

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


**Summary of Recommended Grants
Docket Meeting - November 23, 2009**

Staff	Organization	Requested	Recommended	Term
<u>Legacy</u>				
Erlin	National Association of Urban Debate Leagues	\$60,000	\$60,000	1 year
			Recommended:	\$ 60,000

<u>Special Initiatives</u>				
Census				
Erlin/Tim	Centro por la Justicia (as fiscal sponsor for) Southwest Workers Union	\$100,000	\$125,000	1 year
Erlin/Tim	Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund	\$100,000	\$100,000	1 year
Erlin/Tim	Miami Workers Center	\$125,000	\$150,000	1 year
Erlin/Tim	New York Community Trust	\$75,000	\$75,000	1 year
Erlin/Tim	Public Interest Projects - Census Community Outreach Fund	\$165,000	\$220,000	1 year
			Recommended:	\$670,000

<u>No Child Left Behind Act Reauthorization/Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline</u>				
Erlin/Jane	Advancement Project	\$ 230,200	\$ 230,000	1 year
Erlin/Monic	Education Law Center & Juvenile Law Center	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	1 year
Erlin	Forum for Education & Democracy	\$ 600,000	\$ 200,000	1 year
Erlin/Lenny	NAACP - Legal Defense and Educational Fund	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	1 year
Erlin	National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest)	\$ 200,000	\$ 110,000	1 year
			Recommended:	\$ 940,000

SOF TOTAL RECOMMENDED: \$ 1,670,000


Approval Signature

Nov 23, 2009
Date

MEMORANDUM

TO: Aryeh Neier
FROM: Ann Beeson, Erlin Ibreck
Cc: Monique Dixon, Leonard Noisette, Jane Sundius, Bill Vandenberg
DATE: November 17, 2009
RE: Strategic Opportunities Fund – November 23, 2009 Docket
Recommendations

We look forward to meeting with you on Monday, November 23 to discuss grant recommendations that are being jointly presented with the Democracy and Power Fund (D & P) in the case of the census recommendations, and with OSI-Baltimore and the Criminal Justice Fund in the case of the School-to-Prison Pipeline (STPP) recommendations.

Census

On occasion, the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) undertakes special initiatives that address a time-sensitive opportunity to impact a core U.S. 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. Our funding strategy has prioritized specific work in Louisiana, Florida, and Texas, which are current USP priority states and have a high level of critical hard-to-count constituencies. The **Miami Workers Center** (FL), **Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund** (TX, LA) and **Southwest Workers Union** (TX) are trusted messengers in their target communities and are more likely to ensure fuller participation in the census of populations that would otherwise not be counted in these target states.

Also included in our recommendations is funding for the **Census Community Outreach Fund** at the Public Interest Projects (PIP), which is supported by the Ford Foundation and has targeted local groups located in six states: California, Florida, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina and Texas. PIP seeks support to expand the work of the Outreach Fund into Louisiana. Initially, the Outreach Fund will explore potential partnerships with grassroots groups in the New Orleans area including: Moving Forward Gulf Coast; Advocates for Environmental Human Rights; Louisiana Justice Institute; Voice of the Ex-Offender (led by former Soros Justice Fellow Norris Henderson); and the Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association. These groups are doing critical work that is of ongoing interest to USP.

The final grant in this cluster is to support the **2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative** which is based at the New York Community Trust. This collaborative fund was established by the Trust, New York Foundation, and other foundations that are pooling resources and working in close cooperation with NYC 2010 Census and the New York Department of State to support nonprofit organizations engaged in outreach to hard-to-count communities in New York City with a particular focus on reaching Black and Latino males in the census count, and a further emphasis on increasing the count in public housing communities. The two lead foundations in the 2010 Census Funders NYC

Initiative are The New York Community Trust and the New York Foundation, both of which have prior experience in supporting census-related activities. This collaborative provides an opportunity for OSI to join forces with local colleague funders to make a significant impact on efforts by local organizations to increase the accuracy of the count in the City's hardest to count neighborhoods.

