

**U.S. Programs**  
**Seize the Day Fund**  
**Summary of Recommended Grants**  
**July 26, 2010**

<u>Priority Area/Organization</u>	<u>Grant Total</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<b>Seize the Day (T1: 21079)</b>			
Focus Project, Inc. on behalf of Equity in Government Accountability and Performance	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	
Good Jobs First <sup>1</sup>	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	
Legal Momentum	\$ 400,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000
New America Media	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$ 1,250,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,050,000</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>

**TOTAL RECOMMENDED FOR THIS DOCKET: \$ 1,250,000**

<sup>1</sup> Total grant is \$200,000; split as \$100,000 from the Transparency and Integrity Fund, T1: 21093 and \$100,000 from the Seize the Day Fund, T1: 21079.

*Angel Weis*  
Approval Signature

*July 26, 2010*  
Date

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Aryeh Neier

**FROM:** Ann Beeson, Bill Vandenberg, Laleh Ispahani, and Raquiba LaBrie

**DATE:** July 19, 2010

**RE:** Seize the Day Initiative – July 26 Docket

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The Seize the Day Initiative makes grants to advance the following goals:

- Address the most challenging issues;
- Ensure transparency and equity in the development and implementation of economic recovery plans;
- Increase public participation in policy reform efforts by those most affected; and
- Integrate recent innovations in organizing and technology into more organizations and movements.

Attached please find four Seize the Day grant recommendations to be considered with the July 26 dockets. The recommendations total \$1,250,000. A recommendation for one other Seize the Day co-funded grant to the National Immigration Law Center appears on the Equality and Opportunity Fund July 26 docket.

The following are brief descriptions of the three recommended Seize the Day grants included in this docket.

The recommended grant to the **Equity in Government Accountability Performance (E-GAP)** project will support a newly formed partnership among OSI grantees the Center for Social Inclusion, OMB Watch, Good Jobs First and the Transportation Equity Network. E-GAP is a collaborative effort to build national strategies and tools to promote transparency and equity in government spending through the development of online tools and the provision of advocacy support to state and local groups. The project was born out of a discussion of transparency and equity in the economic recovery at the May 2009 U.S. Programs Board meeting.

The recommended grant to **Good Jobs First** will support its coordination of the States for a Transparent and Accountable Recovery coalition. Good Jobs First will coordinate efforts by state alliances to push for better reporting of data on how American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars are spent. It will also provide technical assistance and research support to groups working on these issues.

The recommended grant to **Legal Momentum** will enable it to strengthen its advocacy for federal reforms to make the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program more

responsive to the realities of poor people's lives. This grant is part of a collection of Seize the Day grants devoted to strengthening the country's social safety net.

Finally, the grant to **New America Media** will expand the capacity of the ethnic media sector to report on the impact of the economic crisis and recovery efforts on their communities. This work expands on New America Media's Stimulus Watch Project, which was created with a Seize the Day grant.

We thank you for your consideration of these recommendations and look forward to your questions and discussion.

<b><u>Name of Organization</u></b>	Equity in Government Accountability and Performance (fiscal sponsor: Focus Project, Inc.)
<b><u>Tax Status</u></b>	501(c)(3) public charity
<b><u>Purpose of Grant</u></b>	to support Equity in Government Accountability and Performance, a project aimed at promoting equity and transparency in the use of federal funds
<b><u>FPOS Grant Description:</u></b>	A project support grant to the Equity in Government Accountability and Performance Project, to advocate for improved government spending, data collection and availability, and to create a web-based tracking tool to map where government dollars are going and who is benefiting, analyze performance of government spending, and train community groups to use the tracking tool.
<b><u>Previous OSI Support</u></b>	none
<b><u>Organization Budget</u></b>	\$1,911,813
<b><u>Project Budget</u></b>	\$1,800,000 over two years
<b><u>Sources of Support</u></b>	Kellogg
<b><u>Amount Requested</u></b>	\$400,000 over two years
<b><u>Amount Recommended</u></b>	\$400,000 over two years [Seize the Day Fund (T1: 21079)]
<b><u>Term</u></b>	Two years beginning June 1, 2010

**Description of Organization**

The Center for Social Inclusion, the Gamaliel Foundation through its Transportation Equity Network, Good Jobs First, and OMB Watch have formed a partnership to launch the Equity in Government Accountability and Performance project (E-GAP). This project was born of a discussion of transparency and equity in the economic recovery at the May 2009 U.S. Programs Board Meeting. Brief descriptions of each of the partner organizations follow.

