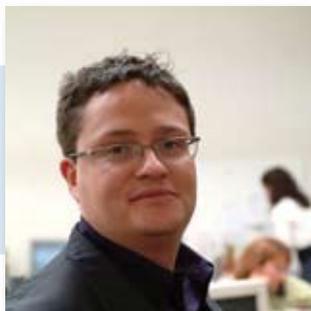


THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP
AWARDS 2006



*Recognizing enterprising
individuals who are helping Americans
realize their full potential
as citizens and members of society*



THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARDS

2006

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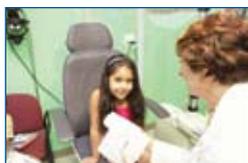
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SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD

MISSION STATEMENT

The Manhattan Institute Award for Social Entrepreneurship honors nonprofit leaders who have found innovative, private solutions for America's most pressing social problems.

Throughout its history, the United States has been distinguished by the capacity of its citizens to solve social problems through their own initiative. From Ben Franklin and his University of Pennsylvania, to Clara Barton and her American Red Cross, to Millard Fuller and his Habitat for Humanity, and to George McDonald and his Doe Fund, Americans have come forward to organize volunteer and nonprofit action to improve American society. Winners of this award exemplify the joyful eclecticism in America's civil society.

Applicant organizations are assessed according to the following criteria:

- Energetic founding leaders;
- Strong vision;
- Committed volunteers;
- Creative, entrepreneurial ways of conceiving and meeting goals;
- Significant private-sector financial support;
- Sustainability or permanence;
- Clear, measurable results; and
- Commitment to sustaining the vitality of civil society.

Recognition is reserved for those organizations whose guiding purpose and function stem from private initiatives and ideas. However, accepting government funds does not, in itself, preclude consideration.

This award recognizes the creative energy of the nonprofit sector by high-

lighting new ideas and approaches even by mature organizations.

Any nonprofit organization that provides a direct service within the continental United States to address a public problem can be nominated for this award. Examples of the types of organizations we want to recognize include:

- Private social-service groups that assist poor families with housing, health care, job training, and other similar needs;
- Reformative organizations that help people cope with moral or psychological problems, such as drug addiction or criminal behavior;
- Education groups that through mentoring, counseling, or other after-school programs improve children's educational achievement and possibilities;
- Community groups that improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods; and

- Conservancies that use private donations from corporations or individuals to purchase land and preserve it from development.

Nonprofit organizations that engage in political advocacy or that bring legal actions, or whose primary activities are in response to government RFPs, are not eligible for this award, nor are individual charter or private schools.

Five awards are presented annually. Beginning in 2007 these prizes will include one \$100,000 grand prize—The William E. Simon Award—and four others of \$25,000 each. These will be presented to the organization founded or led by the award winner. Nominations may be submitted by anyone familiar with a person's or group's activities except for a current employee of that person or group.

Award applications for 2007 are available online after January 12, 2007 at www.manhattan-institute.org/se.

The Social Entrepreneurship Award program is supported by funds from the J. M. Kaplan Fund, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, William E. Simon Foundation, and Nick Ohnell. Howard Husock, Manhattan Institute Vice President, Programs, and contributing editor, *City Journal*, is director of the program.

Award winners are chosen by a Selection Committee. The Committee currently consists of Howard Husock; Anne Marie Burgoyne, Portfolio Director, Draper Richards Foundation, San Francisco, CA; Cheryl Keller, Foundation Consultant, Rye, NY; Leslie Lenkowsky, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN; Adam Meyerson, President, The Philanthropy Roundtable, Washington, DC; Lawrence Mone, President, Manhattan Institute; James Piereson, Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute, and President, William E. Simon Foundation, New York, NY; William Schambra, Director, Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal, Hudson Institute, Washington, DC; and Donn Weinberg, Vice President and Trustee, Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Owings Mills, MD.

INNER-CITY NEIGHBORHOOD ART HOUSE

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The Inner-City Neighborhood Art House is an impressive program, and an exceptional and sophisticated woman leads it. Sister Mary Lou Kownacki, a nun in the Order of Saint Benedict, is a former Catholic elementary school literature teacher as well as a published poet.

In 1994, Sister Mary Lou began to ponder the possible reuse of an abandoned Goodyear tire repair garage in downtown Erie, a western Pennsylvania city of 100,000 where a casino has replaced the paper and steel mills. A pacifist settlement-house leader, she planned a neighborhood center that would bring the arts to the poor. Today, some 30 classes—in writing, music, dance, art, and pottery—are offered daily, even during the summer. At what everyone simply calls the Art House, the poor children of Erie study the masters with accomplished art teachers, have access to a library of art history, and sell their works in galleries. They study violin with a Russian refugee graduate of a Moscow conservatory who tells them about Heifetz and Oistrakh. They write poetry and stories under Sister Mary Lou's own direction. There are field trips to the Erie Philharmonic, Playhouse, and Art Museum.

The former tire garage has enrolled 3,000 children over the past ten years,

the majority from a neighboring elementary school where 97 percent of children qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. That school is just one of 27 schools and social-service organizations that refer kids, all of whom attend voluntarily, to the Art House. Far from being a drop-in center, it is a school of the arts with an accomplished faculty, where children — 60–70 each day during the school year, and 50 each day in the summer program—are, in Sister Mary Lou's phrase, "joined to the thread of the world."

Five of the 30 staff members are Benedictine sisters, a reflection of the extent to which this religiously inspired institution has also become a secular civic institution in Erie. However, religious iconography and religious teaching are not in evidence here. Says Sister Mary Lou: "We do not do any overt religious instruction. We have never tried for funds as a faith-based program. Our faith motivates our work, but we do not evangelize. We see the work with the children as the best expression of our faith."

The funding base is civic. With the exception of small competitive grants from the local arts council, the Art House's \$500,000 annual budget comes entirely from local foundations and individual donations (98 percent).

The average cost per child per year is about \$850; volunteers (2,000 to date) help keep that cost down. They come to help out in such programs as Hooked on Books, in which adults read to children and discuss what they're reading. Local businesses donate food for an annual fund-raiser, which brings in \$100,000. There are 600 in-kind donors of goods and services. A core committee of prominent local women takes the lead in fund-raising but does not serve as a board of directors. The Art House is legally a part of the Benedictine community.