School-to-Prison Pipeline

Following the September OSI board discussion that explored the forces that are fueling the school-to-prison pipeline, the Strategic Opportunities Fund, in its research and development capacity, worked in collaboration with OSI-Baltimore, the Criminal Justice Fund and the Campaign for Black Male Achievement to develop an RFP to support efforts that highlight the linkages between the *No Child Left Behind* version of the Education and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the school-to-prison pipeline. We see this as a timely opportunity to bring the issue of the school-to-prison pipeline to the forefront of the 2010 debate about the ESEA reauthorization. The groups recommended for support will use advocacy, organizing, education and communication strategies to engage a broad set of policy makers and other stakeholders.

Two of the organizations we are recommending – the **National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest)** and the **Forum for Education and Democracy** – both focus on shifting education policy away from low-quality tests and punitive accountability rules that create intense pressure to narrow curriculum, undermine school climate, and push students out back to a focus on student learning. They are both important partners in this initiative, given the networks they each have in the education reform arena and their existing partnerships with organizations like the Advancement Project and NAACP-LDF. The **Education Law Center (ELC)** has worked since its inception to address and eliminate issues of school discipline and exclusion in Pennsylvania's schools. In its education reform efforts, the Center partners with a network of Pennsylvania-based organizations, including the **Juvenile Law Center (JLC)**, which is a long-time grantee of OSI and an expert in juvenile justice field. For this STPP initiative, ELC will work in partnership with JLC and will thus re-grant a portion of the requested funding.

The **NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund** has long been a leader in responding to the STPP crisis for nearly a decade. In 2005, LDF published "Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline," a seminal study of the policies and practices that push students from our country's schools to its criminal justice system. Since the 2005 report, LDF has maintained a national voice in the growing dialogue about these problems, and has engaged with grassroots advocates to confront particular local problems as well.

The final recommendation is to the **Advancement Project (AP)** - the pre-eminent national organization focused on defining, analyzing, highlighting and dismantling the School-To-Prison Pipeline. Its decade of local, state and national work has made it a leader among educational justice organizations, due to its deep content expertise and the comprehensive, supportive advocacy strategies it employs to help its community partners. Since its inception, AP has consistently proved itself to be an effective advocate and partner, substantially reducing the suspension, expulsion and school-based arrest rates in each community in which it has worked. AP is therefore well placed to serve in a coordinating role for OSI's STPP grantees. They will help to leverage each organization's expertise and strengths, to reinforce organizational relationships and combined efforts, coordinate communications strategies, develop shared policy priorities,

support each other's efforts on key issues as needed, and work efficiently together throughout the grant. To this end, AP plans to organize a full-day meeting with partners in December 2009 to share plans and develop a coordinated work strategy for the next year.

Legacy

On occasion, SOF recommends grants that build on significant past U.S. Programs' investments and leverage them for the benefit of a particular field. **The National Association for Urban Debate Leagues** is recommended for a grant to support more extensive research that analyzes the impact of debate on student achievement. OSI has already invested significant resources in this flagship organization which was seen from the outset as our legacy to the urban debate field. Support for further data analysis and outreach that communicates existing and future research findings to a variety of constituents will support NAUDL's overall goal to generate a better understanding of the significance and role of urban debate in urban education and to communicate those findings to a variety of stakeholders thus further strengthening the urban debate movement. We regard this as a one-time investment that will help to improve the sustainability, quality, and scale of the entire Urban Debate Network.

We look forward to the meeting, and welcome any comments or questions ahead of time that you would like us to address.

<u>Name of Organization:</u>	National Association for Urban Debate Leagues
<u>Tax Status:</u>	501(c)(3) public charity
<u>Purpose of Grant:</u>	To strengthen the base of scientific research examining the effect of participation in debate leagues.
<u>FPOS Grant Description:</u>	The National Association for Urban Debate Leagues (NAUDL) was initially launched with OSI support in 2002 to serve as the national leadership association of the Urban Debate Network. In this capacity, NAUDL has dramatically expanded access to debate programs for urban youth. This grant is being proposed as a one year tie-off legacy grant from the Strategic Opportunities Fund.
<u>Previous OSI Support:</u>	\$815,000 from Youth Initiatives, Urban Debate Program (2002-2005)
<u>Organization Budget:</u>	\$957,258
<u>Project Budget:</u>	\$217,512
<u>Major Sources of Support:</u>	Ford Foundation National Educational Association Individual Donations
<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$60,000 over 1 year
<u>Amount Recommended:</u>	\$60,000
<u>Term:</u>	1 year (11/1/09-10/31/10)

