


**U.S. PROGRAMS, STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES FUND (SOF Program Code 21081)**

**Summary of Recommended Grants  
Docket Meeting - October 27, 2009**

| Staff                             | Organization                                                       | Requested           | Recommended       | Term    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------|
| <b>Research &amp; Development</b> |                                                                    |                     |                   |         |
| <b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>         |                                                                    |                     |                   |         |
| Entertainment                     | Culture Project                                                    | \$ 300,000          | \$ 300,000        | 2 years |
| Entertainment                     | Institute for Policy Studies (as fiscal agent for Split This Rock) | \$ 100,000          | \$ 100,000        | 2 years |
|                                   |                                                                    | <b>Recommended:</b> | <b>\$ 400,000</b> |         |
| <b>Rapid Response</b>             |                                                                    |                     |                   |         |
| Entertainment                     | American Journalism Review                                         | \$ 250,000          | \$ 200,000        | 1 year  |
|                                   |                                                                    | <b>Recommended:</b> | <b>\$ 200,000</b> |         |
| <b>Special Initiatives</b>        |                                                                    |                     |                   |         |
| <b>Census</b>                     |                                                                    |                     |                   |         |
| Entertainment                     | National Congress of American Indians                              | \$ 125,000          | \$ 125,000        | 1 year  |
| Entertainment                     | Southern Coalition for Social Justice                              | \$ 150,000          | \$ 150,000        | 1 year  |
| <b>Other</b>                      |                                                                    |                     |                   |         |
| Entertainment                     | National Coalition for Child Protection Reform                     | \$ 100,000          | \$ 100,000        | 2 years |
|                                   |                                                                    | <b>Recommended:</b> | <b>\$ 375,000</b> |         |
| <b>SOF TOTAL RECOMMENDED:</b>     |                                                                    |                     | <b>\$ 975,000</b> |         |

  
Approval Signature

10/27/09  
Date

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Aryeh Neier  
**FROM:** Ann Beeson & Erlin Ibreck  
**DATE:** October 16, 2009  
**RE:** Strategic Opportunities Fund  
October 27, 2009 Docket Recommendations

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The Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) recommends six grants in this docket.

### **Research and Development (R & D)**

There are two grants that fall under this category that relate to the role of arts and culture in advancing social change. The **Culture Project** represents a model approach to using art as a tool to advance a broad spectrum of social justice issues of specific interest and relevance to US Programs, and one that has been successful in that regard. A general support grant will help to build Culture Project's capacity to reach new audiences through deep engagement with the most pressing social issues of the day and through the production of innovative theater that highlights contemporary social and political issues. We expect that longer term support for this project might ultimately be anchored within one of OSI's core funds. **Split This Rock**, on the other hand, is more of an experimental grant to support the use of poetry as a tool to raise public awareness about our issues and to inspire activism. The grant will support the 2010 Split This Rock Poetry Festival, as well as activities related to long-term organizational planning. We see its potential to become an established bi-annual event that can garner ongoing support from other donors.

### **Rapid Response**

SOF set aside a portion of its 2009 budget for rapid response grants related to OSI's interest in addressing the current crisis in journalism. Strategy development is being led by TIF and proposed here is a grant to the **American Journalism Review**. The American Journalism Review's articles documenting the consequences of the crisis in journalism in particular areas of OSI interest will help inform TIF's future grantmaking in this area.

### **Special Initiatives**

Over the past several months SOF has been working closely with the Democracy and Power Fund (D & P) to develop a discrete initiative that aims to increase the accuracy of the 2010 Census among hard-to-count constituencies, and that targets specific states and priority communities for US Programs. The September D & P docket contained our first two recommendations. In this docket we recommend grants to the **National Congress of American Indians Fund** (NCAIF) and the **Southern Coalition for Social Justice** (SCSJ). The grant to NCAIF will support *Indian Country Counts*, NCAIF's campaign aimed at reducing the American Indian and Alaska Native undercount in the decennial census. Through this project, NCAIF will engage tribal citizens in the census process and

educate tribal leaders about the importance of census data related to policymaking and the allocation of federal resources. The grant to SCSJ will support *Why We Count*, SCSJ's census campaign aimed at minimizing the undercount of low-income, racial minority, immigrant, and other traditionally hard-to-count populations in targeted Southern states, including Louisiana and Florida.

Finally, we are recommending a two year grant to support the **National Coalition for Child Protection Reform (NCCPR)**, an organization that has for the past eighteen years been dedicated to making the child welfare system better serve America's most vulnerable children by seeking comprehensive change in the child protective system. In this capacity NCCPR advocates for due process and open court hearings in child welfare cases, while promoting informed media coverage of these cases. OSI has supported this organization with US Programs discretionary funds over a number of years and we now propose a tie-off legacy grant from the Strategic Opportunities Fund.

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                  |           |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b><u>Name of Organization:</u></b>   | Culture Project                                                                                                                                                                  |           |
| <b><u>Tax Status:</u></b>             | 501(c)(3)                                                                                                                                                                        |           |
| <b><u>Purpose of Grant:</u></b>       | General support.                                                                                                                                                                 |           |
| <b><u>FPOS Grant Description:</u></b> | This grant will provide general support to the Culture Project as it builds its capacity to produce innovative theater that highlights contemporary social and political issues. |           |
| <b><u>Previous OSI Support:</u></b>   | \$50,000 (2001 Gideon Project & USP General Fund)<br>\$10,000 (2002 Gideon Project)<br>\$30,000 (2005 SOF)<br>\$30,000 (2007 SOF)                                                |           |
| <b><u>Organization Budget:</u></b>    | \$1,935,000 (FY10)                                                                                                                                                               |           |
| <b><u>Project Budget:</u></b>         | N/A                                                                                                                                                                              |           |
| <b><u>Sources of Support:</u></b>     | World Harmony Alliance, Inc.                                                                                                                                                     | \$375,000 |
|                                       | Lambent Foundation                                                                                                                                                               | \$50,000  |
|                                       | Gould Family Foundation                                                                                                                                                          | \$20,000  |
|                                       | New World Foundation                                                                                                                                                             | \$20,000  |
|                                       | NoVo Foundation                                                                                                                                                                  | \$15,000  |
|                                       | Bloomberg                                                                                                                                                                        | \$10,000  |
| <b><u>Amount Requested:</u></b>       | \$200,000 over two years                                                                                                                                                         |           |
| <b><u>Amount Recommended:</u></b>     | \$300,000 over two years                                                                                                                                                         |           |
| <b><u>Term:</u></b>                   | November 1, 2009 – October 31, 2011 (2 years)                                                                                                                                    |           |

**Description of Organization:**

Since its establishment in 1996, Culture Project has dedicated itself to producing innovative theater that highlights contemporary social and political issues. Culture Project believes in the power of theater as an agent of social change and works to foster the creative growth of artists who are committed to raising awareness through their work. Its theater-journalism model combines the power of provocative storytelling with the rigor and immediacy of investigative reporting. In its thirteen-year history, Culture Project has established itself as a critical meeting ground for journalists, advocates, and activists.

