

**Democracy and Power Fund**  
**Blurbs for Grant Recommendations Under Consideration**  
**March 1, 2012 Docket**  
**(distributed January 18, 2012)**

*Note: Eleven grant recommendations under consideration, totaling \$2.6 million, are spotlighted within their relevant D&P funding strategy. A demographic summary of all recommended grantees may be found at the end of this document. This docket emphasizes non-partisan voter engagement recommendations for the 2012 election cycle in order to get OSF funding into the field as early as possible and enable groups to scale up rapidly for the busy year ahead. Two other promising, emerging idea generation efforts, for which D&P has provided significant thought leadership, are also included.*

**Idea Generation**

**Fair Taxes Campaign (fiscal sponsor: TBA)**

*\$250,000/ 1 year; new, project support*

To support an emerging campaign to spotlight the need for and engage the public in raising new revenue at the state and federal levels. This campaign, to be led by several influential grantee partners, including the Center for American Progress, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and National Peoples' Action, seeks to seize on the opportunities presented by the disconnect between policy inaction and rising public sentiment for raising taxes on the wealthy and closing corporate loopholes. The campaign will focus on research, analysis, public education, and public participation, with a short-term focus on the most promising state-based opportunities to raise new revenue as well as addressing the impacts of the Bush tax cuts, set to expire at the end of 2012. The campaign's longer term focus will seek to elevate the need for a fairer tax structure with everyone paying their "fair share" to cover important community needs, including the middle and upper middle classes. The campaign will launch with the support of a small collaborative of funders, namely the Baumann and Stoneman Foundations, with several other foundations currently considering joining.

**White Working Class Research Project (fiscal sponsor: TBA, likely Jewish Funds for Justice)**

*\$250,000/ 1 year; renewal, project support*

To support the White Working Class Research Project, a project co-initiated by D&P, in identifying best practices for the engagement of the white working class, estimated to be 23% of the U.S. population and a frequent target for right-wing engagement, most notably in recent years by the Tea Party. D&P has partnered with Jewish Funds for Justice, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, and the New World Foundation to build a research project to confront the continuing challenges of engaging the white working class in open society advocacy. The project seeks to foster a better understanding of this sizable and politically influential constituency at a time of rising economic inequality and anxiety, shifting demography, and the decline of the labor movement. The project has thought leadership and funding from D&P staff and, since July 2011, has: (1) built a 60 person learning community of academic, faith-based, labor, public opinion research, and

rural thought leaders; (2) conducted 50 in-depth interviews with leading thinkers and practitioners to dissect the nature of this challenge; (3) hosted small, invite-only convenings to discuss the white working class as it relates to the role of government and shifting American demography; and (4) identified several pilot projects that will use field-based and scientific research to more effectively reach, listen to, and include the white working class in open society advocacy.

### **Non-partisan Voter Engagement**

#### **Asian Pacific Islander American Civic Engagement Table (fiscal sponsor: Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance Education Fund)**

*\$100,000/ 1 year; new, general support*

To support a newly emerging Asian Pacific Islander American Civic Engagement Table to enable greater communication and strategic coordination between 501(c)(3) APIA community-based groups. The table will include leading national organizations working in the East, South, and Southeast Asian communities, as well as local partner organizations, and will prioritize non-partisan voter registration, education, protection, and mobilization in several APIA communities across the nation. The 2010 U.S. Census revealed that the APIA community was the fastest growing major racial group in the nation, with a 43% increase from 2000 to 2010 and a population now approaching 15 million people. The community is very diverse, in terms of nation of origin, culture, language, length of time in the U.S. (both historically and more recently), and advocacy priorities, and has broadened out beyond traditional population centers – California, New York, and Washington State – into new centers in cities like Charlotte, NC, Houston, TX, and Las Vegas, NV. The APIA community typically receives very limited support from national funders and the new civic engagement table can help to provide important connective tissue for this fast growing community to maximize its power in 2012 and beyond.

