

MULTICULTURAL PHILANTHROPY

HIGHLIGHTS

Talmadge D. Betts

- Although cultural differences among minority groups are striking, similarities exist in the development of self-help organizations among communities of color; and
- Among minority groups, philanthropy is generally used to improve the quality of life in communities with needs.

James Joseph

- In the United States, civic impulses—derived from the benevolent traditions of racial minorities and the majority tradition—are nearly universal;
- The concept of a civil society, a good society and a transforming society is woven into the fabric of the different cultures and communities in the United States and impacts giving patterns;
- The boundaries of community are changing conceptually, demographically and functionally. With those changes come racism, nativism and other barriers to community—giving and sharing;
- Indian tribes are a model of social, benevolent and communal organizations;
- African-American tradition traces its moral sentiments to the cosmology of the early slaves and the communal ethic of slave quarters, the Black church, African-American voluntary associations and protest politics;
- Asian Americans share a common commitment to taking care of their own—the neo-Confucian ethic of Chinese Americans seeks to interpret benevolence as an element of humanity, whereas Korean interest in self-help activities is guided by an ancient principle of keh; and
- Latinos derive their values (giving and sharing) from the church and the family.

Bradford Smith, Sylvia Shue, Jennifer Lisa Vest and Joseph Villarreal

- Knowing a community's cultural background does not help to predict how many hours a year individuals will give outside their family; nor does it help to predict the beneficiaries of the money they give—outside their family;
- Values of commitment to family and community are influential within Hispanic and Asian ethnic groups;
- The cultural dimensions of gift-giving, sharing or financial assistance carry a variety of meanings among Hispanic and Asian cultures;
- The uses of wealth, prestige and power influence charitable behavior;
- Ethnic philanthropy is linked to kinship and family;
- Religion plays an important role in ethnic philanthropy, and except for the church, little giving involves mainstream nonprofit organizations;

- Much of ethnic philanthropy is informal and goes unrecorded in tax returns or polls because it is personal;
- Money is sent to family, kin and communities outside the United States; and
- Higher income individuals in communities of color refer to their obligation to help others in their community achieve success.

United Way of America

- Among Hispanics, religious organizations receive the most money (15 percent), then United Ways (13 percent), followed by the Cancer Society; and
- African-American and Hispanic-American populations are a strong market for United Ways. These populations give a higher percentage of their household incomes than whites and are less likely to be asked to give and volunteer; they give to the United Way “to help people, and they give because they are solicited at work.”

ABSTRACTS

Betts, Talmadge D. “Minority Fund-Raising in America: A Historical Perspective.” *The Journal* (Autumn 1989): 6-13. Alexandria, VA: National Society of Fund Raising Executives.

This article summarizes interviews with nine minority Americans, including Native American, Chinese-American and African-Americans donors. As the group develops organizations to meet their needs, a simultaneous development of fundraising and resource networks occurs. Betts asserts that cultural differences among minority groups are striking, but that similarities in the development of self-help organizations also exist among these populations. For these groups, philanthropy is generally used to improve the quality of life in communities where needs exist.

Blum, Debra, and Stephen Green. “American Demographics: Finding Wealthy Donors.” *Chronicle of Philanthropy* (Aug. 13, 1998).

Carson, Emmett D. “The Colors of Money: Charitable Giving Among Racial and Ethnic Minorities.” *NSFRE Journal* (May-June 1995): 14-17.

This article explores the range of giving—large and small—by racial minorities across the United States. Carson provides numerous examples of minority giving that sometimes goes unnoticed by Western standards because it does not necessarily take common “European” philanthropic forms.

Hasch, Trisha. *Volunteering in the African American, Asian American and Latino Communities*. Report on the Volunteer Management-Capacity-Building Grants Initiative conducted by the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and the Voluntary Action Center, Sept. 1996.

As part of a Volunteer Management Capacity-Building Grants Initiative, the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and the Voluntary Action Center. To determine the viability and justify ethnic volunteer centers, the authors conducted a study to

identify how volunteerism is perceived and how it occurs in society at large and within the African-American, Asian-American and Latino communities. The study focused on : identifying perceptions of volunteerism in each community; exploring motivations for volunteering; identifying organizational and personal challenges to volunteerism; examining organizational elements that lead to successful volunteer efforts; defining diversity and multiculturalism in volunteer management; and determining key trends in volunteerism. The report provides an overview of volunteering in ethnic communities, including issues surrounding multicultural volunteer centers.

Jones, Anna Faith. *New Voices at the Center: Strengthening the Commitment to an Inclusive Society*. Paper presented at the Fifth Annual James A. Joseph Lecture Award, sponsored by the Association of Black Foundation Executives, New York, NY, 1995.

This paper focuses on the history, mission and goals of the Boston Foundation, with a particular emphasis on the racial and cultural diversity of the community it serves. For more than a decade, the Boston Foundation has revisited its role vis-a-vis the community and sought to strategically target the critical needs of its constituency. With the changing mix of population in the Boston area, the foundation has continuously focused on being inclusive and broadening its impact in all parts of the community. Jones discusses the foundation's strategy of inclusivity, noting that diversity is essential as the community becomes global and the population's needs shift.

Joseph, James A. *Remaking America: How the Benevolent Traditions of Many Cultures are Transforming our National Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 1995.