In its off-Broadway theater space located in the heart of lower Manhattan, Culture Project has presented critically acclaimed and award winning shows to sold-out audiences for thirteen years. Culture Project productions have been honored with Drama Desk, OBIE, and Outer Circle Critics awards. They have also been recognized beyond the realm of theater with the Freedom of Expression Award from Amnesty International and the PASS Award from the National Association of Criminal Defenders.

Culture Project was propelled to national prominence early in this decade with its acclaimed production of *The Exonerated*, a unique theater piece that featured monologues culled from the real stories of six former death row inmates wrongfully sentenced to death, exonerated by DNA tests, and then released without apology or compensation – some after decades of detention. OSI supported the production of *The Exonerated* in New York, as well as special productions in Baltimore and Chicago, reflecting the foundation’s longstanding commitment to supporting work that seeks to reform the criminal justice system in the United States.

*The Exonerated* came out at a time when executions in Texas were making national headlines. Through an array of talkbacks featuring leading legal scholars, activists, ethicists, and educators, the production served to elevate the conversation to the national level. Joining hands with activist groups such as the Center for Wrongful Convictions, the Justice Project and the Innocence Project, Culture Project channeled the production’s momentum into a series of petitions addressed to elected officials. On the policy level, *The Exonerated* turned public officials into agents for change. Illinois Republican Governor George Ryan referenced the performance as critical to his decision to commute the sentences of 162 death row inmates in his state.

*The Exonerated* was at the same time a critical and commercial success. The *New York Times* recognized *The Exonerated* as the number one play of the year in 2002. The production was adapted into a film for Court TV featuring Susan Sarandon, Danny Glover, and Brian Dennehy, reaching audiences worldwide. Artists including Mary J. Blige, Gabriel Byrne, Richard Dreyfuss, Mia Farrow, and Robin Williams were among the cast members who rotated the leading roles in the play. This strategy generated ticket sales that allowed Culture Project to sustain a multimillion-dollar advertising and marketing campaign, which made a significant contribution toward the shift in public consciousness about capital punishment. It also allowed Culture Project to commit more than \$1 million from sales toward direct support for the exonerees who were profiled in the production.

Overall, the 18-month run of *The Exonerated* demonstrated Culture Project's ability to attract diverse stakeholders and mobilize audiences, and set the tone for new productions highlighting the politics of immigration, torture, the oil trade, and the Iraq War. Culture Project has continued to build on its success and to refine its innovative model of engaging audiences at the critical intersection of art and action. Highlights include:

- In 2004, it presented *Guantanamo: Honor Bound to Defend Freedom*, shining a light on human rights violations at the U.S. prison camp long before it was widely covered in the mainstream media. Culture Project partnered with the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), the nonprofit legal organization that took the lead in defending Guantanamo detainees.
- Also in 2004, Culture Project and Meryl Streep co-produced *Bridge and Tunnel*, a one-woman show, in which writer/performer Sarah Jones portrayed the lives of thirteen immigrants caught between the allure and reality of life in the U.S. The production ran as a sold-out show for seven months, leading to a Broadway transfer and a special Tony Award for Ms. Jones.
- In 2006, Culture Project commissioned a spectrum of multi-disciplinary artists to create and submit work to *IMPACT: Where Culture and Politics Collide*, a six week festival in theater, film, dance, music, visual art, comedy and debates.
- *My Trip to Al Qaeda* (2007), a solo piece written and performed by Pulitzer-Prize winning author Lawrence Wright, ran for six weeks at Culture Project before going on to sold-out performances at New York’s Town Hall and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. The

production was documented by Academy Award winner Alex Gibney (*No End in Sight*) and is a forthcoming film.

- In 2008, *Betrayed*, written by journalist George Packer, followed three Iraqi translators working for the U.S. military in the Green Zone in Baghdad. A recipient of the Lucille Lortel Award, this Culture Project production was a contender for the Pulitzer Prize.

Currently, Culture Project is coordinating *Blueprint for Accountability*, an 18-month multi-disciplinary series on individual, government, and corporate accountability, which launched in May of 2009 with an opening event that addressed the issue of torture and the politics of prosecuting war crimes. It includes panelists Ron Suskind and General Ricardo Sanchez alongside performers like Liev Schreiber, John Leguizamo, and Julianna Margulies. *Blueprint* will carry on as a monthly series exploring issues such as the economy, criminal justice, immigration, and health care. Organizational partners for the series include the Center for Constitutional Rights, New America Foundation, New York Immigration Coalition, and the International Center for Transitional Justice – all of which are current OSI grantees.

Culture Project is also currently presenting *County of Kings* at The Public Theater. Featured in 2008 as part of The Public's Under The Radar Festival, Lemon Andersen's one-man show weaves hard-edged drama with urban poetry as the Brooklyn-born-and-raised hip-hop artist spins his own coming-of-age memoir. The current production, which is produced by Spike Lee, received a glowing review on October 13, 2009 in the *New York Times*.

In the 2010 season, Culture Project will bring to New York a production of *Swimming Upstream*, slated to open in conjunction with the fourth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. *Swimming Upstream* is an original theatrical production developed by 16 New Orleanian women in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Inspired and coordinated by Eve Ensler of V-Day and Carole Bebel of Ashé Cultural Arts Center in New Orleans (a current SOF grantee), the production premiered at V-Day's 'V to the Tenth' celebration at the Louisiana Superdome in April 2008. An Atlanta production followed at director Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company in November 2008, for a sold-out limited run with a cast that included Phylicia Rashad, Shirley Knight, and Kerry Washington. For the 2010 NYC run, Culture Project is reaching out to survivors of Katrina and Rita who have been relocated to the Northeast and to organizations striving to bring justice to the Gulf Coast, including the Advancement Project.

Founder and Producing Artistic Director Allan Buchman, a longtime faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music, established Culture Project in 1996. Buchman has received numerous honors and accolades for his work at Culture Project, including major awards from the Drama Desk, the Lucille Lortel Awards, and the Champion of Justice Award from the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. He is supported by a dynamic staff that includes Mary Daly, a recognized force in the nonprofit and media world, who has recently come on board to develop Major Donor and Board Development campaigns; and by a dedicated Board of Directors that includes Sarah Jones (Tony Award winning actress and UN Peace Ambassador), Ron Suskind (Pulitzer Prize winner), Michelle Coffey (Director, Lambent Foundation), and Colin Greer (President, New World Foundation).

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

This proposal seeks general support.

**Rationale for Recommendation:**

The Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) is investing in exploratory grants to innovative programs that use arts and culture to empower individuals and communities to advance social change. Our

goal is to raise awareness of the power and potential for art as a tool to advance a broad spectrum of social justice concerns and issues of specific interest and relevance to U.S. Programs. Culture Project locates its work at the intersection of issues that are of critical concern to U.S. Programs: criminal justice reform; government transparency and accountability; and human rights in the context of national security. Across all of these issues, the organization aims to engage an informed, effective, and inspired citizenry. The organization's work can provide a tipping point around these concerns – as evidenced in the case of *The Exonerated*.