Description of Organization

The National Association for Urban Debate Leagues (NAUDL) was created in 2002, with support from OSI, to serve as a national clearinghouse for best practices and as a support center and movement leader for the 18 Urban Debate League sites across the country. For eight years U.S. Programs played a lead role in building the Urban Debate movement and founded NAUDL as the national leadership organization. When U.S. Programs ended the Urban Debate Program in 2005, we provided a bridge grant that supported NAUDL in defining its mission and developing its current organizational structure. These investments have helped NAUDL develop a talented staff; a highly engaged Board of prominent leaders; and a strategy for promoting the sustainability, scope, and quality of urban debate leagues.

There are currently 24 urban debate leagues that are based in the nation's largest cities. While NAUDL continues to work with urban school districts interested in bringing debate to their schools, it has framed a ten-year goal for the Campaign for Urban Debate to answer the need for innovative education programs that close the achievement gap.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

Urban Debate Leagues have emerged across the United States as a highly effective solution to the challenge of ensuring that urban youth have the skills they need to thrive in a democratic society.

The National Association for Urban Debate Leagues (NAUDL) serves as the national leadership organization of the Urban Debate Network. In this role, NAUDL dramatically expanded access to debate programs for urban youth since the organization was established in 2002.

This year, an independent team of academic researchers at the University of Michigan, in conjunction with the Chicago Public Schools and the Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, conducted the most comprehensive and rigorous study of urban debate to date. Their research¹ finds that recurrent participation in policy debate positively influences scholastic achievement among African American male students in the urban setting; producing significant benefits on such metrics as graduation rates, grade point average, college and career readiness, and secondary literacy. NAUDL now seeks to develop the Scientific Research on Urban Debate initiative in order to foster scientific analysis of the data generated through this study and to create a better understanding of the value of Urban Debate Leagues (UDLs).

The overall goal of the Scientific Research on Urban Debate initiative is to generate a better understanding of the significance and role of urban debate in education and to communicate those findings to stakeholders in academic, policy, and public realms. Within this context, the initiative centers on two key priorities:

- Support further data analysis by Dr. Briana Mezuk and her research colleagues at the University of Michigan in order to facilitate the publication of peer-reviewed, academic manuscripts on the effect of urban debate on high school graduation rates, college readiness, civic engagement, literacy, and other indicators of achievement.
- Communicate existing and future research findings to a variety of constituents, including policy makers, education leaders, private investors, and the general public.

Urban Debate Leagues throughout the country are helping urban public schools improve achievement as they offer students the opportunity to work in teams, to practice research skills, and to present complex government policies backed by evidence. By extending learning time and fostering academic skill, curiosity, and engagement among urban students in the lowest-performing schools, UDLs improve graduation rates, enhance college-ready literacy and English language skills, and increase the odds of post-secondary success.

These leagues also serve some of the lowest-performing schools in the nation. According to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, approximately 2,000 high schools produce half of our nation's drop-outs and more than 75% of our minority drop-outs. Students attending these low-performing schools consistently perform far below the national averages in key academic achievement measurements. The schools most affected by these challenges educate about one quarter of American students including 40% of the nation's students of color and 30% of low-income students.

NAUDL has launched a "Campaign for Urban Debate" to help address these crucial needs in urban education through the expansion of urban debate. The Campaign will communicate to policy and decision makers and the public the value of urban debate in helping low-achieving students graduate from high school and prepare for college and careers. As a strategic endeavor to demonstrate urban debate's potential for increasing student achievement at scale, the Campaign seeks to improve the sustainability, quality, and scale of the entire Urban Debate Network.

