

ADVANCING PHILANTHROPIC PRACTICE:
Educational Landscape, Current Reality, and
Opportunities for the Future

A Report by Dara Major for
The Center For Strategic Philanthropy and Civil Society
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ABOUT THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIL SOCIETY:

The Center for Strategic Philanthropy and Civil Society was established at Duke University's Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy in 2007, and is led by Director Edward Skloot. The Center's goals are to enhance the decision-making and impact of America's foundations, and to develop philanthropic and governmental strategies to remedy critical problems in areas such as global health, energy and the environment. The Center will be supported by grants from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, as well as endowment gifts and operating fund grants from other philanthropies and individuals.

The Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy educates tomorrow's leaders and strives to improve the quality of public policymaking through research, professional training, and policy and community engagement. Established in 1971, the institute has one of the nation's largest public policy undergraduate programs. It also offers selective graduate degree programs (MPP, PIDP, and PhD). Nearly a dozen affiliated centers and programs research topics as diverse as international development, health, social policy, media and democracy, and philanthropy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dara Major is an independent consultant in the areas of planning and assessment, organizational learning and alignment for results. With 20 years of experience in philanthropy, Dara has led major strategy and evaluation initiatives – including building capacity to embrace and capitalize on change – for the Surdna Foundation, where she served as director for planning and strategic initiatives. Earlier in her career, she served as a chief aide to the president of the Rockefeller Foundation, managing the activities of the executive office and directing special projects, which included drafting and editing speeches and other communication materials. A member of the first cohort of participants in the Executive Program for Philanthropy Leaders at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business, Dara has worked with numerous organizations in a board and advisory capacity, including Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, and is currently a member of the Center for Effective Philanthropy's Advisory Board.

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Edward Skloot, Director
Center for Strategic Philanthropy and Civil Society
Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy
Duke University
201 Science Drive
Durham, NC 27708
ppsinfo@duke.edu / www.pubpol.duke.edu

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study seeks to describe the changing landscape and competitive environment of philanthropic practice education (PE) – defined here as education, leadership development and training programs designed specifically for practitioners – for executive senior-level staff, trustees, and high net worth individual donors. This is an exploratory study, and is by no means exhaustive; the goal was not to compile a complete list of issues and providers, but to lift up representative examples of widely-adopted as well as innovative approaches to PE, to highlight gaps and potential opportunities for partnership, and to identify trends that may influence the Center’s work going forward.

There has been a significant increase in the number of PE programs offered to practitioners in recent years. This signifies an aspect of broader, ongoing professionalization across the sector which is driven by: growth and development in the sector itself; transitions in and diffusion of leadership; public pressure on accountability and effectiveness; and a growing sense – from within as well as outside of the sector – that philanthropy can and ought to do more to ease society’s ills.

The current PE landscape ranges across a spectrum of providers, participants, goals and perceived successes. Within our criteria for program inclusion, there appears on the surface to be a fairly robust competitive environment: universities, grantmaking associations, leadership networks, family offices, and professional advisors reach thousands of practitioners annually across a variety of characteristics (geographical location, donor interest and/or organization type [community, family, private foundation]). Yet closer analysis revealed a lack of diversity of practitioner segments served and products offered. Most providers serve a limited sub-set: the new, inexperienced, individual practitioner. A literature review revealed that, as with philanthropic practice itself, key success factors in practitioner and donor education are emergent though not yet widely adopted; and, further, there is little extant comprehensive research and evaluation on their effects.

Relative to the vast number of offerings, there have been few attempts to define the continuum of donor and practitioner development in philanthropy. The further one goes out on the experienced or “seasoned” end of the spectrum the more arid the PE landscape, based on an implicit assumption that continuous learning at that level rightly resists formalization. This assumption is being increasingly challenged, not only within philanthropy but across sectors as external circumstances shift and the value of communities of practice becomes clear. And while experienced executives in philanthropy are often expert at cobbling together their own learning agendas and resources, many feel that greater potential could be extracted from a more systematic, collective approach. Current providers, too, are beginning to expand offerings to serve the needs of a growing cohort of experienced practitioners.

The challenge, therefore, is to help push the inevitable, in the midst of continually shifting practitioner “mental maps” that variously organize effectiveness according to professionalization, social justice, or performance priorities. The ongoing creative tensions – or even polarities – and largely unchallenged orthodoxies around what constitutes good practice, therefore, often range across approaches that are collective/individual, professional/creative, humble/bold, effective/innovative and ultimately what constitutes the public good. The Center’s biggest contribution may lie in bringing experienced practitioners together in small groups, to identify and facilitate their own knowledge and experience integration for action. For in terms of its development as a profession, philanthropy may just be approaching the end of the beginning.

INTRODUCTION

“In the end, it is not money that counts; it is *men*. The contribution of money is always secondary in importance to the work of men and women of creative minds and devoted lives.”

– Raymond B. Fosdick, President of the Rockefeller Foundation 1936-1948¹

“‘Professionalization’ refers to a shift away from amateur or personalized responses to needs or problems and toward technical and often standardized approaches to providing services that reflect expert knowledge gained through specialized training.”

– Alan J. Abramson and Rachel McCarthy²

“Relying exclusively on exceptional individuals to find their own way in professional grantmaking is not a sustainable strategy for good work in philanthropy.”

– Laura Horn and Howard Gardner³

Against a backdrop of increasing professionalization across the sector, there has been a proliferation of nonprofit and philanthropy education and training programs for students and practitioners alike. Certainly the sector itself has experienced tremendous growth in recent years (Foundation Center 2008). In the United States alone:

- There are more than 72,000 grantmaking foundations (up from 41,588 in 1996);
- Total assets = \$614.7 billion;
- In 2007, there was a record \$36.6 billion in new gifts and;
- Foundation giving increased to \$42.9 billion.

While the sheer growth of the sector provides for much of the interest in developing philanthropic skills, methods and tools, this interest also derives from increasing complexity within the sector itself which includes: lengthening traditions of practice; new performance imperatives; transitions in and diffusion of leadership; public pressure on accountability and effectiveness; and a growing sense – from within as well as outside of the sector – that philanthropy can and ought to do more to ease society’s ills.

Though much research has been conducted on the scope, standards and quality of nonprofit management education generally (Mirabella 2007), less is known about education, leadership and professional development programs offered exclusively to working practitioners in philanthropy. No central body systematically collects, researches and disseminates good practice in this area on practitioners’ behalf. Further, there have been relatively few efforts to describe what good practice looks like, from the practitioner’s point of view, over time.

Given the un-organized nature of both the evolving profession and the growing “cottage industry” of education providers (Siegel 2003), that the array of offerings is scattered should not, perhaps, be unexpected. Programs are offered to practitioners from a variety of sources – from universities and professional associations to private consultants – and represent an enormous range of goals and perceived success. Yet, as in the practice of philanthropy itself, there is little agreement as to what constitutes quality and effectiveness in these programs.

¹ Fosdick 1963, pg 21.

² Salamon 2002, pg 343.

³ Damon 2006, pg 93.

This study seeks to describe the changing landscape and competitive environment of philanthropic practice education (PE) – defined here as education, leadership development and training programs designed specifically for practitioners – for executive senior-level staff, trustees, and high net worth individual donors. The goal is not to try to compile a complete list of issues and providers, but to lift up representative examples of widely-adopted as well as innovative approaches to PE, to highlight gaps and potential opportunities for partnership, and to identify trends that may influence the Center’s work going forward.

The report that follows is presented in four sections:

- I. Framing the Practitioner Development Context
- II. Program Models: A Sample of Current Offerings (Criteria for Inclusion in this Study; Provider Sources; Curricula)
- III. The Marketplace and Practitioner Feedback
- IV. Findings and Recommendations

This is an exploratory study, and is by no means exhaustive. Given the very nature of the currently-evolving field, this research is open-ended not conclusive. What follows, therefore, is not comprehensive but it is representative.

Sources for this study include a small but significant set of one-on-one interviews with practitioners in philanthropy, as well as dozens of PE provider websites. The study’s conceptual framework is based on over 50 references incorporating current research in the field, theories of interorganizational dynamics and adult learning methods. Several key texts are attached as an Appendix. I am gratefully indebted to these authors, to colleagues who agreed to be interviewed for this study and to many other colleagues in the sector for their work has not only informed this report, it has also informed and strengthened my development as a practitioner in philanthropy. The following is also, therefore, inextricably informed by my own experiences as a foundation staff member over almost 20 years.

I. FRAMING THE PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

“In contrast to other professions, professional philanthropy lacks shared norms regarding the purpose and practice of grantmaking. . . . Grantmakers also lack shared professional standards. What some view as effective grantmaking, others view as bad practice.”

– Laura Horn and Howard Gardner⁴

“In 2008, the donor in search of learning, tools, mechanisms and like-minded peers is fortunate to have an array of available options. . . . But despite the progress over the last decade, yawning gaps remain. The need and the opportunity remain great and the stakes remain high. . . .”

– Stephen Johnson and Ellen Remmer⁵

“Individuals who have dedicated their lives to working for social and economic justice need a major paradigm shift and recognize that foundation money, often the result of exploited wealth, is public money.”

– Christine E. Ahn⁶

Philanthropy has come a long way since John D. Rockefeller hired Frederick T. Gates to help manage his philanthropy in 1891. While the overall scale and distribution of service to and employment in foundations today is not easily assessed, it appears modest in comparison to the scale of assets held. A 2006 study found that the largest 10,000 foundations engaged a total of 46,526 trustees, not including staff who also serve as trustees (Boris 2006). Another recent study found that of 20,641 foundations surveyed (those with assets of \$1 million or more, or making grants of \$100,000 or more), only 3,547 foundations reported having staff; the total number of staff positions at those foundations was 19,027. Among those foundations reporting staff, the average number of staff was 5.4 – the median number of staff was just two (Foundation Center 2007). Growth in foundation assets has been accompanied by a rise in the number of professionally staffed support organizations, networks and associations.

Like most fields of practice, in its earliest years philanthropy operated without recognized professional standards and practices, and instead long relied on the accomplishments – the many accomplishments – of exceptional individuals. The lifespan and development of practitioners in philanthropy was left to historians to interpret and describe. Today, professional standards are emerging through the work of organizations such as the Council on Foundations and the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers, sometimes in response to evolving technical, legal or ethical responsibilities of the sector. And these associations are developing curricula to help guide practitioners toward good practice in relation to these standards. Further, a deepening appreciation of the essential craft of philanthropy is moving even established foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, to examine and invite others to help inform its practice. As professional standards emerge, however, so too are gaps becoming visible: there is often a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities at all levels of practice, core skills and, in the midst of tremendous technological and social change, what ultimately constitutes philanthropic effectiveness.

The growth in the nonprofit sector and corollary development of the field of nonprofit management education (NME) provides an interesting point of comparison. The earliest

⁴ Damon 2006, pg 91.

⁵ Johnson 2008.

⁶ INCITE! 2007, pg 74.

university-based nonprofit education programs were established in the late 1970's and early 1980's at Columbia, Case Western and Yale universities and at the University of San Francisco. The first academic conference on NME was held in 1986, and by 1990 there were 17 graduate concentrations up-and-running – this number grew to 130 by 2006, in the United States alone. As Michael O'Neill, founder of the Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management at the University of San Francisco, has noted, "Few fields have grown as rapidly as nonprofit management education. In 1983 – we thought NME was a good idea, but we really didn't know if they'd come" (O'Neill 2007). Meanwhile, by some estimates upwards of 250,000 practitioners were receiving training consulting assistance annually through management support organizations.

Parallel to this growth, the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) was established in 1991 to establish curricula guidelines and support the development of academic centers at accredited colleges and universities. John Palmer Smith, immediate past president of NACC, has noted: "Without the rapid growth of the nonprofit sector in America over the last – pick a number: ten years, fifteen years, twenty-five years, fifty years – I doubt that there would be one hundred universities offering graduate education, and many more now offering undergraduate coursework...." (Hudson Institute 2005).

The development of NME has been driven by experimentation and varied orientations – some programs are research-focused, some education-focused, others service-focused. Seton Hall University professors Roseanne M. Mirabella and Naomi Wish, leading NME researchers, analyzed NME curricula from 1996-2006 through the lens of three categories: outside function (eg. advocacy, public policy, organizing, fundraising, marketing); "boundary spanning" (legal, strategic planning); and inside function (human resources, financial management). They found that while internal management skills comprised the bulk of courses for all degree types in 1996, courses on outside function have dominated growth since then (Mirabella 2007).

As O'Neill has noted, "The most important accomplishment of the last 20 years has been the clarification and rationalization of the nonprofit management education idea." This process has certainly been contentious at times, with critics such as Lester Salamon arguing that NME fails to focus sufficiently on "managing borders" across sectors, and that specialization decreases the likelihood that long-lasting, multi-sector solutions will be found (O'Neill 1998). Mark Rosenman has argued, "As the negative impact of professional education is internalized and expressed by more and more graduates, the field of practice itself will reflect the same limitations they embody. Both theory and application become more conventional and conservative, reinforce extant paradigms, and provide clear disincentives for risk-taking. Having created a body of lore that tells us how it's done, the profession is less likely to support exploration of different ways of doing it" (Hudson Institute 2005). Still, as O'Neill noted at the most recent NME academic conference, Benchmark3: "We're past having to worry about the legitimacy of nonprofit management education. We're now in adolescence, moving into adulthood" (O'Neill 2007). With a greater challenge ahead: remaining responsive to the profession it seeks to serve.

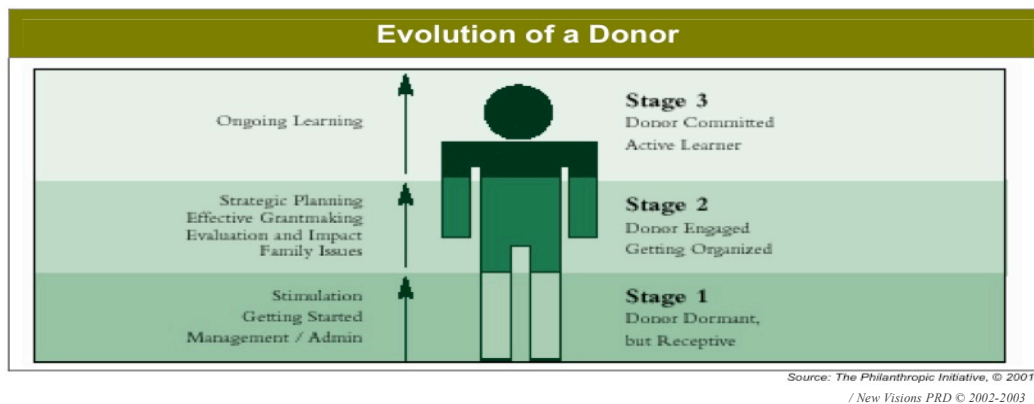
While not quite at the questioning-legitimacy stage, PE – philanthropic practice education – remains in adolescence. And as is typical of most adolescence, PE is marked by experimentation in identify formation and has yet to be fully defined and recognized, even sometimes as distinct from NME. Yet both disciplines share similar struggles regarding relevance, professionalization of mission, most appropriate institutional "home," foci of curricula (outside function, boundary spanning, and inside function), and effects on the sector. It is important to understand the following scan of PE programs in the philanthropic sector with this piece of the landscape in full view.

So just how do practitioners learn and build appropriate competencies over time and at various stages of their professional life cycle, what are (or, some would say, ought to be) their learning foci – and where do they turn for practical assistance?

There have been relatively few attempts made from within philanthropy to define the continuum of practitioner development, whether the practitioner is defined as a donor, paid staff or board member. It would seem, however, that the starting orientations for each are increasingly divergent: donors embark on a “journey” of discovery through philanthropy, whereas boards and staff are increasingly standards-, code- and streamlining-bound. A few examples spanning this range are noted below.

In “What’s a Donor to Do?”, Ellen Remmer of The Philanthropic Initiative described three stages of donor development:

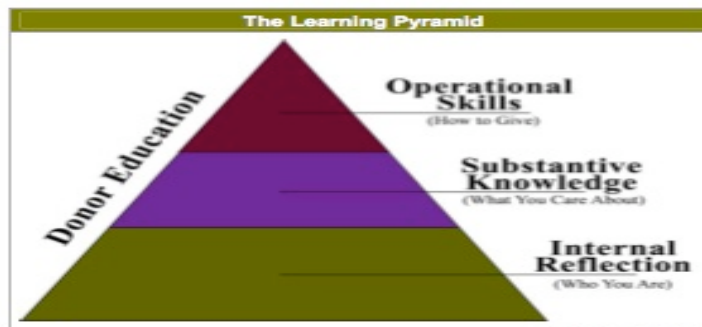
- Stage 1 Donor - Dormant but Receptive
- Stage 2 Donor - Engaged and Getting Organized
- Stage 3 Donor - Committed and Active Learner



Remmer further noted that Stage 3 donors are “very motivated,” and need support for ongoing development in the following areas:

- “moving beyond giving to investment of self
- linking with and learning from other donors
- best practices, new research, model programs
- using technology in grantmaking and as a research and community-building resource
- better models of evaluation/assessing impact
- new models of philanthropy
- selecting/differentiating among consulting professionals
- bringing the next generation into the picture” (Remmer 2000)

In “Philanthropy’s Forgotten Resource: Engaging the Individual Donor,” Dan Siegel and Jenny Yancey identified skills, knowledge and reflection as essential donor education components:



They found that, “The donor education field is highly varied in the focus and depth with which each program covers these three core learning areas” (Siegel 2003).

Paul Shoemaker, executive director of Social Venture Partners Seattle (SVP), recently led that organization’s innovative efforts to map out levels of donor development and how they can guide members – in an effort to better align both their donor education offerings *and* intended community results. As Shoemaker recently noted, “We created a framework: what does it mean to be a great philanthropist. Not because we think we’re so great, but because someone’s got to.”

SVP’s framework flows from areas of program or “curricula” foci:



Source: Social Venture Partners © 2007

to stages of donor development:

<p>LEVEL ONE: “Learn and Grow”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checkbook philanthropist, mostly gives because asked and believes it’s the “right” or moral thing to do • Volunteers because asked • New to learning about nonprofits sector in general, how they are capitalized and raise funds • Unsure how diversity/power dynamics influence philanthropy • Gets information about issues and connections to nonprofits based on small, close network of friends/family <p><i>Desire to learn more.</i></p> <p>LEVEL TWO: “Deepen and Strengthen” / “Going Beyond 101”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives less because asked, more because aligns with personal mission/vision • Has a giving plan for at least a year out, considers income and assets in giving; has begun to include family in giving and exploring more strategies to continue • Sees giving as an investment - wants to make an impact and has started to evaluate impact of own giving • Deliberate about volunteer positions sought based on personal mission and vision • Basic familiarity with nonprofit financials • Somewhat comfortable fundraising (mainly individual asks) • Familiar with concepts around power, diversity and philanthropy; emerging into larger community to build relationships • Good grasp on issues, needs in community and strategies for addressing them. Beginning to collaborate more with others. Familiar with who is doing the work around an issue, though may not have worked directly with them (yet). <p><i>Looking to deepen knowledge/experience in all the above areas.</i></p> <p>LEVEL THREE: “Lead and Amplify” / “Graduate Level Philanthropy”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of giving is planned in advance in alignment with mission/vision. Uses formal processes and criteria when giving. Integrated “triple bottom” approach to giving, and family fully integrated in the process. Likely works with financial advisor to maximize giving strategies • Evaluates the success of personal giving • Commits long-term to an organization/s or issue/s • Seen by others as a leader. Chairs major fundraising campaigns, etc.

- Comfortable working in and facilitating diverse groups, recognizes and uses diverse communications styles easily
- Direct experience working with major organizations around issues important to them
- Regularly speaks/collaborates/strategizes/researches/creates new knowledge and perspectives around these issues.

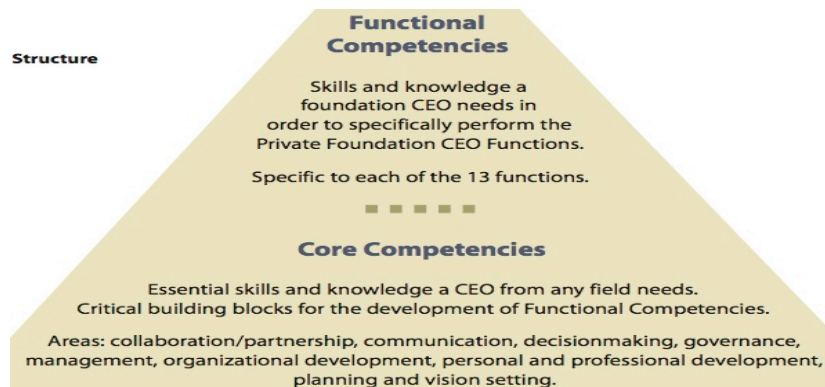
Willing to share knowledge with others.

Source: Social Venture Partners © 2007

What distinguishes these and other efforts is an attempt to move “beyond compliance” and toward greater effectiveness. In 2004, the Center for Effective Philanthropy surveyed the CEO and board members of 53 large foundations – “the largest [study] ever undertaken on a broad set of foundation boards” – to discern key components of effective foundation governance. Their findings, documented in a report entitled “Beyond Compliance: Trustee Viewpoints on Effective Foundation Governance,” revealed that “board members’ conception of board effectiveness goes well beyond the basics of compliance or guarding against malfeasance. Furthermore, the data we have gathered show that both boards and CEOs see opportunities for greater involvement in key areas, such as assessment.” The study identified key characteristics that were the “most significant predictors of trustee perceptions of foundation board effectiveness” which included: appropriate mix and utilization of skills; engagement in strategy development and assessment; focus of discussions on important topics; and positive relationship with the CEO (Buchanan 2005). Yet few skills-building workshops for boards roll up their curricula in quite this way.

The Council on Foundations has moved very far down this field with community foundations to establish “National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations,” which form the basis of a diverse set of PE programs and workshops (more below). The standards, as well as principles and practices for corporate and family foundations, may be found at: <http://bestpractices.cof.org/>

In 2006, the Council’s “Advisory Committee for Executive Programs” released a framework of CEO competencies with, among others, an express purpose of helping “providers of foundation executive education offer effective programs and clearly communicate program content and benefits by basing them on the functions and competencies.” These competencies range from core competencies (such as understanding the basics of collaboration, management) to functional competencies (understanding the foundation’s history) and competencies for board relations, values and ethical standards management, as summarized in this COF graphic:



© Council on Foundations

Most recently, the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers has taken the lead in a process for defining a Grantmaker Education Framework “to provide a comprehensive conceptual structure of the practices and core skills and competencies required of different types of grantmakers at different stages of development/experience and in different positions. The

Framework will be used to provide strategic guidance for the Forum’s project to build the capacity of regional associations of grantmakers to provide grantmaker education” and will “correspond to the legal compliance and accountability practices and overall framework of the Forum’s Private Foundation Accountability Self-Assessment Tool, which was developed in 2006.” The Framework will also incorporate “practices and skills identified through a deeper analysis of education offerings provided by regional associations of grantmakers, grantmaker affinity groups and other grantmaker education organizations” (DJB 2007).

FUNCTIONAL AREAS	PRACTICES, SKILLS & COMPETENCIES		
	Level 1: Following Laws & Regulations (Legal Compliance)	Level 2: Upholding the Public Trust (Accountability)	Level 3: Making an Impact (Effectiveness)
Grantmaker Function			
Administration			
Communications & Disclosure			
Evaluation			
Finance & Investment			
Governance			
Grantmaking			
Human Resources			
Mission & Strategy			
Public Policy & Advocacy			
Grantmaker Type			
Community/Public Foundations			
Corporate Grantmaking			
Family Philanthropy			

Source: DJB Consulting 2007

(The framework, still in development, was an initial piece of a larger education development program at the Forum, described in greater detail in Section II below.)