Culture Project functions as both a multi-purpose arts organization and a social justice advocacy organization, and serves a critical function in linking the arts and advocacy communities. In this regard, it offers a model as we develop our grantmaking strategies related to arts and social change. Since its establishment in 1996, Culture Project has grown from a small theater serving 12,000 patrons annually to one with a projected audience of 150,000 annually. In 2007, SOF provided a grant to Culture Project to support strategic planning for long-term sustainability. To inform the organization's ongoing development, Founder and Director Allan Buchman assembled an impressive group of advisors and consultants with expertise in individual, public, and foundation funding for the arts, corporate sponsorship, cause-related marketing, special events, and organizational planning. The process yielded a multi-year plan that is guiding Culture Project's programmatic and organizational strategies.

The upcoming year (FY 2010) represents a critical juncture for Culture Project as it expands its campaigns, invites new and innovative partners into the work, and increases its capacity to reach new audiences. It is also of course the most challenging of times from a fundraising perspective. OSI support will help sustain Culture Project's growth and vision, strengthen its organizational infrastructure, and fulfill its highest potential as a meeting place for artists, journalists, activists, advocates, and engaged citizens. The organization is taking important steps towards positioning its work for long-term viability and broad-range impact. As a key strategy, and as it seeks to expand and further engage its audience, Culture Project is employing new media technologies such as podcasting to distribute its content and build the profile of its web-based media, even as it leverages partnerships with mainstream and alternative media outlets including C-SPAN, Link TV, Free Speech TV, Democracy Now!, Altnet, Huffington Post, and Salon.com. Culture Project also works closely with partners at PBS and other broadcast outlets to identify opportunities for adapting its live productions into films. At the same time, the organization is committed to expanding and cultivating the diversity of its live audience by making tickets available at affordable rates. Finally, as Culture Project moves into its 13th season, the organization seeks to establish a \$2 million Production Fund to support future work and to complement long-term planning. The ability to ride the ebbs and flows of erratic box office results by amortizing its successes and failures will be a tremendous benefit to the organization.

An OSI grant to Culture Project will build organizational capacity and will provide meaningful support for this critical cross-issue work. The grant expands SOF's evolving portfolio related to arts and social justice, further informing U.S. Programs' priorities and strategies in this regard.

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b><u>Name of Organization:</u></b>   | Institute for Policy Studies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |          |
| <b><u>Tax Status:</u></b>             | 501(c)(3)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |          |
| <b><u>Purpose of Grant:</u></b>       | To support the Split This Rock Poetry Festival.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |          |
| <b><u>FPOS Grant Description:</u></b> | This grant will support Split This Rock, an organization that seeks to build an audience for socially engaged poetry and to connect poets to community activists. Specifically, this two-year project grant will support the 2010 Split This Rock Poetry Festival, as well as activities related to long-term organizational planning. This is an exploratory grant for the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) and bears no commitment to provide long-term support. |          |
| <b><u>Previous OSI Support:</u></b>   | None                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |          |
| <b><u>Organization Budget:</u></b>    | \$242,771 (FY10)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |          |
| <b><u>Project Budget:</u></b>         | \$235,235                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |          |
| <b><u>Sources of Support:</u></b>     | Busboys and Poets Café (business)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | \$5,000  |
|                                       | CrossCurrents Foundation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | \$10,000 |
|                                       | DC Commission on the Arts/Festivals ( <i>pending</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | \$30,000 |
| <b><u>Amount Requested:</u></b>       | \$100,000 over two years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |          |
| <b><u>Amount Recommended:</u></b>     | \$100,000 over two years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |          |
| <b><u>Term:</u></b>                   | November 1, 2009 – October 31, 2011 (2 years)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |          |

**Description of Organization:**

The Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) is a Washington, DC based organization whose mission is to strengthen social movements with independent research, visionary thinking, and links to grassroots communities, scholars, and elected officials. Since 1963, IPS has empowered people to build healthy and democratic societies in communities throughout the United States and the world.

As Washington's first progressive multi-issue "think tank," IPS has served as a policy and research resource for visionary social justice movements for four decades, from the anti-war and civil rights movements of the 1960s to the peace and global justice movements of the last decade. Today, the organization works to reclaim democracy by collaborating with grassroots movements to foster and sustain long-term change and by linking activists and public officials to pursue the overarching policy goals of peace, justice, and a sustainable environment.

IPS serves as the fiscal agent for Split This Rock, a Washington, DC-based organization whose mission is to foster build the national audience for socially engaged poetry from its home in the nation's capital. Split This Rock seeks a grant to provide project support for its 2010 poetry festival and for its activities related to long-term planning for organizational sustainability.



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

Split This Rock's flagship program is its biannual poetry festival celebrating socially engaged poetry. The inaugural festival was held in March 2008, in Washington, on the fifth anniversary of the Iraq invasion, and was a tremendous success. More than 250 people registered for the full program and well over 1,000 attended at least one of the forty-odd readings and workshop events that took place over four days. Split This Rock attracted significant local participation from the DC community, as well as drawing together a national group of poets, activists, and audience members from as far away as Florida, Maine, and California. The festival featured many of the most celebrated poets of our time, including Jimmy Santiago Baca, Dennis Brutus, Mark Doty, Martín Espada, Carolyn Forché, Galway Kinnell, Semezdin Mehmedinović, E. Ethelbert Miller, Naomi Shihab Nye, Alix Olson, Alicia Ostriker, Ishle Yi Park, Sonia Sanchez, and Patricia Smith.

At the 2008 festival, panel discussions were held on topics such as poetry and activism; poetry and healing from trauma; poetry in prisons; poetry in a culture of war. Local DC poets were engaged alongside national and international writers in community-based venues including Busboys and Poets Café and Bell Multicultural High School. The festival drew national attention in the *Washington Post* and coverage by the BBC, Al Jazeera English, and *Le Monde*. To support the festival, organizers raised almost \$90,000 from individual donors, foundations, government grants, and ticket sales. Mobilizing scores of volunteers, Split This Rock closed its first fiscal year with a surplus, carried over into its second year as organizers established a non-profit and expanded the initiative to year-round programming.

Based on feedback from participants and strategic partners, festival organizers determined to make the festival a biannual event and to lay the foundation of Split This Rock as a national organization that would support ongoing opportunities for poets and audiences to network, build learning, and promote activism informed by poetry of provocation and witness. Since the spring 2008 inaugural festival, Split This Rock has built its organizational capacity by establishing a board of directors and acquiring non-profit status; setting up an advisory committee of national poets; enhancing partnerships with local and national literary and activist organizations; and increasing participation in year-round programming.

In addition to the biannual national festival, Split This Rock also sponsors special events in collaboration with community and social change organizations. Examples include:

- *Sunday Kind of Love*, a monthly poetry reading series hosted by Split This Rock at Busboys and Poets Cafe in Washington's U Street neighborhood.
- In the fall of 2008, Split This Rock collaborated with poets and activists in DC's Arab and Muslim communities to organize a tribute to the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, a reading that filled Busboys and Poets to capacity.
- On June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Split This Rock coordinated a reading with members of the African immigrant community, to mark the international Day of the African Child, which commemorates the 1976 Soweto uprising by young people in South Africa. The event was presented in partnership with Haymarket Books, TransAfrica Forum, Africa Action, and *Foreign Policy In Focus*/Institute for Policy Studies.
- Also in 2009, Split This Rock collaborated with Sol y Soul (an artist-centered organization, also based in DC, that nurtures creative work with a social conscience) to host the second annual *The World and Me* poetry contest, celebrating the work of young people from the DC community.

