

MEMORANDUM

To: Aryeh Neier
From: Ann Beeson and Bill Vandenberg, for the Democracy and Power Fund
Date: March 12, 2009
Re: Democracy and Power Fund Docket I

We look forward to discussing with you the first 2009 Democracy and Power Fund docket on Friday, March 20. The write-ups and a docket sheet are attached here.

As you know, the Democracy and Power Fund is intended to enhance U.S. Programs' issue-specific funding and to build the collective power of individuals, communities, and organizations to develop and demand solutions to advance open society in the United States. Currently, the Fund is particularly engaged in conversations to identify how to best prioritize its grantmaking in order to have the greatest impact in this historic and challenging political moment.

Through its strategic priorities, the Fund inspires public participation through civic engagement and grassroots organizing; leadership development and youth engagement; innovative social networking; network builders and strategic intermediaries; and paradigm-shifting research and idea generation. Later in 2009, the Fund will commence its efforts to expand open society in regions where it is most threatened by identifying two states to conduct deeper, more localized funding to grantees that employ our priority strategies.

Our recommended grantees for Docket 1 are:

Civic Engagement and Grassroots Organizing

The Center for Civic Participation (State Voices), Civic Engagement Fund

The Center for Civic Participation (State Voices) is a Detroit, MI-based national organization that supports permanent, year-round state nonprofit coalition tables that foster collaboration, multi-issue policy work, rigorous evaluation, and the engagement of socially responsible and historically underrepresented communities in our democracy. State Voices is the new home of the Civic Engagement Fund (CEF), which provides shared voter file access, trainings, and technical and strategic support to more than 540 local, state, and national affiliate nonprofit organizations in sixteen states.

National Training and Information Center

The National Training and Information Center (NTIC) is a 36 year old, Chicago-based national resource center that supports, strengthens, and coordinates multi-issue grassroots community organizations working for social and economic justice. Through the NTIC, 25 affiliate organizations in 14 states and the District of Columbia link local and regional organizing efforts into powerful national campaigns that win accountability from decision-makers. OSI support would enhance the network's ability to build the power and support it needs to push forward a national economic and racial justice agenda on housing

and banking issues. NTIC's promising work to aggregate its local affiliates into a cohesive national voice on a number of OSI priorities, including TARP accountability, makes it one of our first recommendations for supplementary, capacity building funding from the new Seize the Day transition funding pool.

Pacific Institute for Community Organizations dba PICO National Network

The PICO National Network is a 36 year old, Oakland, CA rooted network of congregation-based community organizations that brings the voices of local families and faith leaders to the public debate on national priorities, including housing, health care, and immigration. With more than 50 faith traditions represented in over 1,000 member institutions, PICO is one of the nation's largest community based efforts, representing one million families in 17 states and 150 cities. OSI support would support PICO's leadership on national housing and immigration reform campaigns. PICO's dynamic work to aggregate its sprawling network of affiliates into a cohesive national voice on a number of OSI priorities, including immigrants' rights, housing, and economic opportunity, makes it one of our first recommendations for supplementary, capacity building funding from the new Seize the Day transition funding pool.

Leadership Pipeline Development and Youth Engagement

Center for Community Change, Generation Change

Generation Change is a project of the Washington, DC-based Center for Community Change that recruits, trains, and sustains the next generation of community organizers and social justice nonprofit leaders. Generation Change has built a strong track record of identifying and developing young leaders who come from communities that are underrepresented in nonprofit leadership, including people of color, immigrant, LGBTQ identified, and low-income people. OSI support would fund Generation Change's work to provide paid internships and six-month fellowships with grassroots organizations that promote immigrant justice, racial justice, economic opportunity, and civic engagement.

Choice USA

Choice USA is a Washington, DC-based organization that mobilizes young people and develops the skills of future leaders through building a more inclusive and effective reproductive justice movement. Working on college campuses and in high schools across the nation, Choice USA utilizes an intersectional approach that links diverse identities and integrates issues of racial and economic justice into the pro-choice movement. An OSI grant would support organizational capacity, campaign strategy trainings, and base building activities to broaden the base of support for reproductive justice.

Jewish Funds for Justice, Funders Collaborative for Youth Organizing

The Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing is a nine year old Brooklyn, NY-based national intermediary that increases funding for youth organizing groups and develops strategies to promote the importance of investment in the leadership of low-income youth of color in social justice organizing. OSI has long supported FCYO and this grant would fund the completion and release of a progressive leadership pipeline report and a series of regional funder convenings to recruit new donors to the youth organizing field.