In a broad sense, the frameworks above illustrate differing aspects of the three “mental maps” that Katherine Fulton and Andrew Blau described as underlying philanthropy today (Fulton 2005):

- The Professionalization Map. In this view, philanthropy needs to get its act together and act like a real field.
- The Performance Map. In this view, philanthropy isn’t enough like business.
- The Social Justice Map. In this view, what’s wrong with philanthropy is that it isn’t democratic enough.

The danger is that an emphasis on tools and structures will reinforce the “status quo” – as “new leaders, under new pressures, use new tools to do new things.” Though the “social justice map” is regaining momentum, as seen in the rise of diversity offerings and efforts to link individual development to community planning and results, as Fulton has noted, “Many people carry more than one of these maps in their heads, and this short list is by no means exhaustive.”

The frameworks described above in some ways represent burgeoning efforts to unpack these “mental models,” to move them from the heads of individuals to the hands of individuals and groups, toward a more transparent and collective orientation for action. None of this is meant to suggest that there are yet common, widely agreed up on practitioner development frameworks in place and at work across the sector: there are not. Relative to the number of program offerings, comprehensive framing/development roadmaps have not yet been widely adopted across the sector. Key success factors in donor education, as in philanthropic practice itself, are emergent though not yet widely adopted. Given the very nature of this currently-evolving field, the following data on programs is not arrayed around a comprehensive development framework, and except as noted below, the following programs do not purposely position their programs within an overarching development framework.

II: PROGRAMS: A SAMPLE OF CURRENT OFFERINGS

Criteria for Inclusion and Curricula

Working closely with Edward Skloot, and with input from Joel Fleishman, the following program criteria were created up-front to define program inclusion for the purposes of this scan. Given the murky state of the discipline, we viewed the criteria as a guideline and determined early on to include some programs that did not fully fit the criteria but were nonetheless more broadly defined as relevant and instructive. We opted to:

Include programs that:

- Focus exclusively or primarily on practitioners in philanthropy (not nonprofits generally)
- Target senior foundation staff (chief executives and executive management team members) and trustees
- Target individual philanthropists, donors, founders
- Are university-based, classroom and/or instructionally-based
- Are of short duration and focus squarely on target practitioners
- Use multiple approaches to teaching/learning leadership
- Have a collective or cohort experience
- Demonstrate innovation of form or content

Exclude programs that:

- Target nonprofit executives (and/or nonprofit management programs)
- Target non-executive foundation staff (program directors and below)
- Provide capacity-building primarily through technical assistance

For selected programs, and to the extent possible, we sought to include the following curricula details: overview description – age, frequency, duration/length and site of program; scope of program – subject matter, faculty and curricula; target audience, admissions criteria, participant profile and cohort size – per session and cumulatively; and cost.

Provider Sources

Based on the above criteria and after a preliminary scan, the programs were broken out into several basic yet distinct categories, with an emphasis on target audience:

Section I: Staff

1. University-based programs that meet strictest criteria
2. University Centers of Note
3. Professional Associations and Interesting Foundation Alliances

Section II: Donors and Trustees

4. Professional Associations for Donors/Donor-Led Organizations
5. Extended Workshops and Peer Learning Groups
6. Professional Advisors

Once the initial provider categories were approved and further scanning underway, the scope was expanded at Edward Skloot's request to include a brief overview of established and/or emerging academic centers on philanthropy that provide strategic research to practitioners and/or for whom public, short seminars for practitioners are central (though they do not provide professional

training per se to practitioners). Explicitly research-based centers that did not substantially offer educational opportunities to practitioners were not included.

Again, this is an exploratory study, and is by no means exhaustive; the goal of this research was not to try to compile a complete list of issues and providers, but to lift up examples that represent widely-adopted, effective, and/or innovative approaches to PE as well as to present potential opportunities for partnership. What follows, therefore, is not comprehensive but it is representative.

A few notes on the research and report: Most providers do not screen participants or set hard admissions criteria; such criteria, where it exists, is noted below. Categories (staff/donors-trustees, peer learning groups/donor advisors) do not always or neatly disaggregate. Where applicable, only the PE offerings of the institutions noted below are described; additional offerings, or areas of research beyond the criteria, are not.

PROGRAMS FOR STAFF

“Much of the internal conversation in foundations is focused on getting the work done, rather than on professional development and peer learning. Despite the best of intentions, it is difficult within foundations to achieve the distance and reflection to get to the heart of the business of grantmaking and the ways in which individuals connect with their own work.... Learning formats are typically for sharing successes and learning about current issues, not the process of grantmaking that includes how we make mistakes, are challenged by grantees, or become stuck or stagnant. There are few opportunities for grantmakers to talk openly and candidly about their inner experience of the work and their careers in philanthropy.... there seems to be an implicit philosophy that grantmakers should find their own way in the field, guided by the unique qualities of their own foundations....”

- Ruth Tebbets Brousseau, “Practice Matters”⁷

“Foundation executives are willing to work with senior leaders of nonprofits, academia and business on social, economic and policy issues. However they tend to prefer to work with peers from within the foundation field when discussing the internal issues of foundation management, program design and evaluation, etc. This preference for peer exchange is one of the factors that makes leadership programming offered by programs outside of the foundation field less appealing to many foundation executives.”

- “CEO Survey Overview,” Council on Foundations Advisory Committee for Executive Programs⁸

Relative to the number of available offerings, there are surprisingly few PE programs that put professional experience and peer learning at their core, and fewer still that focus on experienced grantmakers, whether from providers inside or outside of philanthropy. This section will explore traditional as well as peer-oriented opportunities available for staff:

1. University-based Programs
2. University Centers of Note
3. Professional Associations

⁷ Brousseau 2004, pg 48.

⁸ Council on Foundations 2004, pg 1.

1. UNIVERSITY-BASED PROGRAMS

Executive education in the United States and around the world is experiencing significant growth driven not only by individual demand but also corporate demand for bench-strength and strategic skills building of staff teams. In a recent survey by the International University Consortium for Executive Education of 43 university-based executive education programs, 84% of respondents report revenue rose in 2006 – with 78% growth in customized courses and 70% growth in open enrollment programs (Roner 2007). Such programs are traditionally structured as opportunities for knowledge transfer, rather than personal or strategy development.

One might expect there to be a similar proliferation of courses for executives in philanthropy. While many university-based programs and centers use “philanthropy” in name, however, few offer programs designed exclusively for practitioners.

A. STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Stanford University is a notable exception here. With its multidisciplinary Center for Social Innovation (CSI) and newly-established Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (PACS Center), housed at the Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford seeks to deliver both practice development and research in philanthropy. The CSI was established in 2000, and expanded in 2005 with a gift from Louise and Claude N. Rosenberg Jr. (“the largest ever” to the Center) and a subsequent \$5 million gift from John and Tashia Morgridge. The Stanford Social Innovation Review was formed in 2003, and received a \$1 million gift from Bill Draper in 2006 to further strengthen its commitment to communication and the accessibility of new ideas. As noted in the launch of the new PACS Center:

“Surprisingly, even at a time when studies of philanthropy and donative behavior indicate that the next fifteen years and beyond will be characterized by an unprecedented intergenerational transfer of both leadership and wealth, the knowledge base about philanthropy's behavior and impact, including its effectiveness, is quite thin. The PACS Center's mission, therefore, is to engage students, faculty, and practitioners in examining ways in which philanthropic institutions, nonprofit organizations, and other key elements of civil society work to define and address public interests, both in the United States and abroad” (Stanford 2008).

Stanford offers a wide array of executive education courses for nonprofit practitioners, and its centerpiece for philanthropy practitioners is the Stanford Executive Program for Philanthropy Leaders (EPPL) offered through the Center for Social Innovation at the Graduate School of Business.*

Launched in 2005, EPPL is offered once per year. It is held on-site at the Stanford campus and is 5.5 days in duration (Sunday evening through Saturday morning). The program focuses on “the strategy and management of grantmaking institutions, with a special emphasis on vision, power, governance, and collaboration. Participants have a unique opportunity to engage in deep, reflective discussion around issues in today's philanthropic environment – such as strategy and organizational performance, building and maintaining productive relationships, effectively managing power, and board leadership.”

Participants are instructed through a combination of interactive lectures, case studies, and relevant group exercises. Participants also discuss cases with one another prior to lectures, and jointly

* The author was a member of the inaugural cohort of EPPL participants, in 2005.

work through key questions together in small groups. Core areas of focus are described as follows:

- *Understanding Mission: The Psychological and Emotional Logic.* Mission and strategy are essential but distinct elements of an organization’s direction. This session introduces an advanced framework for analyzing and evaluating mission. It also draws on a case study to examine the relationship between mission and strategy.
- *The Leader as Organizational Architect:* This session introduces the idea of great leaders as organizational architects (i.e., people who focus on how the work setting is ‘configured’ and manage with that in mind), and examines the characteristics of great leaders, new ways to think about leadership, and the role leaders play in motivating desired change.
- *Shaping Cooperative Systems.* The proliferation of philanthropic organizations in recent years has led to many new, imaginative approaches to giving. On the downside, organizations are often found reinventing the wheel and duplicating one another’s efforts. This session examines the advantages and disadvantages of philanthropic alliances and “mergers” as mechanisms to shape cooperation.

Faculty varies annually depending on availability. The following have taught previous courses or are scheduled to teach in the future: James A. Phills Jr., Professor of Organizational Behavior and

Claude N. Rosenberg Jr. Director of the Center for Social Innovation; William P. Barnett, Thomas M. Siebel Professor of Business Leadership, Strategy and Organizations and Senior Fellow, Woods Institute for the Environment at Stanford; Deborah H. Gruenfeld, Moghadam Family Professor of Organizational Behavior, Jeffrey Pfeffer, Thomas D. Dee II Professor of Organizational Behavior, Paul C. Pfliegerer, C.O.G. Miller Distinguished Professor of Finance and Professor of Law, School of Law.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

- ① **Breakfast**
Full breakfast at Schwab Residential Center
- ② **Morning Session I**
Strategy and Performance
- ③ **Morning Session II**
Financial Markets and Shareholder Value
- ④ **Morning Session III**
Power, Asymmetrical Relationships, and Trust
- ⑤ **Lunch**
Buffet lunch with optional patio dining
- ⑥ **Afternoon Session I**
Leading Large Systems Change
- ⑦ **Afternoon Session II**
Board Governance
- ⑧ **Dinner**
Cocktail reception followed by dinner
- ⑨ **Evening**
Study group discussions and networking with participants

The program targets staff and board members from organizations that grant at least \$2 million annually and have full-time staff. It is open to a mix of participants from private, corporate, community, and operating foundations. Secondary criteria include position information such as: number of people you manage directly; annual budget in your control; function; compensation; amount of annual grants you oversee.

Open to a maximum of 55 participants per session, tuition costs \$7,500 and includes all materials, meals, and accommodations. (The Business School has a stated commitment to deliver management education to this sector, and partially underwrites the program's cost.)

© Stanford University EPPL 2008

Participants receive a certificate upon completion, a one-year subscription to the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, and a multimedia toolkit (CD-ROM) “to enhance their learning” which includes case studies on selected topics.

The EPPL is widely known in the sector, repeatedly referred to as “the only serious program for practitioners out there.” One participant has noted: “Overall the faculty members were of a very high caliber although they had limited experience with the philanthropic sector. For the purposes of the EPPL program, Stanford has packaged business concepts and principles – such as developing mission statements, strategies and ‘customer relations’ – for a philanthropic audience. Only a handful of the presentations and case studies featured foundations or non-profit work and

there were no international perspectives included. In response to suggestions... more non-profits and other foundations [were added] on panels. These included Omidyar, the Skoll Foundation and the Packard Foundation.”

B. HARVARD UNIVERSITY

The interdisciplinary Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, with a broad mission “to expand understanding and accelerate critical thinking about nonprofit organizations and civil society,” advances research on nonprofits “and the role of philanthropy in supporting them.” Established in 1997 with a \$10 million gift from alumni Rita E. Hauser and Gustave M. Hauser, the Center hosts convenings and develops an extensive offering of executive education courses for seasoned executives on topical issues for nonprofits. In recent years few courses have been designed or targeted specifically to philanthropic organizations, however (eg. Strategic Public Sector Negotiation, Managing People for Maximum Performance, Consensus and Executive Influence, Executive Decision Making, Promoting Innovation and Creativity).

These courses are frequently offered in concert with the Business School’s Social Enterprise Initiative. One of the Center’s most popular courses – “Performance Measurement for Effective Management of Nonprofit Organizations” – seeks to help nonprofit executives think conceptually about performance measurement systems through a combination of lectures, case studies, and group discussions on the following themes:

- Challenges and Obstacles to Performance Management
- Strategic Uses of Performance Management
- Assessing and Responding to Demands for Accountability
- Aligning Mission and Performance Management
- Tool and Approaches for Performance Measurement
- Institutionalizing and Sustaining Performance Management Systems

This three-day course (at a cost of \$3,300), however, is available to senior nonprofit executives only – and is specifically “*not* targeted to foundation managers, grant-making organizations, consulting firms or management support organizations.” (Imagine the potentially transformative effect of offering a two-part version of this course: nonprofit and foundations take part one separately, then take part two together...)

This summer, the Graduate School of Education and the Business-Higher Education Forum convened a three-day executive education seminar entitled, “The Institute for Strategic Investment in Education.” This inaugural institute was a “groundbreaking symposium convening Harvard faculty and senior corporate and private foundation staff to improve the effectiveness of philanthropic investment in PreK-12 education.”

The seminar sought to outline “the levers of school reform and how they can boost district-wide performance on key metrics,” to “explore how district-wide school improvement efforts can be more effectively supported through philanthropy,” and to enable participants to:

- Make high-leverage investments to improve education at the district level
- Implement data-driven improvement plans
- Collaborate more effectively with local community partners

Case studies were supplemented by panel discussions with corporate executives, superintendents, and private foundation staff who have successfully fostered district-wide improvement efforts.

Designed for senior level corporate philanthropy staff and select leaders from private foundations, the program was open to those “hoping to gain the knowledge and tools to make more strategic investments in education, regardless of the level of investment.” Registration was accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. The cost of the three-day program (Thursday through Saturday) was \$2,700, which included refreshments, an opening reception, and most meals. Travel and accommodations were not included.

Faculty from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard Business School, and Kennedy School of Government included: Robert Schwartz, Educational Chair, ISIE; William Henry Bloomberg Professor of Practice; Academic Dean, Harvard Graduate School of Education; Allen Grossman, Richard Light, Walter H. Gale Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education; and Christine Letts, Lecturer in the Practice of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Noted briefly: Harvard’s Global Equity Initiative was founded in 2001 and until recently was led by Lincoln Chen, former Rockefeller Foundation executive. Through its “Global Philanthropy Program,” GEI seeks to harness the potential of philanthropy to advance global equity by: “mapping and assessing the nature and impact of philanthropic traditions and practices in various countries and on specific issues; enhancing the effectiveness of philanthropic strategies for advancing global equity; and encouraging an international ‘learning network’ of scholars and practitioners engaged in the study and strengthening of philanthropy.” The program has also stated its intention to “make such information widely available to donors, donor advisors, and other groups in order to promote more effective social investing.”

C. MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Located in the Department of Economics, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) was founded in 2003 to “serve all those engaged in the fight against poverty, anywhere in the world”; its stated mission is to fight poverty by ensuring that policy decisions are based on scientific evidence. J-PAL runs, promotes the use of, and disseminates the results of randomized evaluations of poverty programs. J-PAL received a “substantial gift” in 2005 from MIT alumnus Mohammed Abdul Latif Jameel to endow a professorship, two fellowships, and a research and teaching fund, all to support poverty alleviation and development economics. “It is the only research center in the world devoted to combating global poverty by rigorously testing the effectiveness of poverty programs through the use of randomized evaluations. The lab applies the same level of rigor to the measurement of poverty alleviation programs as is routinely used to test the effectiveness of medications.”

J-PAL provides a database of projects and evaluations conducted by affiliates of the Lab. It also offers technical impact evaluation expertise, noting: “Whether you are an NGO with a potentially exciting new program or a donor worried that you are paying for something that does not work: we can help.”

In 2005, J-PAL launched its Executive Education Program to provide training on implementing randomized trials of social programs. This summer, through a course entitled Evaluating Social Programs: Executive Training at J-PAL, over 150 practitioners were trained in the United States, France, India, and Indonesia in running randomized evaluations. The course focuses on how to scientifically measure the effectiveness of development programs, and is aimed at philanthropy and development practitioners interested in learning how to run randomized evaluations.

The program walks participants through an introduction to effective evaluations; randomized evaluation design; implementation; analyzing the data; and using results. Participants explore questions such as:

- Why and when is a rigorous evaluation of social impact needed?
- What are the common pitfalls of evaluations, and why does randomization help?
- What are the key components of a good randomized evaluation design?
- Alternative techniques for incorporating randomization into project design
- How do you determine the appropriate sample size, measure outcomes, and manage data?
- How to guard against threats that may undermine the integrity of the results
- Techniques for the analysis and interpretation of results
- How to maximize policy impact and test external validity

The program is delivered through a combination of interactive lectures, case studies in small groups, and relevant exercises. Participants also work in small groups to craft the design process for a randomized evaluation of a development project. Faculty and teaching assistants assist with the work, which is presented to fellow participants at the end of the course.

Faculty varies from course to course depending on availability and, for international courses, local experience. The following have taught previous courses or are scheduled to teach in the future: Esther Duflo Ph.D., Abdul Latif Jameel Professor of Poverty Alleviation and Development Economics, MIT; Michael Kremer Ph.D., Gates Professor for Developing Societies, Harvard University; Alessandro Tarozzi Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Economics, Duke University.

The program targets development practitioners from government, philanthropy, international aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations, and also more generally seeks “people from a variety of backgrounds: managers and researchers from international development organizations, managers in non-governmental organizations from around the world, as well as trained economists looking to retool.”

Tuition costs \$3,950 and includes working breakfasts, lunches, and all program materials. Participants are responsible for travel-related expenses (including airfare and accommodation). There are a limited number of scholarships available for each location (provided by the Hewlett Foundation).

D. GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Part of the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University, the Grantmaking School at The Philanthropy Institute is “the first university-based program for teaching the techniques and ethics of grantmaking specifically to foundation grantmaking professionals.” Earlier this year, the Johnson Center concluded its “largest endowment campaign,” raising \$5 million and establishing the nation's first endowed chair focused on family philanthropy. The endowment and chair will “support the Johnson Center’s work in increasing the effectiveness of grantmakers and the nonprofit sector in Michigan and nationally.” Though its current offerings do not meet this study’s criteria, The Grantmaking School is piloting two notable new courses that suggest a more thoughtful approach to philanthropy education.

In October 2007, the Grantmaking School convened 19 experienced professionals from 15 private, community and corporate grantmaking foundations across the United States and Canada to participate in two courses on strategic planning and initiative management in foundations, with a special focus on managing a portfolio of grants. This includes:

1. Incorporating the Four Tenets of portfolio management:
 - Theory- guidance from a theory of change
 - Added Value- complementary work beyond the grant funds e.g. deploying all types of assets, advancing knowledge in the field, enhancing grantee work with convening, technical assistance, etc.
 - Sustainability- strategic techniques to support foundation investment e.g. building capacity, infrastructure, and addressing systems and barriers
 - Leadership- complementary investments in foundation leadership, cultural competency
2. Incorporating evaluation practices into your portfolio
3. Gaining deeper understanding of nonprofit capital structure
4. Managing typical portfolio issues:
 - Inheriting a portfolio
 - Maintaining relevancy
 - Balancing strategy and flexibility
 - What to do when a strategy fails
5. Strategic communications

Participants gave the session “extremely high marks for its sophisticated approach and intensive, seminar-style training.” All faculty members are current or former foundation program officers or CEOs, “ensuring a practical orientation in the curriculum.”

Though aimed at program officers (“or other foundation professionals with grantmaking responsibilities”) with three or more years of experience, this offers a glimpse into the Grantmaking School’s stated intention to ramp up the scope and quality of its programs. The course takes place over 2.5 days and will be offered twice a year, with a maximum of 24 program officers and other grantmaking professionals enrolled for each class. Tuition per course is \$2,950, excluding travel, accommodation and evening meals. Subsequent sessions will be held twice a year.

E. NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

The George H. Heyman, Jr. Center for Philanthropy and Fundraising was established in 1999 in New York University’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Named in honor of the chair of the Development Committee of NYU’s Board of Trustees from 1978-1999, Heyman was “in large measure responsible for the rise of the university” through three campaigns which raised more than \$2.2 billion, making NYU the first American university to undertake a drive to raise \$1 billion. The Center offers a “Certificate in Grantmaking and Foundations,” and refers to this program as “the only one of its kind in the United States and addresses a long unmet need – to train grantmakers to give wisely and with more sophistication.”

The curriculum provides “a structured program built on the core competencies necessary for philanthropic giving by individuals and grantmaking organizations. Upon completion of the program, students have:

- Knowledge of the history of philanthropy in America and elsewhere in the world.
- Familiarity with the law, financial structures, and nature of nonprofits and NGOs.
- Familiarity with best practices, values, and ethics of grantmaking and philanthropy.
- Knowledge skills and strategies in grantmaking, as well as current trends.
- Familiarity with how to evaluate grants and the role of the grantmaker.”

Required Courses:

Foundations of Philanthropy and Grantmaking
 Program Evaluation and Grantmaking

Strategic Grantmaking I
Analyzing and Understanding Nonprofit Financial Statements
Law of Nonprofit Management -or- Ethics and Laws of Nonprofits

Electives (choice of 2):

Advanced Topics in Grantmaking Strategies: Perspectives on Corporate Philanthropy
The Art of the Grant
Strategic Grantmaking II – Advanced Seminar
Role of the Nonprofit Organization in Society
America’s Philanthropic History and its Power for Today’s Fundraisers and Grantmakers
Management Principles for Fundraising Philanthropic Organizations
Talking the Talk: Communications Skills for Grantmakers
Women in Philanthropy
Global Philanthropy

Designed for “entry to mid-level grantmakers, both professional and volunteer,” the certificate consists of seven continuing education courses – meeting on average four hours per course – and is awarded to students who successfully complete seven courses with an average of B+ or higher. The courses range in cost from \$200 to \$700, with tuition totaling approximately \$3,500. (Alternatively, a five-day summer “mini intensive” – the equivalent of two courses – is available at a cost of \$1,600.)

F. BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

The Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy, housed in the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, was established in 2007 with a \$10 million gift from alumni Robert F.X. and Laura Sillerman’s Tomorrow Foundation. The Center’s mission is to share knowledge with individual philanthropists and family foundations in order to promote better grantmaking decisions in two areas:

- 1) “Understanding research - Identifying best practices in a field or evidence based models; the policy climate surrounding an issue or area; the funding structures of particular programs or issues; bringing the results of successful demonstration projects to policy makers for broader scale replication.
- 2) “Affecting policy and practice – Understanding strategies for engaging publicly to reach scale through replication; finding foundation/public sector connections; bringing policy stakeholders together at a number of levels.”

According to executive director Andrew Hahn, the Center will provide research-supported advice on effective grant-making strategies, develop best practices, and help successful ventures reach scale. A big, bold agenda is set forth in the Center’s vision statement:

“The Sillerman Center will serve as a powerful resource to strengthen social justice philanthropy with assistance to philanthropists and family foundations as that sector grapples with questions about making significant impacts.

“The Sillerman Center will provide research-supported advice on effective grant-making strategies, develop best practices, and help successful ventures reach scale. In addition, the center will host roundtables with leading members of the donor community, offer executive education opportunities, and support students who wish to focus their research and policy studies on challenges in the philanthropic sector.