The Center for Social Inclusion, a longstanding OSI grantee, is a national public policy organization that works to transform structural barriers to opportunity for communities of color. It employs a structural racism analysis to improve the ability of community activists and leaders to address the root causes of the problems they address.

OMB Watch, a key watchdog grantee of the Transparency and Integrity Fund, works to increase government transparency and accountability; to ensure sound, equitable regulatory and budgetary processes and policies; and to protect and promote active citizen participation in U.S. democracy.

The Transportation Equity Network, a Seize the Day grantee, is a national grassroots organization that fights for transportation equity by organizing to transform federal transportation and mass transit policy and funding to address the needs of the poor, the working class, the middle class, and people of color with respect to jobs, mass transit, and growth that is smart and equitable. TEN has 350 affiliated community organizations in 41 states.

Good Jobs First is a national policy resource center for grassroots groups and public officials, promoting corporate and government accountability in economic development and smart growth for working families. The organization provides timely and accurate information on best practices in state and local job subsidies, and on the many ties between smart growth and good jobs.

### **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought**

The Center for Social Inclusion, the Transportation Equity Network, Good Jobs First, and OMB Watch request project support for the Equity in Government Accountability and Performance project (E-GAP), an effort to build national strategies and tools to promote transparency and equity in government spending. The E-GAP project plans to juxtapose American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other federal spending with measures of social need. In this way, the partnering organizations intend to answer the following questions:

- Is government spending helping those most in need?
- Do the metrics being used to assess success include equity measures and will they be used to improve performance of government-funded programs serving those in need?
- Can the Recovery Act's unprecedented transparency standards give rise to permanent improvements in transparency and accountability for ongoing federal expenditures as well as state implementation of federal spending programs?

The E-GAP action plan is organized into four parts:

#### **Working Groups**

E-GAP will engage experts and advocates in two topical working groups – transportation and broadband – to identify needs and performance benchmarks, as well as data collection demands, and develop advocacy strategies around demands. The working groups will be coordinated by the Center for Social Inclusion.

#### **Web-based Tools**

OMB Watch and Good Jobs First will develop an interactive website that helps to analyze and depict graphically the overlay of community needs data, government expenditures data, and performance data. In March, OSI staff hosted a funder briefing for the E-GAP project, at which the groups demonstrated these tools, and revealed their potential for effective advocacy.

#### Data-Driven Advocacy and Organizing in the States

The Transportation Equity Network and the Center for Social Inclusion will be responsible for getting E-GAP tools into the hands of community groups to help shape advocacy strategies and campaigns on the ground. While the web-based tools will be available to a range of organizations and individuals, the E-GAP partners will target the following five states for extensive training and organizing: Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi and Missouri. Criteria used to select these states include the following:

- Each is strategically positioned to have a meaningful impact on one or both of the two E-GAP national issue campaigns – transportation or broadband;
- Capacity in the selected states is being scaled up through targeted investments from funders or aligned organizations; and
- The Center for Social Inclusion and the Transportation Equity Network have focused on these states to make racial and other equity issues critical focal points for state policy debates.

#### Advocacy for Changes in Federal Policies and Practices

A key part of this project will be to engage in federal advocacy for improved spending, needs, and performance data, as well as to move the federal government to replicate successful elements of the project. E-GAP partners have shared information about this project with the administration, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Transportation and the White House. The executive branch has expressed great interest in, and support for, this project. Some of the agencies consulted discussed the possibility of sharing data with the public in unprecedented ways.