Two of the teachers at the Art House have master's degrees, and one has a doctorate. Two are former school prin-



cipals. Sister Christine Vladimiroff, the head (or prioress) of the Order, is former superintendent of the Cleveland Archdiocesan schools and former head of the Second Harvest food bank in Chicago.

Although she is clearly the social entrepreneur behind the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House, Sister Mary Lou has recently stepped aside as executive director, passing those duties on to a younger member of the Benedictines, Sister Anne Wambach. Sister Mary Lou continues to be the public face of

the program in Erie and continues to teach poetry.

This is not a program that seeks to “go to scale”; it is, rather, a very local initiative. Nevertheless, the Art House reports that it has been approached by 30 cities interested in starting something similar. Any city in which an Art House takes root would be a better place.



PROJECT K.I.D. — RESPONDING TO KIDS IN DEVASTATION

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Hurricane Katrina will long be remembered for exposing the poor disaster response and planning of state and federal agencies. On a deeper level, the Katrina experience was characterized by a sense of powerlessness in the face of tragic, widespread trauma and chaos. Heroes did rise to the occasion, though, and some of their stories ought to inform any planning process for future disasters.

One such hero is Paige Ellison, founder of Project K.I.D. Ellison was a saleswoman for GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals in Mobile, Alabama, who evacuated safely from the hurricane only to travel back into the wake of the storm in Mississippi to visit her sister. Her sister was fine, but the hurricane had reduced her apartment complex to rubble. With a long career in child-care administration, primarily with the army and the marines, Ellison worried about the children amid such devastation. With no potable water, no reliable supervision, and plenty of danger (one child was hit by a car while playing in the street there), Ellison began to call local, state, and even federal officials, asking when help would arrive. As we all know, help was not yet on the way.

Six days after that visit to her sister, Ellison, in a remarkable feat of organization and leadership, had created the first Project K.I.D. “PlayCare” site, pieced together from the wildly disorganized

items donated after the storm. She started with orange safety tape to mark off a section of a parking lot. Firefighters provided tarp-like tents for cover (temperatures were around 100 degrees that week). Through word of mouth, Ellison located volunteers, toys, snacks, and water. For parents consumed with their survival, finding a place to live, and applying for aid and employment, Ellison’s site was the only safe place to leave their children.

Ellison designed these sites to provide more than babysitting. With her academic training in counseling and child development, she strove to create play areas that would aid in the children’s and families’ recovery. That meant lots of toys for gross and fine motor skills (there was nowhere safe to run and play) and outlets for creative expression and emotional comfort.





After hurricane season ended, Ellison started planning for the future role of Project K.I.D. in disaster scenes. She aims to utilize government, corporate, and voluntary resources using partner organizations.

Katrina was the seminal U.S.-based disaster in 2005 and the most pressing challenge for the nonprofit community. Paige Ellison, an impassioned woman with great energy and vision, is a true social entrepreneur who alleviated one component of that great suffering.

The original site gave birth to an emergency response reaching 5,600 children, utilizing more than 220 volunteers from September 2005 to January 2006. While Ellison sought supplies, a friend found a pro bono attorney who incorporated the organization and filed for a tax exemption. Ellison ultimately opened 12 Play-Care sites in Mississippi, using almost \$60,000 in cash (\$20,000 from the sale of her home, \$6,000 in individual donations, \$15,000 from Time Warner, and \$17,000 from HHS). The Department of Labor provided emergency grants to pay for five workers. Ellison's employer, GlaxoSmithKline, kept her on its payroll with full use of her company car and gas card. Volunteers raised money for their own expenses, many living with Ellison and driving two hours each day to work at a site. HOPE Worldwide, run by the International Churches of Christ, signed on and provided rotating teams of volunteers who stayed in a state park in temporary housing that was provided by a local foundation. An Americorps staff member helped Ellison with scheduling and volunteer coordination. Estimated total in-kind support (volunteer time, toys, and other kid supplies) was \$130,000.

Ellison is now training child-care resource leaders in five key states (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida) in disaster planning to find safe locations for children, to quickly activate screened volunteers (teachers, child-care workers) to aid children, and to mobilize community resources (volunteers, funders). A formal agreement is pending with the National Guard to provide access to all 3,200 armories in the U.S. for safe-haven care in emergencies.



PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

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A recent book, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, published by the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the Institute of Medicine, states what many people have long believed: that this country's educational shortcomings may soon affect our economic prosperity and our way of life. The book recommends that the U.S. adopt a voluntary national curriculum for K-12, based on world-class standards. The pre-engineering course work offered by Project Lead the Way (PLTW) is cited as a model.

Founding benefactor and CEO Richard Liebich established PLTW in 1997 to reach schools with an effective program for math and science reform. A representative of America's "Greatest Generation," Liebich studied theology as a college student, became a successful manager in his family's manufacturing operations, and then applied his business skills to philanthropy. A local teacher who had developed the core components of what became PLTW told Liebich that school administrators live in fear of failure; every component of PLTW is therefore designed to ease particular administrative issues.

To help schools teach students what they need to excel in high-tech fields, PLTW created two programs: Gate-

way to Technology, a five-unit middle school program to explore math, science, and technology; and Pathway to Engineering, an eight-course high school program to develop better problem-solving skills by immersing students in real-world engineering problems. The latter program also requires students to take rigorous academic courses adhering to national standards in math, science, and English. The goal is to increase the number, quality, and diversity of engineers.

PLTW trains master teachers who teach other teachers during the summer at local engineering colleges, where they receive graduate credits for course work. Many colleges offer advanced-placement credit to students completing the program. PLTW hires curriculum experts to develop and revise the courses and offers the option of participating in a purchasing program to acquire the necessary technology, course work, and teaching aids. Each participating school or school district signs a strict agreement to abide by the terms (to complete training, keep software updated, and so on) of the program. PLTW offers courseware free to school districts upon their signing, but the colleges charge a fee for the summer teacher training. Technological infrastructure requirements may cost up to \$25,000 per year at the high school level, depending on



how well equipped a school is in computer technology.

One key to the program's success has been its focus on vocational education, called Career and Tech, planned for kids training for jobs, not for college. PLTW has scaled up the academic and practical training for these kids, and many regular math and science teachers have joined the program. If PLTW students choose not to study engineering, the various positions for technologists are still available to them, often through community colleges.