“The Sillerman Center has announced that it is currently reviewing the existing market for executive education and examining the needs of foundation members, staff and other

interested parties, toward developing seminars and workshops on topics ranging from policy and philanthropy to program evaluation and ‘the nature of evidence.’ The Center will be open to providing more tailored programming either topically or skill based. We intend to provide assistance to Brandeis alumni along with other interested groups.” (Brandeis University 2007)

While still in development with not much known to date, what is clear is that the Center is hiring staff to support the education activities of family foundations and individual donors, to synthesize research and evaluation, and to “link them to policy to leverage their efforts.”* The Sillerman Center plans to make collaboration in strategic partnerships with outside organizations a focal point, to maintain its own library and web-based information infrastructure to support it and, in its second year, to establish a national clearinghouse for use by others.

2. UNIVERSITY CENTERS OF NOTE

As noted above, many university-based centers on philanthropy largely focus not on leadership development, but on research – a great number of them do not interact with practitioners at all. Pablo Eisenberg has noted, of the rise of such centers:

“There are a lot of people in the academic centers, in the academic world, who think that academic centers, whether they are nonprofit, management, public-policy institutes, programs under MBAs, are the front line of developing leadership for the future. I don’t think that that is true... I think we will have to in the future invest much more money into the alternative forms of developing leadership than pumping all sorts of money into creating masses of academic centers, some of whom are pretty crappy, and which many universities create really for making a buck. That is the big future of moneymaking” (Hudson Institute 2005).

As more and more university centers for NME are adopting an interdisciplinary approach, pooling internal resources from across the university to connect students with a wide breadth of coursework, so too many philanthropy centers are discovering a wealth of new ways to connect externally with the philanthropic sector.

These centers are seeking to link students to external opportunities – often adopting experiential learning/consulting models and working directly with practitioners in the field. And, certainly, many of these centers are anything but “crappy.” Below is a sub-set of university-based centers on philanthropy that do not offer PE, but nonetheless connect with practitioners in interesting ways.

A. ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

The Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation at Arizona State University was established in 1999 “to help build the capacity of the social sector by enhancing the effectiveness of those who lead, manage, and support nonprofit organizations.” Formerly the Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Management, the Center is directed by Robert Ashcroft and was renamed in 2008 in recognition of the Lodestar Foundation’s \$5 million gift, the largest single gift ever received by the ASU College of Public Programs. The Center provides research on Arizona-based charitable foundations (eg., Profile of Charitable Foundations in Arizona,

* Joel Fleishman inaugurated the Center with a standing-room only opening lecture in January 2008.

sponsored by the Arizona Grantmakers Forum), offers nonprofit leadership education, and hosts annual convenings, professional development and capacity programs for nonprofit board and staff. With the Lodestar gift, the Center “expect[s] to catapult... into the forefront of philanthropic research and expand its high-demand programs that strengthen nonprofits.” An interesting partnership between the academic and nonprofit practitioner communities, the Center’s Evolving Nonprofits through Strategic Evaluation and Planning Program (ENSTEP Program) builds upon and connects the research and knowledge of faculty and staff with the expertise and experiences of nonprofit practitioners. Through an intensive consulting arrangement, faculty partner with nonprofit agencies to clarify their focus, add stability, and increase organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness. ENSTEP organizations engage board, staff, and stakeholders in a challenging process to define opportunities “that are appropriate to their individual resources, strengths and competencies, convert knowledge into effective action, and better serve their communities.” The three phases of the ENSTEP Program include:

- Phase 1 - Explore: Looking outside to clarify, understand, & draw the bigger picture.
 - Mission, Vision, Values
 - External Environment
 - Customers, Clients, & Stakeholders
 - Facilitated Stakeholder Retreat
- Phase 2 - Examine: Looking inside to narrow the scope, analyze, and prepare for the strategic plan.
 - Leadership & Governance
 - Operational Management & Infrastructure
 - Strategic Planning
- Phase 3 – Evolve.
 - Using what's been learned, creating the plan, & moving into action
 - Drafting Strategic Plan
 - Review & Assessment of Strategic Plan

The Center has also launched the Generation Next Nonprofit Leadership Academy, a 9-month leadership development program to engage emerging nonprofit leaders in an examination of their leadership style, and “to embolden them with new skills, knowledge and resources.” Program topics include:

- State of the economy and the impact on nonprofits
- Advocacy and public policy; government relations
- Analysis of issues and critical thinking
- Group and meeting facilitation
- Board governance
- Communications, marketing, branding and public relations for nonprofits
- Charting your own leadership path; continuing professional development; setting goals

Targeted to staff “with experience working in nonprofits,” the program does not set a minimum or maximum number of years experience required. Participants meet for a full day (9am-4pm) once a month. There is a program fee of \$500.

B. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY

The Center for Nonprofit and Public Leadership (formerly the Nonprofit and Public Management Program) at the Haas School of Business was launched in 2007 to provide MBA students with an opportunity to augment their core curriculum with specialized public and nonprofit management coursework and career opportunities. Led by director and adjunct professor Nora Silver, it’s an interesting model combining consulting and research-based field work.

In a program designed by Haas MBA students in 2003 to develop future board leaders, in 2007 the Berkeley Board Fellows program placed over 57 graduate students on the boards of 50 nonprofit organizations “spanning 11 industry areas such as the arts, youth, economic development and philanthropy.”

Beginning spring 2008, the Center will team up with Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund to offer student fellowships to develop the Fund’s strategies, explore international affinity groups, and provide research on donor services.

The Center will also partner with McKinsey & Company to offer a semester-long course called Social Sector Solutions (S3). The course will engage 11 consulting teams to develop management frameworks and deliver nonprofit consulting projects with an emphasis on entrepreneurial ventures (eg, Marine Stewardship Council and the Packard Foundation working together on a marketing plan). Paul Jansen, Director of McKinsey’s Global Philanthropy Practice, co-teaches the class, and experienced McKinsey consultants coach each of the student teams. There is a small nonprofit client fee based on budget size.

C. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

The RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service at the LBJ School of Public Affairs was founded in 2000 with an initial gift of \$5 million from Ronya and George Kozmetsky’s RGK Foundation. Directed by Peter Frumkin, the RGK Center seeks to build knowledge about nonprofit organizations, philanthropy, and volunteerism, prepare students and practitioners to make effective contributions, expand the academic study of policies and practices affecting nonprofits, and contribute to national and international debates about the future of the sector. It has just announced that Francie Ostrower, Senior Research Associate at the Urban Institute Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, will join the RGK Center as Professor at both the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the College of Fine Arts. With this appointment, the RGK Center hopes to “secure a position as one of the premier university-based centers focused on research related to philanthropy.”

In 2007, the RGK Center established the Foundation Internship Program for LBJ School students. Fellows receive \$5,000 to intern at selected foundations for ten weeks. Students have been placed in several Texas foundations including the KDK-Harman Foundation, Houston Endowment, and the Austin Community Foundation.

RGK Center faculty also provide consulting services to nonprofit and public sector clients, and incorporate select projects as a year-long Policy Research Project course. These courses pair the client with RGK Center faculty and a team of 10-15 graduates students to achieve deliverables. Recent clients include the George Foundation (needs assessment to inform strategy development) and the Lance Armstrong Foundation (logic model and evaluation framework).

D. UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Center for High Impact Philanthropy (CHIP), located in the School of Social Policy and Practice at the University of Pennsylvania, was established in 2006 with a gift from anonymous alumni of Penn's Wharton School “to meet the information needs of philanthropists seeking to maximize the social impact of their charitable gifts.” The size of the founding gift was reported as “large enough that the Center doesn't need to seek grants to fund its operations.”

Led by Executive Director Katherina Rosqueta, the Center aims to define the “efficient frontier of

philanthropy, where nonprofit financing is linked to potential for impact” and to “provide the tools, information, and metrics needed to help philanthropists make smart social investments – i.e., where financing and potential for impact are linked.”

Rosqueta further states, “For too long, philanthropic discussions have focused on making donors feel good. The Center is about something radically different: focus on impact. It’s about being an honest broker of the information required to link financing to impact.” The Center aim to help individual philanthropists and their advisors make better decisions through improved information and tools, but does not intend to provide customized philanthropic advice. “We see ourselves as neutral brokers of information for individual philanthropists, philanthropic advisers, foundations and others interested in achieving the highest social impact they can with their philanthropic dollars. To ensure our neutral stance, the Center is neither grantmaking nor grantseeking.”

The Center will “explore models of effective philanthropy” in three areas – urban education, global public health and global development, and improving the lives of disadvantaged populations in the US – by pursuing the following activities:

“Translating. Our professional staff gathers available research and data from multiple sources and thinks strategically about what this information suggests, how it fits together, and how it can best be used. Staff members then translate their findings into clear, practical decision-making tools built upon a process of rigorous interpretation and analysis.

“Innovating. The Center identifies practical ways to think through philanthropic decisions, measure social impact, and create new models for achieving impact. Beyond the information gap in the world of philanthropy, there is also a measurement gap — continuing uncertainty about the best ways to measure and compare effectiveness, and an analytic gap — a lack of analytic and decision frameworks to support a philanthropist who is focused on maximizing social impact. The Center is currently conducting a series of structured interviews with high net-worth philanthropists. The insights gained from these discussions will inform our development of new tools to help philanthropists make smarter decisions.

“Engaging. The Center actively seeks partnerships throughout the region, nation, and world—bringing the best minds to the table to solve questions related to philanthropy and philanthropic impact. We aim to create a network of individuals and institutions who are also trying to identify best practices for delivering and measuring social impact. By partnering with nonprofits/NGOs, philanthropists, foundations, policy and research centers, and universities, the Center is positioned to become a valuable resource for anyone who is committed to allocating capital so that it can do the most good.”

In 2006, the Center convened a two-day conference for donors – The Franklin Seminar – in collaboration with Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (see RPA, below). And last year, the Center released a concept paper (author unknown/unattributed) to mark “the beginning of a discourse on how to practice high impact philanthropy” (University of Pennsylvania 2007). The paper makes clear the Center’s intention to make “cost per impact” the “fundamental measure of any philanthropic investment,” with the understanding that “assessment requires objective, reliable information on what's effective, what's not, and how much capital is required to achieve a given impact.”

E. UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Founded in 2000, the Center on Philanthropy and Public Policy is an academic research center in the School of Policy, Planning, and Development, led by James M. Ferris, the Emery Evans Olson Chair in Nonprofit Entrepreneurship and Public Policy at the School of Policy, Planning, and Development. The Center's mission is "to promote effective philanthropy and strengthen the nonprofit sector through research and communication activities that inform philanthropic decision making and encourage public problem solving." In 2003, the California Community Foundation made a \$1 million grant to establish The USC Center on Philanthropy and Public Policy Research Fund at the California Community Foundation. Proceeds from this endowed fund provide annual support for the Center's research and analysis activities.

The Center "conducts research and analysis on philanthropy, volunteerism, and the role of the nonprofit sector. The Center also shares its findings with the philanthropic, nonprofit and policy communities and works to engage these sectors in an exploration of key issues through forums, roundtable discussions, lectures and seminars."

F. INDIANA UNIVERSITY-PURDUE UNIVERSITY INDIANAPOLIS

The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University was established in 1987, and is today considered a leading academic center for research and education in philanthropy. Led by executive director Eugene Tempel, the Center is "dedicated to increasing the understanding of philanthropy, improving its practice, and enhancing participation in philanthropy in the United States and internationally through research, teaching, public service, public affairs, and donor-centered education programs in philanthropy, fundraising, and management of nonprofit organizations." The Center received a \$40 million grant from the Lilly Endowment in 2006 to "help permanently underwrite" its operations.

The Center's efforts are devoted primarily to academic studies, graduating the first doctorates ever in philanthropic studies this summer, though its strategic plan through 2013 calls for an expansion of educational programs to include philanthropic practitioners (programs typically target nonprofit practitioners through The Fund Raising School). The Center has partnered with the Council on Foundations to provide an innovative and highly-regarded seminar for new foundation CEOs (see below under COF). The Center currently hosts a variety of special seminars for philanthropic practitioners, such as its annual Philanthropy Summit supported by the McCormick Tribune Foundation. These summits focus on and facilitate dialogue on emerging issues facing the sector, and are purposely designed to engage foundation CEOs as well as leaders from other sectors and philanthropic support organizations. Past conferences themes include: Philanthropy and Organizational Effectiveness, Philanthropy and Leadership Transition, Building Bridges between the Media and the Philanthropic Sector, and Identifying Challenges and Opportunities in the Philanthropic Sector.

The Center has also established a Philanthropic Services unit to provide research and advisory assistance to donors, donor advisors and wealth managers. Its goal is to become "the first source for research-based information for those seeking to enhance participation in philanthropy" – "with emphasis on developing a viable, sustainable and revenue-generating model for Philanthropic Services programs and contracts." This unit integrates the Center's core research base and encompasses the Philanthropy Incubator, the Lake Institute on Faith & Giving and, of particular note, the Women's Philanthropy Institute:

The Foundation Incubator became a program of the Center in 2005, and is now known as the Philanthropy Incubator. Still in development, the Philanthropy Incubator will "provide

workshops with experts, peer discussion groups, customized training services and other resources.”

The Lake Institute on Faith & Giving was established in 2002 and seeks to explore the intersection of religion and philanthropy, faith, and giving, and to “establish the topic of faith and giving as central in the Academy.” It provides research and symposia (including the annual Thomas H. Lake Lecture) for religious groups and individual donors on the topic “in all its robust diversity” and primarily seeks to establish research partnerships with other institutions through endowment gifts.

The Women's Philanthropy Institute became a program of the Center in 2004 to “help women understand their full potential and capabilities as financial donors, and to inspire women to fulfill their philanthropic potential.” It provides peer learning groups and technical assistance (“such as initiating a women's giving circle in your community, building a women's endowment at your university, or strengthening women's participation in your nonprofit organization”). And it provides customized workshops for nonprofits and, increasingly, community foundations. Examples include:

- Every Woman a Philanthropist: Introduces the concept of women's philanthropy and provides a rationale for why women should be philanthropists
- Values, Vision and Voice: Inspires women donors to reach their fullest potential as philanthropists
- Developing Your Philanthropy for a Better World: Teaches women how to use their philanthropic efforts to promote the programs they care about
- Translating Values into Action: Encourages women to become inspired philanthropists and catalysts for action
- Values and Legacies: Intergenerational Philanthropic Decision-Making: Motivates women to explore issues of family wealth and intergenerational philanthropy

3. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND FOUNDATION ALLIANCES

A 2003 mapping study by Blueprint Research and Design for the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers listed 29 regional associations that are part of the Forum of RAGS, and 267 funder networks. The authors noted, “This propensity to network is an important feature of the philanthropic industry.... Regional associations are unique in the landscape in many ways. They tend to offer the broadest structural umbrellas, network most actively with their peers.... frequently incubate other networks, and play key roles on state level policy matters, knowledge building, new donor development, and joint funding opportunities.”

The Blueprint study in part contrasted the formal, professional development role of regional associations with the less formal role of funders networks and affinity groups, for whom information sharing about a particular topic is paramount. Though such networks are outside the present scope of work, they are a rich source of further study and at some point it will be important to revisit them in this context.

The focus below is on what Bernholz et al. described as the potential of such associations: “[They] are important elements of the philanthropic landscape for several reasons.... they provide potential venues in which industry knowledge can be created, inventoried, and shared” (Bernholz 2003).

A. COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS

In 2003, the Council on Foundations and its Advisory Committee for Executive Programs launched a three-year project to research and develop executive education programs for foundation leaders. To inform their work, the Council surveyed foundation executives and found that chief executives “are most interested in:

- Informal benchmarking of their foundation’s management and program effectiveness
- Meeting in small cohorts with peers to develop confidential learning circles and collegial resources.
- Influencing and shaping the philanthropic sector and impacting the fields in which they fund
- Support in refining the necessary personal characteristics of leadership including deeper dialog on their leadership role in establishing ethical operations.”

Further, they found that “leading barriers to executive education are the inability to find suitable programs, finding funds or getting board approval, leaving the office, personal circumstances and justifying the expense to staff” (Council on Foundations 2004).

The Council has certainly been trying to surmount these barriers and, according to their strategic plan for 2008, professional education is now a “strategic priority” to which they are devoting almost \$7m, or 31% of their budget (note this figure also includes diversity and stewardship/effectiveness practices). “The Council’s Professional Development program goal is simple: to provide highly effective learning experiences and resources that will help develop leaders at every level of a foundation” (Council on Foundations 2008).

The base of this works springs from the Council’s two-year “Building Strong and Ethical Foundations: Doing it Right” initiative, funded by members and designed to “increase understanding of legal practices and to develop and encourage adherence to high ethical standards in grantmaking.” As a results of this initiative, the Council established what it called “a curriculum on foundation management practices”: made sample legal documents by members on governance, human resources and operations available on-line; hosted a series of conference calls for members on topics such as “Legal Basics” and “Dealing with Difficult Boards”; and began a confidential Senior Advisors Program to “extend the Council’s consulting and education services by providing one-to-one assistance to guide foundation leaders facing significant issues” such as starting a new foundation, orienting a new executive, and reorganizing boards. Since 2006, the Council has also offered a “Seminar for New CEOs” of public and private foundations with fewer than three years of service. Developed and originally piloted in partnership with Indiana University Center on Philanthropy, the seminar explores “the basics of foundation leadership (based on the CEO job competencies) with case examples (based on personal stories of foundation leaders).” This seminar has assumed an almost mythical quality, and is widely referred to practitioners in the field as “something that everyone says works well.”

The Council has been experimenting, too, with programming seminars in collaboration with foundations, such as the three-day Media Learning Seminar with the Knight Foundation, as part of their initiative to help community foundations learn about the information needs of “communities in a democracy.” The seminar offers “an opportunity to exchange current knowledge, review existing information needs projects and share best practices” (in February 2008, and February and October 2009).

The Council is now ramping up a multi-pronged approach to learning that includes webinars, conference calls, pre-and post-conference workshops and on-line and in-person courses.

Webinars and Conference Calls

Webinars are open to all levels of staff and trustees, and scheduled several times per year.

Depending on topic and speaker, they are either free or available at a cost of \$99 for members/\$199 for nonmembers. Recent topics include:

Emerging Trends in Governance for CEOs and Trustees, led by the Council's deputy general counsel:

- Why governance is an increasingly important issue at both the state and federal level in regulating foundations
- How understanding conflicts of interest, related party transactions, and other insider dealings are key to navigating amid heightened IRS scrutiny
- Why board size, composition, independence, compensation, and administrative expenses are key issues
- Why the growing emphasis around effective practices helps clarify the link between good governance and effectiveness

The Role Foundations May Play in the Public Sector, led by the Council's senior staff attorney:

- What are the lobbying rules for private foundations and charities
- How to support grantees that lobby
- How you can engage in direct communications with legislators and the public about your foundation
- How to encourage civic participation

Navigating Family Dynamics: Tools for Resolving Conflict

- Clashes, power struggles, and unresolved conflict happen in the best of families—and family philanthropies. Learn how to identify and get tools to resolve these and other issues.

Conference Calls are open to all, typically 1.5 hours long and have included:

Dealing with Difficult Boards: Strategies and Solutions
Leading with Diversity
Common Mistakes Made by New Foundations
How Foundations Can Influence Public Policy

Pre-Conference Seminar: Establishing a New Foundation

A regular feature of the annual family foundation conference, this seminar focuses on the following “major foundation start-up topics:

- Legal formation issues: corporations and trusts, nonprofits in general, types of foundations, federal exempt status, and state tax exemptions
- Practical formation issues: foundation values, governance, roles of boards and staff, grants management
- Legal operational issues: private foundation rules, state and federal filing requirements, public disclosure rules, funding issues, and advisors
- Foundation stewardship: communications, foundation effectiveness, evaluation, and compensation”

This five-hour (12:30-5:30pm) “confidential seminar” is structured as a large-group discussion with two breakouts, and is limited to 40 participants; philanthropic advisors are “welcome to attend with a client.” The cost is \$225 for members and nonmembers alike.

Pre-Conference Seminar: CEO and Trustee Summit

This annual seminar, described as “a day of peer learning, in-depth discussions, and networking,” is designed to provide “an opportunity to engage in high-level yet practical discussions on diverse topics and gain new perspectives and insight on issues that affect your work.” Widely regarded as a huge lost opportunity, neither the format nor the agenda facilitate true peer exchange. The six-hour seminar (10am-4pm) costs \$80 for members, \$125 for nonmembers.

Post-Conference Advanced Practice Institutes

The Council in recent years has been scheduling Advanced Practice Institutes around its annual

conference for “individuals who share a substantial interest and investment in a subject.” Designed and led by “leaders in the field, who themselves are eager to confer with peers,” the sessions are a mix of presentation and dialogue with participants designed to “deepen their understanding of a subject and its related practices, and to identify both near- and long-term challenges and opportunities in their work.” These sessions explicitly “are not envisioned as problem-solving or planning meetings.” And as with most of the Council’s programs, there are no barriers to entry. Sample topics at the 2008 meeting included (click on link for additional information):

[Public Will and Poverty Reduction: New Partners and New Lessons](#)
[Getting Serious About Climate Change: A Guide for Foundations](#)
[Top Ten Ways Private Foundations Can Influence Public Policy](#)
[The Pathway to Shared Prosperity: National Fund for Workforce Solutions Thinking Creatively and Competing Globally – Building the 21st Century Workforce](#)
[Promises, Potential, and Practice-Successful Practice in Education Reform Philanthropy](#)
[The Second Chance Act: Supporting Children and Families of the Incarcerated](#)
[Pay Day Lending: the Hole in the Bucket of Rural Economic Success](#)

The following *courses* form the core of the Council’s new offerings:

Essential Skills and Strategies for New Grantmakers:

The Essential Skills and Strategies for New Grantmakers (ESS) curriculum was created by the Council on Foundations in association with the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers, Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania, and the Council of Michigan Foundations. Built as an open-source consulting opportunity, sponsoring organizations “may host an individual ESS workshop or the complete three-day program. While the ESS curriculum is free, the sponsoring organization hosting a workshop is responsible for coordinating, marketing, hosting the event, and training faculty and may choose to charge participants a fee.”

An in-depth Grantmaking 101 orientation, the curriculum was designed for “grantmaking staff, board members, and trustees who have up to two years of experience at a community, corporate, family, independent, public, operating foundation or with a giving program.” The components vary in length and may be bundled together to comprise a 3-day course, or may be taken singly and include:

- Being Grounded in Philanthropy (1.5 hours)
- Navigating Legal and Ethical Issues (3.5 hours)
- Making Sound Funding Decisions (3.5 hours)
- Communicating Funding Recommendations and Decisions (1.5 hours)
- Managing the Grant Portfolio (3.5 hours)
- Maximizing the Impact of Grants (1 hour)
- Managing Personal & Professional Challenges (1 hour)

The faculty vary, with practitioners, attorneys, foundation advisors, and members of the Council’s Senior Advisors Program all participating. (Recent faculty include Bea Boccalandro, President, VeraWorks; Maria Boccalandro, Senior Vice President, Arete Consulting Group; Tom David, Senior Strategist-Community Clinics Initiative, Tides Foundation; Janne Gallagher, Vice President, Legal Services and Standards, Council on Foundations). Fees for ESS courses vary and are paid to the organization sponsoring the event per above, which means location varies too (eg. this autumn in Seattle, WA and Anchorage, AK).

Achieving Excellence in Investment Management Strategies for CEOs and Trustees:

This three-module course is designed to equip CEOs and trustees with an understanding of “fiduciary essentials” and their applications, including risk and performance indicators, legal implications, and the basics of legally sound investment policy statements. This includes:

- Module I, 8:30am–12:30pm
Seven key fiduciary principles every foundation board member must know
- Module II, 1:00pm–4:30pm
Asset performance and investment management policies and strategies
- Module III, 9:00am–1:00pm
Legal strategies for investment management, Top 10 ways foundations get into trouble, legal investment responsibilities for boards and foundation leadership

All three modules are taught on-site at the Council’s offices, and cost as follows:

One module \$350, two modules \$550 and three modules \$695 (COF and ABAG member rates)

One module \$450, two modules \$650 and three modules \$795 (non-member rates)

Speakers include: Blaine Aikin, President and CEO of Fiduciary360; Arun Sardana, Senior Vice President, Institutional Consultant, Global Financial Services Company; Andrew Schultz, Deputy General Counsel at the Council on Foundations; Kelly Shipp Simone, Senior Staff Attorney at the Council on Foundations.

