsmann Group for Policy Research, established the International Network for Education, Democracy,



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Human Rights and Tolerance in 1995, during a period of xenophobia and right-wing extremism in Germany.

Although the network still strives to address those issues, it has also moved to incorporate religious diversity into its discussions, according to Michael Seberich, project manager of the politics division. During Bertelsmann's recent annual conference, there were in-depth discussions of the issues resulting from the events of September 11. During those discussions, Seberich said, "We actually realized how different the perception of these events is among the member NGOs. It was quite a challenging situation for us as moderators." Following the conference, the network decided to invest more time in trying to understand how to integrate the needs of religions into human rights education.

Give2Asia, a 501(c)(3) organization established by the Asia Foundation to help donors giving in Asia, has received a \$265,000 grant from the San Francisco-based Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund to help finance the efforts of two NGOs working in Pakistan and Afghanistan to increase their coordination and impact of international relief efforts. The Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) will be able to ramp up its activities in response to strong demand for increased coordination of aid in central Asia, whereas a grant to Physiotherapy and Rehabilitative Services for Afghanistan (PARSA) will allow that group to implement nutrition, health and education programs. As well, PARSA will set up a volunteer service corps of Afghan-Americans who wish to return to the region to help.

Another foundation giving money directly to those in Afghanistan and the surrounding region is the Michigan-based Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. They gave \$250,000 to the People in Need Public Benefit Organization of Prague, Czech Republic, which has been aiding Afghan refugees and \$50,000 to Carelift International to cover the costs of medical supplies and equipment for two emergency medical centers in eastern Uzbekistan.

CLOSER TO HOME

Although some foundations are focusing on the global effects of the September 11 attacks, others are looking in their backyards. The Hamilton Community Foundation in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, has initiated a community mobilization process called "Strengthening Hamilton's Community." During the past three months, this effort has brought together NGOs and civic leaders to both strengthen

civility and increase safety and security. Activities have included meetings to discuss responses to the effects of the events of September 11, including racially motivated incidents in Hamilton; inviting religious leaders of all faiths to come together and provide leadership by demonstrating their mutual respect and tolerance; and creating a round-table of 45 community leaders, chaired by Hamilton's mayor, to generate strategies to combat racism and build understanding and respect.

If your foundation has established or modified grant programs in tolerance education, refugee assistance, conflict resolution, or other related areas in response to the September 11 attacks, please let the Council know by e-mailing Stephen Dau at daus@cof.org with a short description of your grant.

NOTES

FAMILY FOUNDATIONS CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHT

Small World: Successes in International Grantmaking

Friday, February 8, 2002 10:00–11:30 a.m.

This session emphasizes examples of different approaches to international grantmaking, such as funding U.S.-based international organizations, working through intermediaries and making direct grants to non-U.S. grantees.

If you are interested in attending the conference or want further information on conference sessions, go online to www.cof.org/conferences/fam2002.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Visit the Council's Web site at www.cof.org/conferences/ac2002/register.htm to register online for the annual conference.



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Response to September 11

Cynthia Ryan

The Schooner Foundation

I was in the Minister of Health's office in Havana, representing my family's foundation on a tour of Cuba, when I learned of the tragedies on September 11. In the middle of our meeting, someone stormed into the room to tell us America had been attacked. At the time, we thought the interpreter had mistranslated the message. But, of course, he hadn't, and back at the hotel we watched with horror the same images that flashed ceaselessly that day on televisions across the globe.

Like everyone around me, questions that have now become clichés streamed through my mind: How could something like this happen? What would drive people to such incredible acts of violence? Why do "they" hate "us" so much?

Soon after, I connected with colleagues in my hometown of Boston who, like me, are members of Grantmakers Without Borders. Affiliated with the Tides Center and the National Network of Grantmakers, Grantmakers Without Borders is a year-and-a-half-old funders' network whose mission is to promote increased U.S.-based philanthropy to the developing world, with a particular focus on social change philanthropy. Prior to September 11, we as a group had begun planning a series of workshops that would encourage Boston-area funders to begin thinking more globally about their grantmaking.