- In collaboration with IPS (which also acts as its fiscal agent), Split This Rock has begun to host *Poets in the Think Tank*, a reading and discussion series that brings poets to the Institute.

The second biannual Split This Rock Poetry Festival will take place over four days, from March 10-13, 2010. Once again, the festival will offer readings, workshops, panel discussions, youth programming, films, and activism. Twenty-four featured poets are confirmed to participate, including Chris Abani, Cornelius Eady, Martín Espada, Nancy Morejón, Wang Ping, Patricia Smith, A.B. Spellman, Arthur Sze, Quincy Troupe, and Bruce Weigl. Panels and discussions will provide opportunities to assess the role that poetry and poets play in social change and to share strategies for finding and developing an audience for the work, building community, and effectively engaging in the public sphere. For the 2010 festival, Split This Rock has received more than 70 proposals for panel discussions, workshops, and themed readings from poets, activists, and artists from across the country.

Overall, the 2010 Split This Rock Poetry Festival will provide a space for poets to share their approaches to using the arts for social justice work, and to helping others do the same in their own communities. The festival will also provide workshops on utilizing the news media, writing strong op-ed pieces, and using poetry to empower disenfranchised youth and adults.

**Rationale for Recommendation:**

The Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) is investing in exploratory grants to innovative programs that use arts and culture to empower individuals and communities to advance social change. Our goal is to raise awareness of the power and potential for art as a tool to advance a broad spectrum of social justice concerns and issues of specific interest and relevance to U.S. Programs.

Split This Rock approaches poetry as an effective tool for raising public awareness about social issues, including the issues that are of greatest concern to U.S. Programs. On the national level, Split This Rock is unique as the only literary organization dedicated to “poetry of provocation and witness” and the only national festival calling poets to the center of public life. Its relationship to IPS contributes to its capacity by providing access to in-house policy experts and their robust network of activists.

Split This Rock is led by founding co-directors Sarah Browning and Melissa Tuckey, both of whom are award-winning poets, lifelong organizers, and experienced nonprofit leaders. As leaders of DC Poets Against the War, hosts of *Sunday Kind of Love* at Busboys and Poets, and now founders of Split This Rock, they have nurtured and presented the work of hundreds of emerging and established poets over the past seven years. Browning and Tuckey have also studied and written about poetry and the public sphere for a variety of publications. Their work at the intersection of poetry and social change is widely known and results in invitations to read and speak throughout the area and around the country.

Another key member of Split This Rock’s team is Regie Cabico, Artistic Director of partner organization Sol y Soul. A pioneer in the spoken word movement, Cabico coordinates *The World and Me* poetry contest for DC youth and serves as an advisor to the festival. He has a long history of working with at-risk youth in a variety of community settings, and extensive connections in progressive communities of color.

As fiscal agent and provider of office space to Split This Rock, IPS continues to provide strong programmatic and administrative support. With guidance from IPS’ leadership, Browning and Tuckey have established Split This Rock’s own dedicated Board of Directors, that represent a wealth of experience in literary achievement, community activism, business development, and

nonprofit management. They have assembled an advisory committee of acclaimed poets, including Carolyn Forché, nationally prominent advocate of poetry of witness and professor at Georgetown University; Sam Hamill, co-founder of Copper Canyon Press and founder of Poets Against War; Pulitzer-Prize winner Galway Kinnell; poet and critic Alicia Ostriker; Kim Roberts, editor of *Beltway Poetry Quarterly* and co-editor of *Delaware Poetry Review*; and Patricia Smith, National Book Award Finalist, and Pushcart Prize Winner.

The poetry festival is at the heart of Split This Rock's mission, bringing together socially engaged poets, activists, and community members in the nation's capital while raising the visibility and readership of socially engaged poetry. While still quite a new initiative, Split This Rock has already begun to prove itself as a dynamic force for civic engagement, critical dialogue, and social change both in the national arena and in its home base of Washington, DC. Above all, the organization serves a unique function as it seeks to network socially engaged poets, community-based activists, and audiences who are eager to be engaged at this intersection point between art and action.

An OSI grant to Split This Rock will provide critical project support for its 2010 poetry festival and will enable the organization to engage in long-term planning for sustainability. This grant will complement SOF's evolving portfolio related to arts and social justice, further informing the work of U.S. Programs in this regard.

**Name of Organization:** American Journalism Review

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

**Purpose of Grant:** to support a series of at least four major articles on the crisis in American journalism, with a focus on international and investigative reporting, and coverage of federal agencies and state governments.

**FPOS Grant Description:** The American Journalism Review (AJR) will commission at least four major articles on the crisis in American journalism to run in special issues over the course of 2010. AJR will provide detailed coverage of what information a democratic society is missing as a result of severe cutbacks in professional journalism. AJR will focus on areas of particular interest to OSI: the decline in coverage of key federal agencies and departments; coverage of state government; international news coverage; and the decline in investigative reporting.

**Previous OSI Support:** N/A

**Organization Budget:** \$450,000

**Project Budget:** \$250,000

**Other Sources of Support:**

|                     |           |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Display Advertising | \$230,000 |
| Circulation         | \$ 65,000 |
| Ford Foundation     | \$100,000 |

**Amount Requested:** \$250,000 over 1 year

**Amount Recommended:** \$200,000

**Term:** November 1, 2009 – October 31, 2010

**Description of Organization**

American Journalism Review (AJR) is a national magazine that covers all aspects of print, television, radio and online media. The magazine, which is published six times a year, examines how the media cover specific stories and broader coverage trends. AJR analyzes ethical dilemmas in the field and monitors the impact of technology on how journalism is practiced and on the final product. The magazine is published by the University of Maryland Foundation with offices in the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland.

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

This grant will enable AJR to contract with some of the best journalists in the country to develop a special series of at least four major articles on the crisis in American Journalism. AJR will report in detail on what Americans are missing as a result of the dramatic cutbacks in journalism across the country.

AJR will focus on four main coverage areas: the decline in coverage of key federal agencies and departments; coverage of state governments; international news coverage; and the decline in investigative reporting. AJR will publish the first article in this series, on federal agencies and departments, in the March/April 2010 issue.

AJR has tracked news coverage of federal regulatory agencies and commissions since 1999 and has found that almost all of them are either under-covered by journalists or are completely uncovered, except for routine wire service pickup of press releases. In addition to conducting a survey to determine current levels of coverage of key federal agencies and departments, AJR will conduct interviews with government officials, watchdog organizations, and experts on the topics the agencies monitor to understand the consequences of the decline in coverage and to gather particularly illustrative examples. AJR will survey a range of departments and agencies including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration, Department of the Interior, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Homeland Security, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Department of Energy, Social Security Administration, and the Department of Justice, among others.

AJR has periodically assessed statehouse coverage, the second focus area of this series. The latest tally by AJR in 2009 found that the number of reporters covering the nation's 50 statehouses declined over 30% in just six years. AJR will visit statehouses across the country to collect information about what kinds of stories are increasingly ignored, and to describe the consequences.

