SOF Blurbs for Ann Beeson's Approval – May 2010

Creative Change 2010, a project of **The Opportunity Agenda**, is a retreat-style convening for artists, organizers, cultural workers, and grantmakers engaged at the intersection of arts and social justice. The proposed August '10 convening in New Mexico builds upon the work of Creative Change 2009, which brought together more than fifty artists and advocates and launched The Opportunity Agenda's Arts + Culture Initiative. Designed to move the social justice sector towards greater innovation and to create a channel through which artists can connect with advocates, the Initiative serves as a catalyst for inspiration and action, incubating new ideas, relationships, and opportunities to move beyond traditional modes of organizing and activating constituencies.

SOF is recommending a $25,000 renewal project grant to The Opportunity Agenda to support the participation of artists and organizers at Creative Change 2010.

SilenceIsViolence is a project of the **New Orleans Bayou Steppers Social Aid and Pleasure Club**, an organization founded in 2000 to promote, preserve, and celebrate the music and culture of New Orleans, especially as embodied in the tradition of the Second Line.

New Orleans Bayou Steppers launched SilenceIsViolence as a campaign in 2007 in response to the back-to-back murders of New Orleans artists Dinerral Shivers (Hot 8 Brass Band) and Helen Hill (independent filmmaker). The project's core strategies around public safety advocacy include: engagement of young people in addressing public safety and criminal justice reform; solidarity-building across diverse New Orleans communities; and intervention within the public school system. The overarching approach is to advance community advocacy around public safety by engaging young people in arts and culture activities that are rooted in local traditions.

SOF is recommending a $40,000 renewal project grant to the New Orleans Bayou Steppers to support the SilenceIsViolence project's core activities in 2010.

Youth Rights Media, a former USP Youth Media grantee, grew out of a project developed and piloted by students at Yale University and Yale Law School in the summer of 2000. YRM incorporated in 2002 with founding support from the Youth Media Program and has since engaged hundreds of New Haven teens in producing social change media and implementing advocacy campaigns that have reached thousands and generated tangible reforms in Connecticut's justice and education systems. YRM builds youth leadership and power by engaging them in community organizing and media production so that they are equipped with tools, skills, and strategies for affecting change within themselves and their communities. YRM achieves this mission through three core programs: the Media Lab, where youth learn to produce public service announcements and documentaries to raise awareness about issues in the education and justice systems; the Youth Organizing Initiative, where youth use media to launch public awareness and action campaigns; and the Summer Institute which builds young people's political education, leadership and organizing skills.

YRM is now seeking OSI support during a new stage of its growth. After leading the organization for eight years, YRM's founding Executive Director, Laura McCargar, is stepping down to take up a recently awarded Soros Justice Fellowship. The request is for a grant to support:

1) coaching and consulting support to assess and address organizational development needs during the transition;
2) salary support to cover the costs associated with a 1-2 month overlap period to train and orient the incoming director; and 3) hiring a consultant to work with the new organizational leadership to develop a strategic plan for YRM's future work.

SOF is recommending a $25,000 legacy grant for the coaching and consulting support necessary for ensuring a successful transition