Some 1,700 schools participate in the program, comprising more than 200,000 students. There are 26 college

or university partners for training and college credit. More than 5,000 teachers have completed the teacher training. PLTW also teaches guidance counselors—2,400 so far—about the fields of engineering and technology and how to support students in the program. The entire program is administered with 24 staff members in an upstate New York office with 12 local representatives who cover regional areas.

Liebich believes that good programs should not be dependent on philanthropists forever but must find creative ways to meet their costs. PLTW's purchasing program, through which schools may buy software, computers, and engineering supply kits, has be-

come so cost-effective that the proceeds from these sales cover all program costs. Over 90 percent of PLTW schools participate in this program; total sales last year were \$6.5 million, yielding a total profit of almost \$3 million. Until this point, Liebich's foundation had been the primary funder of PLTW.

The leaders of PLTW insist that many Americans wash out of engineering programs because the front-loading of math and science postpones all the "fun stuff" and because most American students don't really know what engineering-related workers do. These leaders designed a solid program for improved teaching, stronger curricula, and (eventually) for tracking results. PLTW is a fine example of leveraging small philanthropic dollars to change an ineffective, bureaucratic educational system from the inside out, and it demonstrates the vision and skills necessary to deliver a program with great social impact on a large scale.



TAPROOT FOUNDATION

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The Taproot Foundation (TF), founded in San Francisco in 2001, delivers critical infrastructure-building support to local organizations through a highly structured volunteer-management process. TF provides “service grant” awards in the form of teams of prescreened volunteers with specific roles. A Taproot volunteer manager directs the volunteer team, utilizing a detailed blueprint to deliver a specific product: branding systems, brochures, annual reports, websites, donor databases, or performance management systems. Teams of five volunteers work together for about five hours per week, for six months, on each project.

Taproot’s founder, Aaron Hurst, is a young organizational genius. A creative writing major at the University of Michigan, he worked in curriculum development in Chicago before joining the high-tech boom in San Francisco. A “process and efficiency person,” he sees capacity building and strengthening nonprofits as a platform for social change, and he believes that the next era of nonprofit work will revolve around both how to serve and how to “go to scale.”

The local offices (currently in New York and Chicago, but soon also Boston and Seattle) focus on program delivery, including the awarding and

managing of service grants. The national office in San Francisco provides back-office and human-resources services. Volunteers are recruited through Monster.com, Craigslist, VolunteerNYC, and professional, trade, and college alumni websites.

The Taproot staff asks volunteers to be open-minded and willing to help wherever their skills are needed. Entry-level volunteers who do a good job are considered for promotion to volunteer project manager. A volunteer account director provides high-level oversight. TF claims that 85 percent of its service grant projects are delivered on time, with a 97 percent client-satisfaction rating.

Nonprofits applying for a service grant must have annual budgets in the range of \$350,000 to \$5 million, have no religious or political focus, and demonstrate an organizational readiness with a reasonable strategic plan. TF conducts a thorough review process, involving senior staff and board members, of the applicant’s organization. Most grant recipients focus on local community needs (health, education, social services, and the environment).

Donors supporting Taproot partnerships specify a certain number of service grants at \$5,000 each, directed to a particular grant-making field (e.g.,

after-school programs, youth development) or, more often, to a certain number of their own grantees. TF estimates that each \$5,000 contribution delivers \$30,000–\$50,000 of pro bono services. Nationally, the three offices have awarded more than 400 service grants to 980 nonprofits since 2001, providing over \$20 million in services. The overall organizational budget for the three offices is \$1.8 million. By 2010, Taproot expects to establish five to seven new offices and launch two or three new practice areas.

The New York office has directed 90 projects with more than 1,500 active volunteers and is budgeting for 115 service grants in 2007. More than a dozen foundations in New York have



supported service grants for their grantees, including the Robin Hood Foundation, the United Way, and Deutsche Bank. Others have provided general operating support and free office space. The New York office budget for this year is \$860,000; and for next year, \$1 million.

TF devised an innovative program with Time Warner, redefining corporate volunteerism. A similar program exists for Lehman Brothers and, soon, for Deloitte. This model leverages the strong talents of senior professionals instead of using random employees for community-relations purposes, and

employees of Time Warner, Deloitte, and Lehman Brothers represent a set of functional skills not widely available to nonprofits.

Hurst wants TF to be a voice in nonprofit management. TF has devised an assessment worksheet for each project with identified goals and indicators of success. Volunteers and grantees complete assessments at the end of each project. Some 97 percent of volunteers want to re-volunteer, and all grantees agree to work with TF for one year after completing the project to assess results. TF will have an impressive database on what works in marketing, fund-raising, and website effectiveness.



TF is training the next generation of nonprofit leaders as staff and board members. Several volunteers hope to use their TF experience to go into nonprofit management. This generational shift reflects a new vision for a more ambitious nonprofit sector.

VOLUNTEERS IN MEDICINE INSTITUTE

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On an old commercial main street, in otherwise affluent Red Bank, New Jersey, patients without health insurance arrive daily for appointments at a handsome new brick building. This is neither a hospital emergency room nor a federally funded health center. Rather, the six-year-old Parker Family Health Center, which sees 7,000 patients a year, and expects soon to see 10,000, has been built entirely with private donations and relies on more than 100 volunteer physicians and nurses. It serves those people who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but whose employers do not provide health insurance. Their children obtain vaccinations at “the Parker,” and adults are seen regularly for such chronic ailments as diabetes and hypertension. Donations are welcome, and many patients do donate; but none are required to pay.

The Parker Family Health Center, named for well-known local physician James Wesley Parker, is one of 50 clinics in 24 states established through the efforts of Volunteers in Medicine Institute, a nonprofit that provides plans and consulting services for local groups that start their own VIM-style centers to serve the uninsured. Executive Director Amy Hamlin has big plans for 250 clinics by 2010.

The model varies slightly from place to place. In some, there is no paid staff. In most, care is provided by volunteers: retired, but still licensed, doctors, or medical professionals still in their own practices but donating their time. The emphasis is on primary care. The clinics substitute for expensive and often ineffective emergency-room service. They typically provide referrals to hospitals with whom they’ve established a relationship and that often provide financial support. Although clinics don’t request a fee for a patient visit, some may charge nominally for prescription drugs. Local charitable support from individuals, foundations, corporations, and special events provides virtually all the operational funds. Some clinics receive small state and local government grants.