AJR has also conducted a census of foreign correspondents working for American newspapers from time to time. Foreign coverage will be the third focus area in the series. These surveys, the last of which was done in 2003, showed a steady decline in international reporting. In addition to updating the survey, AJR will interview remaining foreign correspondents to find out what issues and stories they have had to ignore because they are increasingly spread too thinly to adequately do their jobs. AJR will scrutinize the amount of international news in newspapers, network and cable television, and compile a roster of the nation's remaining correspondents. AJR will also investigate the fact that many newspapers do not opt to carry the international news made available to them by wire services such as the AP. AJR will also examine the role of the AP, which retains an extensive international staff, and new initiatives such as GlobalPost, a new online international news service.

The fourth area AJR will examine, investigative reporting, has arguably suffered the most from the deep cuts in reporting staffs at newspapers across the country. AJR will document and measure the extent of cutbacks in investigative reporting. AJR will also assess the contributions of several of the new investigative reporting entities such as

ProPublica and the Huffington Post Investigative Fund, as well as more established nonprofit investigative reporting organizations including the Center for Investigative Reporting and the Center for Public Integrity.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

The Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) and the Transparency and Integrity Fund (TIF) recommend a grant of \$200,000 over one year. SOF set aside a portion of its 2009 budget for research and development related to OSI's interest in addressing the current crisis in journalism. Strategy development is being led by TIF, and the American Journalism Review's articles documenting the consequences of the crisis in journalism in particular areas of OSI interest will help inform our future grantmaking in this area.

Some aspects of the crisis in journalism are very well defined. According to the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, newspaper ad revenues have fallen 23% in the last two years. Pew estimates that nearly one out of every five journalists working for newspapers in 2001 is now gone. We know that across the country, there are now fewer journalists covering specialty beats including health, criminal justice, energy, immigration and other vital areas. However, we don't have as clear an understanding of the consequences of this erosion in professional journalism. AJR's work will contribute to helping the public gain a better understanding of what is at stake if the watchdog function of professional journalism continues to erode.

AJR is particularly well prepared to cover the issues outlined here as it maintains extensive databases on how U.S. news organizations have distributed their staffs over the years in covering international news, Washington D.C., and state governments across the country.

AJR has a circulation of 25,000 and a readership of approximately 62,500. Audience research has determined that AJR reaches a majority of the nation's journalists, including all top news executives. AJR is mailed to every member of Congress. As part of this proposed project, AJR will send the magazine to key columnists, editorial writers, governors, and mayors.

Rem Rieder is editor and publisher of AJR. Rieder, who writes a monthly column in AJR commenting on media issues, has edited the magazine since 1991. Rieder has held senior editing positions at a number of major newspapers, including The Washington Post (deputy metropolitan editor), Miami Herald (national editor and city editor) and Milwaukee Journal (assistant managing editor/news). Rieder has taught journalism ethics, magazine editing and production and advanced public affairs reporting as an adjunct professor at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland.

Gene Roberts will serve as advisor to this project. Roberts has been a professor at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland since 1991, following 18 years as the executive editor of The Philadelphia Inquirer, which won 17 Pulitzer Prizes during his editorship. He took a hiatus from his university work from 1994 to 1997 to serve as managing editor of The New York Times. In 1998, he returned to the College,

where he teaches courses on writing the complex story, the press and the civil rights movement, and newsroom management. He received the National Press Club's Fourth Estate Award for Distinguished Contributions to Journalism in 1993. Roberts, along with co-author Hank Klibanoff (managing editor of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution), won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for History for their book *The Race Beat*.

**Name of Organization:** National Congress of American Indians Fund (NCAIF)

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

**Purpose of Grant:** To support NCAIF's 2010 Census campaign aimed at reducing the American Indian and Alaska Native undercount in the decennial census.

**FPOS Grant Description:** The grant is recommended as part of an initiative coordinated by the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF), in collaboration with the Democracy and Power Fund (D&P), to provide support for organizations that aim to increase the accuracy of the 2010 Census among hard-to-count constituencies. The grant will support *Indian Country Counts*, NCAIF's campaign aimed at reducing the American Indian and Alaska Native undercount in the decennial census. Through this project, NCAIF will engage tribal citizens in the census process and educate tribal leaders about the importance of census data related to policymaking and the allocation of federal resources.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$250,000 from the Transparency and Integrity Fund (TIF) over two years beginning 4/01/2008, to support the Project on the Judiciary.

**Organization Budget:** \$3,890,639 (FY09)

**Project Budget:** \$703,129

**Sources of Support:**

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Ford Foundation           | \$100,000 |
| Kellogg Foundation        | \$40,000  |
| Annie E. Casey Foundation | \$30,000  |

**Amount Requested:** \$125,000

**Amount Recommended:** \$125,000

**Term:** October 1, 2009 – September 30, 2010 (1 year)

**Description of Organization:**

Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is the oldest and largest American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) membership organization, representing the interests of the 562 federally recognized tribes in the U.S. For 65 years, NCAI has been working to inform the public and Congress about the governmental rights of American Indians and Alaska Natives and the ability of tribes to self-govern and engage in their own governmental policymaking. The organization maintains its headquarters in Washington, DC.

As a representative Congress, NCAI is organized to determine consensus on national priority issues. Tribal governments pass resolutions to become members of NCAI, selecting official delegates to three national meetings: the Annual Session at which policy platforms are debated



annually and elections are held every two years; the Executive Council Winter Session which focuses on legislative goals for each Congressional session; and the Mid-Year Session which emphasizes skill-building workshops and serves as host for the annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum.

Overall, NCAI serves to secure for Indian peoples and their descendants the rights and benefits to which they are entitled; to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of Indian people; to preserve rights guaranteed under Indian treaties or agreements with the United States; and to promote the common welfare of American Indians and Alaska Natives. As the major national tribal organization serving AIAN communities, NCAI functions as a forum for guiding progressive policy and advocacy, and for developing and advancing a common vision.

The National Congress of American Indians Fund (NCAIF) is NCAI's 501(c)(3) arm and houses the organization's Policy Research Center (PRC).

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

NCAIF seeks support for *Indian Country Counts*, a comprehensive campaign to reduce the undercount of American Indians and Alaska Natives. The core objectives of the project are to improve the accuracy of data in the 2010 Census count and to engage tribal citizens in the census process through outreach and training. Furthermore, the project seeks to provide ongoing education for tribal leaders about the importance of the census and other federal data to the policymaking process, congressional redistricting, and the allocation of federal resources.