#### **Rationale for Recommendation**

The recommended grant to support the E-GAP project advances the Seize the Day Fund's commitment to promoting transparency and equity in government spending. It advances the Transparency and Integrity Fund's goal of ensuring broad and equitable access to high-quality information and effective accountability mechanisms. It also advances the Equality and Opportunity Fund's overarching goal of supporting efforts to ensure justice and equality and to lift barriers that prevent people from participating fully in economic and social life.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided nearly \$800 billion to create and preserve jobs, support the environment, and contribute to the long-term health of the U.S. economy. An explicit goal of the Act is to help those hardest hit by the economic crisis. Yet communities of color, women of all races, those with disabilities, and many low-income communities have not benefited to the degree expected. Indeed, many advocates argue that the Act's funding has flowed primarily through existing program pipelines and allocation formulas thereby reinforcing existing inequality. To capture the data regarding who is benefiting from Recovery Act dollars and to identify ways to ensure more equitable distribution of government resources, the E-GAP partners devised the recommended project.

Accurate information, made public and shared, is essential to demonstrate the importance of public programs, to enable citizens and advocacy groups to push for spending priorities, and to hold government accountable to meet the needs of all people, including the most vulnerable. The Obama administration has taken steps toward meaningful progress on government transparency with its Open Government Directive and on declassification of records. . Yet it is still hard for the public to understand and track federal spending, and the administration has been tentative about explicitly addressing equity concerns. Without collecting accurate information, there is no way to demonstrate federal programs are meeting their intended purpose. The E-GAP project creates both the data tracking tools and advocacy support necessary to begin a conversation with government about meeting its goals and demonstrating its fulfillment of those goals. It also helps to advance a key Seize the Day Fund priority by bridging the work of transparency and equity groups.

**For these reasons, staff recommends a project support grant of \$400,000 over two years.**

**Name of Organization:** Good Jobs First

**Tax Status:** 501(c)(3) public charity

**Purpose of Grant:** To coordinate the ‘States for a Transparent and Accountable Recovery’ coalition and provide technical assistance to that coalition’s member organizations; and to provide core operating support for Good Jobs First

**FPOS Grant Description:** This grant would support Good Jobs First’s coordination of the States for a Transparent and Accountable Recovery coalition. Good Jobs First will coordinate efforts by state alliances to push for better reporting of data on how American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars are spent. It will also provide technical assistance and research support to groups working on these issues.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$390,000  
\$140,000 from Seize the Day (2010)  
\$150,000 from U.S. Programs (2009)  
\$100,000 from U.S. Justice Fund (2003)

**Organization Budget:** \$985,000

**Project Budget:** \$150,000 over one year

**Major Sources of Support:**

Ford Foundation	\$250,000
Arca Foundation	\$50,000
Ottinger Foundation	\$40,000

**Amount Requested:** \$150,000 over one year

**Amount Recommended:** \$200,000 over one year  
(\$100,000 Transparency and Integrity Fund, T1: 21093)  
(\$100,000 Seize the Day Fund, T1: 21079)

**Term:** June 1, 2010 – May 31, 2011

**Description of Organization**

Good Jobs First (GJF) is a national research, advocacy, and resource center dedicated to promoting corporate and government accountability in economic development and smart growth for working families. Based in Washington, DC, GJF’s mission is to empower constituency-based groups and pro-reform public officials with high-quality research and technical assistance to make government spending more transparent, equitable, accountable, and effective. GJF produces research reports, maintains websites, conducts

trainings for local activists, and provides technical assistance and consulting to allied individuals and organizations. In response to its efforts to focus greater effort and resources on the economic recovery effort, GJF recently closed its offices in New York and Chicago.

### **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought**

Good Jobs First seeks funding to continue its work as a leader and organizer of the States for a Transparent and Accountable Recovery coalition (the ‘STAR’ coalition). Created in March 2009, the STAR coalition coordinates and provides technical assistance to still evolving state-based coalitions tracking the spending of federal dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) at the state and local levels, helping assure that such funds are spent both transparently and equitably.

