

Democracy and Power Fund
Docket III, September 22, 2009 Blurbs
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Note: Grant recommendations are spotlighted by D&P funding strategy. A summary of recommended grants, and grantee demography, is at the end of the document.

Grassroots Organizing & Civic Engagement:
8 recommendations, \$1.835 million

Arab American Institute Foundation / General Support

\$150,000/2 years (renewal)

To support the Washington D.C.-based Arab American Institute Foundation (AAIF). AAIF engages in research, educational outreach, coalition building, leadership development and heritage programs to promote the Arab American experience. OSI support helps to fund AAIF's Yalla Vote project, its civic education and nonpartisan voter engagement work in Arab American communities across the country. Yalla Vote activities promote full engagement by Arab Americans in civic opportunities at the local, state and national levels.

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good / General Support

\$100,000/1 year (renewal)

To support Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good (CACG), a Washington, DC based organization that educates Catholics and the public about the Catholic social justice vision of the common good and policies that further the common good. CACG focuses on three core strategies: (1) a grassroots/grasstops field organizing strategy to educate and organize local Catholic activists to discuss and promote public policies that serve the common good; (2) a media organizing strategy to promote the voices of religious leaders focused on the common good in local and national media, and (3) strategic coordination and support of the Catholic social justice movement. *Note:* Originally slated as a two-year renewal recommendation, D&P now recommends a one-year renewal grant because of staffing issues related to significant transition and an ongoing lack of staff diversity.

Faith in Public Life / General Support

\$300,000/ 2 years (renewal)

To support Faith in Public Life, a Washington, DC-based strategy center advancing faith in the public square as a positive and unifying force for justice, compassion, and the common good. In order to maximize the faith community's unique ability to shape public debates, Faith in Public Life identifies and creates moments of opportunity, builds and supports broad coalitions, and designs and implements innovative campaigns, bold initiatives and capacity-building tools. Faith in Public Life's approach emphasizes results, rapid response, cutting-edge skills and media savvy. Since its official launch in 2006, Faith in Public Life has worked to build the faith community's media presence and capacity, provide strategic assistance to faith-based coalitions, broker new partnerships, develop online communities, sponsor opinion research, and amplify the voices of emerging religious leaders.

Public Interest Projects / Funders' Committee for Civic Participation

\$100,000/ 2 years (renewal)

To support the New York City-based Funders' Committee for Civic Participation (FCCP), housed at Public Interest Projects. FCCP brings together grantmakers committed to enhancing democratic involvement in all dimensions of civic life, including elections, governance, and media and civil society, with a particular emphasis on historically disenfranchised and underrepresented communities. Since the 1980s, FCCP has been a driving force in the donor community - advancing effective voter registration and education, supporting campaign finance reform, and exploring new voting technologies and effective voter engagement strategies.

Public Interest Projects / Four Freedoms Fund

\$60,000 1 year (renewal)

To support the New York City-based Four Freedoms Fund (FFF), a national funding collaborative established by a group of foundations, including OSI, in July 2003 to safeguard immigrants' civil rights and civil liberties and promote the full participation of immigrants in a democratic society. This grant would provide support, above that which the Equality and Opportunity Fund already provides for FFF, for an annual national immigrant civic engagement convening. FFF intends to use its 2010 convening to solicit reflection and feedback about the participating organizations' civic engagement activities and how they can be improved for future campaigns. More specifically, this convening will examine field access to voter registration databases, list matching, high quality voter files, design of civic participation programs, experiments and evaluation, one-on-one technical support, and census outreach.

Minnesota Council of Nonprofits / Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network

\$300,000/ 2 years (renewal)

To support the St. Paul, MN based Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network (NVEN), housed at the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. NVEN, a national alliance of direct and human service providers and agencies builds the civic engagement capacity of the nonprofit sector. Through NVEN, hundreds of social service agencies such as housing coalitions, free clinics, ethnic alliances, and youth service organizations have joined together in various state-based civic participation projects, including non-partisan voter registration and education efforts.