The decennial census is a critical and powerful source of information that significantly influences American policy for the coming decade. Native people have been excluded from or undercounted by the census for generations, up to and beyond 1962, when the last American Indians were granted the right to vote. Native communities today face unique and pronounced challenges in ensuring an accurate population count, particularly for tribal members residing on Native lands. These challenges include:

- *Chronic undercount of American Indians and Alaska Natives:* According to the Census Post-Enumeration Survey, the 1990 Census undercounted American Indians/Alaska Natives by an estimated 12.2 percent on reservations and 4.5 percent in all geographies. A National Academy of Sciences panel concluded that while undercounts among these communities were likely lower in the 2000 Census, the challenges persisted.
- *Language barriers:* There are 155 Indigenous languages and over 350,000 Native language speakers in the United States. The diversity of Native languages and the number of American Indians of limited English proficiency vary throughout Indian Country, but many areas pose specific language challenges, such as in Alaska, whose state population is approximately 20% Native.
- *Unmarked or difficult to find addresses:* On reservations, a significant number of American Indian households are not included in the mail out/mail back operation and instead are enumerated by a list/enumerate process whereby census enumerators visit the reservation or village and collect census information by personal interview. The employment of indigenous enumerators as part of a robust and culturally appropriate outreach campaign is critical to achieving a successful and accurate count.
- *Difficult travel and transportation:* The 104,000 miles of Indian reservation roads represent the most underdeveloped road network in the nation—yet these roads are the primary transportation system for all residents of and visitors to American Indian and Alaska Native communities. More than 65% of the system is unimproved earth and gravel. Challenges of

geography are also significant in that American Indians are more likely to reside in rural areas than any other group.

- *Mistrust of government institutions and efforts*: In surveys of the attitudes of American Indians and Alaska Natives towards the census, respondents often state concerns that personal data collected by the census will be misused or shared with other government agencies. Past governmental efforts at registering or identifying tribal community members are remembered as particularly harmful to Native communities, with data used for the purpose of taking land, relocating a community, or forcefully removing children to boarding schools.

The 2000 Census showed that eight of the ten poorest counties in America are home to Indian reservations. The 2000 Census identified unemployment on Indian reservations at 22 percent, only 3 percent below the national unemployment rate during the Great Depression. Per capita income for American Indians and Alaska Natives living on reservations in 2000 was \$7,942, merely one-third the U.S. average for all races, which was \$21,587. High unemployment coupled with low average income means the poverty rate for Indian families on reservations is 36%, which is two and half times the national average.

Access to accurate and reliable data about Indian communities is a paramount concern as tribes partner with the federal government, state governments, and other allies to address these demographic concerns and to recommend effective policy. In 2003, NCAI took an important step toward addressing the unique challenges of AIAN communities with regard to research and data by establishing its Policy Research Center (PRC) as a culturally specific think tank that plays a significant role in gathering and disseminating critical data. As a project of the PRC, *Indian Country Counts* aims to engage tribal leaders and Native citizens at the local, regional, and national levels, and to educate these stakeholders about the influence that census data has on their everyday lives.

Key project strategies include:

- *Developing the message for outreach*, including education materials that provide tribal leaders and other stakeholders with a clear sense of the utility and importance of census data; branded *Indian Country Counts* promotional materials that can be shared at NCAI conferences and other national, regional and local Indian Country events; and messages for Native and non-Native media at all levels.
- *Coalition-building*, including a peer learning summit with national Indian organizations and non-Native partners to be held at the NCAIF Annual Session and the ongoing activities of the *Indian Country Counts* coalition, a group of Native partners who are coordinating a Census strategy through monthly conference calls and other communications.
- *Community engagement and training*, including in-person and online training events in locations throughout Indian Country; events at NCAI conferences and events; a national Native student art competition to engage youth in the census process, and the expansion of NCAIF's online presence.

As a core component of its community engagement strategy, NCAI will conduct seven regional online census training Webinars to engage local advocates and to equip them with information and materials to educate their communities about the importance of the census. In order to focus more deeply in states with hardest-to-count populations, NCAIF will also conduct three in-person training sessions in the states of Alaska, Montana, and New Mexico. These states have been selected based on the high percentage of their state AIAN population living in hard-to-count areas.

NCAIF will expand its website by creating a unique portal at indiancountrycounts.org to ensure that advocates have access to the most relevant and up-to-date information and resources. Finally, NCAI will host a national Student Art Competition to engage students at the grassroots level in promoting the 2010 Census, acknowledging the critical position that young people play in their families and homes as information-bearers.

**Rationale for Recommendation:**

On occasion, the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) undertakes a special initiative that addresses a time-sensitive opportunity to address an issue of core concern to U.S. Programs. In this instance, SOF has collaborated with the Democracy and Power Fund (D&P) on an initiative to provide support for organizations that aim to increase the accuracy of the 2010 Census count among hard-to-count constituencies.

NCAIF is highly qualified to undertake the *Indian Country Counts* 2010 Census campaign and to serve a lead role in census-related civic engagement throughout the AIAN community. Like other communities of color, many Native citizens mistrust the federal government generally and federal data collection efforts particularly, based on painful lessons learned over generations. Ensuring a successful census in Indian Country requires a trusted messenger. As the oldest, largest, and most representative organization serving AIAN people, NCAI is uniquely equipped for this task. As part of *Indian Country Counts*, NCAI recently published and distributed at its 2009 Mid-Year Session a toolkit for tribal leaders called *The 2010 Census: A Call to Action*, to serve as a policy brief for tribal leaders about the challenges and opportunities presented by census data. This education tool provides a critical and indispensable foundation for NCAIF's broader outreach efforts and messaging work.

The NCAIF Policy Research Center serves as a Census Information Center (CIC) and as such is recognized as an official source of demographic, economic, and social statistics produced by the Census Bureau. NCAIF periodically convenes the other Native CICs to address issues of common concern and coordinate overlapping efforts. The organization has presented numerous conference sessions on data-based policymaking that have addressed census data and included representatives of the Bureau. NCAIF also serves on the 2010 Census Advisory Committee, providing recommendations to the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau from the perspective of the Native community on issues that affect AIAN populations.

In addition to its direct connections to the tribes, NCAI has established relationships with other key partners ranging from the National Indian Health Board to the National American Indian Housing Council and the National Indian Education Association, among many others. The presidents of the executive boards of these organizations often serve as chairs of the respective committee or subcommittee at NCAIF conferences. In this way, the national issue-specific organizations are integrated into NCAIF's policymaking structure. NCAIF also has strong relationships with regional intertribal organizations across the country, such as the United South and Eastern Tribes, Alaska Federation of Natives, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes.

As an extension of the *Indian Country Counts* campaign, NCAI is participating in a partnership with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), and the Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), to conduct outreach to increase awareness and engagement among communities of color in advance of the 2010 Census. LCCREF is a current OSI grantee through general support from

D&P and project support from both the Equality and Opportunity Fund (EOF) and the Transparency and Integrity Fund (TIF).

OSI's support for *Indian Country Counts* through a one-year project grant will lend further capacity to NCAIF as a current grantee (through TIF) and as an anchor organization serving American Indian and Alaska Native communities. This grant will likewise lend momentum to the continuum of advocacy along which NCAI is advancing its crucial work related to civic engagement in some of this country's hardest-to-reach communities.