In May, with “Seize the Day” funding from OSI, GJF coordinated and led a three-day convening of eight OSI-funded state alliances working for transparency and equity in the economic recovery. The convening provided a forum for these alliances to share best practices, learn effective organizing and communications strategies, and share the latest research on how recovery dollars are being disbursed at the state level. Since the convening, GJF has consulted with the nearly 100 advocates who attended to better understand how GJF, as coordinator of the STAR coalition, can best support state-level recovery-related advocacy going forward. Informed by the state activists’ input, GJF has determined to pursue the following goals in the next year:

- coordinate state and federal efforts to demand that the federal government collect “equity metrics” to allow for a better understanding as to who is benefitting from recovery efforts;
- analyze quarterly rounds of jobs data published by the federal government and provide a research webinar on that data to STAR members;
- rate (for the third time) the states’ Recovery Act websites and work with state advocates to force state officials to make state recovery data more accessible and useful;
- connect state recovery-focused coalitions to coalitions working on state fiscal and unemployment issues;
- provide state advocates with information and mapping assistance; and
- maintain and continually enhance the STAR website and list-serv as a means of sharing information among the alliances.

GJF will pursue these goals through a combination of strategic research, technical assistance, and coordination of the many organizations and coalitions working on these closely related issues. It will engage in strategic research on the Recovery Act, on best practices for greater state-level transparency and equity in spending, on the outcomes of the Recovery Act, and on other issues identified by coalition members. GJF will provide technical assistance to groups seeking to form state-level coalitions, and to those coalitions once formed. In addition to research, GJF support will be primarily communications and organizational (website creation, conference call organizing,

governance best practices, etc.). Finally, GJF will assist with state-to-state and organization-to-organization coordination and networking, helping state coalition organizers connect with allies in their respective states; with the national Coalition for an Accountable Recovery; with national resource centers and organizations with relevant expertise in specific issues related to access to information, equity, and accountability; and with peers in other states.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

The Transparency and Integrity Fund (TIF) and the Seize the Day Fund (SDF) recommend a grant of \$200,000 over one year (\$100,000 from SDF and \$100,000 from TIF). This grant would advance the Transparency and Integrity Fund's goal of supporting 'targeted' transparency efforts, disclosing information that people need and in a form that enables advocates to act on the information and leads to equitable outcomes. It also advances the Fund's goals of supporting state-based transparency, equity, and accountability efforts. The grant would advance the Seize the Day Fund's specific goal of ensuring transparency, accountability and equity in the development and implementation of economic recovery plans. SDF's contribution of \$100,000 would support GJF's work coordinating the STAR coalition; TIF's \$100,000 contribution would provide GJF with support for STAR coordination as well as \$50,000 of core operating support. TIF sees GJF as a likely candidate for general support going forward and this additional core support would mark the beginning of that process.

When President Obama took office in January 2009, he put transparency and open government at the top of his administration's agenda, promising unprecedented access to all government data and information. But the rush to get stimulus money out the door has often meant allocating funds to those most prepared (usually also those best-connected) to use the funds, not those most in need. Adequate systems for tracking spending and holding governments and recipients accountable were not put in place. Given the size and scope of the ARRA and the inequitable (and corrupt) spending that has plagued past economic stimulus efforts, it was therefore essential that organizations unite across issue and interest lines to monitor stimulus spending and advocate for greater transparency and equity. This was all the more essential given that federal dollars are allocated and disbursed at the state and local levels. Through a Request for Proposal process, the Seize the Day fund made grants to eight state-based alliances of organizations working to ensure transparency and equity in the disbursement and allocation of recovery funds. (The states are Texas, Maryland, New York, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Colorado, California, and Florida.) At the same time, Seize the Day fund also made two grants to Good Jobs First to support its efforts to assist and coordinate these and related state-based efforts. The present recommendation would allow GJF to continue these coordination efforts through the next year.

Good Jobs First has a proven track record of working collaboratively at both state and federal levels to advance transparency and equity agendas. Greg LeRoy, GJF's Executive Director, is an experienced muckraker and organizer. Phil Mattera, the group's research director, has long been connected to the transparency and equity

community in D.C. and nationally. Prior to 2009, most of GJF's work focused on state economic development spending, pushing for greater transparency in how those funds were allocated, to whom, and who benefited (or not) from such spending programs. But given the significance of federal recovery spending and the opportunity presented to advance transparency and equity goals, GJF has shifted the bulk of its efforts to stimulus-focused advocacy.