This book examines the long history and rich traditions of giving among people of color. Focusing on four minority groups—Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and Latinos—Joseph draws compelling portraits of cultural heroes and heroines who personify the benevolent nature of their unique heritage. By understanding and affirming these traditions, Joseph believes that society can form a new vision of the larger American community based on shared values, universal compassion and a new spirituality. According to Joseph, despite cultural differences, each of the four groups has a legacy of self-help and volunteerism, and the groups are in consensus about the relationship between the individual and society. Through personal accounts, Joseph offers an overview of the distinctive traditions and customs that have helped to shape the charitable practices of communities of color.

Smith, Bradford, Sylvia Shue, Jennifer Lisa Vest and Joseph Villarreal. *Asian and Hispanic Philanthropy*. San Francisco: University of San Francisco, Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management, 1992.

This report is based on a cross-cultural ethnography. It identifies and describes the customs of sharing and giving money, goods and services to individuals and organizations outside the nuclear family in the Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Mexican

and Guatemalan communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. Based on interviews and other research, the authors test two hypotheses: knowledge of people's cultural background does not help to predict the number of hours in a year they give outside their family, nor does it help to predict the beneficiaries of the money they give outside their family. Value of commitment to family and community were found to be influential within these ethnic groups. The authors suggest that the cultural dimensions of gift-giving, sharing or financial assistance carry a variety of meanings among the cultures. Other issues explored include the role of religion, voluntary associations, mutual benefit societies, godparenthood, kinship and other cultural institutions that shape ethnic charitable life.

———. *Ethnic Philanthropy*. San Francisco: University of San Francisco, Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management, 1994.

This report is based on a cross-cultural ethnography of members of the African-American, Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Filipino, Chinese, Japanese and Korean communities in the San Francisco Bay area. The authors examine the cultural dimensions of gift-giving, sharing, and the distribution of income and wealth, as well as the philanthropic impact of religion, mutual benefit associations, godparenthood and kinship on the behavior of members of the above groups.

Winters, Mary-Frances. *Donors of Color: A Promising New Frontier for Community Foundations*. Washington, DC: Council on Foundations, 1993.

This report outlines the results of a study of the philanthropic motivations of minority donors and how they benefited by using a community foundation to achieve their charitable goals. Winters concludes that community foundation leaders should consider demographic changes in potential donor bases in their efforts to expand the donor pool. Examples of outreach efforts in minority communities are described in each of the selected cities.

———. *Widening the Circle: Inclusive Practices and Community Foundations*. Washington, DC: Council on Foundations, 1994.

This resource book is designed to assist community foundations with their inclusive practice initiatives. Winters provides practical ideas and information on expanding the circle of partners, enhancing inclusiveness of board and staff, broadening donor and grantmaking activities, instituting recruitment and retention of diverse groups and gathering demographic and lifestyle information to better inform community foundation practices. She also offers strategies for expanding the potential donor base to include donors of color.

United Way Multi-Ethnic Research Project. San Diego: United Way of San Diego County, Feb. 1996.

This study, conducted by Moder Marketing Research, surveyed the multiethnic profile of givers in California between 1995 and 1996. The study focused on eight major questions that affect ethnic donors across California: What influences are most

effective in motivating donors to give through the United Way? What are current images and attitudes regarding the United Way? What kind of outcomes are desired from donor involvement? What are the primary motivators for giving and not giving? What is the relationship between community needs and charitable giving? What are the philanthropic profiles of current, lapsed and potential donors by ethnicity? What kinds of volunteer involvement and participation do people have? What are the philanthropic profiles of donors by ethnicity? These questions were asked of interviewees from eight ethnic/racial groups—Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, Filipinos, Vietnamese and whites). Their attitudes and motivations for giving and fundraising, and their awareness of United Way and its purpose and activities, were reported in the study.

United Way of Alexandria. *1995 and 1996 United Way of America Public Opinion Poll: Findings Among African American and Hispanic Respondents*. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America, 1995.

In January 1995 and December 1996, United Way of America commissioned a survey of the general public on giving behavior, attitudes toward United Way and awareness of United Way communications. This report provides highlights of the findings of the study of 200 African American and 200 Hispanic respondents in the United States. Findings from 1995 indicated a favorable view of United Way among African Americans (79 percent) and Hispanic (77 percent) respondents and a less favorable view among white respondents (65 percent). Among African Americans who say they have a favorite charity list, that list includes: United Way (15 percent), American Negro College Fund (12 percent), followed by religious organizations, children's groups, the Cancer Society and the Red Cross. Among Hispanics, religious organizations led giving (15 percent), then came United Way (13 percent) and the Cancer Society. The report notes that African-American and Hispanic-American population segments represent a strong market for United Ways. They give a higher percentage of their household incomes than whites and are less likely to be asked to give and volunteer. They give to the United Way "to help people, and because they are solicited at work."

Wittstock, Laura Waterman, and Theartrice Williams. *Changing Communities, Changing Foundations: The Story of the Diversity Efforts of Twenty Community Foundation*. Minneapolis: Rainbow Research, Inc., 1998.

This book provides an overview of the Ford Foundation Diversity Project and the results of community foundation efforts to respond to the racial and ethnic challenges in their communities. The Diversity Project, funded by the Ford Foundation, focused on 20 community foundations around the United States, challenging them to respond to the changing racial and ethnic population needs of their communities. The community foundations were asked to consider governance and staffing, asset development, community linkages and grantmaking, and business practices in an effort to produce a blueprint on the essence of best practices in this arena.

RELATED WORKS

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