The following materials are made available to participants who attend modules I and II:

- Prudent Practices for Investment Stewards
- How to Write an Investment Policy Statement by Jack Gardner
- Self-Assessment of Fiduciary Excellence (SAFE) for Investment Stewards
- A laminated reference card of key concepts
- A free 30-day trial to “Fiduciary Analytics Web-based Tools”

Center for Community Foundation Excellence

The Council has established several courses for the community foundation practitioner at all levels, in partnership with Community Foundations of America/GivingNet. Offered variously on-line or in-person, as stand-alone events or as part of the Council’s annual conference, these courses include:

Making a Difference: A Community Impact Series

This free, on-line seminar is designed for “community foundation board members, CEOs/Executive Directors, senior staff, program officers and communications staff” to “increase and highlight the impact of your community leadership and grantmaking, from assessing community needs and opportunities to creating and executing strategies and communicating the results of your efforts.” Participants receive workbooks, study guides, needs assessment survey and report templates, and press release examples. Seminar components include (click on each to view details):

[Session 1 – A model for community impact](#)

[Session 2 – Scan](#)

[Session 3 – Prioritize](#)

[Session 4 – Strategize](#)

[Session 5 – Design and Measure](#)

[Session 6 – Communicate](#)

Resource Development for Community Foundations

Designed for “community foundation staff and trustees responsible for resource development, particularly those new to the field,” this course is designed to “advance understanding and techniques around providing donor services, comparing philanthropic options, attracting new

resources, gift planning, and building strategic alliances.” View the Council’s [Detailed Agenda](#) here. This two-day course costs \$525 for members, \$775 for non-members.

Financial Administration for Community Foundations

This course is designed for “community foundation CEOs, managers, or trustees with fiscal responsibilities, and who are new to finance and fiscal administration.” The curriculum is framed around a fiscal manager’s typical day and “is designed so that participants will:

- Have a framework for developing policies and practices related to the National Standards
- Understand the legal and regulatory requirements specific to community foundations that are necessary to maintain full legal, ethical, and industry standards compliance
- Better understand the implications and trade-offs in policy decisions
- Understand factors to consider in cash management, asset allocation, and fees
- Be more conversant in complicated fiscal issues, and better able to take your case to your Board
- Know when you need to find people who will help you get the job done, and be able to identify the skills you need in those people

View the Council’s [Detailed Agenda](#) here. This two-day course costs \$545 for members, \$845 for non-members.

Community Leadership for Community Foundations

This course is designed for community foundation staff with at least two years experience in the field and already possess an in-depth understanding of their foundation, the community foundation field and the civic infrastructure of their community. “Staff of large and medium-sized foundations, as well as CEOs of smaller community foundations, will benefit from this course.”

View the Council’s [Detailed Agenda](#) here. This two-day course costs \$525 for members, \$775 for non-members.

Study Tour for Grantmakers

Lastly, the Council is experimenting with its first “study tour” for grantmakers. This is perhaps the Council’s most innovative program in that it moves the traditional funders network concept back into the realm of the association (while also borrowing from donor workshops). The week-long study tour, entitled, “From Guanajuato to North Carolina: A Tale of Two States – The Challenges of Transnational Communities,” begins in Raleigh, NC with a panel discussion among local leaders and concludes in Mexico City. Designed to bring together philanthropic leaders “who see the potential for impact of social investments in Latin America and Latino communities,” this tour “will provide participants an opportunity for learning, peer exchange, and a sharper understanding of the complex dynamics of immigration to the United States from Latin America, including the economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions of both the sending and receiving communities.” It includes: “Issue briefings with noted experts, academics, and practitioners; site visits to projects to hear firsthand from communities and their leaders; discussions of best practices, innovative models, and new ideas; and reflections and peer exchanges. In addition, the curriculum incorporates readings, case studies, and other resources to introduce participants to the subject matter.”

Space is limited to 25 participants, preferably “senior executives from grantmaking institutions who have influence over their organizations’ strategic goals and programmatic activities.” The total cost is \$3,200, which includes hotels, meals, materials, ground transportation, and airfare to Guanajuato and Mexico City (airfare to and from the study tour and incidental expenses are not included).

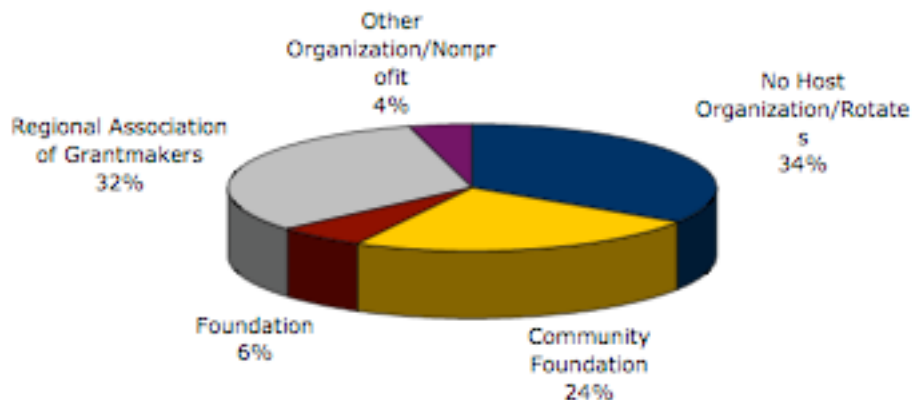
B. FORUM OF REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF GRANTMAKERS

The Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers, a national network of 32 regional associations of grantmakers representing more than 5,000 member organizations, seeks to support philanthropy by “strengthening the ability of all regional associations to fulfill their missions.” The Forum has provided leadership on a number of initiatives in recent years to more strategically grow its knowledge and education base, such as: Building Grantmaker Effectiveness and Accountability, Knowledge Management, and New Ventures in Philanthropy.

A number of networking and educational offerings – workshops, teleconferences, and its annual conference – are currently available to its nation-wide RAG members. The centerpiece is the Essential Skills and Strategy partnership with the Council on Foundations on the grantmaker orientation curriculum described above. Teleconferences currently comprise the remaining bulk of their offerings, and have included the following topics: how to fill out a 990-PF; understanding administrative expenses; conflict of interest and self dealing; communications strategies for greater transparency. These offerings are supplemented by similar, locally-tailored workshops (eg., Primer for New Foundation Staff, Minnesota Council on Foundations; Effectively Communicating and Branding Your Organization, Associated Grantmakers; Using Data to Drive Evaluation and Strategic Planning, Northern California Grantmakers).

Its current initiative, the Professional Education Capacity Building project, grows out of a three-year grant from the Hewlett Foundation to strengthen professional education at the regional level. As noted in Section I above, the Forum is engaging in careful planning to understand and map out a framework of practitioner development in philanthropy, to scan current programming, and then to operationalize the framework by creating strategic partnerships with curriculum developers to plug programming gaps. The work has been guided by Forum’s Grantmaker Education Task Force, chaired by Judie Donaldson of Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania and Vicki Rosenberg of the Council of Michigan Foundations.

There is tremendous potential for high-quality collaboration here. According to a 2003 Blueprint R&D study, regional associations are home to almost one-third of all funder networks, which was illustrated by the following graphic “Types of Hosting Organizations for Funder Networks”:



Source: Blueprint Research & Design, Bernholz 2003 ©

Moreover, “The regional associations educate more grantmakers than any other organization in the country. They have established systems for delivery and knowledge of their members’ interests. They have a network of communication and connection that can be leveraged for even greater learning and exchange” (Donaldson 2008 – see Appendix D for complete report).

C. SOUTHEASTERN COUNCIL OF FOUNDATIONS

The breadth and traditional nature of the Council on Foundations' educational offerings seem to have liberated colleague associations to some extent, and the Southeastern Council of Foundations (SECF) offers a good example of an alternative approach to strengthening practice through its Hull Fellows Program.

The SECF established the Hull Fellows Program in 2000 to honor past president Robert H. Hull, who led the organization for nearly 20 years. The program's goal is to "nurture and inspire the Southeast's next generation of philanthropic leaders. It is a selective program that reaches out to younger and/or new foundation staff and trustees who have already demonstrated strong leadership capabilities in their careers and their communities." With a long time horizon, "this is not a nuts and bolts course on foundation grantmaking, but a personal and professional development program with an emphasis on experiential learning. The program's activities will enable participants to:

- Develop an understanding of the historic roots and traditions of philanthropy.
- Discuss the current challenges facing emerging leaders in philanthropy.
- Gain new perspectives on future issues facing philanthropy.
- Explore the unique challenges and opportunities facing Southern philanthropy.
- Develop new insights about the dimensions of leadership and their relationship to the practice of philanthropy. Reflect on personal assumptions about and approaches to leadership with an emphasis on values and roles.
- Form new relationships with peers throughout the Southeast, enabling them to work together and support each other through future years."

The bulk of the program is a four-day Spring retreat which is "highly participatory, involving small group work and discussions. It is an informal but intense gathering that enables participants to learn from each other as well as the facilitators." Pre-conference reading is required and – most unusual – after the conference, "each Hull Fellow is expected to write a brief reflection paper on the overall experience." The papers are shared among fellows and with staff, donors and the SECF Board. The program concludes in the Fall with a half-day session at the annual SECF meeting. Program alumni are then "given the opportunity to maintain ongoing communication with one another and encouraged to participate on SECF Committees."

Approximately 20 fellows are selected annually. Fellows typically have at least two years of experience in philanthropy and are associated with SECF members as either staff, trustees, or donor fund advisors. The cost of the program is underwritten by the Robert H. Hull Leadership Development Fund: fellows are responsible for a total of \$1,300 in fees (\$600 for the four-day retreat, this year held at the Timber Ridge Conference Center, Mableton, GA, includes single occupancy lodging, meals, and conference reading materials; and \$700 for the SECF annual meeting held at Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC).*

D. GRANTMAKERS FOR EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, a coalition of grantmakers committed to building strong and effective nonprofit organizations, has over 1,400 individual members representing 350 grantmaking organizations. GEO promotes strategies and practices that contribute to grantee success on the understanding that "grantmakers can only succeed when the nonprofits they

* For an insightful review of several employee-based fellowship programs, see Matthews, Mélange. "Fellowships in Philanthropy: Policy and Curricula Brief," prepared for the San Francisco Foundation, Ascent Associates, February 2005.

support achieve meaningful results.” GEO is further differentiated by its audience – it works primarily with philanthropy’s innovators and “early adopters,” the small segment of practitioners that are change agents as well as self-described learners. Its listserv is one of the most active in philanthropy, and has become recognized as the source for both efficient and effective information-sharing among practitioners.

GEO is quite non-traditional in that its core educational offerings are driven by practitioners, rooted in part by experience that demonstrates “senior executives don’t want anything to do with ‘training.’” Through its Change Agent Project, GEO piloted new ways to convene local groups of grantmakers, help them to identify their own promising change opportunities, and then learn how colleagues overcame barriers and begin to build resources to achieve similar results. GEO’s ultimate goal is “to provide more grantmakers with the resources, ideas and connections they need to make the greatest contribution to the nonprofits they invest in” (Grantmakers for Effective Organizations 2006).

Building on its successes in facilitating peer learning in these and other venues, in 2007 GEO piloted Action Learning Groups to provide “soft” facilitative assistance to groups of innovators on emerging issues – so that they may move beyond interest in a particular area, to concrete action. GEO asks, “Sounds good in theory – but what is most appropriate for your organization? And how can you best go about it?” The work of each group is crystallized around a specific question (e.g., How do we evaluate general operating support – and can evaluation help make the case that the ratio of our general support grants should increase? Can we leverage grantmaking failures to improve practice?). The topic and format are fluid, and groups have consisted of large and small private, community, and family foundations. There is no “one-size-fits-all fix.”

GEO recently collaborated with the Council on Foundations to offer a skills-building intensive for grantmakers on increasing stakeholder involvement in grantmaking strategies – a how-to on making “your grantmaking more effective by increasing the involvement of those most affected by it.” The following questions formed the core: “In the face of the obvious power differential, how can you authentically engage grantees in order to achieve your mutual goals? Could you solicit grantee feedback on your grantmaking practices? Incorporate grantee and community input when setting grantmaking priorities? Delegate funding decisions to community representatives? Build staff and trustee boards that reflect the communities you support?”

This two-day program was open to GEO and COF members and non-members. The fee for members was \$595 (first person); \$395 (second person); non-Members may attend for \$795 (first person); \$595 (second person).

E. EMERGING PRACTITIONERS IN PHILANTHROPY

A national and local peer learning community established in 2002 to “offer unique leadership and professional development,” Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy (EPIP) is an affinity group of the Council on Foundations that seeks to “strengthen the next generation of grantmakers, in order to advance effective social justice philanthropy” through a combination of advocacy and education activities.

With member chapters around the country, and following on COF’s work here, EPIP successfully launched a mentoring program to pair emerging and experienced grantmakers in semi-structured, six-month mentoring relationships outside of their own institutions. And it has partnered with the Council and Resource Generation to provide next-generation content at Council convenings.

EPIP has also created the Philanthropology™ Curriculum to provide the next generation of grantmakers with “an in-depth, critical study of philanthropy and social change.” As Rusty Stahl

has said, “The aim of our Philanthropology series is to bring reflective study to foundation practitioners – to take people out of the frantic ‘What are we going to fund and how’ mode and create a space for them to engage in honest dialogue and learning.” The program has been piloted in various stages across several chapters and includes:

- Understanding Philanthropy - A session on various forms and types of foundations. Designed for grantmakers with less than one year in the field, this session provides “factual and personal perspectives on how different models of foundations and giving vehicles operate and support social change.” Speakers are drawn from public and private foundations.
- Paradoxes in philanthropy - This highlights tensions inherent in foundation work and encourages participants to work toward resolving them. Has at various stages encompassed: The challenge of leading from the middle and "finding your voice" as a young person in philanthropy; "Power, Money, & Public Service: The Philanthropic Balancing Act"; "An Introduction to Social Justice Philanthropy.”
- Transforming Philanthropy - In partnership with Resource Generation, this session provides young foundation professionals and individual donors with an opportunity to learn from each other and understand their various roles.

EPIP is currently revamping the curriculum and delivery model for this program. To quote Stahl again, “I think the foundation community needs to come to terms with its workforce as a semi-profession — to accept that it's okay and valuable. From there, foundations need to expand their staff professional development programs, internships, apprenticeships, etc.” (Philanthropy News Digest 2005).

F. GRANTCRAFT

A project of the Ford Foundation, GrantCraft offers topical guides, cases and facilitated workshops – based on interviews with hundreds of grant makers about their experiences, core tensions and breakthroughs – to “build knowledge about practice.” Workshops are frequently scheduled around association conferences, and may also be scheduled by individual groups. Key topics include:

Scanning the Landscape: Finding Out What's Going on in Your Field

“For veterans and newcomers alike, scanning is a set of practices used to discover funding opportunities by exploring what works and what's missing in a field or community. Learn how to get started with a scan, explore its benefits and methods, insure diverse input, and discover ways a scan can contribute to the field. This workshop is designed to help you work smarter. Based on interviews with numerous grant makers, this workshop is designed to help participants:

- Understand what a scan can do for your work and your field as a whole
- See what you haven't seen before. The input you want is hard to find when you don't know exactly what you're looking for or who can help you find it.
- Get diverse viewpoints and take the time and necessary steps to share what you learn.”

Personal Strategy: Mobilizing Your Self for Effective Grantmaking

“Experienced and new grant makers alike can easily find themselves in ambiguous situations with their grantees or their foundations. Sometimes there's right on more than one side and no clear paths for action. A personal strategy framework can assist practitioners to reflect constructively on these difficult situations and to use the role of the grant maker to improve the dynamics at play and move toward a better outcome. Whether it's saying *No* to a grant seeker who's expecting to hear *Yes*, offering constructive criticism, or introducing new ideas within one's own organization, even the most experienced grant makers can struggle to sustain the focus and creativity they need to be effective. Based on interviews with numerous grant makers about the most challenging

aspects of their work, and informed by lessons from sociology and the study of organizational behavior, the workshop helps participants learn how to:

- Recognize soft challenges, the situations that don't have technical solutions and leave even experienced grantmakers feeling confused or ineffective.
- Draw on a new framework for effective personal strategy – using the linked concepts of role, self and system.
- Think and work like a natural by using a framework that makes the tacit strategies of highly effective grantmakers explicit and accessible.”

When Projects Go Wrong: Clarifying Your Role When Good Grants Go Astray

“Every grant maker can detect warning signs that a grant is floundering, especially in hindsight! This workshop examines the different ways in which good grants can go astray and helps participants to discuss ways to understand floundering and their own reactions to it. Based on hundreds of interviews with grant makers about the most challenging aspects of their work, the workshop helps participants learn to:

- Recognize the warning signs and distinguish ordinary hiccups from extraordinary troubles.
- Assess the nature of the problem and decide whether to intervene.
- Shape your response based on considerations of your role as a grantmaker, your foundation's responsibilities and goals, and your grantees' needs.”

GrantCraft workshops are “highly applied” and it is expected that participants will prepare and work with issues derived from their own experiences. They vary in length from 1.5 hours to a full day. Experienced facilitators are used, who “require fees and reimbursement for travel and other expenses.” The cost ranges from \$2,500 to \$5,000 depending on the size and duration of the workshop.

G. GILL FOUNDATION

The Gill Foundation is a private foundation that makes grants and operates programs “to secure equal opportunity for all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender expression.” Established in 1994, the foundation has so far invested more than \$120 million to support programs and nonprofit organizations across the country that share its commitment to equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans.

Through its OutGiving program, the foundation works “to engage and cultivate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and allied philanthropists to help secure large-scale and long-term financial support to build a robust network of organizations working towards achieving full civil rights for LGBT people.” The core of the program is an annual conference that brings professional staff and donors together to develop strategies for giving and information exchange, as well as “to encourage donors (who have the capacity to give \$5,000 or more annually to GLBT causes) to increase their giving capacity, make informed donations, and be more strategic in their giving.” More than 35 people registered for last year's program which was deemed a “huge success.” Tim Gill, founder and chairman, has said, “OutGiving is more than just a gathering of philanthropists – it's a specific, focused, and streamlined roadmap to making your dollars do more ... to increase capacity on the frontlines of the fight ... where they can have the greatest impact.”

The Gill Foundation also houses the Movement Advancement Project, whose mission is to speed achievement of full social and political equality for LGBT people by “providing donors and organizations with strategic information, insights and analyses to help them increase and align resources for highest impact. MAP serves two constituencies with information and analysis:

- Major donors to the LGBT movement – because an increase or change in their giving can have quick and substantial positive impact. They have extensive influence on organizations.
- Executive Directors, senior staff and board members of LGBT organizations – because this is where the rubber meets the road. Their participation is needed for effective change.”

One observer has remarked on philanthropy generally, “Without donor advisors, donors and foundations might never meet; we operate in separate worlds” (Backer 2008). Not so at the Gill Foundation. It’s an unusual and effective model.

PROGRAMS FOR DONORS AND TRUSTEES

“New players have entered the market....As of 2004, twenty-three (23) national financial institutions now offer charitable gift funds totaling \$5.1 billion in assets. In addition to the growing numbers of the traditional players in the market – community foundations (750), United Ways (1,400), Jewish Federations (150) and other religion-based federations – new types of public charities are emerging, including: Identity-based funds (hundreds), e.g., Women’s Funds (100); Issue-based funds (192), e.g., education funds; Giving Circles (220); Hometown Association and Other Remittance Giving (hundreds), e.g., Mexican Hometown Associations (600).”

– Community Foundations of America⁹

“You no longer have to be a Ford to have a foundation.”

– Dan Schley, CEO of Foundation Source¹⁰

In their groundbreaking report on donor education, Dan Siegel and Jenny Yancey characterized the field of donor education as a “cottage industry,” noting: “The emerging field of donor education is in its infancy. An extremely small share of today’s organizations that conduct some type of formal donor education existed 20-25 years ago. In fact, most of the current donor education programs have been created just since 1990” (Siegel 2003 – see Appendix D for full report).

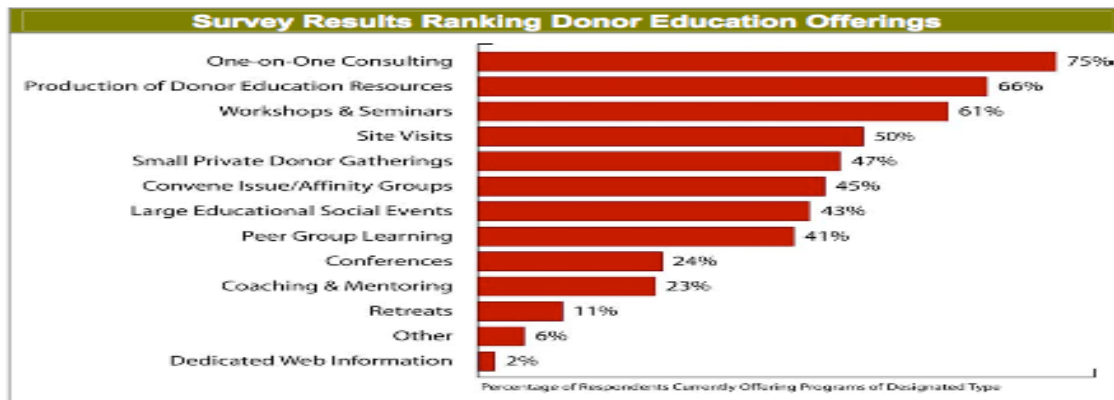
Thomas Backer, in an April 2008 study of donor advisors, found that donor advisors typically interact with clients within a range of eight key areas:

- Financial assessment
- Values clarification
- Family involvement
- Structure
- Actions
- Learning and peer networking
- Collaboration
- Evaluation

⁹ Community Foundations of America, Inc. 2006, pg 17-18.

¹⁰ Uzelac 2007.

Siegel and Yancey described the typology of donor education vehicles as follows:



To what extent does the content of these offerings keep pace with donor development or even important trends in the nonprofit sector? “Repeated themes” surfaced in their data: “going beyond philanthropy 101” and “the need for comprehensive and continuous learning” were closely followed by understanding “traditions of giving,” “how much to give,” and “nonprofit capacity building and sustainability.”

A separate study of donor perspectives on the capacity of the nonprofits they support found: “With some exceptions... individual donors and their advisors seem to have virtually no connection with the knowledge base or opportunities for learning and networking that might be afforded by foundations involved in capacity building.” Noting the wealth of philanthropic research and practice here, he suggested that philanthropic associations, among others, find ways to make it simply and easily available to donors – “making all these resources more known to trusted advisors could also increase the contact of donors with them” (Backer 2004).

That’s just one among many areas and possible solutions; opportunities to establish impactful connections abound. Yet, as noted in GivingNet/Community Foundation of America’s strategic plan for 2007-2009:

“Traditional players aren’t responding fast enough.” Community foundations and others are up against a “rough-and-ready, no-holds-barred set of business competitors eager to dominate the expanded charitable marketplace that High net worth individuals represent. Most established philanthropy service providers still cling to the belief that their knowledge of community ensures they will always be relevant and integral to the philanthropic ecosystem. But in order to be able to take this community knowledge to scale and offer it in next generation donor engagement opportunities, that knowledge must be collected, analyzed and distributed in new ways. It is not a question of whether this will happen, but rather how soon, and by whom. Can anyone say ‘Google?’”¹¹

This section will explore:

4. Professional Associations for Donors/Donor-Led Organizations
5. Extended Workshops and Peer Learning Groups
6. Professional Advisors

¹¹ Community Foundations of America, 2006.

4. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS FOR DONORS/DONOR-LED ORGANIZATIONS

A. ASSOCIATION OF SMALL FOUNDATIONS

The Association of Small Foundations (ASF) is the membership home for more than 3,000 foundations with few or no staff that seek “peer learning opportunities, targeted resources, and a collective voice in and beyond the philanthropic community.” From an informal, inaugural gathering in 1995 to today, the organization has enjoyed tremendous growth with an “enthusiastic membership and high renewal rates.” ASF works primarily with foundation trustees, and many of its member organizations were founded within the last five years. The first decade of ASF’s work was organized around providing tools and guidance on start-up operations/administration; like its members, ASF is now preparing to move toward a next-stage phase of development and in the future will focus more directly on effectiveness and assessment.

ASF conducts an annual operations survey with nearly 1,000 foundation respondents, and currently offers a variety of workshops at its annual, national conference as well as at other venues around the nation. In 2008, ASF also established an on-line discussion group for members, launched an on-line “fields of interest” guide to connect foundations with similar grantmaking interests, facilitate information exchange, “and even explore the possibility of working together.” It also plans to expand its programs to serve younger members (ages 18-35) becoming involved in the work of a foundation.

ASF organizes its core curriculum into the following major categories, which together comprise the signature “Foundation In A Box” series of tools and resources for members (click on topics in blue for additional information):

Setting Direction & Evaluating Impact:

- [Is a Private Foundation for You?](#)
- [Starting a Private Foundation](#)
- Creating a Mission
- Perpetuity and Spending Down
- Donor Intent/Legacy

Administration

- Setting Up and Managing Your Office Space
- Planning Your Work
- Hiring & Managing Staff
- Working with Consultants
- Budgeting, Accounting & Bookkeeping
- Recordkeeping
- Using Technology
- Communications and Annual Reports

Boards & Governance

- Getting Started
- Board Structure & Membership; Board Policies
- Board Policies (compensation, conflict of interest, discretionary grants)
- Leading Toward Excellence (ethics & strategic planning)
- Running the Board (meetings, retreats)
- Ensuring an Effective Board

Family Foundations

- Building a Board
- Family Dynamics
- Meetings and Retreats
- Next Generation
- Success Planning

Grantmaking

- Setting Up Your Grantmaking Program
 - Defining Your Grantmaking Strategy
 - Deciding How Grantseekers will Apply
 - Establishing Your Grant Guidelines
 - Giving More than Grants
- Ways to Fund
 - Capacity Building
 - Collaboration
 - Discretionary Grants
 - General Operating Support
 - Program-related Investments
- Fields of Interest
 - Member Stories
 - Advocacy & Public Policy
 - Grants to Individuals / Scholarships
 - International Grants
- Making Your Expectations Clear
 - Disseminating Your Mission & Guidelines
 - Communicating with Grantseekers and Grantees
- Evaluating Funding Opportunities
 - Accepting Grant Applications
 - Acknowledging Proposals
 - Proposal Review
 - Due Diligence
 - Site Visits
 - Saying “Yes” and “No”
 - Grant Agreements
- Evaluating Your Grantees
 - Grant Reports
 - Changing Course
- Evaluating Your Grantmaking Program
(In development for 2008)

Investments

- Investment Oversight
- Strategy, Policy, and Implementation
- Working with Consultants
- Working with Investment Managers
- Mission-related Investing
- Program-related Investments

Tax & Legal

- Essential documents
- 5% Distribution Requirement
- Self-Dealing
- Liability and Protecting Your Foundation
- Grant-Related Legal Guidelines (advocacy, expenditure responsibility)
- Investment-Related Legal Requirements
- IRS & State Reporting Requirements (disclosure, 990-PF, tax tips, IRS audit)
- Changing Your Foundation’s Status

Variations on the above themes are also offered as stand-alone “Master Primer” and day-long workshops, and at annual and regional conferences (e.g., Trustee Leadership Seminar, ASF’s longest-running one-day seminar, is designed for trustees and key staff who work closely with the board.).

Additionally, ASF offers the following day-long content-specific “Advanced Grantmaking” seminars:

- Arts Funders (with Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and Grantmakers in the Arts):
 - The Evolving Landscape of the Arts
 - Why Funds Arts Now
 - Identifying Characteristics and Needs of Arts Organizations
- Education Funders (created with Grantmakers for Education):
 - The Landscape of K-12 Public Education in the US
 - Funders Who Have Made a Difference
 - Principles of Effective Grantmaking
 - Exploring Your Passion
 - Success: How Do I Know When I See It?
 - Tales From the Trenches: Inspiring Education Leaders
- Evaluation:
 - Defining and measuring success within your foundation
 - Evaluating the Impact of your foundation’s grantmaking program
 - How to get the intended result from a grant

Faculty/presenters range from ASF staff to consultants and colleague organizations. Past presenters include: Doug Bauer, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors; Marcia Sharp, Millennium Communications Group; Karin Kunstler Goldman, New York State Attorney General’s Charities Bureau; Mike Fischer, Bank of America; Amy Zell Ellsworth, The Philanthropic Initiative; and Kerrie Blevins, The Patrick & Aimee Butler Family Foundation.

And in what must surely be the deal of the century, ASF’s annual membership dues for 2008 are \$495 (a flat rate, regardless of asset size) which entitles members to receive discounted rates to programs; many local programs are free. Three-day regional conferences for members, which feature extended workshops, range in cost from \$250 for one day to \$550 for all three days. Opportunities are also available through partner conferences and workshops.

B. NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY PHILANTHROPY

The National Center for Family Philanthropy (NCFP) was established in 1997 to encourage families and individuals (and their advisors) to create and sustain their philanthropic missions, and to inform the larger public of the value of private philanthropy. It is “the only national resource center that focuses solely on matters of importance to families engaged in philanthropy and their effective giving.” NCFP was the number one most-cited resource organization, and president Virginia Esposito was among the top ten program speakers, identified by donors in New Visions’ donor education survey (New Visions 2002).

Since its founding, NCFP has “conducted hundreds of interviews with donors and family members about their relationship with advisors – how their ideas about philanthropy were shaped by the advisor, what they found helpful, and what advice they offered to other potential donors looking for effective professional planning advice. Most of those interviewed have made considerable fortunes or are currently managing it for their families. Without exception, donors agree that philanthropy is no more personal than any of the other decisions that advisors help them make. Planning is about all the things you can do with your money. This is one of them” (National Center for Family Philanthropy 2000).

To facilitate this planning, NCFP conducts research and provides educational materials and programs to “help families and individuals:

- Better understand their roles and needs based upon their personal motivations and family values, relationships and enterprises;

- Make their philanthropy as effective and meaningful as possible for them and their communities; and
- Realize their desire to make a positive difference in the world around them.”

Family foundations, individual donors, and families that support NCFP’s mission can join as “Friends of the Family” (contributions are based on assets size and range from \$500 to \$2,000 or above) and receive access to National Center resources, including:

- Family Philanthropy Online Knowledge Center
- Family Giving News, monthly e-newsletter
- Teleconference Series, with partner subscribers/regional networks of donors and advisors
- Special seminars, peer gatherings, and other offerings

NCFP has developed a series of small group workshops and seminars dealing with issues specific to family giving. “We have conducted programs for very small groups of individuals considering becoming philanthropic donors, as well as conferences for family foundation groups of more than one hundred. We’ve worked with community foundations and bank trust officers, as well as groups of advisors to the wealthy (attorneys, investment counselors, and other estate planners). Finally, we’ve done programs for those interested in the field of philanthropy more generally, including nonprofit groups, university students, and policymakers.” Click here for a list of [Program Descriptions](#). Organizations may sponsor workshops, for an honorarium fee plus the cost of travel expenses for the participating NCFP staff (the fee varies “according to a number of factors” including size of audience).

C. GIVINGNET – FORMERLY COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICA

Founded in 2000, Community Foundations of America (CFA) changed its name to GivingNet in 2008, to reflect its new mission – “enhancing the impact of giving” – and the range of public, private and nonprofit organizations with whom it partners to achieve that mission. An important network weaver, GivingNet/CFA has a large subscriber base of over 100 community foundations regularly driving content out to over 1,400 colleagues in the field – and it is poised to take a new and innovative approach to outreach.

As noted in CFA’s Strategic Plan, the approach is multi-pronged: “Philanthropic service providers must restructure their organizations to create a constituent self-service model and at the same time to support more high touch experiences. While some see these as mutually exclusive activities, in fact the self-serve model actually leads to more, and more complex, personal relationships. A self-serve model allows for constituents to garner as much information as they can in the ways that they want, before they interact with a human being. By the time those individuals are ready for a personal interaction, they are better-informed, more prepared to transact, and have even higher expectations of the value that will be added by a personal interaction.”¹²

To build its “self-serve” model, GivingNet plans to aggressively introduce “web2.0” products, services and tools that infuse philanthropic offerings with new participatory engagement opportunities – with the ultimate goal of improving and exponentially leveraging philanthropy. Through these offerings, GivingNet seeks to be “the principal point of engagement for foundations, corporations, and investment advisors to interact with high net worth individuals interested in innovative approaches to maximizing their philanthropic investments.” It’s a big leap, one which GivingNet recognizes is new for the field of community foundations, typically

¹² Community Foundations of America, Inc., 2006. For full report, see Appendix D.

“cautious and slow to move to an Internet-based model of product and service delivery – and despite six years of continued capacity-building efforts toward this end, no scalable demonstration product has [yet] emerged from the field.”

GivingNet envisions that all of its donor engagement tools will provide opportunities for high net worth individuals to:

- *“Network* with other philanthropic investors
- *Engage* other donors to participate in projects and initiatives
- *Participate* in projects and initiatives created by other members or organizations
- *Research* philanthropic investment opportunities and high-performing organizations
- *Manage* philanthropic investment portfolios
- *Build and share* knowledge of philanthropy and social investment”

The centerpiece of this effort, already in a pilot phase with a small pool of its community foundation clients, is the “Next Generation Engagement Products and Services” program through which GivingNet will “identify, negotiate and manage the development of donor engagement tools that deliver philanthropic opportunities to high net worth donors” and distribute these products and services to philanthropic intermediaries (community foundations, and interested private foundations and nonprofits). It will also make these products directly available to the “high net worth market,” and to any organization in the sector that wants to use the products and services to enhance their operations. One up-and-running example is illustrated below. Products will be developed using a combination of new and existing GivingNet tools and relationships. Products and services will contain “essential components such as high-quality



**Introducing ScholarBridge™:
America's Scholarship Marketplace**

A partnership between CFA, MTV, American Council on Education (through its Solutions for America program) and a select group of major national foundations and financial institutions is entering the financing stage of R&D to create ScholarBridge™, an online marketplace that will use sophisticated matching and community tools to connect high net worth donors with deserving students nationwide.

In a bold “look Ma, no hands” enterprise, this program will use no interviews, collect no documents and have no committees, and at the same time funnel more scholarship dollars to more students from more donors, all via the Internet. New things. New ways.

content (in the form of informed choices and giving opportunities); centralized back office administrative functions (for scale, cost control and efficiencies); feedback loop (some sort of reporting, ‘return’ or ‘psychic reward’ accountability component that compels the constituent to more engagement); and community tools to enable social networking.”

The initiative seeks to “accelerate the trend toward community foundations capturing their community knowledge in ways that can be searched and communicated, and efforts to increase grant performance and the demonstration of grant accountability.”

Additionally, GivingNet will offer professional services such as business process evaluation and reengineering, and technology implementation and integration. The goal of these services is to provide “better, lower cost and in some cases

Source: Community Foundations of America, Strategic Plan © 2006

outsourced front and back office infrastructure services to community foundations and any other interested philanthropic institutions.” An interesting study in focus through quasi, bottom-line business planning.

5. EXTENDED WORKSHOPS AND PEER LEARNING GROUPS

“The concept of *peer networking* [has] emerged as one of the most powerful methods for promoting learning and building capacity among donors and the foundations they create. At the heart of these approaches is the *trust* donor-initiated and donor-run groups can create – an atmosphere in which donors can speak off the record with trusted peers, not just for information-sharing but for active problem-solving. Approaches to donor education which lack this atmosphere of trust are less likely to result in real learning and action.”

– Thomas E. Backer, “Nurturing High-Impact Philanthropists: Learning Groups for Donors and Small Foundations”¹³

In contrast to the relatively low-touch approaches described above, the following illustrate smaller-scale, high-touch and input-intensive approaches that have yielded outsize results in terms of building high-trust teams and networked, though relatively small, cohorts. Alumni are beginning to make their mark in traditional, and non-traditional, philanthropy.

A. THE PHILANTHROPY WORKSHOP

The Philanthropy Workshop was founded by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1995, to provide training and networking opportunities for new donors and wealthy individuals interested in higher-impact giving. In 2006, TPW became a project of the Institute for Philanthropy in London – an independent, nonprofit organization that works to increase effective philanthropy in the UK and internationally through education and advisory services – and is led by chief executive Salvatore LaSpada. TPW’s mission is “to create an active, global network of strategic philanthropists with the skills, commitment and imagination to make a significant contribution to the pressing issues of our time.”

TPW has four stated goals for workshop participants: “deepening one’s understanding of critical social issues and philanthropy’s role in solving them; sharpening strategic grantmaking skills; further developing one’s leadership; and building and strengthening the TPW Network.” The workshop consists of three week-long modules, which take place over the course of a year:

- Module I: Developing a framework for strategic philanthropy (October, in London)
- Module II: Collaborating across borders, global philanthropy (March, in a developing country; past locations include Bangladesh, Brazil, Vietnam, Rwanda)
- Module III: Putting strategic philanthropy into action (June, in New York)

Attendance at the London and New York modules is required, and optional but strongly encouraged at the developing country module. Each provides opportunities for “developing knowledge about strategic philanthropy, leadership development and collaborative problem solving” via preparatory readings, site visits, ‘living case studies,’ seminars and small-group discussions, through which participants develop:

- A conceptual framework for strategic philanthropy;
- The skills to implement their own strategic philanthropic program;

¹³ Backer 2006, pg 2.

- A personalized mission statement and a work plan to put into action the skills and tools gained from the Workshop;
- A confidential forum for peer group discussions;
- Interaction with local and international leaders who are defining and carrying out creative solutions to the pressing social issues of our time;
- A deeper understanding of one's values and motivations for giving through exposure to a wide variety of perspectives."

Visiting faculty, comprised of experts from the public, private and nonprofit sectors, has included: Richard Mittenhal, TCC Group; Bill Drayton, Ashoka; and Muhammad Yunus, Grameen Bank.

The workshop is designed for individuals "with the discretion to allocate philanthropic funds" and draws participants from around the world (with a large and growing European base). Participants have ranged in age from 30's to 60's, with median age in the 40's. The application process is via letter of intent and brief biography, and a subsequent interview. Each cohort is limited to no more than 12 participants. The cost of the 2008 – 2009 Workshop is £9,000 or \$18,000. (This does not include airfare, accommodation, and certain meals.) To date, approximately 150 people have participated.

Upon completion, workshop participants are invited to join the TPW Network, an association of alumni that seeks to foster collaboration and ongoing learning. The Network is supported by alumni leadership grants and individual annual subscription, and offers an ongoing "connection to the expertise of the Institute and its network of leading organizations, funders, and advisors," as well as meetings and funders collaboratives.

Four funders collaboratives have grown out of TPW, to enable alumni to learn about an issue of mutual interest, craft a funding strategy, pool funds and make collaborative grants. They are:

- The Youth Justice Funding Collaborative, a partnership between philanthropists and non-profit leaders/activists, works to promote policy change in the U.S. juvenile justice system;
- The Pluralism Fund supports human rights organizations in Pakistan and Iran, and works to promote greater understanding of these countries in the West;
- The TPW Energy Collaborative funds sustainable energy projects in the developing world;
- Supporting Women Entrepreneurs in Ghana.

Members of the alumni network also have access to an annual advanced workshop module held regionally, to coincide with the standard workshop. Recent themes include: broadening the governance of foundations; how to provide funding in problematic regions such as Darfur, New Orleans and Iran; strategies for supporting leadership development; and leveraged grant-making.

Approximately 90 workshop participants have gone on to join the TPW Network, which represents quite a large percentage – nearly 70% – of alumni engaged.

In 2007, TPW launched a spin-off workshop for 18-30 year olds called the Next Generation Philanthropy (NGP), designed "to give the philanthropists of tomorrow the tools for effective giving." Offered in partnership with the Institute for Family Business, a nonprofit membership association supporting the UK family-owned business sector through advocacy, education and research, NGP will teach participants "the methodology of making risk-taking grants, leveraging greater change than the size of a donation and inspiring systemic change." Participants will "wrestle with the concepts, methods and practice of strategic philanthropy" and gain "a deeper insight into the issues they care about and the seeds of their own strategic philanthropic program."

The workshop consists of two modules, 3.5 days each, which take place in London over the course of four months. The workshop is designed for “young inheritors, and future entrepreneurs and family business owners” and hopes to draw participants from around the world. The application process consists of submitting a brief personal biography, a letter of intent and an interview. Each cohort is limited to no more than 12 participants. The cost of the 2008 – 2009 Workshop is £3,000 or \$6,000, which does not include airfare or accommodation. (There may have been some trouble attracting participants, as the program’s original, longer design and heftier costs seem to have been scaled back.)

Upon completion, NGP participants are invited to join the Next Generation Philanthropy Network, an association of alumni that will seek to foster collaboration and ongoing learning.

B. THE PHILANTHROPY WORKSHOP WEST

In collaboration with The Rockefeller Foundation and TPW staff, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the TOSA Foundation launched The Philanthropy Workshop West (TPW West) in 2001. Led by Christine Sherry since its inception, the goal of TPW West is to “create an active global association of strategic philanthropists with the skills, commitment and imagination to make a significant contribution to the pressing issues of the day.”

The program explores “both traditional and emerging models of philanthropy,” effective strategies for meeting philanthropic goals, and “difficult issues commonly faced by funders” (retaining humility, funding collaboratives, creating constructive and respectful relationships with colleagues in the field). TPW West offers participants:

- “An understanding of how to develop strategic approaches to philanthropy that are innovative and creative;
- Exposure to the non-profit sector: its role in society and how philanthropy can best support it;
- Exposure to leaders, domestic and international, who are defining and carrying out creative solutions to the pressing social issues of our time;
- Introduction to a network of philanthropists, foundation officers, community leaders, social innovators, and consultants; and
- An individualized set of philanthropic goals and a work plan to put into action the skills and tools gained from the course.”

Staff are also available to consult with participants on “specific strategic plans, issues and projects, including serving as a conduit for the expertise that Rockefeller and Hewlett program officers have to offer.”

TPW West conducts one workshop a year, which consists of three 3-day sessions and one week-long, international session described as follows:

Session I: Strategies & Challenges (October, in California)

This session will explore the role of philanthropists in promoting social entrepreneurship and will provide a conceptual framework for strategic grantmaking. Participants will examine effective models of grantmaking and learn how to hone strategic grantmaking skills. Participants will explore best practices in evaluating grantees, setting criteria, and structuring grants, as well as how to assist organizations to improve their financial and managerial capacities. These issues will be explored through informal, small group discussions and a series of site visits to some of the most creative non-profit organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. Additional individually tailored skills building workshops will also be offered. Participants will meet with innovative

philanthropists to learn novel funding strategies and to explore a variety of strategic approaches to funding. Finally, Session I will address in detail new trends in philanthropy, from venture philanthropy and effective measurement tools to the use of technology by the nonprofit sector, and as an aid to researching grantmaking options.

Session II: National Philanthropy (January, in Washington, DC)

Participants will meet with prominent national leaders to discuss a range of perspectives on issues affecting today's social, economic, and cultural fabric, including education, the environment and civil justice. They will gain first hand exposure to the public policy process and explore the creative intersections between philanthropy and that process. Participants will examine selected current policy issues from a national perspective, and learn how to develop a strategic framework for addressing such problems, using skills developed in Session I. They will explore how local nonprofit initiatives fit into a national response to a problem, how to learn what others are doing regionally to address a problem, and how to inform policy through a variety of mechanisms, including advocacy and the press.

Session III: Global Philanthropy (March, in a developing country)

Designed to introduce participants to global philanthropy. Participants will travel to a developing country where they will spend a week meeting leading social innovators and visiting successful organizations operating in rural and urban areas. Participants will have the opportunity to meet with clients and see the communities in which they are working, to learn first hand about the effects of international giving on democratic institutions, health care, poverty and the environment. Spending time in one of the world's poorest countries with some of that country's most effective organizations is an opportunity to witness not only the interconnectedness of the globe but also the extraordinary impact made possible with limited resources. Participants will also learn about new methods to facilitate international giving and other groups funding overseas.

Session IV: Practical Grantmaking (May, in California)

As a culmination of the course, this session is designed to give participants hands-on practice in grantmaking. Participants will utilize their skills and experience to develop and refine their philanthropic strategies, including completing a personalized set of philanthropic goals and work plan. Individuals will also be given the opportunity to present to other participants, board members and staff, one to two proposals that they are planning to fund. These presentations will enable each participant to hone his or her grantmaking skills, and will encourage thoughtful analysis and critical feedback by all participants. Additional skills building workshops will be included. Session IV also examines existing structures that facilitate effective grantmaking. Participants will focus on the advantages and restrictions of private foundations, public charities, community foundations, funding collaboratives, and direct giving. The discussions will consider which structures best meet one's philanthropic goals, whether and how to hire staff, and how to form an effective board of trustees. To expose participants to the operations of professional boards, the group will meet with members of the Hewlett and Rockefeller Foundation Boards as well as foundation officers to discuss strategies for effective grantmaking.

The workshop is targeted to "high net worth individuals and foundation trustees who are committed to making a difference through their philanthropic giving. A distinguishing characteristic of TPW West is the ability to deliver effective and meaningful content to both experienced donors as well as newer philanthropists... The course especially seeks participants who are interested in developing connections with other philanthropists, both nationally and internationally." Most participants are drawn from the Bay Area. Admissions criteria include:

“eagerness to expand and strengthen your philanthropy;” demonstrated “risk-taking,” willingness to collaborate, respect for other’s ideas.

The application process is via letter of application (outlining reasons for attending, voluntary and “civic involvements,” current giving program and interest areas) and an interview. Each cohort is limited to no more than 15 participants. The cost of the 2008-2009 workshop is \$25,000. (This does not include participant travel and miscellaneous expenses). Each participant is also “expected to make a \$5,000 contribution toward a collective grant following the international module.” To date, approximately 90 people have participated. Participants who have completed the program are eligible to join the TPW Network described above.

C. ASPEN INSTITUTE

Under the umbrella of the Aspen Institute, the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy Policy Program (NSPP) was established in 1991 to “improve the operation of the nonprofit sector and philanthropy through research, leadership education and communication initiatives focused on critical issues” with a core mission to “foster enlightened leadership, the appreciation of timeless values, and the ability to pursue common ground with fellow citizens while remaining true to basic ideals.” Since then, it has awarded more than \$10 million to support over 400 research projects on a broad range of topics. Jane Wales now leads this work as vice president for Philanthropy and Society, and executive director of NSPP.

Aspen has developed and partnered on several offerings over the years for foundation executives, such as: the Seminar for Foundation Executives; the Kellogg-Kauffman Seminar Series for Mid-Continent Foundation CEOs; and the Racial Equity and Society Seminar for community change leaders. Through its Workforce Strategies Initiative, Aspen just launched a 2008-2009 “sector strategies prac.ti.cum” with PP/V to support organizations that operate – or want to operate – multi-sector partnerships in New York City.¹⁴

This year, to support strategic giving by individual donors and small foundations, Aspen launched smartlink.org, through Community Giving Resource, a joint project with the Neighborhood Funders Group. This “free, independent and informative website” for donors was created “explicitly for people who want to give within their neighborhoods and communities.”