We have been impressed with GJF's work with the STAR coalition and the state alliances. More impressive, however, has been the fact that GJF has successfully brought together groups from the historically disconnected transparency and equity communities. These groups are now making common cause and advancing shared goals. Having worked to foster similar collaborations at the state and federal levels, we recognize that this is no easy feat. To have done so under the intense pressure of the current economic crisis makes it doubly impressive.

<b><u>Name of Organization</u></b>	Legal Momentum
<b><u>Tax Status</u></b>	501(c)(3) public charity
<b><u>Purpose of Grant</u></b>	To provide project support to expand Legal Momentum’s advocacy for federal reforms to make Temporary Assistance for Needy Families more responsive to the realities of poor people’s lives
<b><u>FPOS Grant Description:</u></b>	A project support grant to Legal Momentum will enable it to amplify its advocacy efforts addressing: the need for a true national safety net program for families facing extreme poverty; the error of creating incentives for “welfare rolls reduction” without distinguishing between reduction resulting from living wage employment and reduction due to non-compliance with restrictive policies; and the proliferation of state access barriers in the absence of federal standards, monitoring and oversight.
<b><u>Previous OSI Support</u></b>	\$150,000 USJ- Women’s Rights: \$150,000 (2004-2006)
<b><u>Organization Budget</u></b>	\$4,661,000
<b><u>Project Budget</u></b>	\$505,479
<b><u>Sources of Support</u></b>	Helena Rubinstein Foundation; Joseph Drown Foundation; Ms. Foundation for Women; Sidney Stern Memorial Trust; The Funding Exchange; The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation; The New York Community Trust; The New York Women’s Foundation; The Valentine Foundation; The William and Randolph Hearst Foundations; The Ford Foundation
<b><u>Amount Requested</u></b>	\$400,000 over two years
<b><u>Amount Recommended</u></b>	\$400,000 over two years (Seize the Day Fund, T1: 21079)
<b><u>Term</u></b>	Two years beginning June 1, 2010

**Description of Organization**

Legal Momentum (formerly the NOW Legal Defense Fund), based in New York City, works to ensure the economic and personal security of women and girls through advocacy, policy analysis, litigation, technical assistance, training, and public education. For nearly 40 years, Legal Momentum has been at the forefront of advocating for,

ensuring passage of, implementing and expanding some of the most important laws affecting women.<sup>1</sup> Through litigation, it has secured significant victories and expanded rights in areas including employment, violence against women, and reproductive freedom.

### **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought**

Legal Momentum requests project support to advocate for federal reforms to make the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program more responsive to the realities of poor people's lives. Legal Momentum's long-term goals are to: a) increase the American commitment to a safety net for women and families; b) improve rights, fairness, and access under the TANF program; and c) increase and enhance meaningful TANF support for women transitioning to employment and self-sufficiency. To accomplish these goals, it will engage in the following strategies:

- Identify key shortcomings of TANF as a safety net for the nation's poorest families;
- Raise awareness of key flaws including access barriers, inadequate benefit amounts, arbitrary exclusions unrelated to need due to policies such as time limits and the five-year eligibility bar for legal immigrants;
- Build a broad national constituency in support of reforms by working with grassroots advocacy organizations working on the local, state and national levels, including the End Poverty Now coalition, which includes over 700 members representing diverse women's rights and anti-poverty advocates; and
- Identify policy solutions that:
  - Reduce access barriers;
  - Make employment and earnings the work program goal;
  - Offer subsidized employment opportunities when unsubsidized employment is unavailable;
  - Protect domestic violence victims by assuring access and safety;
  - Continue aid as needed for unemployed, underemployed or disabled parents who are in compliance with work rules;
  - Strengthen child care quality protections; and
  - Raise benefits to an adequate level.

IF TANF reauthorization is postponed beyond the projected September 30, 2011 deadline, Legal Momentum will continue the activities described above. If TANF reauthorization is enacted by that date, Legal Momentum will:

- Advocate with HHS, the federal TANF agency, for the most effective federal implementation policies;

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<sup>1</sup> These include Title VII (barring gender and racial employment discrimination); Title IX (barring gender discrimination in federally funded educational programs); the Pregnancy Discrimination Act; the Violence Against Women Act; the Trafficking Victims Protection Act; the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act; and TANF.