#### **League of Young Voters Education Fund**

*\$350,000/ 1 year; renewal, general support*

To support the Brooklyn, NY based League of Young Voters Education Fund, the non-partisan arm of the League of Young Voters, a national network that is focused on building the political power of young people of color and low-income young people through year-round civic engagement efforts. The League conducts programs that include outreach, leadership development, trainings, arts-based organizing, alliance building and non-partisan voter engagement, with the goal of building the power and leadership skills of low-income youth and youth of color. The League fills an important niche as one of the only national, non-partisan voter engagement organizations that focuses on young people of color who are not primarily based on college campuses.

#### **Mi Familia Vota Education Fund**

*\$200,000/ 1 year; new, general support*

To support Mi Familia Vota, a leading national non-partisan voter engagement organization working to unite and build power in Latino, immigrant, and allied communities, and to ensure social and economic justice through increased civic

engagement. Mi Familia Vota works nationally in a number of states, is an anchor of the newly emerging Latino Civic Engagement Table, and has regional offices in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and Texas. Initially launched by the Service Employees International Union, Mi Familia Vota expands the electorate through non-partisan voter registration, census education, get out the vote work, issue organizing in key states, and increasing public support for the full civic participation of new Americans.

### **NAACP**

*\$300,000/ 1 year; new, project support*

To support the NAACP's national, non-partisan civic engagement campaign. Founded in 1909, the Baltimore-based NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Despite the passage of time and organizational peaks and valleys of effectiveness, the NAACP name maintains tremendous "brand" recognition among the U.S. general public and within Black and African American communities nationwide. The NAACP has historically conducted its civic engagement work via its 501(c)(4) and through volunteers, including many activists who have done voting related work for decades. In 2012, reflecting the modernization of its leadership and professional staff, the NAACP seeks to complement this historically powerful volunteer base with a large scale, strategic, and professionally staffed c3 program. The program will be the largest in the nation to focus on the voter engagement and voter protection of Black and African American communities. The NAACP projects to register more than 600,000 new voters and conduct voter education and mobilization work to 600,000 new or infrequent voters via sizable efforts in 12 states, with several other states in its second tier of activity.

### **National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Education Fund**

*\$400,000/1 year; renewal, general support*

To support the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Education Fund (NALEO), a Los Angeles-based national network of over 6,000 Latina/o elected and appointed officials. NALEO facilitates full Latina/o participation in the American political process, from citizenship to public service, through integrated strategies that include increasing the effectiveness of Latina/o policymakers, mobilizing the Latina/o community to engage in civic life, and promoting policies that advance Latina/o civic engagement. Responding to the historic immigrant's rights mobilizations of 2006, NALEO has spearheaded the "Ya Es Hora" campaign linking naturalization to census to voter participation under a single message: "it's time."

### **Rock the Vote/Democracy Class**

*\$250,000/ 1 year; new, project support*

To support Rock the Vote, a Washington-D.C. based non-partisan voter participation organization that uses music, popular culture, and new technologies to mobilize young people to participate in elections. Since its founding, Rock the Vote has registered more than five million young people to vote and, through its online voter registration tools, is the largest voter registration platform in the nation. Rock the Vote has the most powerful brand in the youth engagement field and the organization has become a trusted source of information for young people about registering to vote and casting a ballot. Democracy Class, a new project for the organization, launched in 2011 and targets high school

students across the country to introduce them to civic engagement via interactive, academically sound, and culturally savvy civics lessons that connect history to the present day and inspire eligible high school students, from more than 1,000 schools nationwide, to register to vote.

### **Voto Latino**

*\$300,000 / 1 year; renewal, general support*

To support Voto Latino, a Washington D.C.-based organization working to inform and motivate acculturated Latino youth to engage in civic participation. Every month 50,000 Latinos in the U.S. turn 18 and most are eligible to register to vote. Despite the size, rapid growth, and potential power that could come from this constituency, many traditional non-partisan voter engagement efforts do not understand and do not reach this fast-growing population. Voto Latino, known for having launched the nation's first-ever national text message voter registration campaign, is at the cutting edge of engaging young Latinos by employing new technologies, popular culture, celebrities, and the arts in voter registration, get out the vote, and advocacy campaigns.