Without a doubt, the events of September 11 gave us a sense of focus for our activities. For many of us working in international grantmaking—my family's foundation, the Schooner Foundation, makes grants to support

"The events of September 11 genuinely highlighted the conviction that until there is justice for all of us, there will be no real security for any of us."

—Cynthia Ryan

global human rights and peace and security—the events of September 11 genuinely highlighted the conviction that until there is justice for all of us, there will be no real security for any of us.

That was one of the many key points conveyed in our first funders briefing, held November 2 at the offices of Associated Grant Makers in New England. A packed room of staff and trustees of local foundations and corporate giving programs, philanthropic advisors and others were briefed on the context of terrorism and its implications for the philanthropic community.

Zainab Salbi of Women for Women International spoke on Islam and noted that what is most critically needed now is dialogue, economic prosperity, and consistency of U.S. policy with regard to human rights and justice in the Middle East. Ambassador John Shattuck of the John F. Kennedy Library and Foundation offered a human rights perspective on the crisis and recommended several key areas of focus: promoting intercultural, interreligious dialogue; supporting international organizations from the

UN on down, building civil societies, supporting human rights, and holding the United States accountable to international laws and standards. Susannah Sirkin of Physicians for Human Rights offered the latest information on the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan including the proliferation of land mines, while former journalist Ry Ryan shared his thoughts on the need to launch a movement to put an end to U.S. exceptionalism and unilateralism on the global scene. Cora Weiss of the Samuel Rubin Foundation and the Hague Appeal for Peace moderated the panel discussion.

Following the success of this first session, Boston-area members of Grantmakers Without Borders held a second session on December 8 that focused specifically on strategic grantmaking for Afghanistan. We prepared an extensive resource packet, which included a list of organizations working in Afghanistan (this list has since been posted on the Grantmakers Without Borders' Web site, www.InternationalDonors.org). Panelists for this session spoke on the need for immediate action—not just in terms of the refugee crisis, but also regarding the rebuilding of Afghanistan from the grassroots up. Panelists noted that while much international aid will likely be targeted to Kabul, it is essential that aid be brought to the entire country, village by village, and agreed that peace will only hold if people begin to see tangible improvements to their lives: in healthcare and education, in food production, in social and physical infrastructures, and in economic development. Panelists warned against funding organizations with little or no experience in Afghanistan, and they



"Philanthropy has a frontline role to play in mitigating violence...the opportunities for positive change are enormous.."

—Cynthia Ryan

noted that capacity building of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) is critical at this juncture. Panelists also reminded funders not to forget Pakistan, a country whose history and politics are inextricably linked to Afghanistan's.

In the coming months, Grantmakers Without Borders' members in Boston hope to convene additional sessions on women in the Middle East, peace building and other topics. Through these sessions, we hope to show that philanthropy has a frontline role to play in mitigating violence, and that the opportunities for positive change are enormous: peace-building programs that teach tolerance, understanding and respect for

the rule of law; economic development programs that root out hunger and poverty; human rights efforts that hold governments accountable to their citizens.

Through such positive actions, philanthropy can help to build a world of peace and justice—which is, after all, its fundamental mission.

Cynthia Ryan is a trustee and director of The Schooner Foundation, a private family foundation based in Boston, Massachusetts, with an international focus on social and economic justice, human rights, and peace and security.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Text of Disaster Response Document Available Online

The publication *Disaster Grantmaking: A Practical Guide for Foundations and Corporations* is now available for download via the Council's Web site at www.cof.org/whatis/types/international/publications/disasterguide.pdf. The guide is the culmination of a year-long, joint effort of the European Foundation Centre and the Council on

Foundations. It contains principles, practices, lessons learned and resources useful to foundations and corporate giving programs as they contemplate their role in disaster-related grantmaking. The guide also will be available as a free, printed publication in the near future. If you are interested in receiving the printed version of the guide, please send an e-mail request with your name and address to Stephen Dau at the Council, daus@cof.org, or call 202/467-0386.