And it is now rolling out the Aspen Philanthropy Seminar, a new Seminar for donors and trustees. Noting that donor community members “find comparatively few occasions to come together in a neutral seeing to explore issues unique to their roles,” the Seminar was piloted in 2007 and seeks to “stir values-based reflection and critical thinking” among peers on issues ranging from philanthropic mission and strategy to structuring giving programs, engaging in regional issues, exploring effectiveness and impact.

Designed to facilitate participants’ ability to “identify a specific challenge or decision they are facing” and “develop a strategy for addressing this challenge,” the Seminar will explore the following “guiding questions”:

- What values are most important in my life? How do I balance competing values?
- What is the purpose of wealth—my own and in general?
- How does my giving reflect my values? What difference will my giving make?
- How can my giving be most effective, creative and strategic? How can I learn from others—and avoid others’ mistakes?

¹⁴ For more information: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/labor_market/labor_market_initiatives.asp?section_id=5&initiative_id=46

Participants will also explore “tensions inherent in philanthropy”:

- What is the appropriate level of donor engagement?
- To what degree do you impose your knowledge, to what degree do you defer to the goals and methods of the grantee organization?
- What are the cutting-edge strategies and approaches being applied by donors to society’s most challenging problems?
- How does (or can) a donor know he or she has been truly effective?

It is expected that participants will gain “greater insight and a plan for strategic action” – including knowledge of best practice, a framework to apply to giving, and a new network of peers – through preparatory readings, case studies, peer exchange and “expert guidance.” All sessions and discussions “will be informal and off-the-record” to provide for a “safe, intellectually stimulating and meaningful” environment.

The seminar consists of four sessions conducted over the course of a year (an opening two-day retreat, two half-day sessions, a closing day-long retreat) and a final dinner. “Principals and decision-makers” (in most cases, non-staff) of family/private foundations and individual donors of all kinds may attend. Donors engaged in alternative strategies (social entrepreneurship, or venture philanthropy) are particularly encouraged to attend. To be eligible, participants must live in Washington, DC at least part-time. Sessions are held at Wye River Conference Center and at two arts institutions in the District. Attendance is limited to no more than 25 participants. The cost of the 2008-2009 seminar is \$5,000 (including lodging at Wye River).

Aspen also co-convenes the annual *Summer Seminar* with the Global Philanthropy Forum; more follows in the section below. Lastly, the Aspen Institute has announced a collaboration with the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College – opening in New York this fall – to offer talks, discussions, salons, seminars, and other special events. Watch this space: there may be more to come for practitioners here.

D. GLOBAL PHILANTHROPY FORUM

A project of the World Affairs Council of Northern California, the Global Philanthropy Forum (GPF) seeks to develop a community of donors and social investors committed to international causes, and to “inform, enable and enhance the strategic nature of their work.” GPF was founded by Jane Wales in 2001, in partnership with leading Silicon Valley philanthropists, around a shared conviction that “individuals are not only capable of advancing human security, environmental stewardship, and improved quality of life, but that they must.” Wales, as noted above, now leads and is already putting her stamp on the Aspen Institute’s philanthropy and nonprofit programming.

GPF’s goal is to expand the number of philanthropists who will be strategic in pursuit of international causes, by building and “continually refreshing a lasting learning community.”

It seeks to connect donors to “issues; to effective strategies; to potential co-funding partners; and to emblematic agents of change from around the world” through an annual conference, a summer seminar, special events and conference call programs.

With the Aspen Institute, GPF convenes the Summer Seminar annually. The Seminar “confronts the recurring tensions that arise between such goals as equity and liberty, the individual and the community, or engagement and empowerment. As we delve into strategy and method, we take part in focused exercises so that we can consider specific challenges and apply the methods about which we will have heard and read throughout the Seminar.”

Guiding questions for participants include:

- What values are most important in my life? How does my giving reflect my values?
- How can I create and stay true to my philanthropic mission?
- What role does or should my family, spouse, loved ones play?
- How can I be most effective and strategic? How will I measure success?

It is expected that participants will gain “a sharpened philanthropic vision,” a framework for assessing giving, and a new network of peers – through preparatory readings, case studies, peer exchange and “expert guidance.” Past speakers and moderators include Bill Gates, Sr., Leslie Crutchfield and Heather McLeod Grant, Mark Kramer and Michael Milken.

The three-day, two-night Seminar is held at the Aspen Meadows Resort, and is targeted to “principals of established family foundations” and individual donors of all kinds may attend. Donors engaged in alternative strategies (social entrepreneurship, or venture philanthropy) are particularly encouraged to attend. The Seminar costs \$4,000 (less for GPF members), and does not include airfare or lodging.

E. GLOBAL PHILANTHROPISTS CIRCLE

A program of the Synergos Institute, the Global Philanthropists Circle (GPC) was co-founded by Peggy Dulany and David Rockefeller in 2001 to catalyze effective, international giving by individual donors. The Circle offers a unique multi-generational, international opportunity for donors to meet and learn from each other.

GPC is staffed by The Synergos Institute, the nonprofit capacity-building organization founded by Dulany in 1986 “with the goal of bringing people together to address poverty and inequity around the globe,” particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In 2007, Synergos sharpened its strategy to more directly include “building a global community of leaders and leading institutions, working with them to promote collaborative efforts that address the complexities of poverty and social injustice, and sharing what all of us learn for the benefit of others.”

GPC is comprised of 70 multigenerational families from 23 countries who work together “to eliminate poverty and increase equity worldwide.” GPC members are drawn from the US and Canada, as well as Europe, Africa, Russia, Asia, Latin America. Fully half of the families are from other countries, facilitating networking on giving overseas as well as on philanthropy in the US. A Next Generation Group was formed in 2003 for members who are inheritors of wealth, “successor generations - family members between their teens and early 30s,” to promote their involvement in philanthropy.

The membership fee is \$25,000 a year. Dulany has described further criteria for members as, “They need to be serious in their interest in philanthropy.... we do a kind of background check on people who are interested because we obviously want upstanding citizens to be members” (Oleck 2006). GPC members receive access to:

Strategic Planning Services

To strengthen potential impact and “ensure value added,” GPC staff will assess the strategic planning needs of member’s individual or family philanthropy or foundation. Based on the assessment, GPC members may choose from the following options:

- “Work together to create your Strategic Plan
- Target your planning for specific projects
- Evaluate your current planning process
- Design a monitoring and evaluation plan”

Learning Retreats

- Working Retreat on “Exploring and Deepening Our Social Engagement”: GPC Members are invited to spend one week at Peggy Dulany’s ranch in Centennial Valley, Montana, exploring their personal purposes and deepening their social engagement. Special teaching and practice exercises, including a three day wilderness immersion, provide a space for participants to deepen and clarify their understanding of and commitment to their work in the world.
- Annual Reflection Retreat: Past retreat participants are invited to Pocantico to further connect with each other and to explore how they might deepen the experience to increase their philanthropic effectiveness.

Learning Visits

Circle Members connect with local leaders, philanthropists, and social innovators to explore collaborative ways of addressing issues of social inequality and injustice. Highlights include site visits hosted by local GPC Members.

Annual Meetings

All members of the Circle meet annually for a day-long opportunity for learning and exchange, “to find inspiration and share new methods and possibilities for collaboration.” The most recent convening, held in New York in October 2007, attracted more than 100 “leading international philanthropists” and featured sessions with: Zainab Salbi, founder and CEO of Women for Women International; Blaise Judja-Sato, founder and president of VillageReach; and a dialogue between Sheryl Sandberg, board member of the Google Foundation/google.org, and Judith Rodin, president of the Rockefeller Foundation, on their approaches to innovating and measuring impact.

As Dulany has noted, “Finding the opportunity to be able to interact not only in a grantmaking way, but in a learning way - learning from those with whom we want to work - is essential.” This model stands in stark juxtaposition to some of the more technically-oriented offerings described in preceding sections. And is an interesting twist on the potentially growing number of “dual passport advisors,”: advisors who come from wealth and who are deeply involved in their own philanthropy as well as in their advising work (Backer 2008).

F. SOCIAL VENTURE PARTNERS

Founded by Paul Brainerd in 1997, Social Venture Partners (SVP) “advances the common good by engaging and connecting a community of philanthropic leaders, strengthening local nonprofits, and catalyzing efforts to accelerate system change.” Since its inception, SVP Seattle has established capacity-building relationships with and granted over \$10 million to 58 nonprofits, and has worked with nearly 1,000 individuals seeking to become effective philanthropists by connecting with each other and the nonprofit sector. It has inspired its Partners to “give more time and more money and educating them to have more impact with that time and money” (Social Venture Partners 2007). With affiliates in 24 other communities, SVP “has emerged as the best known and most extensive network of donor circles in the country” (Siegel 2003).

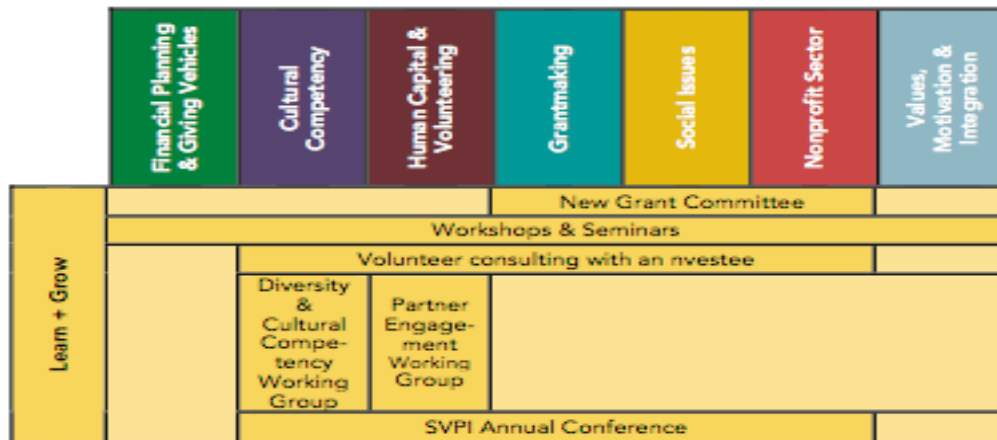
SVP is noteworthy for at least two reasons: It is one of the few donor education vehicles that has thought through the arc of donor development and directs educational resources to strategically guide members along that arc. And it is, ultimately, as externally focused – on the capacity of grantees and a shared mission for social change – as it is internally focused, on its donors’ education. Consistent with that external mission focus, SVP is positively evangelical in its openness and drive, routinely sharing what it learns as it goes with its members (Partners) and the field generally.

Partners join SVP by making a minimum annual contribution of \$5,700. The funds are pooled to provide general operating and capacity-building grants to grant recipient “Investees,” and to support SVP’s programs and operations. Once selected, SVP works with Investees to improve management practices, strategies and systems by providing access to skilled Partner volunteers, professional consultants and training opportunities. SVP works with approximately 20 Investees annually, in funding relationships that typically last from three to five years. In the course of a five-year relationship with an Investee, SVP invests approximately \$200,000-\$300,000, provides 10-20 hands-on Partner volunteers, funds approximately \$25,000 worth of consultant support, and provides numerous connections to other resources.

As noted in Blueprint Research & Design’s evaluation of SVP’s first five years, “SVP’s model of intertwining its donor education and capacity building activities is unique and marks its greatest contribution to the field of philanthropy. SVP has taken activities traditionally practiced by separate entities and brought them together into a single organization. By creating a philanthropic ecosystem of donors and nonprofits, SVP strengthens the effectiveness of each piece” (Bernholz 2003).

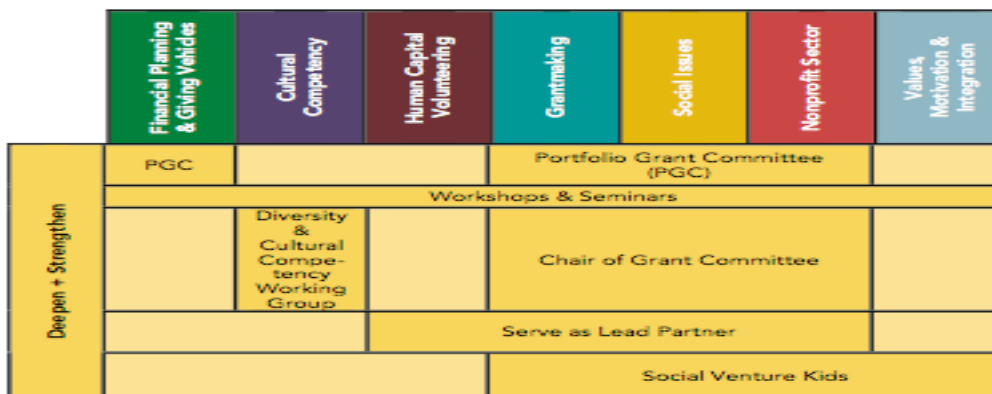
The donor education portion of that “ecosystem” is substantial. SVP currently works with over 450 Partners, and is piloting a self-assessment tool that will help Partners to identify their education needs. The larger web of Partner education and engagement activities corresponds with SVP’s theory on donor levels of development (cf. Section I above), developed in 2007, which is summarized further in the following graphics:

Level 1: Learn and Grow (74% of Partners are at this level)



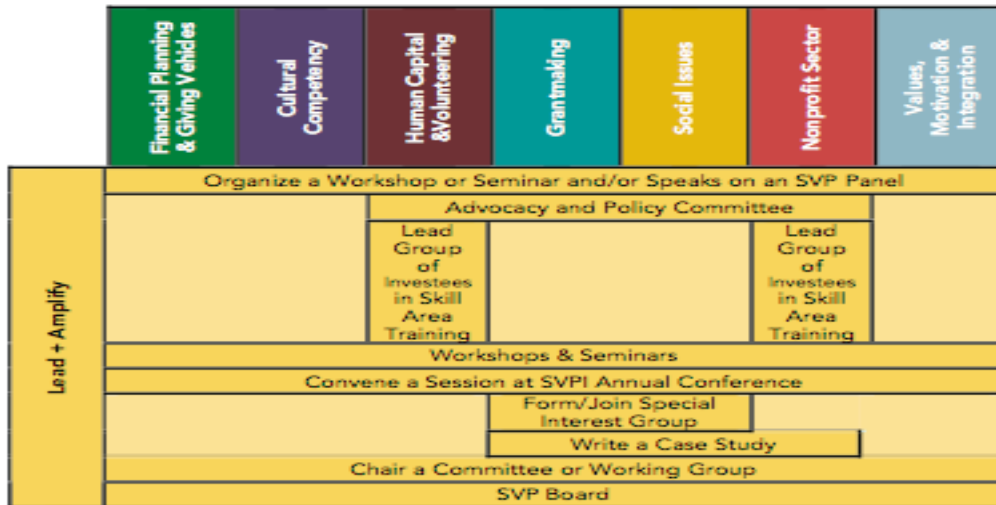
© Social Venture Partners 2007, Past & Future: Reflections on SVP Seattle’s past 10 years and vision for the future.

Level 2: Deepen and Strengthen (19% of Partners are at this level)



© Social Venture Partners 2007, Past & Future: Reflections on SVP Seattle’s past 10 years and vision for the future.

Level 3: Lead and Amplify (7% of Partners are at this level)



© Social Venture Partners 2007, Past & Future: Reflections on SVP Seattle's past 10 years and vision for the future.

With this framework in place, SVP is now positioned to more intentionally relate its donor curricula to a more systematic donor education agenda. SVP helps Partners to structure learning goals around donor strategies, philanthropic planning, and the nonprofit sector through one-on-one support, service on grants committees, internal working groups on recruitment and diversity, workshops, and an online knowledge library. Examples follow.

Committee Service

New Grant Committee: Focusing on SVP's funding areas – early childhood development, environment, K-12 education and out-of-school time – each committee is made up of 10–12 Partners who spend five to six months learning about the issue area, developing criteria, evaluating applications, reviewing proposals and attending site visits. (Partners' children can join their own grant committee, [Social Venture Kids](#).)

- First 6 weeks: Regular weekly meetings, Partners learn about the issue area we will be funding.
- Next 2–3 months: Within less structured, small team meetings, Partners develop evaluation criteria and review initial applications.
- Final 2 months: Partners evaluate proposals and attend site visits. Site visits are time intensive but essential... and consistently the most valued aspect of the process by committee members.

Upon completion of service on this committee, Partners may “graduate” to become *Lead Partners* who serve as primary liaison between SVP staff, volunteers and the Investee. Lead Partners spend between 4–6 hours per month working with the leadership of an Investee and project managing volunteer opportunities. Then, eligible to join the *Portfolio Grant Committee*, a three year commitment with 12 Partners to conduct mid-year and annual reviews with each Investee, and make annual refunding decisions in subsequent years.

Advocacy & Policy Committee

Engages 12 advanced Partners in “looking more deeply into not just today's symptoms and problems, but into the upstream root causes.” SVP has launched a three-part educational series for Partners and intends to form APC committees around all of its grantmaking areas to:

- Address the root cause of problems and foment systemic change.
- Leverage the impact of our capacity building grants.
- Team with expert organizations on systemic change.

- Create interest and challenge for SVP Partners. Partners will develop high-level skills and knowledge around advocacy, policy work and the issue area.
- Become a more involved and engaged community partner working towards positive impact in our issue areas.

Evening Seminars and Workshops - examples include:

- Issue-area seminar: What is Microcredit?
- Family-focused presentation: Raising a philanthropic child in an affluent community
- Effective volunteering workshop: Volunteering in a diverse world
- Investing forum: Socially responsible investing

Advanced Board Leadership Series

Developed in partnership with the Cascade Center at the University of Washington, this four-evening, for-credit class seeks to catalyze outstanding board service. Sessions will explore the context of leadership; elements of effective board leadership; leading through difficult times; developing a mindset for outstanding financial oversight; and the application of concepts to participants' specific leadership work in the community. All sessions will be reinforced with select reading recommendations. The course is designed for people with at least two years experience on nonprofit boards and a good grasp of the nonprofit sector as a whole, legal and financial responsibilities of board members, and strategic planning concepts. Each of the four sessions is 3.5 hours long (5pm-8:30pm), scheduled over roughly six weeks. Faculty include Leslie Breitner, DBA, a Principal Lecturer and the Faculty Director of the Cascade Center at the Evans School, and faculty lead for the Executive Masters in Public Affairs program.

With their new roadmap taking shape, SVP Seattle executive director Paul Shoemaker says, "I can see us working toward some kind of certification, something that formally recognizes varying levels of practice." SVP Partners are already viewed as "a cut above," and "we want to build on that, to meet Partner demand" and – in an increasingly crowded marketplace of individual givers – "to give better signals to nonprofits about who comes equipped with what skills, vision, relational attributes."

In essence, SVP is seeking to do it all – to align the quality of its instructionally-based donor education with the quality of its experiential learning to achieve lasting results in the community. As the evaluation highlighted:

"Although most people think of donor education as the myriad seminars that SVP offers, the impact of these activities on Partner's [or donor's] individual philanthropy paled when compared to the experience of volunteering and/or serving on a grant committee. These activities provide donors experiential learning" (Bernholz 2003).

It's a pretty audacious goal, in somewhat experimental territory. Shoemaker adds, "We definitely now have the vision, we have the strategy and – though in some ways we're just beginning – we are implementing it."

6. PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

“Choosing a cause has grown more daunting. More than a million charities were registered with the Internal Revenue Service in 2005, from about 625,000 a decade earlier. That doesn't count 350,000 religious groups that aren't required to file with the IRS, estimates the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.”

– *Wall Street Journal*¹⁵

“The four characteristics common to effective donor advising are:

- building trust between advisor and donor
- finding a psychologically-based understanding of donor intent and behavior
- drawing on knowledge and experience with philanthropy, the nonprofit sector and the community
- doing skillful research to provide data for donor decision-making

Beyond these commonalities, there is a great range of practice.”

– Thomas E. Backer and Lilli Friedland,

“Donor Advisors and Philanthropic Strategy”¹⁶

In the midst of incredible growth – private wealth, number of nonprofits, available data, conflict for resources – the field of philanthropic advising is quickly shedding its “cottage industry” status. Today’s philanthropists seek to convene in new ways and through new networks. And while many emerging organizations purport to provide some kind of PE to donors, most – like John Templeton Foundation’s Philanthropic Leadership Network – are less instructional- and more networking-oriented. Others, like the Skoll Foundation’s World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship, have a more intentional focus on peer learning but nonetheless fall short of our criteria for “donor education” The organizations below seek to provide opportunities for both, and represent varying approaches to the craft.

A. THE PHILANTHROPIC INITIATIVE, INC.

A full-service nonprofit advisory firm, The Philanthropic Initiative, Inc. (TPI) was established in 1989 by founder and chairman H. Peter Karoff. TPI’s website states: “After a thorough process of market research and due diligence that strongly suggested that TPI as then envisioned would never succeed, Peter chose to do what many of the world's more entrepreneurial and effective donors have done, he took an informed leap of faith!”

Now led by president and CEO Ellen Remmer, TPI’s mission is to “increase the impact and amount of philanthropic giving” and promotion of philanthropy through education, writing and research – as well as through consulting services with clients “to promote effective, strategic and rewarding giving.” TPI advises clients through a “five-stage process: discovery to develop mission and vision statements; strategic planning; research on relevant social issues and focus definition; program design and implementation; and evaluation.”

TPI reaches well over 1,000 wealthy individuals and their advisors annually. Remmer has described TPI’s client base as “sort of middle-of- the-road to more progressive,” noting, “Early on we ran the spectrum in terms of our clients. But most of our referrals come from other clients, and then they have their experience either individually or institutionally... We recently went through a strategic planning process... and we had a long conversation about how much to be out in front and how much to go after clients, to try to work specifically with clients who shared our

¹⁵ Silverman 2007.

¹⁶ Backer April 2008, pg. 1. For full report, see Appendix D.

collective institutional values... But it's not something we haven't struggled with."¹⁷ TPI's 990 for year-end 2006 (latest available) stated revenue was \$5,704,955 against expenses of \$5,570,432.¹⁸ Widely recognized as a leader among advisors, TPI's resources were among the top five, and its leaders were among the top ten program speakers, identified by donors in New Visions' donor education survey (New Visions 2002).

TPI offers numerous educational conferences and seminars for families, individuals, and donors interested in creating more effective giving strategies – often collaboration with allied organizations. One example, for the Association of Small Foundations, is “Family Dynamics: Passing the Foundation from Parental to Sibling Control,” on the nature of family foundations transitions, the typical challenges faced and best practice responses.

Though its formal PE offerings were initially designed to meet the needs of Stage 1 donors, Remmer recently noted, “In the last few years, however, we have seen the emergence of growing interest in other areas of learning and services, including assessing the impact of charitable giving; ‘personal engagement’ – getting involved beyond simple monetary gifts; and learning in the company of peers. By way of example, to address the last of these, TPI recently conceived ‘The Master Class’,TM a unique working experience for a peer group of families and individuals who have demonstrated strong passion, commitment, and capacity to be transformational donors and social investors.”¹⁹ This seems to be in the prototyping stage, with no established curricula in place yet.

Additionally, TPI provides support to philanthropic advisors through seminars on “how to support client philanthropy,” workshops on a range of philanthropy-related topics and speaking engagements at both in-house and professional association events. The firm's reach also extends to corporate workplace giving as well, establishing the new Philanthropic Advisory Service to assist corporations in expanding employee benefits.

A centerpiece of TPI's field engagement is its work with the staff of community foundations, most notably through the Excellence in Family Philanthropy Initiative (EFP), a peer-driven program of “senior/experienced” community foundation staff who work with families. Designed to support the development of tools and templates, training curriculum and a peer learning agenda, staff from 19 community foundations met over 18 months via conference call and in three two-day meetings to share and learn from each other and TPI on issues such as measuring success and working with advisors. EFP participant foundations engaged Blueprint R & D to design an evaluation tool to track the impact of their family philanthropy practice and is developing two levels of community foundation training for staff working with families.