### **Voter Participation Center (formerly known as Women's Voices, Women Vote)**

*\$200,000/ 1 year; new, general support*

To support the Voter Participation Center, a leading non-partisan voter registration organization that registers large numbers of new, lapsed, or recently moved voters at a low cost and a high rate of accuracy and integrity. The Voter Participation Center, then operating as Women's Voices, Women Vote, spotlights the importance of voter registration and engagement of what it has labeled the "Rising American Electorate," the emerging, potentially progressive U.S. majority that is comprised of people of color, young people, and unmarried women. The Rising American Electorate is already a majority of the nation's population but it lags as a share of those who vote (it is typically in the mid-40s as a percentage of overall voter turnout). The Voter Participation Center utilizes scientific and demographic research, data analysis, and innovative means of engagement to reach the often highly mobile "RAE" population (indeed, more than 42% of RAE citizens moved between 2006 and 2010). The Voter Participation Center projects to register one million new or recently moved voters in 2012.

### **Wellstone Action**

*\$100,000/ 1 year; renewal, general support*

To support the Minneapolis, MN-based Wellstone Action, a national center for training and leadership development for progressive community-based organizations. Wellstone Action trains thousands of community activists each year so that they may be better equipped to organize issue advocacy campaigns, become community leaders, or run for public office. OSF funding for Wellstone Action would help to support technical assistance provision for a sizable number of 501(c)(3) organizations that are part of State Voices civic engagement tables across the nation, enabling them to be better able to maximize their non-partisan voter engagement impact.

## **D&P March 1, 2012 Recommended Grants and Grantees**

## Grant Recommendation Analysis, Demography, and Equity

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Total number of grants recommended by D&P:   | 11                         |
| Total general support:   | 7                          |
| Total funding recommended:   | \$2.6 million              |
| Number of multi-year grants recommended:   | 0                          |
| Number of co-funded grant recommendations:   | 0                          |
| Number of tie-off recommendations:   | 0                          |
| Number of newly recommended grantees:  | 5 (45% of total recs.)     |
| Number of recommended grantees with<br>people of color as Exec. Director*:                           | 6 (55%)                    |
| Number of grant dollars recommended for<br>people of color led organizations:                        | \$1,650,000 (63% of total) |
| Number of recommended grantees with<br>women as Exec. Director*:                                     | 3 (27%)                    |
| Number of grant dollars recommended for<br>women led organizations:                                  | \$750,000 (29%)            |
| Number of recommended grantees with<br>openly LGBTQ person as Exec. Director*:                       | 3 (27%)                    |
| Number of grant dollars recommended for<br>LGBTQ led organizations:                                  | \$750,000 (29%)            |
| Number of recommended grantees with<br>immigrant or first generation American<br>as Exec. Director*: | 2 (18%)                    |
| Number of grant dollars recommended for<br>immigrant led organizations:                              | \$300,000 (12%)            |

## Geographic Diversity

The following is where the eleven recommended grantees have their base of operations. Many of the recommended organizations have local and state affiliates, partners, or chapters that enable them to reach far beyond the cities where their offices are located.

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Washington, DC: | 4               |
| New York:       | 3 (all NYC)     |
| California:     | 1 (Los Angeles) |
| Maryland:       | 1 (Baltimore)   |
| Minnesota:      | 1 (Minneapolis) |
| Texas:          | 1 (Houston)     |

\* The background or identity of an executive director is only one measure, among many, for identifying an organization's authentic commitment to diversity. Via due diligence in our grant recommendation process, D&P uses this and other measures of assessment to monitor our performance from docket to docket. Through this, we seek to improve our track record of funding high impact organizations that are rooted in, led by, and sensitive

to the interests of communities that have faced and often continue to face the greatest challenges to achieving a more open society.

Circulated by the Democracy and Power Fund on January 18, 2012. For further information on the recommended grantees, please contact program director, Bill Vandenberg; program officers, Patricia Jerido or Nora Ranney; or program associates, Nashay Jones and Heddy Nam.