CALENDAR

February 6–8

COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS FAMILY FOUNDATION CONFERENCE

Hilton New Orleans Riverside
New Orleans, LA
Colleen Reed, 202/467-0436

March 10–14

WINGS FORUM (WORLDWIDE INITIATIVES FOR GRANTMAKER SUPPORT)

Conference of members of the WINGS and WINGS-CF Network (by invitation only)
Sydney, Australia
Jayne Millar Wood, 202/467-0399

April 29–May 1

53RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS

Hilton Chicago
Chicago, IL
Conference Information, 202/466-6512



A CONVERSATION WITH CHRISTINE SARTOR

Continued from page 3

IN RETROSPECT, IS THERE ANYTHING DIFFERENT YOU WOULD DO IN YOUR APPROACH?

I don't think so. I think you just have to go through the different stages. Like I said earlier, we started out by funding children's homes, which is not working for societal change at all, but merely working on the status quo. Perhaps a lot of foundations start out that way—they don't just jump into working for societal change right away. I think it's just been a gradual learning experience, and I'm happy with where we are right now, but I

look forward to learning more and improving our approach.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL THOUGHTS OR ADVICE THAT YOU WOULD GIVE TO FOUNDATIONS INTERESTED IN BECOMING INTERNATIONAL GRANTMAKERS?

I think being willing to take an experiential trip to somewhere in the global South is the very best way to start, which is how we started. Now, we do only direct cross-border international grantmaking, which is probably not the easiest way of doing international grantmaking, but it is the most satisfying to us. My advice is to start by using some of the easier methods, like going

through an intermediary funder or grantmaking through a U.S.-based organization currently doing international work. Connect with networks of international grantmakers, such as Grantmakers Without Borders. Also, I found the publication put out by the Council on Foundations, called *Family Foundations and International Grantmaking: Tips on How to Begin*, very useful in providing suggestions on how to start.

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New Funders Collaborative: The Global Human Rights Fund

*By Mary Ann Stein
The Moriah Fund*

The last few decades have produced a network of international organizations combating human rights violations worldwide. These groups are well known to donors and have a reasonable degree of access to funders in the United States, Europe and elsewhere. Partly as a result of the work of these international organizations and the increased attention paid to guaranteeing basic human rights, hundreds of local and national organizations have been formed to address human rights violations in their own countries or regions.

To aid their work, the International Human Rights Funders Group (IHRFG) has proposed establishing the Fund for Global Human Rights. Such an intermediary funding mechanism seeks to effect three needed

changes: (1) to enable human rights organizations working at a local or national level to publicize their work and gain greater access to funding; (2) to make it cost-effective for large foundations to make small grants to local human rights organizations that would otherwise fall below their funding level screens; and (3) to facilitate giving by private foundations and individual donors who wish to make limited grants in this area, but would prefer to have the IHRFG investigate, screen and monitor grants in foreign countries.

To date, IHRFG has received a commitment of \$300,000 from the Rausing Foundation in London, conditional upon raising an additional \$750,000 for year one or \$1.2 million in multiyear grants. The Moriah Fund, the Open Society Institute, the Ford Foundation and the Diamondston Foundation have also made commitments to the IHRFG.

For more information, please contact Mary Ann Stein of the Moriah Fund at mstein@moriahfund.org.

New Member Services!

The media relations department announces two new Council member benefits:

- **Breaking News**, posted each morning at www.cof.org/membersonly/headlines, puts you just a click away from the day's top philanthropy articles from around the world. This service is provided by Lexis/Nexis.
- **Newsroom**, posted at www.cof.org/membersonly/newsroom, offers a host of media relations tools including how to write press releases, develop a targeted media list, work with reporters, and build a relationship with the media. On the site's public side, the media and the public can browse through archived press releases, media alerts, and press kits developed specifically for each foundation type. For more information, contact media@cof.org.