Rationale for Recommendation

The proposed grant to support NAUDL's Campaign for Urban Debate is being recommended by the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) as a legacy grant. On occasion, SOF recommends grants

¹ *Urban Debate and High School Educational Outcomes for African American Males: The Case of the Chicago Debate League*: Briana Mezuk, Univ. of Michigan. *The Journal of Negro Education: A Harvard Quarterly Review of Issues Incident to the Education of Black People*. Vol. 78, Summer 2009, No. 3

that build on significant past U.S. Programs' investments and leverage them for the benefit of a particular field. The Campaign's proposed focus to support more extensive research that analyzes the impact of debate on student achievement also advances the goals of the Campaign for Black Male Achievement since preliminary research results have shown that black males do better academically through debate participation.

NAUDL has demonstrated that it works in a strategic manner, focusing its resources on professionalizing practitioners, building movement and site capacity and sustaining leagues. The NAUDL has filled a void by creating powerful, much-needed products and services, including the highly developed website, promotional materials and well-run, meaningful events. It has become the organization that groups look to for help on all fronts, from administration to fundraising. They are able to dispense TA to sites based on a concrete and comprehensive understanding of the best practices among leagues and based on the understanding of the unique needs of each site. In addition to providing thoughtful, complete responses to sites, NAUDL has successfully become the leadership body of the National UDL movement, forging ahead with movement-building activities that could not be performed by individual sites. In launching the Campaign for Urban Debate NAUDL is creating a more extensive advocacy effort that aims to create supportive policy environments, promote better public understanding of debate, and demonstrate urban debate's potential for increasing student achievement at scale. The NAUDL will use the Campaign to build a stronger scaffold of Local Education Agencies (LEAs), private parties, and UDL alumni and participants that support urban debate, in order to aid efforts to increase the number of high-performing, sustainable UDLs nationwide and recognition of urban debate's track record as a rigorously reviewed, evidence-based academic intervention

OSI has already invested significant resources in this flagship organization which was seen from the outset as our legacy to the urban debate field. Support for further data analysis and outreach that communicates existing and future research findings to a variety of constituents will support NAUDL's overall goal to generate a better understanding of the significance and role of urban debate in urban education and to communicate those findings to a variety of stakeholders thus further strengthening the urban debate movement.

We recommend a one year grant of \$60,000 to support this important Campaign for Urban Debate.

Name of Organization: Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)

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

Purpose of Grant: To support outreach for the 2010 Census.

FPOS Grant Description: 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 MALDEF's census outreach campaign aimed at minimizing the undercount of Latinos and other traditionally hard-to-count populations in Texas and Louisiana.

Previous OSI Support: \$375,000
\$275,000 from Emma Lazarus Fund (1997-2000)
\$100,000 from U.S.J.F. (2008-2009)

Organization Budget: \$5,810,213

Project Budget: \$218,186

Major Sources of Support: *NB:* The sources of support listed here are funding MALDEF's national census work. OSI support is recommended explicitly for the work of MALDEF's Southwest Regional Office and its activities in Texas and Louisiana.

Ford Foundation	\$600,000
Public Welfare Foundation	\$200,000
Joyce Foundation	\$150,000
California Community Foundation	\$100,000

Amount Requested: \$100,000 over one year

Amount Recommended: \$100,000 over one year

Term: One year, beginning November 1, 2009

Description of Organization

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) is a leading nonprofit Latino legal organization focusing on litigation, advocacy and educational outreach. Founded in 1968, MALDEF has its headquarters in Los Angeles and regional offices in Atlanta, Chicago, San Antonio, Sacramento and Washington, D.C. The organization fosters sound public policies, laws and programs to safeguard the civil rights of the 50 million Latinos living in the United States and to empower the Latino community to fully participate in our society in all areas, from education and employment to voting and other civil rights.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

This grant supports MALDEF's census outreach efforts in Texas and Louisiana, states selected by the Strategic Opportunities Fund and the Democracy and Power Fund for census grantmaking.

MALDEF has a long history as a leader in the arena of census education and outreach. Because of its successful outreach campaign in 2000, the United States Census Bureau has already enlisted MALDEF's assistance in convening stakeholders to discuss strategies for reducing the undercount. Since August 2008, MALDEF has held monthly meetings with representatives from labor, Congressional offices, local elected officials, the U.S. Census Bureau, complete count committees, and community-based organizations representing Asian and Latino immigrants, African Americans, and others.