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b><u>Name of Organization:</u></b>   | Southern Coalition for Social Justice (SCSJ)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |           |
| <b><u>Tax Status:</u></b>             | 501(c)(3)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |           |
| <b><u>Purpose of Grant:</u></b>       | To support SCSJ's 2010 Census campaign.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |           |
| <b><u>FPOS Grant Description:</u></b> | This grant is recommended as part of an initiative coordinated by the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF), in collaboration with the Democracy and Power Fund (D&P), to provide support for organizations that aim to increase the accuracy of the 2010 Census among hard-to-count constituencies. The grant will support <i>Why We Count</i> , SCSJ's census campaign aimed at minimizing the undercount of low-income, racial minority, immigrant, and other traditionally hard-to-count populations in targeted Southern states, including Louisiana and Florida, that are of particular interest to U.S. Programs. |           |
| <b><u>Previous OSI Support:</u></b>   | None                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |           |
| <b><u>Organization Budget:</u></b>    | \$723,920 (FY09)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |           |
| <b><u>Project Budget:</u></b>         | \$265,934                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |           |
| <b><u>Source of Support:</u></b>      | Ford Foundation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | \$175,000 |
|                                       | Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$135,000 |
| <b><u>Amount Requested:</u></b>       | \$150,000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |           |
| <b><u>Amount Recommended:</u></b>     | \$150,000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |           |
| <b><u>Term:</u></b>                   | November 1, 2009 – October 31, 2010 (1 year)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |           |

**Description of Organization:**

The Southern Coalition for Social Justice (SCSJ) is a full-service public interest advocacy organization working in partnership with community-based organizations across the southern region of the United States. SCSJ was founded in August 2007, in Durham, North Carolina, by a multi-disciplinary group of advocates, predominantly people of color, whose experiences in social justice activism and professional work related to organizing in the South led them to conclude that community-based organizations did not have ready access to effective legal representation.

The mission of SCSJ is to promote justice by empowering minority and low-income communities to defend and advance their political, social, and economic rights. Using the combined skills of lawyers, social scientists, community organizers, and media experts, SCSJ supports underrepresented people to develop community-building strategies and to link their efforts to broader processes of political, legal, social, and economic change in the U.S. South. To this end, SCSJ plays a critical role for its constituents and partner organizations in the region by providing legal advice and representation in carrying out litigation and non-litigation advocacy; supporting efforts related to organizing and capacity-building; supporting the development of effective

media strategies to advance social justice goals; and coordinating community-based participatory research.

A key two-part strategy for SCSJ is to participate in existing regional networks that address critical issue areas, and at the same time to begin building a network of state-based community organizations that are pursuing a community lawyering model in the South. SCSJ designs its program work in response to the needs and priorities of its network partners and their communities, cutting frequently across issue areas that include voting rights, immigration reform, environmental justice, community sustainability, and criminal justice.

SCSJ's Executive Director, Anita Earls, is a civil rights attorney with more than 20 years experience working on issues of structural racism, voting rights, and community empowerment. Ms. Earls is an adjunct professor at the University of North Carolina School of Law, where she previously she served as Director of Advocacy for the Center for Civil Rights. She has also served at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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

SCSJ seeks support for *Why We Count*, a comprehensive campaign to ensure that traditionally undercounted communities in targeted regions of the South are accurately counted in the 2010 Census. It is well-documented that certain populations are more likely to be missed in the census, including racial minorities and immigrants. The consequences of such undercounting are significant and long-lasting, manifesting in at least four key impact areas over the course of a subsequent decade:

- The distribution of federal funds for programs and services, most notably Medicaid;
- The reapportionment of seats in Congress and the redrawing of district lines for governing bodies;
- The implementation of state funding formulas and state laws that govern based on population size;
- Decision-making at local levels, by public and private entities, that affects the provision of services such as roads, schools, parks, libraries, retail establishments, and transit services.

*Why We Count* seeks to reach hard-to-count populations in five Southern states: Virginia, North Carolina, Louisiana, Florida, and Georgia. OSI funding will be used to enhance and sustain outreach efforts in the latter three of these states. SCSJ will focus its outreach efforts in the regions of these states with the highest percentage of population in areas that rank high on the Census Bureau's hard-to-count scale. Using a "bottom-up" approach that builds upon community-led outreach efforts and is informed and supported by the work and resources of national advocacy organizations, SCSJ will work with partners in each state to develop appropriately targeted messages; engage locally relevant messengers; conduct election-protection type monitoring of local census bureau efforts to prevent an undercount; and build the capacity of local advocacy organizations.

As a core strategy, SCSJ will map and network across the organizing and advocacy communities in each of its five target states, collaborating with partner organizations to provide general census information and develop targeted messages. SCSJ will also administer a mini-grant program that supports local groups to develop unique outreach programming that engages constituents in the enumeration effort. By working closely and directly with local communities and providing them specific information about the impact of the census undercount on their communities, SCSJ has

positioned the *Why We Count* campaign to be highly effective in encouraging the participation of hard-to-count communities in the 2010 Census.

SCSJ's long-term objectives for *Why We Count* are to address inherent and structural biases against low-income, racial and ethnic minority, immigrant, and migrant worker populations in the delivery of public and private services that occur when they are undercounted; and to educate community-based organizations and other advocacy groups about the impact of the census on redistricting. Moreover, SCSJ seeks in this effort to support sustainability for advocacy efforts in the region by building the capacity of community-based organizations dedicated to civic engagement and social justice work in the five target states, and across the South.

**Rationale for Recommendation:**

On occasion, the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) undertakes special initiatives that address a time-sensitive opportunity to impact a core US Programs concern. In this instance SOF has collaborated with the Democracy and Power Fund (D&P) on an initiative to increase the accuracy of the 2010 Census count by providing support for organizations that aim to engage hard-to-count constituencies. This grant to SCSJ to support its *Why We Count* census campaign in targeted Southern states furthers the joint goals of SOF and D&P in regard to this initiative.

Under the leadership of Anita Earls, and in the two years since its launch as a regional advocacy organization serving the U.S. South, SCSJ has established itself as a critical partner working in coalition with state-level advocacy organizations and with local community-based organizations. SCSJ is remarkably well positioned with these two sets of constituent-partners to advance an effective census outreach campaign in its five target states. Within the scope of the *Why We Count* campaign, SCSJ will engage a third constituency: non-profit service-based or civic organizations that have contact with the populations that are typically missed, including homeless shelters, domestic violence groups, aid agencies, and community centers.

SCSJ understands – in part from its work with migrant farm workers and in the defense of undocumented immigrants – that invisibility of these constituencies facilitates oppressive and exploitative practices against them. Thus, ensuring that every person is counted directly serves the organization's mission of empowering minority and low-income communities and ending structural inequities. The 2010 Census presents a critical opportunity for SCSJ, through its *Why We Count* campaign, to broaden its network of community-based organizations across racial lines and state boundaries and to forge working relationships with a greater number of partners.

SCSJ will lend critical capacity to local organizations across the region related to its census outreach effort. Support from OSI will fund SCSJ to hire an Organizing Coordinator based in New Orleans and to expand its mini-grant program to support a cohort of grassroots groups engaged in census outreach work and advocacy at the neighborhood level, which is where much of the critical work will happen in this region. This grant also advances D&P's strategy to support state-based groups to build power and affect lasting change. Three of the five states beyond Louisiana in which SCSJ will be engaged in census outreach are possible D&P priority states for 2010 grantmaking: Virginia, North Carolina and Florida.

We therefore recommend a one year grant to support SCSJ's *Why We Count* 2010 Census campaign.