However, Remmer has stated that “despite the progress over the last decade, yawning gaps remain. The ‘learning systems’ that were proposed in ‘What's a Donor to Do?’ have yet to materialize. While ad hoc efforts are under way to educate legal and financial advisers on better supporting their clients' philanthropy, they are few and far between, and too often institution-specific. Community foundations are gaining traction, but most are doing so slowly. At least a handful of established foundations (Casey, Gates, MacArthur, Pew Charitable Trusts) are providing limited advice to other donors, but they are a distinct minority. The need and the opportunity remain great and the stakes remain high – for donors, for civil society, and for the ultimate beneficiaries of thoughtful giving worldwide.”²⁰

¹⁷ Hudson Institute 2008.

¹⁸ Source: www.guidestar.org.

¹⁹ Johnson 2008.

²⁰ Ibid.

B. ROCKEFELLER PHILANTHROPY ADVISORS, INC.

A full-service nonprofit advisory firm, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc. (RPA) originated under the aegis of the Rockefeller family office and was established as an independent entity in 2002 to “help donors create thoughtful, effective philanthropy throughout the world” and to “support the growth of a vital, creative nonprofit sector.” RPA offers advisory and administrative, financial and program planning and management assistance to individuals, institutions and groups seeking to establish a grantmaking program or to pursue activities in specific subject areas.

RPA currently serves more than 150 clients and facilitates over \$200 million in grants annually to more than 50 countries through direct giving and donor advised funds, as well as through The Philanthropic Collaborative, a special donor-advised fund (and training vehicle) available exclusively to clients. Most of RPA’s clients give \$500,000 to \$1-million annually.²¹ RPA’s 990 for year-end 2006 (latest available) stated revenue was \$53,572,52 against expenses of \$62,560,44.²²

In addition to its boutique advisory services, RPA conducts original research on a variety of philanthropic and nonprofit subject areas. This research is often then translated into workshop offerings for clients and others via collaborations with regional associations, the Association of Small Foundations and funder networks. For example, this spring RPA published a detailed guide to mission-related investing entitled, “New Passing Gear: Mission-Related Investing”– and is now providing workshops on the topic, including “Harmonizing Giving and Investing” at EGA’s fall retreat. RPA just published the first of three reports on the state of diversity in philanthropy entitled, “Changing Society: Achieving Effectiveness Through Diversity” and seems well positioned to respond to the growing demand for instructional assistance on that issue. On its face, theirs is an impressive model of strategic alignment and synergy.

RPA has experimented with long-form workshops as well. In partnership with the University of Pennsylvania, RPA developed The Franklin Seminar in 2006, a “practicum” described as “the first-of-its kind philanthropy workshop that aims to help affluent individuals and families develop their own effective giving programs.” The two-day workshop was designed to give participants hands-on guidance, and experts were available “to review participants’ giving strategies.” Sessions included: Developing a Strategic Approach to Philanthropy; Shaping Your Strategy: Identifying the Family’s Talents, Tools and Causes; A Look at Current Giving; Implementing Your Grant Making; and Monitoring, Measuring, Evaluating and Learning From Results. Attendance was limited to 30 people. The fee was \$6,500 per person, or \$5,000 per person if multiple members of one family attended (and included accommodations and materials).

(The Penn School of Social Policy & Practice at UPenn presented a second, one-day seminar in spring 2007 for senior executives from private and corporate foundations as well as individual philanthropists, to explore “Effective philanthropy: is passion enough?”)

C. FASTER CURES PHILANTHROPY ADVISORY SERVICES

FasterCures, a nonprofit established in 2003 under the auspices of the Milken Institute, is dedicated to “saving lives by saving time.” FasterCures seeks to transform the resources and infrastructure of medical research, to ultimately accelerate the clinical development of new therapies for the treatment of deadly and debilitating diseases. “We want to catalyze systematic

²¹ Lewis 2007.

²² Source: www.guidestar.org.

change in several key areas. We: evaluate current systems of disease prevention, research, development, and treatment; identify barriers to efficiency, effectiveness, and expediency in those systems; create achievable action plans to improve those systems; and apply seasoned leadership to implementation of those action plans in concert with organizations seeking new medical solutions.” FasterCures is itself on a fast track, and in 2007 received a five-year, \$35 million grant from the Sumner M. Redstone Charitable Foundation.

It also launched the FasterCures Philanthropy Advisory Service to improve “the efficiency and productivity of the philanthropy” by providing independent, reliable data on nonprofit disease research. It has already amassed substantial grants from two key supporters (\$748,000 from RWJF’s Pioneer Portfolio and \$1.395 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) and plans to:

- Help philanthropists align their goals and expectations with the capabilities and approaches of research organizations;
- Provide independent analyses of nonprofit medical research activities to inform and guide philanthropic support of such research, especially in areas, both globally and domestically, where there are demonstrated funding gaps in research and development.
- Promote a “continuum of cure” perspective, critical to developing cures, among donors.

The Advisory Service will provide data to foundations, independent philanthropists and their advisors through publications and “direct counseling services,” and is developing a methodology for collecting, analyzing, and organizing information about diseases and organizations (which it will also profile in a web tool). “We envision creation of an information marketplace to facilitate informed philanthropic support and improve the efficiency and productivity of both the philanthropic investor and the nonprofit disease research organizations that depend on such support. The program is expected to improve global access to medical solutions for various diseases by accelerating and increasing the flow of philanthropic support to nonprofit medical research organizations.”

The Advisory Service is set up to support FasterCures’ three overarching goals: to promote innovative research organizations, to accelerate clinical trials, and to “create a public policy, business, and social environment that supports and accelerates innovative medical research and widespread availability of best treatments.” This includes improving the capacity and effectiveness of the FDA. A fascinating model, this could be prove to be a huge, and hugely effective, advocacy vehicle.

SECTION III: THE MARKETPLACE & PRACTITIONER FEEDBACK

“Effective philanthropy is philanthropy that has impact. It is philanthropy that succeeds at amassing, managing, then allocating financial and human resources in ways that have the greatest positive impact in the sectors that foundations choose to fund.”

– Mary Ellen Capek and Molly Mead²³

“The best philanthropists, like the best of anything,
use the sum total of their experience and then take a leap,”

– Gara LaMarche²⁴

Are philanthropic practitioners gaining on-the-job experience that will help them to take an informed, and effective, “leap”? What role do the programs described above play? Where are the opportunities to unlock existing knowledge, to deliver new content, to reach under-served practitioners?

That the overall PE landscape has a relatively small profile is to some extent rooted in the cultural norms at work in philanthropy (Fulton 2005, Damon 2006, Capek 2007 to note just a few). As Katherine Fulton has noted, “Despite many nascent efforts to improve learning in philanthropy, there is still no developed culture or system for learning” (see text box). Individual learning and adaptation creates pockets of knowledge, but they are hard to access. PE is one of those pockets.

Further, training and development programs for leaders are notoriously difficult to assess. There are few standards by which to judge and compare individual outcomes, and the intended community effects are often not articulated. And what happens to program participants over time, with so many additional variables at play, influences and experiences gathered, is elusive at best. Only a large-scale, multi-faceted evaluation of program alumni and faculty, knowledgeable observers and organizations impacted could come close to assessing the impact of program on participants’ leadership skills at the individual, organizational, community and field levels.

That said, PE clearly ranges across a spectrum of providers, including universities, associations and professional advisors, as well as across a variety of characteristics – geographical location, donor interest and/or organization type (community, family, private foundation). Within our criteria for program inclusion, however, there appears to be lack of diversity of products offered and practitioner segments served. Most providers serve the new, inexperienced practitioner. There are few formalized PE opportunities expressly for intermediate and advanced practitioners motivated to acquire new knowledge or skills, reflect on and reconnect with personal values and development, and organize new working partnerships or collaborations with like-

It’s worth reflecting on a few of the reasons why this basic dynamic is difficult to change:

--Donors and funders face their own capacity limits—too little time, too much information. And given that learning is voluntary, there is often not enough pressure or motivation to overcome these limits.

--Philanthropists normally support others in their work, which means that learning is based on secondhand information...

--Philanthropic institutions face the same governance challenges as many other institutions: those vested with ultimate decision-making authority are often not the same people who hold the substantive knowledge necessary to make good judgments about needs and how to meet them... This can result in a disconnect between the most pressing needs and what the ultimate decision-maker does about them.

--Individuals might choose to learn and adapt, but the pockets of knowledge that are created are hard for others to access because the field is so decentralized.

(Excerpted from Fulton 2005)

²³ Capek 2007.

²⁴ Foster 2008.

minded people/organizations. (And though funder networks provide opportunities for such engagement, devoting a considerable percentage of their activities to education efforts, the job categories of members remains unclear; they seem to attract program- over executive-level participants.)

What Executive-Level Practitioners Want: Learning Styles & Chief Concerns

Executive practitioners, donors and staff alike, are ambivalent toward “training.” The existing body of research on adult learning processes as well as my own anecdotal evidence derived from practitioner interviews suggest that peer learning approaches are key. Similarly, research by Thomas Backer uncovered that, “Exchange among peers is one of the most valuable strategies in the adult learning field, and its application in philanthropy is no exception.... Many [foundation and donor learning experiences] tend to involve donors or foundation trustees and staff in a fairly passive way, as readers of print materials, or as ‘students’ in a seminar or workshop. Even when the mechanism used is technical assistance consultation, the terms and conditions of the consultative process are usually set more by the consultant than by the recipient. Learning and action objectives are defined by others, and tend (at least short term) to be fairly inflexible” (Backer 2006).

Peer networking – A problem-solving and decision-making approach built on *interaction*, both structured and informal, among two or more people defined as “equals” by their similar goals and interests, job roles or place in a community. Peers come together in networking activities to exchange information, disseminate good practices, and build leadership structure for work they do together, such as a community change initiative. Peer networking stimulates the transformative power of ideas, promoting conversation that helps reveal possibilities for change, and confirms the necessity of doing so...
Such an approach is crucial in an area where there is not already a “well-worn path” to making change, and where there are many gifted people at a site whose input and support are needed...Peer networking helps all involved to deal more honestly with power differentials, build trust among people who are operating from different cultural assumptions, and create ongoing relationships to help with both communication and problem-solving.
(Excerpted from Backer 2006)

Creating peer interaction and connection was also viewed as a key “effective donor education program practice” in Siegel and Yancey’s study:

Effective Donor Education Program Practices (Compiled from Survey Results)	
1.	<p>Tailor Programming to Donor Level and Needs</p> <p>“Programs must vary in intensity and content, and be matched to the level of philanthropic involvement of the individuals.”</p> <p>“Programs must reflect the ‘stage’ that the donor is at in their giving.”</p> <p>“Provide a variety of experiences that help to move donors up the philanthropic ladder.”</p> <p>“Meet donors where they are.”</p>
2.	<p>Create Peer Interaction and Connection</p> <p>“Give donors an opportunity to network with peers.”</p> <p>“Donors learn from colleagues – primarily funder networks and collaborators.”</p> <p>“Connecting donors who share similar purposes or struggles is tremendously empowering and sustaining.”</p> <p>“One-on-One interaction between our members creates strong bonds and an intimate climate which fosters enthusiasm and ideas.”</p>
3.	<p>Engage the Values, Emotions, Thoughts and Actions of Donors</p> <p>“Bring people together out of isolation and talk about issues from both a factual and emotional perspective.”</p> <p>“Work at the heart level as well as the intellect.”</p> <p>“Encourage donors to think deeply about their giving (best gift, worst gift, social goals, etc.).”</p> <p>“Encourage boldness in clarifying deep personal values.”</p>
4.	<p>Involve Donors in Shaping the Development of Programs</p> <p>“The best way to design education opportunities for donors is to ask them what they want.”</p> <p>“Design programs in response to donors’ stated interest in learning.”</p> <p>“Speakers and content need to be vetted and you need to be constantly surveying your donor base for their interests and needs.”</p>
5.	<p>Provide Real-Life Case Studies and Stories / Experiential Learning / Site Visits</p> <p>“Direct contact with our [nonprofit] partners dramatically enhances any educational experience.”</p> <p>“Personal stories have the most impact.”</p> <p>“Case studies, examples, and stories are the best way to illustrate principles and concepts.”</p> <p>“Foster connections between donors and grantees.”</p>
6.	<p>Topics should be timely, specific and substantive</p>
7.	<p>Offer appropriately-timed programs that start and end on time</p>
8.	<p>Commit staff to ongoing personal contact with donor before and after education programs</p>
9.	<p>Have an inspirational (and locally recognized) speaker</p>

Source: Siegel 2003; New Visions PRD © 2003

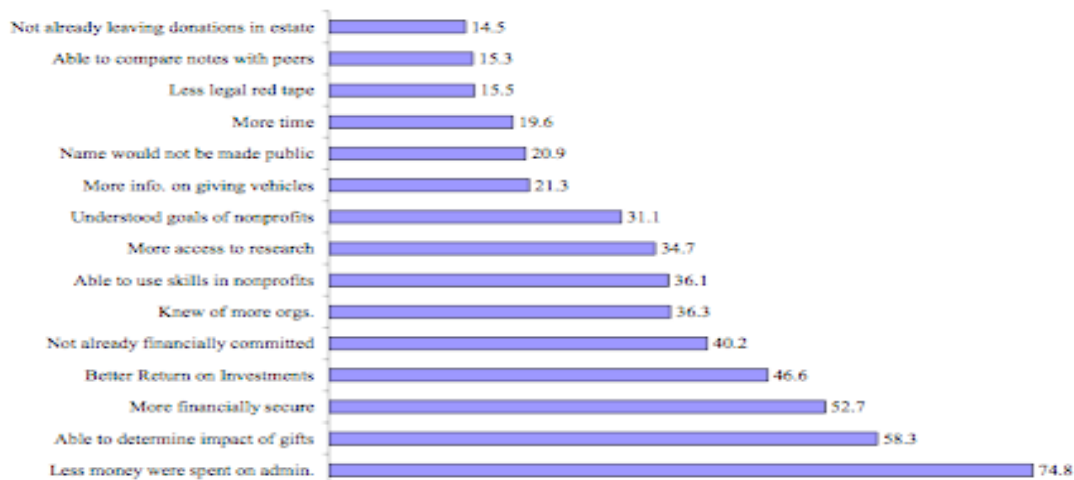
Even as providers struggle to respond to the educational needs of the field, next generation practitioners are shape shifting and new “mental maps” will undoubtedly result. At some point, a tipping point will be reached as younger entrants to philanthropy eventually import the wider culture’s dual imperatives of life-long and self-directed learning. They may also arrive without the sturm und drang around “professionalization” in the sector: it will be, quite possibly, a given.

New technological capacity, meanwhile, continues to fuel an ongoing quest for accountability and impact – and that quest will drive more and more educational offerings. Even on-line giving is sizzling, as a recent study documents, “Almost a decade after online giving first emerged we can now begin to see the key drivers of present success and a promising pathway for greater effectiveness. We conclude that the markets could indeed make a significant contribution to just, sustainable development, but they will do so only if they address the fatal flaw at the heart of our profession – the generally inadequate informational basis for understanding the difference we make” (Bonbright 2008).

Tim Walter, president of the Association of Small Foundations, has noted, “Every year the Association of Small Foundations conducts a survey that is answered by representatives of at least 950 foundations. We asked what would make the work of the board members more fulfilling, and the answer came back a resounding ‘seeing a tangible impact for our efforts.’ At its core, philanthropy is about voluntarily coming forward to express care about someone else, and no one wants to have his or her time and money wasted” (PAI 2008).

An ability to determine the impact of gifts was second only to the cost of “administration” in determining levels of giving for high net-worth households in the 2006 Bank of America Study of High Net-Worth Philanthropy:

Figure 5 Percentage of High Net-Worth Households Reporting They Would Give More to Charity If the Following Occurred



Source: Rooney 2006, © 2006 Trustees of Indiana University

Financial services firms are stepping up to meet this demand. As was reported in the Wall Street Journal recently, “The Philanthropic Services Group at J.P. Morgan Private Bank, which typically caters to people with \$25 million or more, has six senior philanthropic advisers, compared with one adviser five years ago. Citi Global Wealth Management is rolling out a new database that helps clients measure the effectiveness of the charities they support. Although Citi doesn't generally charge additional fees for the advice, the bank hopes its services will help attract more clients” (Silverman 2007).

And a recent Barclays Wealth Insight declared, somewhat ominously, “As the profile of philanthropy grows, so the way it operates develops. Donors will start to give more time; this time will be based on specialist and commercial skills, as opposed to their current generalist nature... This deeper and more ongoing involvement from donors will necessitate more transparency and efficiency from the charities themselves, as donors will be increasingly likely to question – or indeed see with their own eyes – how donations are used and how much is attributed to salaries or marketing activities. Increasing levels of trust, cooperation and relationship-building between charities and their donors should help the former obtain ever-increasing monetary and practical support from the latter” (Barclays 2007).

Uncertainty around impacts and effectiveness is playing out against competition for increasingly scarce resources. Even the New York *Times*' editorial board has jumped into this dialogue: “Critics of government spending argue that America’s private sector does a better job making socially necessary investments. But it doesn’t. Public spending is allocated democratically among competing demands. Rich benefactors can spend on anything they want, and they tend to spend on projects close to their hearts” (New York *Times* 2008). Such signals on the philanthropic radar are only going to intensify.

For what purpose do practitioners require training – and, ultimately, who benefits? To what extent are current PE offerings leading staff and donors toward individual norms of personal satisfaction and operational excellence (new and better ways to administer funds, manage knowledge, and evaluate grants) and away from shared systems and societal change? Just as new philanthropic and donor vehicles are transforming “giving,” growing nonprofit concerns around mission, access to capital, and diversity and inclusion – in other words, the broader social justice movement – may well transform “getting.” As a sector right now, however, we don’t seem to be focused on creating the educational/practice opportunities that will cultivate that movement.

One of the challenges, then, is to create a space where advanced philanthropic practitioners and nonprofit organizations together can begin to build elements of a new culture, one that recognizes and supports an essentially common mission. As a sector we must shift our thinking from wondering “who pays” to understanding that better PE could be essential to planning and implementation... so “we all pay.”

Defining Target Audience and Key Partners

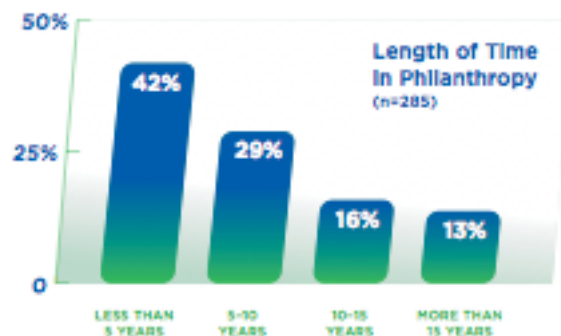
The programs profiled above suggest that the greatest opportunities lie in reaching donors, donor advisors and staff who are at or are approaching an advanced stage of practice, desire new ways of working with peers, and are open to working in teams across functional areas. Among these programs, PE as “community of practice” is best exemplified by GEO’s Action Learning Groups, which are self-organized around common work; they are designed to enable participants to actively share what they know and support one another. Most importantly, these Groups intentionally set out to create new knowledge and implementation pathways in their chosen focus area, and to make their process and products accessible to all. SVP as an organization is similarly oriented, and is positioned to deepen its own practice going forward. Workshops such as The Philanthropy Workshop and –West incorporate elements of peer learning, though to a lesser extent and with a much smaller set of practitioners. (And absent the availability of formal evaluation data, it is unclear what effects if any result from the significantly higher entry barriers of time commitment and cost - four weeks/\$25,000 is typical.) The Council on Foundations and the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers are highlighting the need to elevate the state of practice. Together, these organizations represent the real potential to scale up potential new offerings.

As the Forum noted in their “Guide to an Educational Framework for Philanthropy,” however: “The regional associations... lack a common standard of quality. There is diversity in their size and capacity. Most of the smaller associations have infrastructure and capacity building needs if they are to succeed and bring value to a common product platform. These needs must be understood, planned for, and addressed. Product development alone will not build capacity or meet the Forum’s goals... However, from regional associations’ perspective, the most significant programming gap pertains to the education of senior grantmakers. In addition, regional associations expressed a need for other topics related to grantmaking. This undoubtedly reflects the fact that grantmaking education is the cornerstone of regional associations’ professional education portfolios” (Donaldson 2008).

Against substantial, fundamental systems inadequacies and outright barriers, the Center must engage in a similarly unflinching examination of its own goals and capabilities. How can your facilitative leadership help to drive change in the field? What do you want practitioners to do differently as a result of their engagement?

The Center will also need to rigorously define for itself what is meant by “advanced” or experienced – and in the absence of norms or shared standards, this will necessarily be subjective (or, rather, there are objective definitions of “advanced” that people can and will disagree about). For the individual, “years of service” in the sector is not a particularly good metric, as it fails to incorporate not only experience gained in other professional settings, but also quality of service, roles and personal orientation.

For example, in a 2003 nation-wide survey of its members, GEO – whose members are commonly viewed as highly engaged in probing practice – found that 42% were in philanthropy for 5 years or less. (Intriguingly, a little over half had worked in the nonprofit sector prior to entering philanthropy.)



Source: Grantmakers for Effective Organization © 2003

Yet what distinguishes GEO’s approach is that it doesn’t focus on individual position or tenure, but agility – it intentionally seeks to engage early adopters and innovators, individuals who are knowledgeable, personally courageous and professionally positioned to try on and implement change in their own organizations. They’re the practitioners who “just do it.”

Similarly, advanced individual donor advisors typically have gotten to that level by “simply doing it,” almost by apprenticeship to more senior colleagues (Backer 2008). Who mentors the mentors? Bringing these advisors together could have dramatic effects not only for the advisors, but for the clients they serve.

Organizational Readiness

Active listeners in philanthropy have long heard the quiet build-up of demand for new peer-learning and development opportunities. My interviews suggest that in fact there is a large cadre of individual practitioners who are ready. Their organizations, however, may not be.

The Center will need to rigorously define for itself the systems and cultural attributes that “advanced” or experienced suggests in the organizational context. Foundations and donor advisor firms that are considered “advanced” may not only rank higher on your readiness scale, but may be ready partners for identifying additional participants as well.

The extent to which foundations have a learning orientation was probed in the Urban Institute’s groundbreaking “Attitudes and Practices Concerning Effective Philanthropy” survey in 2004. Community foundations were found to most often provide opportunities for staff development and training, and independent foundations did so least frequently:

While 82 percent of community foundations and 67 percent of corporate foundations sometimes or often provided opportunities for training in *computers/technology*, this practice was characteristic of just 50 percent of independent foundations.

While 65 percent of community foundations and 55 percent of corporate foundations sometimes or often provided opportunities for training in *internal management*, only 36 percent of independent foundations did so.

While 78 percent of community foundations and 70 percent of corporate foundations sometimes or often provided opportunities for training in *grantmaking*, this pattern was true of only 56 percent of independent foundations.