In the coming months MALDEF will greatly expand these efforts in underserved areas of Texas and Louisiana. MALDEF's community outreach campaign will focus on distributing educational materials to hard-to-count populations both in counties with high hard-to-count scores as well as in counties with large Latino populations. In addition, MALDEF will distribute training materials to community-based organizations to help them to spread the message to Latinos about census participation.

More specifically, the MALDEF Southwest Regional Office in San Antonio will work to ensure an accurate Census count in the upcoming 2010 census by employing a three-pronged strategy for effective outreach, education, and mobilization, including:

- (1) Accessing and partnering with grassroots entities (non-profit groups, social service providers, community associations, and faith-based organizations) that have direct and daily contact with hard-to-count populations;
- (2) Partnering with leaders, such as elected officials, business leaders and agencies to raise the profile and increase message dissemination; and
- (3) Broadcasting bilingual promotional information (English and Spanish) via radio, television, and internet and at large-scale events. Collaboration with grassroots organizations having face-to-face and daily contact with hard-to-count Latino families will likely be the most effective means of assuring respondents that the census is safe and confidential.

MALDEF's target demographic of Latinos is a critical constituency that requires significant outreach in order to ensure an accurate count. Latinos are the fastest growing minority group in the United States. By 2050, Latinos are expected to double in size to comprise 30% of the United States population. From April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007, the Latino population in the United States grew by 29%. During the same period, the non-Latino population grew by just 4%. The Latino population is growing rapidly in both Texas and Louisiana; the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the Latino population grew by 33% in Texas and 38% in Louisiana between 2000 and 2008.

Rationale for Recommendation

On occasion, the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) undertakes special initiatives that address a time-sensitive opportunity to impact a core U.S. 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 MALDEF to support its census outreach campaign in the targeted states of Texas and Louisiana furthers the joint goals of SOF and D&P.

The full participation of Latinos in the census is critical as the census will determine how more than \$300 billion in government spending will be allocated to state and local governments for schools, hospitals, businesses and government services. Additionally, an accurate census count is critical for redistricting legislative seats and for reapportionment and is the basis for creating districts that provide Latinos with political representation at the local, state and national levels.

Yet, while the census is critical to a community's power, both politically and financially, there are several challenges to counting Latinos, especially those in Texas and Louisiana. Many Latinos

live in areas that are unincorporated, including colonias. These areas present a challenge to the census both in terms of developing an accurate address file as well as conducting effective outreach. Rural areas along the U.S. Mexico border are characterized by a lack of general information about programs like the census and are also linguistically and culturally isolated. Recent events along the Texas-Mexico border have exacerbated the challenges of a full census count. For example, an estimated 10,000 Mexicans have fled drug violence in Juarez by using their border crossing cards to move to El Paso. They are living with relatives on the U.S. side of the border, often doubled-up and without authorization to stay in the United States.

In Louisiana, which experienced an influx of Latino immigrant workers in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the Mexican immigrant population more than doubled from 2000 to 2006 (130.6 percent, from 9,321 to 21,496). With few social service organizations serving Latinos, and little information in their language, Latino immigrants in Louisiana are preyed upon by unscrupulous employers. Additionally, because so many immigrants in New Orleans are reluctant to report crime, the New Orleans Police Department announced formally in September that it would not inquire into the immigration status of crime victims or witnesses.

Led by civil rights lawyer Nina Perales, Southwest Regional Counsel, MALDEF is well positioned to increase the accuracy of Latinos in the 2010 census in Texas and Louisiana. Ms. Perales specializes in voting rights litigation, including redistricting and vote dilution challenges, and successfully argued before the U.S. Supreme Court in *LULAC v. Perry*, a Latino vote-dilution challenge to the 2003 Texas congressional redistricting plan which resulted in a ruling by the Court that the redistricting plan violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965. MALDEF's sophisticated understanding of census and redistricting issues, coupled with the trust Latinos place in the organization, qualify it as a critical grantee for OSI's census initiative.

We are pleased to recommend this grant \$100,000 grant for MALDEF's 2010 Census outreach campaign.

Name of Organization: Miami Workers Center

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

Purpose of Grant: To support outreach for the 2010 Census.