- Provide technical assistance to state and local TANF advocates regarding state and local implementation of reauthorization provisions; and
- Investigate whether litigation is needed to advance advocacy objectives, expand rights, or bring attention to TANF failures and inequities.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

The recommended grant to Legal Momentum advances the Seize the Day Fund’s commitment to strengthening the social safety net for the most marginalized groups. It also advances the Equality and Opportunity Fund’s overarching goal of supporting efforts to ensure justice and equality and to lift barriers that prevent people from participating fully in economic and social life, and its specific goal of addressing the needs of the most marginalized women.

In late 2009, the group of staff managing Seize the Day grantmaking decided to devote a substantial amount of the Fund’s remaining grantmaking resources to strengthening the country’s social safety net. The recommended grant to Legal Momentum represents one of a handful of grants we plan to recommend focused on four major strands of the safety net: TANF; Unemployment Insurance; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps); and Child Care.

TANF is the national social assistance program for families with children created in 1996 to replace AFDC and to “end welfare as we know it.” It provides a crucial but limited safety net for single mothers and their children who experience exceptionally high rates of poverty. About 90% of adult TANF recipients are women.<sup>2</sup> In 2008, 28.5% of white (non-Hispanic) single mother families, 46.6% of Hispanic single mother families, and 44.4% of African American single mother families were living below the poverty line.<sup>3</sup> In 2008, 31.5% of TANF recipient families were white, 34.2% African American, and 28% Hispanic.

The 1996 shift from AFDC to TANF created several fundamental changes that had devastating consequences for poor women and children, and complicated national advocacy efforts. Congress deregulated federal oversight of state administration – spawning a significant increase in state access barriers, and making it more difficult for eligible families to enroll and stay enrolled in the program. The proportion of all eligible families actually receiving benefits fell from 84% in 1995 to 40% in 2005 – a drop in enrollment that is believed to be even higher for persons with disabilities, limited English proficiency, or limited literacy.

As TANF reauthorization approaches, policy makers will engage in the welfare reform debate on the heels of an economic downturn that drove many families to turn to public safety net programs for help. Because of its long-term involvement in safety net

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, *Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Eighth Annual Report to Congress (2009)*.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau poverty tables titled “POV04: Families by Age of Householder, Number of Children, and Family Structure: 2008.”

advocacy, Legal Momentum is well-situated to seize this moment. In doing our due diligence in the area of TANF policy advocacy, Legal Momentum stood out as the national field leader. Tim Casey, who manages the organization's TANF advocacy agenda, has served as a welfare law and policy advocate for nearly three decades. Legal Momentum manages a listserv for, and coordinates the advocacy, of a tightly networked group of TANF and safety net researchers and advocates. Its expertise is acknowledged by other field leaders, including OSI grantees the National Employment Law Project and the Center for Law and Social Policy.

Staff is confident that Legal Momentum will contribute to and enhance national movement-building efforts to reform TANF by gathering and analyzing data to identify the program's shortcomings, help strengthen a broad constituency in support of reform, and identify national policy solutions.

**For these reasons, staff recommends a project support grant to Legal Momentum of \$400,000 over two years.**

**Name of Organization:** New America Media (NAM)

**Tax Status:** 501 (c)(3) public charity

**Purpose of Grant:** to expand the capacity of the ethnic media sector to report on the impact of the economic crisis and recovery efforts on their communities. This work would expand on NAM's Stimulus Watch Project, which was created with a grant from the Seize the Day Fund.