Volunteers in Medicine Institute’s roots go back to 1994 and a clinic started by a single retired physician and research scientist, Jack McConnell, who is credited as the developer of acetaminophen (Tylenol) while a researcher at McNeil Pharmaceuticals, a division of Johnson & Johnson. McConnell recruited retired doctors and nurses to serve the poor of Hilton Head, South Carolina, whose tourism economy and resulting seasonal unemployment left many people without health insurance. McConnell is the inspirational leader of the



organization, which has been largely supported by McNeil Pharmaceuticals. Hamlin, a former nurse practitioner from Burlington, Vermont, has been the entrepreneurial chief executive for over a decade and is dedicated to scaling up the organization.

Volunteers in Medicine Institute is a small organization: a staff of three and a half positions and a budget of \$355,000 a year. Essentially a consulting service, it spreads the gospel of volunteer-based clinics, inspiring other locales to set up similar clinics while making it clear to those inquiring that a clinic is no small undertaking. The organization decides to work with fewer than one in four of those nonprofits that approach it; once it does decide to work with an entity, a formal “contractual services agreement” is signed with the new, independent local nonprofit. VIM offers service and sophisticated analysis as well. VIM consultants analyze demographic data, insist on the establishment of a local organizing committee, and provide advice and a forum for discussing management issues.

Hamlin is deeply ambitious for VIM. She is seeking a higher public profile for the organization and, with help

from founder McConnell (chairman emeritus), has begun to assemble an “honorary” board of directors to attract attention and additional funding. A 2005 survey of VIM-assisted clinics indicates that the responding clinics (80 percent) attracted 6,144 volunteers, budgets of \$12.6 million not including in-kind donations of labor, and even prescription drugs. The average cost of service by the clinics themselves was \$61.18.

Any sort of “accreditation” would be well beyond VIM’s means. Still, as with any nonprofit, the local boards of directors and donors must be the first-line check on the quality of service. VIM would assert that by helping to



find the right local players, it also helps ensure quality.

VIM consultants help local groups deal with legal complications for volunteers. The Federal Tort Claims Act protects volunteer physicians at federally funded community health centers from malpractice liability suits, and VIM is included under the same protective umbrella. Clinic physicians would not be protected were their clinics to charge a patient fee.

Hamlin believes it likely that there will “always be a role” for VIM-style clinics and is convinced that their volunteer physicians provide better-quality service than government-run community health centers.



MEXICAN INSTITUTE OF GREATER HOUSTON, INC., 2005

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Jose-Pablo Fernandez, a Mexican publishing executive, had long hoped to improve the lives of the rural “indios” in Mexico. Ironically, he, and many of them, have moved to Houston, where he has now organized such help. With the Houston public school system and the Monterrey (Mexico) Institute of Technology, Fernandez has forged a program that has taught hundreds of recent immigrants, some barely literate in Spanish, to become relatively sophisticated computer users. Through a combination of school computer rooms and distance learning, graduates qualify for office jobs and even start their own small web-based businesses. The program draws immigrants into American life, brings them to their children’s schools, introduces them to American formal education, enables them to help their children with homework, and motivates them for further education.

The program has grown to include computer learning centers offering the 100-hour course at 76 schools, 47 in the Houston district. It is a formal, structured program, and several thousand people have completed the course. After passing an exam, they receive a certificate from Monterrey Tech, considered the top private university in Mexico.

Fernandez, an Ashoka Fellow, makes use of his business experience. The program keeps detailed, school-by-school records on enrollees, most of whom are married women. Thirty percent of those who complete the computer course go on to a community college.

An aggressive fund-raiser, Fernandez has created a splash in Houston. The organization’s traditional Mexican Independence Day Gala raises \$200,000. Additional funds come from the Houston Endowment as well as from banks and oil companies. The program uses both facilities of and funding from the Houston school system. The annual “Dia de Familias,” the institute’s graduation for those in the computer classes, is a high-profile event in the city.

Fernandez wants to do something about the lack of a well-developed philanthropic tradition in Mexico and Latin America. The computer training program might be a first step in introducing such a tradition into Mexican-American culture. This is a striking aspiration, and he is a deserving recipient of the award.



PHILADELPHIA FUTURES FOR YOUTH, 2005

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Philadelphia Futures began as a pledge of college funding for low-income students who complete high school. In 1999 Joan Mazzotti, a corporate attorney, took charge and turned around a faltering program.

Today, Philadelphia Futures annually enrolls Philadelphia public school ninth-graders in a program to prepare them for college and support them financially, emotionally, and academically until they graduate. Most students complete the program. Some 607 Philadelphia Futures students have matriculated at the college level; 196 have graduated. Almost all stay at least two years. The students are from substandard Philadelphia public schools; average household income is \$19,000; more than 75 percent come from single-parent homes; 77 percent are black, and most of the rest are Hispanic. Their schools fail to graduate the vast majority of those entering ninth grade.

Philadelphia Futures makes presentations at school assemblies to virtually all Philadelphia’s 15,000 ninth-grade neighborhood public school students. Perhaps 500 take applications. Those admitted undergo three rounds of screening: a questionnaire, an essay, and an interview. Futures tries to balance incoming classes between males and females. The selection process is rigorous, as is the record keeping.

The program consists of after-school enrichment classes two afternoons a week and on Saturday, a three-week summer course, and an afternoon book club. Each student is matched with a volunteer mentor who stays with him or her through high school and college. The 192 “corps of active mentors” complements the staff of ten full-time and five part-time employees. Many mentors also “sponsor” by donating at least \$7,500 for the student’s college-related expenses (books, transportation) but not tuition. Philadelphia Futures holds its own college fair, provides SAT counseling, and files high school transcripts for unreliable Philadelphia public schools.

Its financing comes primarily from corporations, banks, and foundations, plus it receives a small amount from the Department of Labor. Two Pennsylvania colleges, Gettysburg and Dickinson, provide virtually full scholarships to the Philadelphia Futures students whom they accept. Most students go to the various campuses of Penn State and to a variety of community colleges.

The program is small but effective and shows how much is required to substitute for middle-class parents.