Southern Echo / Pushback Network

\$225,000/ 18 months (renewal)

To support Los Angeles-based Pushback Network, a national collaboration of grassroots groups and networks, fiscally sponsored by Mississippi-based Southern Echo, that is building "bottom-up" state-based alliances to increase civic participation by leaders from marginalized communities. Pushback Network is catalyzing a national network of grassroots organizations that have deep ties with disenfranchised constituencies located in some of the nation's poorest communities. It supports nonpartisan voter engagement aimed at developing higher levels of civic participation among low-income African-American, immigrant and new citizen, and rural white populations.

State Voices / General Support

\$600,000/ 18 months (renewal)

To support Detroit-based State Voices. State Voices connects and supports 16 permanent, year-round state tables for nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organizations that foster collaborative multi-issue policy work, economies of scale, rigorous evaluation, and efforts to engage and empower socially responsible and historically underrepresented communities. State Voices plays an important behind-the-scenes role by providing high-end voter engagement tools and support to these state tables – and their more than 545 state and local member organizations – thereby allowing individual organizations to otherwise expensive and out of reach technologies and expertise. Overall, through its economies of scale, State Voices estimates it saved an average of at least \$500,000 per state, or \$8 million for all sixteen states, through its shared voter files and staff.

Innovative Social Engagement through Arts, Culture, or Technology:

2 recommendations, \$225,000

Hip Hop Caucus

\$150,000/2 years; likely to fund with the Campaign for Black Male Achievement (100k D&P; 50k CBMA)

To support the Hip Hop Caucus, a Washington D.C.-based national organization that utilizes cutting edge and old fashioned outreach strategies – from new media, large scale text messaging campaigns to street teams and barbershop outreach – to inspire non-partisan voter participation and community engagement from the hip hop generation. Since it's founding in 2004, HHC's dynamic leadership and effective use of high profile celebrities with street credibility – including performers like rapper T.I. and singer Keyshia Cole – the Hip Hop Caucus has grown from 900 people at its founding conference to nearly 700,000 members, an advisory board of 25 Members of Congress, and 48 local chapters nationwide. In 2008, HHC registered 49,000 new voters and inspired hundreds of thousands of young people, primarily young people of color who are not college campus based, to vote. Hip Hop Caucus is now is leading – with Green for All – a new campaign, “Green the Block,” to link climate change, urban workforce development, and anti-poverty work with an emphasis on young Black men.

Voto Latino

\$75,000/1 year; recommend \$150,000/ 2 years with Seize the Day co-funding

To support Voto Latino, a Washington D.C.-based organization working to inform and motivate acculturated Latino youth to engage in civic participation by leveraging the latest technologies, celebrities and youth themselves to promote positive change. Voto Latino, known for having launched the nation's first-ever national text message voter registration, is at the cutting edge of employing new technologies and arts in voter registration, Get Out the Vote and issue campaigns. OSI funding support would assist Voto Latino in building its organizational capacity to increase Latino participation in our democracy and provide partner organizations, such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the National Association of Elected Latino Officials and others, with access to new technologies and its network of Latino youth.

Leadership Pipeline and Youth Engagement:
8 recommendations, \$1.325 million

Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training / General Support

\$100,000/ 1 year (new); recommend \$200,000/ 2 years – seeking EOF, SOF co-funding

To support the Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training, (GIFT), an Oakland, CA based multiracial organization that promotes the connection between fundraising, social justice, and movement-building. GIFT works with organizations to understand the importance to social change organizations to examine how they're funded and links fundraising methods to programmatic goals and budget spending. GIFT provides training, resources, and analysis to strengthen organizations, with an emphasis on those focused on social justice and based in communities of color. GIFT emphasizes the need for leadership of people of color in fundraising and the building of infrastructure and diversification of funding streams.

