

## MEMORANDUM

To: U.S. Programs Board  
From: Ann Beeson  
Date: September 21, 2009  
Re: September 30 – October 1, 2009 U.S. Programs Board Meeting

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I look forward to seeing you at next week's Board meeting. As we have already overwhelmed you with materials sent over the summer related to the U.S. Programs 2010 budget and program planning process, this cover memo will be very brief. The first day of the Board meeting will be devoted almost exclusively to a discussion of the 2010 budget. During the second day of the Board meeting, we will engage in a discussion about our work to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline.

The Board book contains additional background materials for the meeting. As the program planning materials we distributed over the summer provide a wealth of information about our recent grantmaking and programmatic activities, I am not including my usual re-cap of those activities in this memo. In the enclosed binder, we have provided press clippings that highlight the inspiring work of U.S. Programs grantees. See Tab 7.

Following the meeting on September 30, the Board members will have a private dinner meeting to discuss improvements to the structure and format of the Board meetings. (Jonathan Soros will facilitate the conversation. George Soros will not attend.) The dinner is scheduled from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at Trattoria dell'Arte, 900 Seventh Avenue, between 56<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup>.

If you have not already sent an RSVP, please send a note to Orelida Hicks to let us know whether you are joining us for both days of the Board meeting and for dinner on September 30: ohicks@sorosny.org or (212) 548-0372.

As you know, the December 2-3, 2009 Board meeting will be held in New Orleans. We are busy planning a series of site visits and discussions to showcase and engage Board members in our work there. Very soon, we will distribute more detailed information about the agenda and recommendations regarding your travel to New Orleans.

### **Overview of Board Meeting Agenda**

On September 30 starting at 2 p.m., the Board will devote substantial time to reviewing, discussing, and recommending approval of the 2010 U.S. Programs Budget to the Trustees and senior management of OSI. **Please remember to bring your 2010 Budget Binder to the meeting.**

We are grateful to the Board members for their careful review of the budget materials, and for participating in calls with staff in the last few weeks to answer questions in advance of the meeting. The process of deeply engaging the Board members in the budget review is a new one, and we expect to learn from our experience this year and

improve it next year. We propose the following format for the Board budget discussions. I will open the discussion by providing a brief overview of the full budget. During this first session, the Board will discuss the overall structure of the budget and the allocation of resources across the programs. The Board will then dig deeper by focusing on the budgets for the core, long-term funds of U.S. Programs. Board advisors from each of the funds will serve as discussion leaders and provide comments on the core fund budgets.

After a mid-afternoon break, the Board will engage in a discussion of the budgets for our special initiatives and standing campaigns. The first conversation will focus on our special initiatives related to the economic crisis and journalism, followed by a discussion of our standing campaigns on national security and human rights, black male achievement, and immigration innovation. Again, Board advisors for the special initiatives and campaigns will lead the discussions. U.S. Programs' directors and campaign managers will be present to answer any questions throughout the day. We will reserve time towards the end of the day for the Board's final recommendations regarding the budget.

Following the budget discussion, staff will present two grant recommendations for Board discussion: Harlem Children's Zone; and Center for New York City Neighborhoods. See Tab 5. The final session on the first day will be a closed executive session to discuss Board member recruitment. (Materials will be circulated at the meeting.)

On Thursday, we will begin at 8:30 a.m. with a presentation of any recommendations from the discussion of Board structure and meetings over dinner the previous evening.

The remainder of the second day will be devoted to a discussion about our grantmaking strategies to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. See Tab 6. This session will explore the forces that have created and reinforced the school-to-prison pipeline, focusing on the impact of zero-tolerance policies in schools, the over-reliance on the criminal and juvenile justice system to address youth behavior, and the negative influence of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Based on feedback from Board members, we are experimenting with a new format for this programmatic discussion that is intended to provide the Board with more detailed information about our grantmaking strategies in advance of the panel discussion with outside experts. Geoff Canada will open the discussion by outlining the issue, followed by brief presentations from USP staff about our evolving strategies and current challenges. The Board will then have the opportunity to ask questions of staff members, moderated by Geoff. Following the opening discussion with staff, and a brief mid-morning break, three outside experts will join the conversation. Bryan Stevenson will moderate the discussion, joined by Dr. Margaret Beale Spencer, Department of Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago; Judge Steven Teske, Juvenile Court of Clayton County, Georgia; and Albert Sykes, Young People's Project, Jackson, Mississippi. We expect a lively discussion that will help inform our grantmaking strategies as we expand our support to address this critical problem.

I look forward to seeing you all next Wednesday.