RISE (RESOURCES FOR INDISPENSABLE SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS), 2005

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Established four years ago by Temp Keller, RISE is based on research showing that a significant number of effective teachers leave the profession after three to five years, mostly because they are working in substandard schools. RISE seeks to match effective young teachers with good, “emerging” schools, virtually all of which are charter schools. Keller has worked closely with two of the best-known charter organizations, KIPP and ASPIRE, with charters in Houston, New York, and California.

The mechanism for making such matches is a web-based system through which RISE-approved teachers signal their availability to RISE-enrolled schools. RISE has established serious procedures to decide which of each to accept. Not all teacher applicants are selected, and a site visit is conducted at every school seeking to enroll. Schools must be recertified each year. Five years after its founding, 71 percent of RISE teachers are still teaching, a notable figure.

A detailed application from teachers is required indicating that they have helped low-income, underachieving students progress toward grade-level performance. Teachers can be dropped for failing to demonstrate continued effectiveness. Retired educators review applications and references.

Principals must have independent hiring authority to become part of the RISE network and can only search for RISE teachers who list themselves as job seekers. Teachers may respond to job postings at RISE schools. Keller, an Ashoka Fellow, sees RISE as a fledgling labor-market alternative to unions and a restoration of teacher professionalism.

RISE is ready to expand and to lower the cost per match. It is being heavily recruited to open a New York City office.

Funds come from individual donations, foundations, and earned income. Schools pay to participate and again for each teacher match. Teachers do not pay dues, which differentiates RISE from teachers’ unions. RISE wants a network of up to seven regional offices and 25,000 RISE teachers by 2020 and to serve as a model to change education culture.

The charter school movement is inspiring a generation and seems poised to take off. RISE, with its young staff, well-organized operating systems, strong sense of mission, ambition to “go to scale,” and a well-spoken founder/social entrepreneur, is prepared to go with it.



SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER COMMUNITY RENEWAL, 2005

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Grady “Mack” McCarter, a minister without a congregation, has revived Jane Addams’s early settlement-house movement in the black neighborhoods of Shreveport and neighboring Bossier, building seven “Friendship Houses” in some of the poorest neighborhoods in America.

These houses provide after-school homework help for kids, high school equivalency classes for adults, pediatric health care delivered via a mobile van from the Louisiana State University health service, and more. Resident married couples, almost all African-American, oversee programs and provide an example of married life in areas where it is virtually extinct. Inspired Christians, they attract glowing public attention from their work. Most Friendship Houses are the first new structures built in their areas for decades.

Some 1,200 volunteers help in SBCR projects. Twenty-five thousand have signed up for SBCR’s “We Care” team, paying \$2 per year and wearing a button emblazoned with the organization’s name. Haven House leaders and some 600 quasi-block captains, including rich and poor, from good neighborhoods and bad, meet regularly to help others with problems. A “covenant team” has emerged to help communities and individuals. McCarter believes that all sorts of unplanned improvements should develop in the lives of these people and communities.

McCarter’s vision of “community renewal” has to do with uplifting the black poor and creating a vehicle for black and white of all social classes to feel part of a better Shreveport. The local Catholic bishop and the most prominent black minister serve on McCarter’s board. McCarter sees himself as completing work left undone even after the passage of civil rights laws and the subsequent end to Jim Crow.

McCarter’s organization receives hundreds of individual donations along with a great deal of support from local celebrities. Backed by many Shreveport businesses and churches, McCarter has built an organization with a staff of 35 and a \$2.5 million annual budget. He has spoken at nearly 100 churches, successfully recruiting volunteers. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has made substantial grants to his organization.

McCarter’s vision of expansion inspired the establishment of similar “community renewal” programs in Austin and Abilene, Texas.

The Friendship Houses are thriving under the leadership of Mack McCarter.



BRIDGES TO LIFE, 2004

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Bridges to Life is predicated on the belief that understanding the impact of crime will spark empathy and remorse and diminish the chance that criminals, once released, will commit new crimes. The social entrepreneur behind this six-year-old program is 57-year-old John Sage, a former Louisiana State football all-American and Merrill Lynch broker whose sister was murdered during a car theft.

Bridges has more than 300 volunteers, predominantly drawn from churches. The 13-week program combines the personal reflections of both victims and victimizers, “facilitated” by a designated group leader, complemented by a structured curriculum, the reading of which is assigned “homework” for inmates. The goal is to change the hearts of convicted criminals due for imminent release so that they do not commit new crimes.

The program has grown dramatically from a presence in a single Texas prison in 1999 to a presence in 18 prisons today. Costs per program have been decreasing — from \$650 per inmate in 2000 to \$375 today. To date, some 2,150 inmates have “graduated.”

Participation in this program is a powerful experience. Inmates at one Bridges program were frank in confessing that they had never considered the impact of their crimes on the families of their victims.

The state assists Bridges in tracking “graduates” after their release. The overall recidivism rate for the general population is 35 to 40 percent. Only 13 percent of Bridges to Life graduates are reincarcerated, half of them because of parole violations, not new crimes. Of the first 1,706 released inmates, just 18 have been rearrested for having committed violent crimes. That’s 1.1 percent.

Bridges to Life does not seek or accept government funding and has developed an impressive list of donors, including 20 Houston-area foundations, 12 church congregations, and notable corporate donors, including IBM and ExxonMobil.

Sage has mobilized a large number of volunteers who travel long distances to spend much of a day in prison talking to criminals to reintroduce them to the world outside. This is a brave endeavor.



CENTER FOR TEACHING ENTREPRENEURSHIP, 2004

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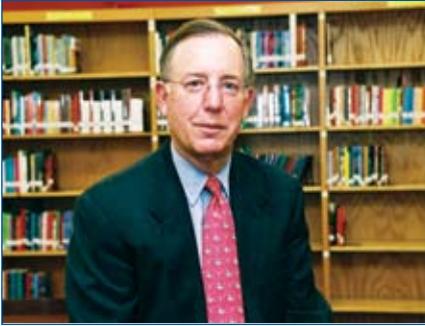
As a child, ReDonna Rodgers closely observed the way that her stepfather operated: always on the lookout for work, forming relationships with general contractors who might need him, teaching himself new skills. Thanks to his entrepreneurship, their family of four children saved money, albeit slowly, and moved to better neighborhoods.