Movement Strategy Center / General Support

\$150,000/ 1 year (renewal)

To support the Movement Strategy Center (MSC), an Oakland, CA based organization strengthening the social justice movement through increasing the capacity of individuals, organizations, alliances, and sectors to be more strategic, collaborative, and sustainable. MSC teaches organizers and organizations movement building and networking skills through: 1) capacity-building trainings and conferences; 2) networking opportunities for organizations through face-to-face and online meetings; and 3) research and information. MSC focuses on organizations led by young people, women, people of color, and low-income people on regional, statewide, and national levels. *Note:* D&P recommends a one-year grant for MSC, contrary to a prior multi-year grant, in order to evaluate MSC's evolving place in its field.

National Immigration Law Center / United We Dream Network

\$75,000 / 1 year (new)

To support the United We Dream Network, housed at the Los Angeles-based National Immigration Law Center, a new network founded by immigrant youth activists to connect immigrant youth organizing efforts throughout the country. The United We Dream Network will provide structure for immigrant youth activists to develop a shared vision, goals, and strategies for addressing the challenges they and their families face in their communities, particularly on expanding access to higher education. The network will allow funders to funnel resources directly to the youth organizations that are leading this movement; improve the groups' access to technology, media and organizational development tools; and support peer-to-peer networking. OSI support will help the Network hire a coordinator (its first employee) and will increase opportunities for immigrant youth to lead efforts to promote immigrant rights and educational access. *Note:* D&P recommends a one-year grant, not multi-year support, for UWDN so that we may monitor its viability as it launches. *Please note:* on August 14 it was determined that UWDN will not be submitting for this docket but will do so in early 2010.

Oregon Bus Project / Bus Federation

\$150,000 / 2 years (renewal)

To support the Oregon-based Bus Federation, a unique coalition of five state organizations in Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington that seek to engage young people in civic engagement work and develop them as leaders. The Federation enables the partners to tailor programs to their states' unique political landscapes, and at the same time share core programs such as Bus Trip campaigns, “Trick-or-Vote” Halloween canvassing campaigns, the PolitiCorps summer training academy, and alternative candidate public debates. The Bus Federation enables the organizations to share best practices, common branding and messaging, joint purchasing, key metrics of performance, and fundraising capabilities.

Rockwood Leadership Program / General Support

\$400,000/ 2 years (renewal)

To support the Rockwood Leadership Program, an Oakland, CA based non-profit that promotes social change by providing individuals, organizations, and issue sectors with powerful and effective training in leadership and collaboration. Recognizing that a strong civil society is supported by visionary, collaborative, and sustained leadership, the Rockwood Leadership Program has built a highly regarded signature program, the Art of Leadership, with trainings built around five core practices - Purpose, Vision, Partnership, Resourcefulness, and Performance. The program draws nonprofit and philanthropic leaders from a wide variety of sectors and has also extended sector-specific support to hundreds of national leaders working in critical policy issues of our time, such as media and democracy, global climate change, LGBT civil rights, women's leadership, racial justice, and electoral reform.

Students for a Sensible Drug Policy / General Support

\$100,000/ 2 years (renewal)

To support Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP), a Washington, DC based grassroots network of students who are concerned about the impact drug abuse has on communities and how the “War on Drugs” is failing. With more than 100 chapters across the country, SSDP mobilizes young people to participate in the political process, pushing for sensible policies to achieve a safer and more just future while fighting back against counterproductive Drug War policies – particularly those that directly harm students and youth. SSDP student chapters work on issues that have the most traction in their own communities and focus on a range of campaigns including the Campus Change Campaign that encourages administrations to adopt sensible and non-punitive policies to deal with drug abuse and addiction; the Higher Education Campaign which educates students about the Aid Elimination Penalty in the Higher Education Act, which automatically strips financial aid from students with prior drug convictions; and the Student Rights and Privacy campaign that addresses the increasing trend to engage in mandatory random drug testing at public high schools. *Note:* SSDP receives indirect support from the Criminal Justice Fund via regranting from the Drug Policy Alliance.