Source: Ostrower 2004, © Urban Institute

Even more dramatically, 45 percent never or rarely provided opportunities for training in internal management, and 29 percent never or rarely provided opportunities for training in grantmaking:

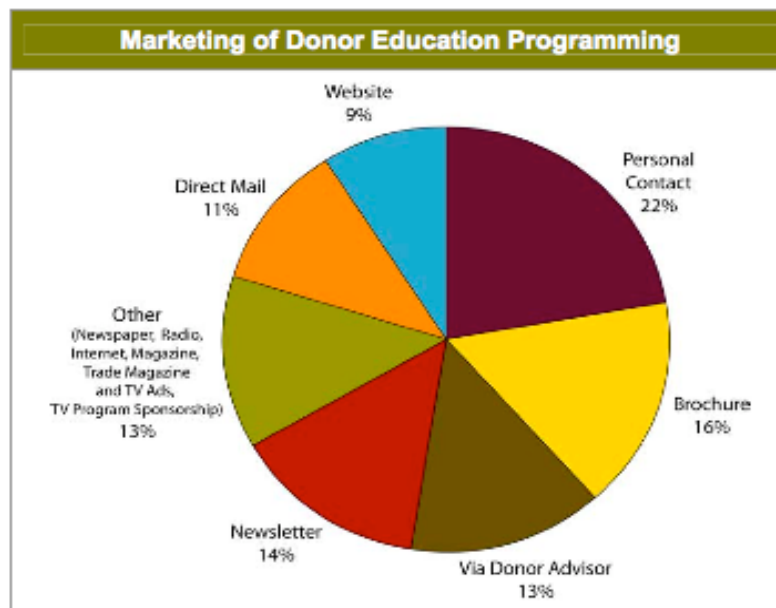
VIII. Opportunities for Staff Training						
During the past two fiscal years how often did the foundation provide formal opportunities for staff development and training in the following areas?						
	Community Foundation		Corporate Foundation		Independent Foundation	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Computers/technology***						
Never	25	10.96	24	26.97	300	37.88
Rarely	17	7.46	5	5.62	95	11.99
Sometimes	108	47.37	35	39.33	296	37.37
Often	78	34.21	25	28.09	101	12.75
Internal management***						
Never	38	16.96	23	27.06	376	49.28
Rarely	40	17.86	15	17.65	114	14.94
Sometimes	108	48.21	33	38.82	205	26.87
Often	38	16.96	14	16.47	68	8.91
Grantmaking***						
Never	25	11.11	18	20.45	265	33.76
Rarely	24	10.67	8	9.09	78	9.94
Sometimes	123	54.67	43	48.86	304	38.73
Often	53	23.56	19	21.59	138	17.58

As the author of a recent study of foundation fellowship programs observed, “Many foundation executives use their monthly or quarterly staff meetings to update employees on a range of topics from the annual picnic to new guidelines. In this kind of setting, administrative announcements, operational process changes, and staff learning may be bundled together. If this is the only time for staff to engage in professional development, such as sharing lessons learned or discussing evaluation issues, there is likely to be a significant disconnect for quality staff development” (Matthews 2005).

Defining the sweet spot within this larger practitioner segment will be essential.

Where Funders and Donors Meet

It’s unclear that foundation leaders for whom intentional learning and practice development is not already a priority will be able to meet the growing demand for organized philanthropy to provide donor advice or education. For foundations to establish clearinghouses on donor education, help unify donor education programs into a more systematic field, and commission leaders to draft field standards for educators (as was suggested in Siegel, Yancey) seems a tall order.²⁵ And suggests that this picture is unlikely to include significant foundation resources in the near future:



Source: New Visions PRD-National Survey on Donor Education © 2002-2003

As Ellen Remmer and her colleague Stephen Johnson recently noted, “While there is more advice, education and learning experiences available to a growing cadre of donors, existing donor support resources are still inadequate to meet the need” (Johnson 2008).

FasterCures is a rare, well-funded experiment in what funders and donors might be able to achieve together. And donor interest is substantial. GivingNet/Community Foundations of

²⁵ The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is an interesting case in this context, cf. FSG report, “Encouraging Thoughtful and Effective Philanthropy: Donor Interviews,” presentation prepared for the Gates Foundation, August 2006.

America has taken a decidedly market-oriented approach to meeting this demand, even as they note that “no scalable efforts exist to attract and more deeply engage high net worth individuals in philanthropy.” From their strategic plan: “This fairly new phenomenon of competition in the philanthropic marketplace is good news for the communities of America. It is universally understood that in a free market economy, competition works to ensure the efficient and effective operation of business, and ensures that an organization will survive only if it serves its customers well. The philanthropic market is no different. There is no doubt that there will be clear market winners in this expansion of philanthropy.... In fact, an in-depth look at the philanthropic landscape identifies threats and opportunities that lead us to believe this may be the last chance for traditional philanthropic organizations such as community foundations to have a meaningful say in how philanthropy is defined and delivered into the future.” In other words, they note, it’s important to “go big or go home.”

Leaps of Imagination

Some of the most knowledgeable, discerning practitioners interviewed remain politely unconvinced that even a well-designed peer-engagement opportunity will have much effect on them and their daily lives. Representative quotations include:

- People who are already compulsively driven to learn on their own go out and find what they need – it’s inefficient and it comes out of your hide. But if you’re good at it, you can really excel and forge the connections you need to. That’s just part of the job.
- Would a more systematic PE approach make sense? Absolutely, it’s a must. Where is the tipping point for dampening? How do we add to this cauldron of eccentricity, without screwing it up?

After years of being forced to take command of their own development, some practitioners are now “expert” at cobbling together resources to suit their own needs – it’s a well-honed craft in itself.

In some ways, these skeptics are your key audience. They’re voracious, individual learners who have been around long enough to be able to spot something remarkable on the horizon and to sense its transformative potential; and it is their drive that needs to be nurtured, and released. All of which strongly indicates that building more efficiency into this in-formation system is most welcome, and will be viewed as highly valuable. Investing in creative facilitating tools that are neutral in themselves will by definition keep the “cauldron” brewing, but also keep the power in the hands of the participants – who are most likely to know what to do with it.

So part of this requires a leap of the imagination: many advanced practitioners simply cannot imagine their wildest dreams come true, and in some cases have ceased to dream altogether. It’s time to reawaken them to the possibilities.

IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“If you want to build an organization that unshackles the human spirit, you’re going to need some decidedly unbureaucratic management principles. Where do you find organizations where people give all of themselves?”

– Gary Hamel, *Harvard Business Review*²⁶

“The good news about philanthropy today is that there are now so many others to travel with—both individuals and institutions. This was not true even a generation ago. The new critical mass that is possible in some regions and in some issue areas suggests many new ways of working today and in the future.”

– Katherine Fulton and Andrew Blau²⁷

There has been a significant increase in the number of philanthropy education, leadership development and training programs offered to practitioners and donors in the last 10 years. This signifies an aspect of broader, ongoing professionalization across the sector which is driven by: growth in the sector itself; transitions in and diffusion of leadership; public pressure on accountability and effectiveness; and a growing sense – from both within as well as outside the sector – that philanthropy can and ought to do more to ease society’s ills. A literature review revealed that, as with philanthropic practice itself, key success factors in practitioner and donor education are emergent though not yet widely adopted; and, further, there is little extant comprehensive research and evaluation on their effects. Given the very nature of this currently-evolving field, the following findings and recommendations are based on research that is open-ended and representative, not conclusive.

Findings:

The current landscape of philanthropy education, leadership development and training opportunities (“PE”) for senior-level staff, trustees, and high net worth individual donors ranges across a spectrum of providers, participants, goals and perceived successes. Within our criteria for program inclusion, there appears on the surface to be a fairly robust competitive environment: universities, grantmaking associations, leadership networks, family offices, and professional advisors reach thousands of practitioners annually across a variety of characteristics (geographical location, donor interest and/or organization type [community, family, private foundation]). Yet closer analysis reveals a lack of diversity of products offered and practitioner segments served. Most providers serve a limited sub-set: the new, inexperienced, individual practitioner.

Relative to the vast number of offerings, there have been few serious attempts to define the continuum of donor and practitioner development in philanthropy (Remmer, 2000; Siegel and Yancey 2003; Buchanan 2005; Sharp 2007; DJB 2007; Donaldson 2008), and the further one goes out on the “committed” and “experienced” end of the spectrum the more arid the PE landscape. There is an implicit assumption that continuous learning at that level rightly resists formalization as “affiliation with others in the field can only tarnish the true gold of their unique capacity to create social change” (Brousseau 2004). This despite the “low-key malaise affecting the sector” caused by a “lack of awareness about what could be possible... and the unrealized potential foundations could have.” (Anheir 2006).

²⁶ Hamel 2006, pg 72.

²⁷ Fulton 2005, pg 23.

Instead, PE programs largely focus on basics for new entrants. Programs for staff are typically of short duration, highly structured and relatively low-cost. Even programs that are viewed most positively focus on fundamental techniques of management and grant-making, not higher-order transformational collaborative change. Similarly, programs for donors are widely perceived as not having been “particularly successful.” An exception is the extended workshop format of eg The Philanthropy Workshop, which is “generally well-regarded” (Backer 2008). Thus even at the new-entrant level, the most highly valued programs have a very limited reach and the least highly-valued programs have a more extended reach. As one observer has noted, “Probably less than 5% of the potential market is being served at present” (Backer 2008). Nonetheless, there is a pipeline of providers in place to supply PE for this level of practitioner that is growing more organized and efficient over time.

Networking among donor providers is on the rise and there is a clear desire to hone skills and to organize professionally, as well as to build capacity to serve the segment of clientele that is growing ever more advanced. Advisors will necessarily require access to provider networks in order to perform their roles effectively, and will likely build those networks themselves if necessary. Where that may lead in 20 years is anybody’s guess. But as one recent article reported, “Philanthropy Coach founder Jay Steenhuisen goes so far as to say that the industry is in the ‘early adopter’ phase of moving philanthropic planning advice to professional advisors—and away from the non-profit sector. His message to advisors: Get ready, because here it comes” (Uzelac 2007).

Having mastered the basics, what’s a practitioner to do.... next? Here the pipeline narrows significantly. Senior-level intermediate and advanced practitioners motivated to acquire new knowledge or skills, reflect on and reconnect with personal values and development, and organize new working partnerships or collaborations with like-minded people/organizations currently face few formalized PE opportunities. Indeed, few practitioners at this level respond positively to the term PE or any of its variants (professional development, etc.) and instead value what is confirmed by a wealth of research on adult learning to be most effective at this level: peer-to-peer learning, with agendas crafted by participants and oriented for action. Further, especially at this level, programs must recognize and differentiate among the continuum of practice that exists even among seasoned practitioners (skeptics, early adopters, innovators). Facilitating this kind of experience is beyond the scope of most providers’ experience and expertise, however.

For instance, follow-up sessions or conferences are offered to alumni of select donor education programs but serve more as networking vehicles than as opportunities for purposeful engagement. Professional associations quite simply do not focus on this level of practitioner. Though there are certainly movements afoot to change that and as noted above, COF and the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers are preparing to meet their education missions in new ways. Very few universities are able to provide support to this level of practitioner; while some appear to be positioning themselves to innovate here, the focus so far seems to be on knowledge creation not necessarily partnership for action (and in any event have not yet added experienced practitioners to their teams). Even the most highly-regarded university-based program for advanced practitioners is struggling – with mixed success – to place peer learning and joint problem-solving at its core.

GEO is the real innovator here, with Action Learning Groups on issues defined by foundation staff (eg incorporating general operator support and stakeholder engagement into grantmaking portfolios). GEO’s approach: is problem-centered, not content-centered, and requires participants to themselves define the problem; encourages active participation; is heavily reliant on participants’ past experience; and fairly demands changes in usual practice as a result of participation. In short, it’s meaningful and practical. And while participation in these Groups is not exclusively targeted to senior executive leadership, they do represent a rare forum of opportunity for innovative practitioners to take on complex issues together.

Barriers for providers and groups of participants alike include, of course, the time and cost of design and implementation. Perhaps the biggest barrier lies in what Robert Hughes of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation called the challenge to “a foundation’s usual way of doing business.” In describing relationships among foundations, he drew an “important distinction” between collaboration and partnership:

“.... ‘collaboration’ encompasses the full continuum of inter-foundation relationships – from informal sharing of information and advice to much more complex and structured arrangements. ‘Partnerships’ are a particular form of collaboration characterized by formal relationships that involve investment of money or other tangible resources. Not surprisingly, the loosest arrangements are the most common, and involve few if any changes in a foundation’s usual way of doing business. Partnerships, on the other hand, require more time, resources and flexibility in foundations’ normal practices than other forms of collaboration.”²⁸

Overall, in brief:

- PE programs focus largely on basics for new entrants, and on internal organizational planning not external problems and change.
- There’s a clear need for advanced PE offerings and engagement with peer-learning and agenda shaping at their core: among donors, there’s growing capacity and readiness to move beyond introductory offerings; among staff, external imperatives as well as ongoing internal cultural shifts are likely to drive demand.
- Most advanced PE programs for staff are designed for individuals, which discounts workplace realities and possibilities inherent in team-based approaches (eg CEO and direct reports).
- Lines are blurring: donors increasingly see themselves as “partners in the work of change” with staffed foundations (even if staff don’t quite see it that way) and giving giving circles are beginning to lead the way here.
- There is a growing interest in PE among next generation leaders in philanthropy, and offerings have not yet kept pace.
- There are very few highly-respected provider “brands” out there – and as the client base even among those brands is small, their value is somewhat unclear.
- Few providers of PE at any level have extensive distribution and economies of scale (this applies to both nonprofit and for-profit providers). And there are few large-scale agreements in place with key “distributors” such as COF, GEO, or even RAGs.
- There is a deep need for a knowledge base “synthesizer.” As practice professionalizes, and as technical capacity grows, the rationale for information sharing for impact becomes increasingly obvious. Even as knowledge creation is becoming increasingly diffuse, however, there are few respected and experienced sources to turn to for synthesis. For instance, advanced practitioners seeking for practice-based literature in philanthropy must cobble together their own knowledge base from a variety of important yet in some ways peripheral sources (eg. AEA, ARNOVA, SSIR) and colleague organizations. (Notable: In December 2008, Grand Valley State will publish its inaugural peer-reviewed journal *The Foundation Review*, designed to “meet the needs of foundation staff and boards, and those who work with them to implement programs.”)
- In the absence of an established open-source infrastructure, current trends (providers safeguarding curricula, universities establishing consultant-like relationships with donors, to say nothing of standard foundation “hoarding” practice) suggest it’s quite possible that

²⁸ Hughes 2004, pg 5.

- intellectual property issues loom ahead – colliding with peer-learning methodologies and the stated goals of the sector itself.
- There are few actors of sufficient stature with distinguished service/“street cred” and honest-broker reputation capable of playing matchmaker across interests and institutions.

All present significant opportunities for Duke’s Center for Strategic Philanthropy. With its highly-regarded practitioner link, the Center is already viewed as one of the few players able to operate from “within” practitioner norms – and is therefore well positioned to provide strategic framing, shape consensual dialogue, exercise influence and change norms in what is, for the moment, a rapidly-evolving and so by nature highly contested space. As one observer noted, “Joel Fleishman and Ed Skloot at Duke can engage with leaders in philanthropy from a neutral yet highly informed place – this is unprecedented.”

The Center’s ability to provide facilitative leadership for a peer action-oriented approach will, further, be viewed as qualitatively distinct from current offerings – there quite simply are very few formal programs that seek to advance practice in this way. This suggests that there are tremendous opportunities to create alliances with providers across a full spectrum of sources – from donor advisors to community foundations and regional associations.

These findings take on a sense of urgency in the context of highly adaptive work required to create better strategies around the public policy, deep diversity, advanced research/evaluation and communication challenges that are expected to drive philanthropic practice for community change in the foreseeable future. Current providers are delivering the potential for improved technical capacity, but running faster does not mean running smarter, or differently; this may ultimately devolve into “best practice.” Yet, as has even been noted at McKinsey & Company, best practice doesn’t equal best strategy (Nattermann 2000).

Recommendations:

The Center’s comparative advantage with respect to its peers is inextricably linked to the reputation of its leadership as big, bold, trusted and transparent. For this reason, it will be especially important to be clear about your role in the practitioner and provider communities: is your primary role that of a go-to provider, or an honest broker/network weaver? Or both? Put another way, I think a key consideration is: to what extent do you want to leverage your own “brand” for potentially deeper impact across the sector, to establish an “open source” platform? The Center seems uniquely positioned to accomplish just that and, as noted above, opportunities for strategic alliances with distributors are wide open.

Needs and opportunities in PE suggest that the Center move several rungs up the current problem and strategy ladder to anticipate, embrace and channel the expertise of practitioners in this still-developing landscape. Clearly, a new lexicon around what advanced PE offerings are, and are not, is needed: for the purposes of this report, I have used the catch-all “PE” but the entire field is struggling to imagine and define these emerging possibilities. Additional visioning with the practitioner community to notch out and carefully define your own potential offerings would serve to create a host of fundamentally new terms and further distinguish your program in the marketplace. (Eg: “Support/development lab of peer-based problem-solving for improved results.”) (Ugh.)

One way to advance community visioning on these possibilities is to directly conduct additional scanning with practitioners and providers, initiating a sector-wide conversation. Options to consider include:

- Surveying practitioners in the field to ascertain practitioner PE needs. As the Forum of RAGs highlights: “At this point, not enough is known about what foundation executives want” (Donaldson 2008). A large-scale survey, conducted in partnership with membership organizations such as Forum of RAGS/COF/GEO could serve as a catalyst in this area, just as the Urban Institute’s survey of “effective practice” provided data on and significantly elevated foundation attitudes and practices on effectiveness.
- Convening a Pocantico-style gathering of advanced practitioners and or providers and support networks, and publish proceedings. This would be particularly useful if you see the Center’s role primarily as network hub. Again, this could be conducted in partnership with any number of allied organizations and would assist in anticipating the response of current providers to your move.

These activities would serve the dual purpose of not only sharing initial costs across a whole network of potential partners and providers, but also begin to focus and recruit interested parties to your approach. You might even consider doing this on an annual or bi-annual basis, to serve as continual scan of the field and well as a vehicle through which to build a steady rapport with practitioner peers and opinion-shapers.

In keeping with the state of practice today, an initial approach that intentionally seeks to develop some rapid prototypes – prototypes that could be scratched as needed – probably makes sense. And would likely suit the level of practitioner that you are seeking to attract. As the Center develops its approach, it could serve as “secretariat” to a new movement, providing support not only for a range of working groups in residence at Duke, but also across an array of product offerings and incentives that combine high- and low-touch. Based on existing gaps, options to consider include:

- Establishing a learning lab for teams of advanced practitioners for peer-learning and external problem solving per above. For staff, become *the* support Center for high-level initiatives (a la Bellagio). For donor providers/family firms, become the go-to source for clients who have graduated out of their own programs yet are interested in advanced PE opportunities.
- Helping to establish a formal executive-level, multi-sector donor-and-funder network, should a particular subject or interest area predominate. As a 2004 GEO study of funder networks found, “membership in these networks is dominated by funders.” In all but 29 percent of networks, at least three-quarters of the members are funders – only 15 percent include members from private sector and community-based organizations, and “few networks have any significant representation from government agencies within their memberships” (GEO 2004).
- Convening extended workshops around professional conferences. There’s a pervasive sense that annual conferences are opportunities lost for advanced practitioners. As one observer put it, “All of these smart people come together... to listen to a panel presentation.” With an established base, the Center could move “beyond borders” to literally meet practitioners where they are.
- Establishing a learning lab for donor advisors...as well as opportunities for them to connect with professionals in foundation infrastructure organizations.
- Establishing a learning lab for giving circle founder/leaders... as well as opportunities for them to connect with professionals in foundations.
- Bringing advanced donors and staff together for joint-learning opportunities. For example, create short-term fellowships for innovative practitioners who are also skilled network weavers.
- Establishing the Center as the go-to place for research and information – in other words, ongoing learning. Become the central repository for foundation-commissioned evaluations and research. And create the literature on the kind of practice you seek to

promote with a philanthropic practice journal in-print and on-line; a robust on-line presence could promote, capture and sustain wikipedia-style data sets and potential matches on current and actual philanthropic goals, strategies, and results. Such an open-source data center would be self-initiating/developing and keep practitioners in charge and coming back for more.

Is a revolution needed, or an evolution? The challenge is to help push the inevitable, in the midst of ongoing creative tensions – or even polarities – and largely unchallenged orthodoxies around approaches that are professional/creative, collective/individual, humble/bold, effective/innovative. The Center’s biggest contribution in bringing practice groups together may well be to increase understanding of and break down the artificial distinctions between these approaches.

Whatever route the Center chooses, it is advisable to build in your own assessment strategy from the start, to both inform your own practice over time and to demonstrate program value (or perhaps, someday, return on investment) to potential participants and the field itself. Though not all providers currently evaluate these programs at even the participant level, this is likely to change in the near future – and is already a clear trend in the private sector – especially given philanthropy’s increasing reliance on measurement as a pathway to effectiveness.

Lastly a note on the related, yet for the purposes of this report, distinct field of nonprofit management education (NME): It is clear that university-based NME programs have developed sufficiently over the last 20 years to reveal some cautionary lessons for PE, chief among them that NME may be best equipped to provide efficient management training, not leadership development. If the traditional pipeline of talent flow from nonprofits to foundations continues, particularly at the leadership level, over time new practitioners in philanthropy will be better educated in the basics of management than ever before. That’s putting it optimistically. The downside is that advanced PE programs of an essentially disruptive nature as sketched and recommended above may be absolutely essential in the future.

For as Raymond B. Fosdick, an early president of the Rockefeller Foundation once wrote, “The story is told – probably apocryphal – that years ago on the eastern edge of the great prairies a sign was erected to warn travelers. ‘Choose your rut carefully,’ it said. ‘You will be in it for the next 500 miles.’ This is a good warning for foundations, too.”²⁹

²⁹ Fosdick 1963, pg 18.

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APPENDIX B: SELECT WEBSITE RESOURCES

Arizona State University: www.asu.edu
Aspen Institute: www.aspen.org
Association of Small Foundations: www.smallfoundations.org
Brandeis University: www.brandeis.edu
Council on Foundations: www.cof.org
Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy: www.epip.org
Faster Cures Philanthropy Advisory Services: www.fastercures.org
Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers: www.givingforum.org
Gill Foundation: www.gillfoundation.org
GivingNet/Community Foundations of America: www.givingnet.net
Global Philanthropists Circle: www.synergos.org
Global Philanthropy Forum: www.philanthropyforum.org
Grand Valley State University: www.gvsu.edu
GrantCraft: www.grantcraft.org
Grantmakers for Effective Organizations: www.geofunders.org
Harvard University: www.harvard.edu
Indiana University – Perdue University Indianapolis: www.indiana.edu
Massachusetts Institute of Technology: www.mit.edu
National Center for Family Philanthropy: www.ncfp.org
New York University: www.nyu.edu
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors: www.rockpa.org
Social Venture Partners Seattle: www.svpseattle.org
Southeastern Council of Foundations: www.secf.org
Stanford University: www.stanford.edu
The Philanthropic Initiative, Inc.: www.tpi.org
The Philanthropy Workshop: www.tpw.org.uk
The Philanthropy Workshop – West: www.tpwwest.org
University of California – Berkeley: www.berkeley.edu
University of Pennsylvania: www.upenn.edu
University of Southern California: www.usc.edu
University of Texas – Austin: www.utexas.edu

APPENDIX C: SELECT INTERVIEWS

Gregg Behr, Executive Director
The Grable Foundation
650 Smithfield Street, Suite 240
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Phil Buchanan, President
The Center for Effective Philanthropy
675 Massachusetts Avenue, 7th Floor
Cambridge, MA 02139

Kathleen Enright, Executive Director
Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
1413 K Street, NW, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Francie Ostrower, Senior Research Associate
Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy
The Urban Institute
2100 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037

Thomas K. Reis
Director of Innovation and Design
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
One Michigan Avenue East
Battle Creek, MI 49017

Ellen Remmer, President and CEO
The Philanthropic Initiative
The Philanthropic Initiative, Inc.
160 Federal Street, Floor 8
Boston, MA 02110

Paul Shoemaker, Executive Director
Social Venture Partners Seattle
Social Venture Partners
1601 Second Avenue, Suite 605
Seattle, WA 98101

APPENDIX D: SELECT KEY TEXTS

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