Rodgers founded the Center for Teaching Entrepreneurship in Milwaukee’s East Side black neighborhood 14 years ago, seeking to revive the tradition of self-reliance that she saw in her stepfather, a tradition she views as having atrophied and as under assault. As befitting an entrepreneur, she began this effort using her own funds and worked nights as a security guard.

CTE comprises an introductory workshop program and a series of more specialized programs for those who become more serious about starting businesses. Students are taught the “CEO of Me” idea. Some develop written business plans and start their own small businesses. Typical are kids, from sixth-graders to high school, who start businesses such as candle making and landscaping. Rodgers’s polite, well-dressed, and well-spoken students attend events for young entrepreneurs throughout the upper Midwest, frequently as the only black participants.

By encouraging young people to take charge of their lives, Rodgers believes that she can lead them away from passivity and fatalism. She encourages her students to think about future employment and to think of themselves as citizens with the responsibility for keeping their neighborhoods clean and safe. “I talk to kids who tell me that the streets are dirty, and that’s just the way it is,” she says. “And I tell them, ‘No, things don’t have to be that way.’”

Most of CTE’s funding comes from 12 Milwaukee foundations, including the Bradley Foundation, and an annual fund-raising dinner in November, attracting 300 ticket buyers and a range of local businesses that buy space in her program. An active board of directors has skills and a willingness to volunteer time. This program is well integrated into community life and is improving Milwaukee’s minority youth and neighborhoods.



READING EXCELLENCE & DISCOVERY FOUNDATION, 2004

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The Reading Excellence and Discovery (READ) Foundation was founded six years ago to help children learn to read. The READ model pairs kindergarten, first-, or second-grade children, identified by their teachers as poor readers, with academically successful teenagers, often from their own neighborhoods, to tutor them in school and after school during the school year, or in an intensive summer program. Tutors who volunteer during the school year compete for paid summer jobs as READ tutors. This program is designed both to help young children learn the most basic skill necessary to succeed in school and to provide jobs and encourage teaching careers.

Since its modest start, in which 24 teens tutored 37 students in two schools, the program has grown dramatically. In 2005, READ served 800 students and more than 800 teens in 23 schools (3 parochial, 13 public, and 3 charter). Children come only from schools in which at least 25 percent of students are poor readers.

READ employs a simple, effective program requiring minimal training (eight hours) for its tutors. With 40 sessions a year, its phonics-based approach uses a series of 60 reading workbooks and includes a progress test after every five. Of the 2,881 students tutored from 2000 to 2005, 88 percent improved by at least half a grade level, and 57 percent improved a full grade level. This is an impressive and credible result.

The social entrepreneur behind READ is former Federal Communications Commission chairman Alfred Sikes. Sikes and a core group of what became the READ board decided on the program, hired curriculum specialists to implement it, and hired a former American Express executive, Anne Adler, to put it all together, including the recruitment of participating schools and teen tutors.

That is an especially impressive feat: only the summer tutoring is a paid job; the tutors are volunteers during the school year. Those who fail to show up for work regularly or who don't have the knack for being encouraging and demanding at the same time are dismissed. The program's budget includes required payments from participating schools. READ's long-term goal is to replicate its highly effective model on a national scale. READ has accomplished much and holds the promise of accomplishing much more.



UPWARDLY GLOBAL, 2004

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Upwardly Global acculturates immigrants to succeed in America and works with employers to help them understand the skills of the immigrant workforce. A small, paid staff, augmented by extensive volunteers, mentor job candidates and share their experience in workshops. With a website comprising a database of job-applicant résumés, employers can log on to review job candidates. Founder Jane Leu hopes to expand across the U.S. and be recognized as “the Fortune 1000’s premier resource on immigrant professionals in the workplace.”

UpGlo teaches its clients through individual counseling and group sessions such lessons as the importance of a firm handshake and the need to look interviewers in the eye. There are group counseling sessions on “surviving the American workplace.” Clients include immigrants from Belarus, Kenya, Syria, Russia, Bolivia, and Sierra Leone. Participants are asked to reflect on the variety of ways that American culture differs from that which they left. Skills are learned this way, and a dramatic Americanization occurs. Immigrants face a common problem: making clear to employers the nature of their skills and experience. Thanks to the emphasis in the U.S. on individual merit, it is a problem they can overcome.

UpGlo has already created an extensive network of some 70 Bay Area employers who provide representation on the board of directors and the “workplace diversity advisory council” and attend workshops on such topics as how to interview immigrant job applicants. Such major firms as Wells Fargo, Robert Half (a job-placement firm), California State Automobile Association (Triple A), Merrill Lynch, and BearingPoint are involved with UpGlo on an ongoing basis. UpGlo is essentially two businesses: a job-placement service for immigrants; and a corporate education enterprise to help firms understand the immigrant labor market and to effectively hire and promote immigrants who may or may not have been referred by UpGlo.

One great strength of the United States is that we are able to welcome and make good use of the talents of immigrants from around the world. Jane Leu has devised a next-generation model for this great tradition and has begun to implement it in an effective, step-by-step way.



THE FIRST PLACE FUND FOR YOUTH, 2003

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“Aging out” of foster care is an issue addressed by children’s advocates. Federal funds have been appropriated to help such children live independently. But Amy Lemley, the founder of First Place, saw a lack of funds as the least of the problems facing emancipated foster children. They lacked any real preparation for independent living. Besides helping with housing, reading skills, and health care for those enrolled, the First Place Fund seeks to prepare enrollees to become self-reliant.

Lemley devised an elaborate and demanding structure to help applicants make the transition to independent adulthood. While providing reduced-rate housing in private apartments, she insisted on appropriate behaviors. Many children coming from group homes have never learned to work out arrangements of intimate living. First Place helps guide these young people toward productive adult lives.

Each year, First Place provides safe, affordable housing and supportive services to 70 foster youth in transition and their 25 children. First Place leases this housing from private-property owners along with nonprofit developers. The owners are pleased to have Lemley’s organization take responsibility for monitoring the upkeep of the apartments, sign the lease, and pay on time, and, at the same time, help these youth who, without assistance, could easily descend into crime and homelessness.

Sensitized by her own experience as a case worker in a publicly supported group home, Amy Lemley imagined and successfully established a way to help others in such situations toward a better future.