Tides Center / Generational Alliance

\$100,000 / 2 years (renewal)

To support the Washington, DC-based Generational Alliance (GA), a national collaboration of youth engagement organizations working to empower low-income youth, youth of color, and LGBTQ youth through electoral and community organizing, arts and culture, communication and media, policy, and leadership development. Members include D&P grantees United States Student Association, League of Young Voters, Young People For, Choice USA, Center for Progressive Leadership, Ruckus Society, Center for Community Change's Generation Change, Campus Camp Wellstone, WireTap Magazine, and the Bus Federation, among others. The GA builds the capacity of organizations and leaders by providing a space and the resources for these organizations to map out and align their goals and strategies, share best practices, plan collective special projects, and develop collective resources.

Tides Foundation / Youth Engagement Fund

\$150,000 / 1 year (renewal)

To support the relaunch of the Youth Engagement Fund, a Washington, DC based nonpartisan 501(c)(3) collaborative table of youth civic engagement organizations that exists to increase the ability of each group to meet registration and mobilization goals. The Fund provides trainings, the purchase of a joint Catalist voter list subscription, and allows members to take advantage of economies of scale, share best practices, and coordinate field work. In the next year, the Fund's Coordinator will help the organizations develop systems and technology for voter data entry and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) contacts through use of a joint voter file; develop a coordinated GOTV plan with the members in strategic states; and help address issues affecting young people (such as ID requirements, misinformation about restrictive requirements, and allocation of voting machines) and identify them to election administration. Participating organizations include key youth mobilization organizations in diverse communities (including many U.S. Programs grantees): Black Youth Vote, Bus Federation, Campus Progress, Energy Action Coalition, Hip Hop Caucus, National Council of La Raza, Planned Parenthood, and Rock the Vote. *Note:* D&P recommends a one year grant, not multi-year support, in order to monitor the Youth Engagement Fund's relaunch.

Paradigm-Shifting Policy Generation:

7 recommendations, \$2.225 million

Center for American Progress / General Support

\$1,000,000/ 2 years (renewal)

To support the Washington D.C.-based Center for American Progress (CAP), one of the nation's largest progressive think tanks. Led by John Podesta, CAP's four-fold mission has been to: 1) craft a progressive vision that best reflects the aspirations and goals of the American people; 2) generate progressive policy that realizes this vision; 3) thoughtfully critique conservative proposals and rhetoric; and 4) build a communications network that can help bring the national policy dialogue back into balance. This grant would continue OSI's long-term support of CAP.

Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest / General Support

\$50,000/1 year (new)

To support the Washington D.C.-based Center for Lobby in the Public Interest (CLPI). CLPI works to protect the ability of nonprofits to engage in lobbying and other forms of advocacy. Through reports, media, and stakeholder convenings, CLPI seeks to educate and mobilize nonprofit leaders with the goal of dramatically increasing nonprofit advocacy from current levels. CLPI has proven itself a trusted source of information on legislation and regulations that impact the work of nonprofits. It recently raised awareness of advocacy-related restrictions on Legal Services Corporation grantees leading to the loosening of several restrictions, and – with OSI-DC – is spotlighting the Obama Administration's Executive Order on the hiring of lobbyists. That order has had the unintended consequence of precluding many civil and human rights experts from employment in the Obama Administration.

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute / General Support

\$200,000/ 2 years (renewal; will seek additional Seize the Day Initiative funding)

To support the New York-based Roosevelt Institute for its work on economic policy and financial regulatory reform, and its student-led network of campus think tanks that connect student ideas to the political process. Roosevelt student chapter members conduct policy research on pressing issues, from environmental protection to equality under the law to trade and taxes. The organization is based on the premise that students are already producing policy – through academic research, extracurricular activities, and undergraduate and graduate theses – but their ideas about social change remain disconnected from movement building. Roosevelt's campus based think-tanks are where student "fellows" learn to be policy makers. Students identify and prioritize critical issues, conduct research and produce policy papers, and then promote their ideas through campus publications, public debates, and community gatherings hosted in partnership with local organizations and policy makers. Roosevelt is currently involved in cutting-edge financial regulation policy work and recently launched the website www.whatcausedthecrisis.com which calls for transparency around the origins of the financial crisis.