**FPOS Grant Description:** NAM will expand and deepen its work to improve ethnic media's reporting on the recession's impact on their communities and government initiatives meant to alleviate the crisis. NAM will produce a multi-media Recession and Recovery Newsbeat. NAM will also build a rapid-response reporting network of more than 40 Arizona-based ethnic news organizations to document the impact of the new anti-immigrant law.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$1,285,000  
\$500,000 from Seize the Day Fund (2009)  
\$150,000 from the Four Pillars Project (2009)  
\$535,000 from Strategic Opportunities Fund (2005  
—  
2007)  
\$100,000 from Youth Development Grants (2005)

**Organization Budget:** \$5,774,761

**Project Budget:** \$260,000

**Source of Support:**

<i>Organization</i>	
Atlantic Philanthropies	\$350,000
California Endowment	\$350,000
Knight Foundation	\$225,000

**Amount Requested:** \$250,000 over one year

**Amount Recommended:** \$250,000 over one year (Seize the Day Fund, T1: 21079)

**Term:** August 1, 2010 to July 31, 2011

**Description of Organization**

New America Media (NAM) is the first and largest network of ethnic news organizations in the United States. NAM operates as a multi-media content producer and aggregator, a

media organizer and marketer, and an incubator of youth-led communications projects in underserved communities. NAM's mission is to increase and improve the flow of journalism and communications to serve the news and information needs of an increasingly diverse global society. NAM serves 3,000 ethnic media outlets, spanning print, online, TV and radio, and reaching more than 60 million people. NAM has built partnerships with 38 journalism schools, which serve as hubs for regional networks of ethnic media in virtually every region of the country.

NAM's primary goal is to develop a national AP-style ethnic media news exchange that integrates the ethnic media sector into American journalism. The model is collaborative, linking ethnic media outlets to one another to develop a media grid connecting otherwise isolated and fragmented communities, building inter-ethnic, inter-racial and inter-generational communications and understanding.

### **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought**

New America Media requests a grant of \$250,000 from OSI's Seize the Day Fund to expand ethnic media's capacity to report on the impact of the economic crisis and recovery efforts on their communities. This work would expand on NAM's Stimulus Watch Project, which was created in 2009 with a grant from the Seize the Day Fund.

NAM proposes to conduct training seminars in five cities to expand and deepen ethnic media's reporting of the recession's impact on their communities and government initiatives to alleviate the crisis. NAM will also award fellowships to 10 ethnic media practitioners, who will attend a two-day training program in Washington D.C. to hone their reporting skills and expand their sources. Multi-media content produced as a result of the fellowships will be translated and disseminated to NAM's ethnic media network.

NAM will also produce a multi-media Recession and Recovery Newsbeat on the economic crisis, comprised of content produced for or aggregated from ethnic media by NAM editors. Aimed at broadening the context for ethnic media's local reporting on economic issues, NAM will disseminate the news beat through its syndicate and post on a special section of NAM's website devoted to the project. NAM will coordinate regularly with partner organizations at the national level such as the Center on Economic and Policy Research and OMB-Watch to help identify important stories and to inform the national watchdog organizations as they advocate for increased transparency, accountability and equity in the economic recovery.

These initiatives are designed to strengthen collaboration across the ethnic media sector; among ethnic media practitioners and new online or mainstream news organizations; and among experts, policy makers, and advocates tracking economic trends and policies.

NAM will also support a special initiative in Arizona, where a recession-fueled backlash against immigrants has led to the most repressive new anti-immigrant laws in the country. The initiative will build a rapid-response reporting network of more than 40 Arizona-

based ethnic news organizations to document both the impact of SB 1070 on the communities they serve, and rapidly-growing resistance to the law.

NAM's Arizona Watch project flows out of three years of organizing briefings and summits on immigrant rights, environmental justice, the H1N1 epidemic, and the 2010 Census for and with ethnic media practitioners across Arizona and the Southwest. These efforts helped build NAM's visibility in Arizona and forge collaborative ties with leading nonprofits such as Border Action Network as well as with Journalism Schools at the University of Arizona/Tucson and the Arizona State Cronkite School of Journalism/Phoenix.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

This grant furthers the strategies of the Seize the Day fund by helping to ensure that transparency, equity, and accountability are prioritized in the economic recovery debate, through stronger ethnic media reporting and collaborations on economic policy issues. NAM's Arizona initiative advances the Fund's interest in confronting structural inequality, by building a rapid-response reporting network of more than 40 Arizona-based ethnic news organizations to document both the impact of SB 1070 on the communities they serve, as well as the rapidly-growing resistance to the law.