**Amy Lemley has left the First Place Fund. Co-founder Deanne Pearn is currently the group’s executive director.*



LIVING LANDS AND WATERS, 2003

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From his original impulse as a 22-year-old to clean up the banks of the Mississippi, along which he grew up in the Quad Cities area of western Illinois, Chad Pregracke has developed a multifaceted operation. Living Lands and Waters organizes the cleanup of America’s greatest waterway and elicits an outpouring of effort by thousands of volunteers.

LL&W is a floating recycling center that visits a long series of river towns once a year. Each of its three barges stores a different sort of trash. A fourth barge serves as quarters for the seven-member crew and houses Pregracke’s office as well as a seminar classroom for teachers to learn the history and ecology of the Mississippi. Lashed to the barges are small boats for carrying volunteers on the river and trucks to transport trash to landfill sites or recycling centers. LL&W works not only on the Mississippi but on the Missouri, Illinois, and Ohio Rivers as well. The crew is afloat ten months a year.

Chad Pregracke is fund-raiser, crew chief, motivational speaker (at local schools and on cleanup days), scheduler, and volunteer coordinator. He has raised funds from more than 50 corporations and foundations. He has organized the pickup of thousands of tires and refrigerators and has filled thousands of 55-gallon bags with trash.

Because of his efforts, much of America’s greatest river today is far cleaner.



THINK DETROIT, 2003

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University of Michigan Law School graduates Mike Tenbusch and Dan Varner, with the prospect of promising careers ahead of them and esteemed judicial clerkships under their belts, founded the youth sports nonprofit called Think Detroit. The organization gives Detroit kids access to the kinds of well-coached and well-equipped teams that Tenbusch and Varner had in their own years in youth sports, when Detroit was not a deeply distressed city.

They accomplished extraordinary things, enrolling more than 5,000 kids in their sports and leadership development programs and recruiting more than 650 community members to serve as coaches and volunteers. In addition to annual operating funds, they have raised over \$1 million in private funds to renovate five baseball diamonds in a previously dilapidated city park.

Think Detroit required parents to go to the kids' schools or organization's office to register their kids, or to register them through its website. A small fee was required. This is a community effort, and families come out in force for their early evening games. Think Detroit also encourages computer literacy among the kids and their parents.

Tenbusch and Varner, energetic and creative, created a high-functioning, on-the-ground organization. Thanks to Think Detroit, a lot of low-income kids in Detroit who might otherwise fall prey to drugs and gangs are playing baseball under the watchful eyes of adults.

The recent merger of Think Detroit with the Detroit Police Athletic League has created an organization that now serves more than 12,000 children. Varner is the CEO of the merged organization, Think Detroit Pal, and Tenbusch has moved on to a leadership role at a prominent Detroit charter school.



WORKING TODAY, 2003

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Sara Horowitz founded Working Today in 1995 to address the needs of the growing independent workforce. Working Today seeks to update the nation's social safety net, developing systems for all working people to access affordable benefits, regardless of their job arrangement. As executive director, Horowitz takes an entrepreneurial approach, pursuing creative, market-based solutions to pressing social problems. Working Today is a potential model for chipping away at the problem of the millions of Americans who lack health insurance.

Horowitz has created a nonprofit insurance brokerage that provides portable health-insurance products through the Health Insurance Plan (HIP). Working Today's monthly premiums are \$175–270 per month, about a third of the price of average plans on the individual market in New York City. Prices are kept low through group purchasing power and because the organization uses technology for efficient online registration, billing, and customer service.

Working Today also offers life, disability, and dental insurance as well as education and discounts for independent workers. The organization currently provides benefits to 12,000 freelancers in New York City, and its mission is supported by thousands of additional members. Working Today's program demonstrates the viability of a portable benefits delivery system and creates a constituency that can advocate for a new social safety net.

Combining the qualities of businesswoman and policy analyst, Sara Horowitz is a worthy social entrepreneur.



YEAR UP, 2003

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Gerald Chertavian, a former London-based software magnate, founded Year Up in Greater Boston in 2000. Year Up is a one-year intensive education and apprenticeship program for urban young adults (aged 18–24) that takes on one of the great labor-market challenges that the country faces: training minority youth for an economy that has little demand for unskilled labor.

Year Up prepares participants for the disciplines needed to succeed in careers and higher education, targeting those with limited skills but good attitudes. Those chosen must be interviewed and agree to such sanctions as immediate expulsion for drug use and a reduction in stipend for tardiness.

Classroom training aimed at placing participants at IT help desks and other behind-the-scene computer-dependent jobs is augmented by staff advisors, guest speakers, and individual mentoring.

Year Up serves more than 200 students annually in Boston, Cambridge, and Providence, RI, and hopes to create a network of such sites, including New York City and Washington, DC, for 450 urban young adults annually by 2007. Ultimately, the goal is to create and implement a replication model to effectively reach tens of thousands across the country.

Program results are measured closely. Eighty-five percent of those who completed the program work at jobs averaging \$14.50 per hour.

Chertavian and his staff closely monitor everything from participant behavior to the labor market itself, from recruiting at inner-city schools to lining up large employers. An enthusiastic champion of the participants, Chertavian has shown that the qualities that make one successful in the private sector can be transferred to social entrepreneurship.



SHEPHERD'S HOPE, INC, 2002

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Eight years ago the Rev. William Barnes, pastor of St. Luke's United Methodist Church of Orlando, was inspired to do something about the working men and women in the Orlando area who, because they had lost their jobs, had lost their health-care benefits, or whose jobs did not provide such benefits. His hope was to harness the talents of members of his congregation, which included many medical professionals. Today, two or three nights each week, rooms in eight public schools in and around Orlando are transformed into medical clinics for poor families without health insurance. Barnes's idea of church-organized health care has been realized. Led by St. Luke's, a consortium of local churches has drawn from their congregations a staff of volunteers, including physicians and nurses, who see patients. Partnerships with area hospitals provide radiological and laboratory services to help complete the cycle of care for patients.

Some 1,200 volunteers work at least one night a month in one of the eight clinics. Barnes has devised a way for people of means to offer help to Orlando's uninsured, generally service employees in the city's tourist industry who endure spells of unemployment and the temporary loss of health insurance.