Partnership for Working Families / General Support

\$300,000/ 2 years (renewal)

To support the Partnership for Working Families (PWF), a national organization based in Denver, CO that provides policy, communications, research, organizing and legal resources to a growing network of metro-based affiliates that are working to advance economic and social justice in their communities. The network's principal mechanism for advancing economic and social justice has been the negotiation of Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) with private and public developers. CBAs are legal devices that contractually obligate developers that receive public, taxpayer investment to create affordable housing and good-paying jobs, fund job training and provide neighborhood services, environmental mitigations, and other benefits to communities. The substantive benefits of these agreements in the communities where they have been achieved are significant: they create jobs, housing and environmental improvement in communities that often face the greatest obstacles to social and economic equity.

Progressive States Network / General Support

\$300,000/2 years (renewal)

To support the New York City-based Progressive States Network (PSN). PSN supports state legislators with background research on progressive public policy and is linking legislators and progressive state advocates to each other across state lines. In partnership with single-issue groups, academic experts, think tanks, national advocacy partners, and local grassroots organizations, PSN creates model legislation, fact sheets, and talking points that are distributed to state legislators and legislative aides, raises awareness of state-specific legislative campaigns, and promotes message continuity across states to reinforce progressive messages nationally.

Tobin Project / General Support

\$225,000/ 1 year (renewal; tie off grant)

To support the Tobin Project, a Cambridge, MA based network of leading academics from law, economics, history, politics, and policy working to reframe fundamental debates about foreign and domestic policy. The core Tobin network includes over 90 scholars, with another 100 academics involved in some aspect of Tobin's work. The Tobin Project seeks to influence public debate by reaching outward to connect with the policy and advocacy communities and inward to shape debate within the academic community. Tobin supports and promotes work in a small number of important areas where new thinking and evidence challenge the strong anti-government, anti-redistributive, anti-tax, and anti-internationalist bias that has taken hold of American politics in recent decades. *Note:* D&P recommends that this be a tie off grant to Tobin following an evaluation of how it matches our funding priorities.

United for a Fair Economy / Tax Fairness Organizing Collaborative

\$150,000/1 year (first general grant, follows 2008 planning grant)

To support Boston-based United for a Fair Economy's Tax Fairness Organizing Collaborative. The Tax Fairness Organizing Collaborative (TFOC) is a national network of state-based organizations that educates and organizes for fair taxation at the state and local levels. The TFOC brings grassroots organizations, including many people and communities that are most hard hit by unfair tax policies that benefit the wealthiest of the wealthy, into tax and budget policy efforts, working with them to make sure that state and local tax and budget policies are informed by the voices of those most affected by economic inequality. Currently, the Tax Fairness Organizing Collaborative has 25 member organizations in 23 states. TFOC members have played a leading role in preventing passage of anti-tax legislation and referenda in several conservative states, and in pushing the envelope with new reforms/ideas in comparatively progressive states.

Note: D&P recommends a one year grant to TFOC in order to monitor how it lifts off following its strategic planning process, particularly to see if it draws support from other funders so that it may grow to scale.

Doing the Math: D&P Docket III Recommended Grants and Grantees

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| Total number of grants recommended: | 25 |
| Number of multi-year grant recs.: | 17 (68%) |
| Total funding recommended: | \$5,610,000 |
| Total general support: | \$4,300,000 |
| Number of general support grant recs.: | 17* (68%) |
| Number of recommended grantees with people of color as Exec. Director: | 9 (36%) |
| Number of recommended grantees with women as Exec. Director: | 12 (48%) |

Geographic diversity of recommended grantees (refers only to base of operations, not scope of work):

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| Washington, DC: | 10 |
| California: | 5 |
| New York: | 4 |
| Massachusetts: | 2 |
| Colorado: | 1 |
| Michigan: | 1 |
| Minnesota: | 1 |
| Oregon: | 1 |

* D&P is recommending 17 general support grants; 7 grants to fiscally sponsored organizations, networks, or field tables; and 1 project specific grant.