People for the American Way, Young People For & Young Elected Officials Network

Young People For (YP4) and Young Elected Officials Network (YEO) are two programs housed at the People for the American Way Foundation. YP4, based in Manhattan, is a leadership development program that supports a diverse group of campus leaders through its college-age fellowship, advanced-fellowship and Leadership Academy (age 21-30) programs, leadership trainings and conferences. YEO, a Tallahassee, FL-based network, provides support to local, state, and federal elected officials who are 35 years old or younger. YEO, the only national organization of its kind, offers a forum for idea exchange, connections to policy organizations, and policy academies on a range of issues.

Tides Center, WireTap Magazine

WireTap magazine (www.wiretapmag.org) is a well-read and influential independent news and culture youth web magazine based in San Francisco, CA. WireTap generates and amplifies daily content by young people from diverse backgrounds and carefully selects op-eds that promote social justice, inspire action, give young people a voice, and shed light on issues that are overlooked by the mainstream media. Through its work with young people on editing, fact checking, and writing support, WireTap ensures high quality journalism and shapes the political discourse by connecting young social justice activists to each other, to non-activists, and to issues that impact their lives.

US Public Interest Research Group, Student PIRG

This grant would provide tie-off support to the Student PIRGs, a national organization whose staff is dispersed throughout the country to facilitate student activism on college campuses. Student PIRGs train and empower students to become engaged in policy campaigns, elections, and the political process. Further details of our tie-off recommendation are included in the attached Student PIRG write-up

Wellstone Action, Campus Camp Wellstone

Campus Camp Wellstone, a project of the Minneapolis-based Wellstone Action, runs trainings and develops curriculum for a diverse community of young people. Campus Camp Wellstone also works with the staff and membership of national youth organizations to train them on how to run community-building and advocacy campaigns and advance issues of concern to young people.

Idea Generation and Policy Change

American Rights at Work Education Fund

American Rights at Work Education Fund (ARAWEF) is a national organization founded in 2003 and based in Washington, DC that is dedicated to fighting workplace discrimination and enhancing fairness in the workplace during these challenging economic times. ARAWEF has built an impressive 155,000 person activist base and a strong coalition of business, civil rights, environmental, human rights, labor, and social justice organizations that are united in opposition to workplace discrimination. ARAWEF also supports the rights of workers to have a voice on the job, an especially important priority for low-income, people of color, women, and immigrant workers most likely to face discrimination.

Network Builders and Power Building Intermediaries

Ballot Initiative Strategy Center Foundation

The Ballot Initiative Strategy Center Foundation (BISCF) is a Washington, DC-based organization that provides social justice and progressive organizations with education, research, and strategic assistance on ballot initiatives and referendums. In the two dozen states where the initiative and referendum process is present, BISCF provides essential support for organizations seeking to expand rights through the citizen initiative process and helps social justice advocates counter right-wing proposals that threaten people and communities of greatest interest to OSI.

In this first docket, the Democracy and Power Fund recommends funding for twelve organizations, including nine renewals and three new grantees. These recommendations total \$3.45 million, of which \$450,000 is co-funded through the new Seize the Day transition funding pool; \$150,000 from the Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative; and \$100,000 from the Equality and Opportunity Fund.

Our twelve recommendations include five general support grants and seven projects. Six have grant terms for more than one year and one, Student PIRG, is recommended for a tie-off grant.

Additionally, the Democracy and Power Fund is offering \$250,000 to support funding recommendations that you will consider on April 17, including \$200,000 for the Young Peoples Project (to support a Campaign for Black Male Achievement recommendation) and \$50,000 for the Jamestown Project (co-funded with the Equality and Opportunity Fund).

We are also pleased to introduce you to the Democracy and Power Fund's two new program officers, Cristóbal Josh Alex ("Josh") and Patricia Jerido. They bring extensive community, legal, philanthropic, organizational and political experiences in New York, Texas, and Washington State to the Fund and, with their hires, the Fund is now fully staffed.

Full write-ups of each of our recommendations are attached. We look forward to discussing them with you when we meet later this week. Please let us know if there is further information we can provide in advance of the docket meeting on March 20. Thank you.