The proposed project builds directly on NAM's Economic Stimulus Project, which helped NAM improve the quality of news coverage of economic policy issues in the ethnic media sector and trained more than 200 ethnic media journalists on how to investigate ARRA and its effects; expanded coverage of ARRA across the sector; and honed NAM's in-house capacity to report on economic issues.

Through the Economic Stimulus Project, ethnic media journalists learned how to cover government spending from respected think tanks like the California Budget Project and the Public Policy Institute of California. In Denver, where frustration among ethnic minority groups was running high, NAM arranged to have the Governor's chief economic spokesperson speak directly with the ethnic press. In New Orleans, where a NAM investigation revealed that only one stimulus-backed Small Business Administration loan went to a non-white owned business, the Black, Asian, and Latino media were able to question the regional head of the Small Business Administration directly. In every city, the ethnic media were able to learn from presentations by experienced reporters from Pro Publica and Investigative Reporters and Editors the intricacies of how to follow government dollars to see whether they are reaching the communities that need them most. Learning computer assisted reporting skills and other investigative tools to track the impact of the stimulus whetted the appetite of dozens of ethnic media practitioners and improved the overall coverage of the economic crisis in their outlets. Many are now eager to deepen their skills and capacity to track economic issues.

This grant will enable NAM to award 10 new fellowships to ethnic media practitioners. Some of the stories produced under NAM's current Economic Stimulus Fellowship:

- A three-part investigative series by Eva Sanchez of El Diario/La Prensa on the epidemic of foreclosures striking Brooklyn's Bushwick neighborhood, which is wiping out generations of home ownership within New York's Hispanic community;
- A two-part series by Charles Hallman in the Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder, showing the paucity of contracting opportunities available to black businesses in Minneapolis and the failure of Minnesota's transportation planners to use stimulus dollars to invest in transit projects that serve the state's black population.
- A story by Khalil Al Hajal of the Arab American News that showed that Arab American small businesses that had been approved for stimulus-backed loans had actually not received money because banks were failing to provide funds after they had been approved by the government.

Since producing these stories, NAM's ethnic media fellows have been invited to present their work at prestigious gatherings, such as UC Berkeley's Logan Symposium on Investigative Journalism and the national convention of Investigative Reporters & Editors. This demonstrates that, after increasing their skills through NAM's training and mentorship programs, these ethnic media journalists are able not only to improve the content and coverage in their own outlets but to affect mainstream journalism itself.

NAM's proposed Recession and Recovery project provides an important opportunity to build relationships among ethnic media journalists, national watchdog organizations and the larger journalism community. This project will help build the long-term capacity of ethnic media to report on economic policy issues and inform the communities most impacted by the recession and also most underserved by traditional and new media alike: low income, minority, immigrant, Native American, and rural.

As NAM demonstrated through its Economic Stimulus Project, practitioners and leaders across the ethnic media sector are both intensely concerned about the prolonged economic crisis as it affects their communities, and uniquely positioned to uncover its untold stories. They want to know how to account for conflicting trends; to track the impact of government revitalization programs such as ARRA; and to inform and engage policy makers, experts and advocates in discussions about the economic forces and public policies that are closing off options for the most vulnerable groups. But even as demand for their services grows – some 60 million ethnic adults now rely on ethnic media for news, information, entertainment – they too, like other news sectors, are cutting back on reporting to survive a dramatic fall off in ad revenues. Univision laid off news reporters at stations across the country; the venerable Watts Times in Los Angeles just sold to a rival to stay afloat; Ming Pao, a Chinese-language daily with bureaus on both coasts, closed down operations.

At a time when the ethnic media itself is struggling to serve its audiences with few if any of the resources available to general market media, this grant represents a strategic investment in its growth as the most important intermediary informing and engaging immigrants and ethnic minorities about the public life of this country.

In a highly fractured media landscape, NAM is developing new collaborative models linking ethnic media with each other, with mainstream news outlets and with new public service media projects to generate reporting none of these sectors could do on their own, and to magnify public awareness of social justice issues.