Government plays no role as funder. The entrepreneurial vision inspiring Barnes has permitted more than a thousand volunteers to put their talents to use and thousands more to be helped. To date, more than 40,000 patient visits have been provided free of charge to those desperately in need of health care.



COLLEGE SUMMIT, 2002

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J. B. Schramm, a Harvard Divinity School graduate directing a youth-counseling and recreation center in a low-income DC public housing project, wanted to increase the number of college admissions among the kids with whom he was working. His target group was not the high-achieving kids over whom diversity-hungry selective schools would fight, but rather the mid-tier students, often from mediocre high schools. Thirteen years later, Schramm heads a \$10 million organization, which provides a new sort of college counseling-intensive service to some 6,000 students annually. Seventy-nine percent have been admitted to college, and some 80 percent of those have remained in the schools in which they are enrolled. College Summit currently has regional offices in Washington, DC, West Virginia, Missouri, South Carolina, Colorado, and California, with more offices planned. These offices provide communities with the tools and resources to create a college transition system that works.

Through summer workshops, College Summit motivates and trains influential students to boost college enrollment in their high schools. In addition, schools are provided with a comprehensive transition system, including accountability mechanisms, curricula, teacher training, and a method of tracking results to ensure ongoing success.



NEW JERSEY ORATORS, 2002

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New Jersey Orators is the labor of love of its unpaid executive director, James Hunter, one of the original six black professionals who, concerned about the poor interviewing skills they saw in young black job candidates, founded the Orators in 1985. They are plainspoken in their praise and encouragement of the timeless virtues of self-improvement.

At weekly sessions, public speaking is the central, but not exclusive, focus. Discussions of current events, nutrition education, and homework help take place as well. The Orators provide an oasis for academically oriented students, and its graduates have gone on to top colleges and professional schools, often returning to help out those following in their footsteps. Using volunteers and donated facilities, most chapters meet in space provided by local churches. Dozens of successful professionals donate their time to NJO--enough for one evening and one Saturday morning session every week during the school year.

Knowing the perils that can befall kids, James Hunter feels a responsibility to help them follow a constructive path. The many hours of volunteered time that he and the local New Jersey Orators chapter leaders provide are the key ingredient in the organization's success.



JUMP: JUNIOR UNIFORMED MENTORING PROGRAM, 2001

John (deceased) and Catherine Dixon
Buffalo, NY 14204

John Dixon,* a former army sergeant, knew that the legions of fatherless and undisciplined kids in his neighborhood could benefit from a structured military-style program run by former military officers, although he anticipated that only a “handful” of kids and parents might attend. Within months, however, hundreds were attending. The program was staffed by a corps of volunteer officers who led military drills, followed by homework help provided by suburban and retired public school teachers on their own time. The program included classes on sexual abstinence and controlling anger. Neighborhood residents came to talk about work and about what their own jobs were like.

Dixon and his wife, Catherine, charged only small fees (not always collectible) but were rewarded in the improvement that they saw in the behavior of individual children. Faced with the city’s problems, they had a daunting task. But the impact of JUMP was such that the Buffalo News called it one of the “good programs, the ones making a difference.”

** Sadly, John Dixon died, and JUMP is currently not in operation.*



NEIGHBORHOOD TRUST
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION/CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE, 2001

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Mark Levine,* a former New York City public school teacher, was concerned about those who were outside of the mainstream financial system. Starting with \$85,000 in seed money from the Echoing Green Foundation, he established Credit Where Credit Is Due, a nonprofit organization designed to promote economic empowerment in upper Manhattan by increasing low-income people’s access to, understanding of, and control over financial services. CWCID runs a bilingual financial education program, and in 1997 CWCID opened the doors of a community development credit union called Neighborhood Trust.

Community owned and controlled, NTFCU is a dynamic cooperative. Through a viable means of savings, access to credit, and financial education, NTFCU helps low-income families, particularly new immigrants, enter the economic mainstream, promoting neighborhood revitalization.

Today, NTFCU has 4,200 members and almost \$7 million in assets. Every dollar deposited remains in the neighborhood. Credit Where Credit Is Due is entering its ninth year providing complimentary financial literacy education programs to youth and adults, having served more than 4,000 people in its personal finance, entrepreneurship, and homeownership courses, in addition to its school banking program for local youth. These educational services are reinforced through the provision of affordable financial products and tools generating asset development and wealth-creation opportunities.

** Mark Levine left CWCID four years ago but remains on NTFCU’s board.*



THE SEED FOUNDATION, 2001

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Eric Adler and fellow management consultant Rajiv Vinnakota could have made money in the private sector, as did most of their business school classmates. Instead, they decided to build and manage a boarding school for kids in an impoverished area in southeast Washington, DC, to provide underserved students with a college prep education. One year later, in 1998, the SEED School of Washington, DC, opened its doors.

SEED is a boarding school where kids learn in a safe, secure, and highly structured environment. The early results appear promising: test scores have risen steadily, and 100 percent of both the school's graduating classes have been accepted to four-year colleges and universities. After raising \$26 million and borrowing additional funds to give life to their dream, Adler and Vinnakota can show that talent, perseverance, and hard work make a difference in young lives. SEED is currently undertaking to build additional schools in DC and around the country.

Recipient of many awards, the SEED School received the 2005 Innovations in American Government Award, with its accompanying \$100,000 grant, from the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.



STEPPINGSTONE FOUNDATION, 2001

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Former teacher Michael Danziger asked himself what it would take not only to improve the education of poor children but to provide some of them with a "life-transforming experience" in which they would excel academically and go on to realize their life potential. He believed that the vehicle for such an experience would be an intensive and rigorous academic program, after school and on Saturdays during the school year and over the summer, and that students selected could go on to qualify for top private schools or academic middle and high schools that admit on the basis of an entrance exam.

Steppingstone is the result—a school in all ways except that it does not have a building of its own. With programs in Boston and Philadelphia, it has clearly succeeded in helping participants gain admission to and succeed in selective secondary schools and colleges. Success at these schools opens doors previously unimagined. By succeeding, both in and out of the classroom, students change their own lives, positively affect the schools that they attend, and open doors for others who follow.

Eighty-five percent of those admitted complete the program, and 90 percent of those are successfully placed; 89 percent of those placed still attend or have graduated from the schools to which they were admitted, and 95 percent of those go on to college, including selective schools such as Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, Williams, and Georgetown.

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