**Name of Organization:** National Coalition for Child Protection Reform

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

**Purpose of Grant:** to provide general support

**FPOS Grant Description:** The National Coalition for Child Protection Reform is dedicated to making the child welfare system better serve America's most vulnerable children by seeking comprehensive change in the child protective system. In this capacity NCCPR advocates for due process and open court hearings in child welfare cases, while promoting informed media coverage of these cases. OSI has supported this organization with US Programs discretionary funds over a number of years and now proposes a two year tie-off legacy grant from the Strategic Opportunities Fund.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$50,000 Presidential Grant 2008  
\$300,000 SOF/US Programs 1998 – 2004

**Organization Budget:** \$100,000

**Project Budget:** N/A

**Major Sources of Support:** Atlantic Philanthropies  
Annie E. Casey

**Amount Requested:** \$100,000 over 1 year

**Amount Recommended:** \$100,000

**Term:** 2 years (1/1/10-12/31/11)

**Description of Organization**

The National Coalition for Child Protection Reform (NCCPR) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to making the child welfare system better serve America's most vulnerable children by seeking comprehensive change in the child protective system. In the fall of 1991, Elizabeth Vorenberg, a former deputy commissioner of Public Welfare in Massachusetts, former deputy director of the Massachusetts Advocacy Center and, at the time, a member of the national board of the ACLU, convened a conference at Harvard Law School in an attempt to find a way to counter the assaults on efforts to keep families together and the harm those assaults were inflicting on children. The result of the conference was the creation of NCCPR, an organization committed to seeking comprehensive change in the child protective system. It does not seek this change because the system hurts parents, but because the system hurts children. NCCPR's hope is to turn the public monologue about child abuse into a dialogue.

NCCPR fights for these children on several fronts – as a clearinghouse about best practices in child welfare for grassroots activists around the country, as a source of technical assistance for reform-minded administrators in child welfare systems nationwide, and as a source of rapid response to help shape public opinion in the wake of attacks on reform that follow high-profile child abuse



tragedies. NCCPR fights for a system in which resources now squandered on needless foster care and institutionalization are spent instead on the concrete help families need to live together safely. NCCPR fights for fundamental due process for families caught up in child welfare systems and is the reason for their strong advocacy for greater openness and accountability in juvenile and family courts. The relatively few states that have opened their courts repeatedly have proved the value of transparency.

For example:

--In Lebanon, Tennessee, the juvenile court judge issued a shocking ultimatum to impoverished immigrant parents: learn English or lose your children forever. A reporter for the *Lebanon Democrat*, (Circulation, 7,236) was in court when the judge issued one of those orders. He wrote a story which was noticed by a newspaper in Nashville which then contacted NCCPR. The story spread nationwide and was covered in the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*. The Southern Poverty Law Center intervened for the parents. The children were returned, and the judge was censured.

--In Pittsburgh, opening juvenile courts helped build support for the efforts that have turned the local child welfare system into a national model.

--Exposure of dreadful conditions in family courts in New York City improved provision of defense counsel to indigent families, allowing more children to remain safely in their own homes. New York's former Chief Judge, Judith Kaye, put it best when she ordered family courts open in that state stating that "Sunshine is good for children."

Working closely with the University of the District of Columbia School of Law, NCCPR plans to increase its advocacy on behalf of opening court hearings in child maltreatment cases.

In poor neighborhoods, fear of child protective services is a daily fact of life. It is a reasonable fear. The normal protections of due process of law taken for granted in other aspects of American life do not apply in child welfare. Homes can be searched and children can be strip searched without a warrant, children can be taken from their homes without a court order, indigent families often have no right to an attorney, the standard of proof at most proceedings is merely "preponderance of the evidence" and, in most states, all court hearings are secret. In other spheres, similar infringements on civil liberties have prompted the progressive community to mobilize. But when the topic is child abuse, many progressives make an exception. That exception has done enormous harm to children. NCCPR believes in civil liberties without exception. All of the problems in the system are compounded by racism. African American children make up only 12.3 percent of the total child population – yet they are 38 percent of America's foster children. One study found that when caseworkers are given identical hypothetical cases, they are more likely to rate a child as "in danger" if the family is described as African-American.

NCCPR's principal funder over the past years has been the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which has alerted NCCPR that it should not expect continued funding next year. In 2006, Casey gave \$80,000. In 2007, that went down to \$75,000. This year it was \$70,000. NCCPR has made it through each year that Casey has cut back by stop gap efforts, such as a one-time payment for legal fees from *Nicholson v. Scopetta*, a major case won in New York concerning wrongfully removing children from mothers who were victims of domestic violence; through board member and other donations; a small grant from the Child Welfare Fund, and dipping into non-grant funds that have built up over nine years.

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

This grant will provide general operating support to NCCPR.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

OSI has been one of the few consistent supporters of NCCPR through discretionary funding. While NCCPR's work does not fit within US Programs priority areas, its unique role in advocating for due process and open court hearings in child welfare cases, and promoting informed media coverage of these cases, is consistent with OSI's open society mission. However, it is unlikely that US Programs will continue indefinite support to this organization. The Strategic Opportunities Fund, which reserves some of its funds for legacy grants, is therefore recommending that we provide a two year tie-off grant to NCCPR.

NCCPR is a small organization that is dedicated to reforming the child welfare system, acting as a clearing house for best practices in child welfare; providing technical assistance to progressive child welfare leaders; mobilizing allies when highly publicized child abuse cases threaten punitive policies that will only exacerbate systemic failings; filing amicus briefs in major child welfare cases; and joining forces with grassroots family advocacy organizations to help strengthen their efforts to transform child welfare at the state and local level. NCCPR's board of directors includes some of the most knowledgeable experts in the nation including Ira Burnim, former Legal Director of the Children's Defense Fund who now holds that job with the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law; Ruth White, former Director of Housing and Homelessness for the Child Welfare League of America; and Professor Dorothy Roberts of Northwestern University Law School. Roberts is the author of the definitive book on child welfare and race, *Shattered Bonds, the Color of Child Welfare* (Basic Civitas Books: 2002). NCCPR's President is Professor Martin Guggenheim, former director of Clinical and Advocacy programs at New York University Law School. The background of NCCPR's Executive Director, Richard Wexler, is in journalism - 19 years as a practitioner, and three as a professor. He spent much of that time covering child welfare issues that culminated in the publication of *Wounded Innocents: The Real Victims of the War Against Child Abuse*. The legal expertise of NCCPR's Board has allowed them to support cutting-edge litigation, including a class-action lawsuit that stopped the City of New York from taking children from their mothers just because those mothers had been beaten by husbands or boyfriends, and an *amicus* brief in the case of *Ferguson v. City of Charleston, South Carolina*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the jailing of mothers and automatic removal of their newborn children as a result of a single positive test for drugs.

Over the past decade, NCCPR has built a track record as an authoritative source of analysis, advocacy and action on child protective services system failings from a progressive perspective that few organizations of their size can match. At this time, NCCPR is faced with cycling out of grantmaking portfolios of their reliable funders. Fundraising has been a constant struggle for this organization because their work does not fit squarely within many funders' priorities. In an effort to support the ongoing work of this organization and to provide them with sufficient time to garner new sources of support, we propose a final two year general support grant.