FPOS Grant Description: 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 the Miami Workers Center's 2010 Census outreach campaign aimed at minimizing the undercount in Florida.

Previous OSI Support: N/A

Organization Budget: \$1,065,871

Project Budget: \$245,000

Major Sources of Support:

Ford Foundation	\$50,000
Right to the City Alliance	\$50,000
French American Charitable Trust	\$50,000

Amount Requested: \$125,000 over one year

Amount Recommended: \$150,000 over one year

Term: One year, beginning December 1, 2009

Description of Organization

The Miami Workers Center (The Center), based in the Liberty City area of Miami, is a strategy and action center whose purpose is to advance the self-determination of South Florida's most marginalized communities and build a progressive platform that can nurture the growth of movements for social change in Florida and in the United States. The Center works to achieve this mission through constituency-building, integrated voter engagement, grassroots organizing and education, public policy research, communications geared to shifting public debate and values, and training and leadership development among the people most affected by poverty, racism, and gender and sexual oppression.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

Since 2000, the population of the United States is estimated to have grown by more than 25 million people. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 25% of that growth is estimated to have taken place in two states: Florida and Texas. This grant supports The Center's robust census outreach campaign aimed at increasing participation in hard-to-count areas of Florida.

The Center's census campaign is a statewide effort that will take place in collaboration with the Florida Immigrant Coalition, the national Right to the City Alliance, Advancement Project, and other state and local allies. More specifically, in January 2010, The Center will launch a census education and mobilization campaign in key metro regions of the state: South Florida (principally Dade County), Orlando, Tampa, and possibly Jacksonville. The campaign will have two primary components: a canvass field operation, and an education and awareness campaign.

Intensive training and orientation of canvassers will be conducted in late February and early March, and the canvass operation will begin in mid-March 2010. The Center expects to canvass 30,000 to 40,000 households in person in the target areas. Door-to-door canvassing will also be supplemented with phone banking. The immediate goals of the canvassing will be to educate and encourage residents in the hardest to count urban zones to complete census forms. Additionally, the Center will gather household and voter data and seek to recruit new organization members during this process, thereby building its capacity for its longer-term civic engagement work.

The education and awareness arm of the campaign will involve establishing alliances in targeted metro areas. Funding permitting, The Center will make mini-grants to designated organizational partners to conduct community festivals in each metro area between March 1st and May 1st, 2010. Festivals will involve food, cultural activities, entertainment, and education and awareness activities that focus on the need for Black and immigrant people to be counted in the census and receive their fair share of resources that are distributed based upon census data. Additionally, through a robust communications strategy that reaches into ethnic media markets, The Center expects to indirectly impact 250,000 (or more) individuals.

Rationale for Recommendation

On occasion, the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) undertakes special initiatives that address a time-sensitive opportunity to impact a core U.S. 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 the Miami Workers Center to support its census outreach campaign in Florida furthers the joint goals of SOF and D&P.

Florida was selected as a priority state for U.S. Programs census grantmaking based on a number of factors. Florida has historically suffered extreme census undercounts, and is the fourth most populous state. In fact, Florida was the fastest growing state until the economic crisis of 2008. It has been hit hard by the recession with a near collapse of its real estate market and has seen its growth curve flatten dramatically as a result. Nowhere, arguably, is the impact of the current recession on the census greater than in Florida. Taking into account indicators of the recession in housing, jobs, civic engagement, and health care, Florida was recently named by as the state most impacted by the current recession (followed closely by Nevada and Michigan).

The Center is well positioned to impact the Florida count because it brings a very sophisticated civic engagement model to its census outreach work. For example, in 2008, in little more than three months, The Center recruited three dozen low-income community canvassers who registered more than 4,000 new African American, Latino, and Haitian voters, knocked on more than 14,000 doors in targeted low turnout districts, and engaged close to 4,000 new and infrequent majority minority voters. In recognition of its bilingual voter registration efforts, which were the product of a partnership between The Center and Democracia-USA, a Democracy and Power Fund grantee, The Center was awarded the prestigious Capital Award for Public Service.

By building on its successful voter engagement work, The Center has the potential to successfully engage Florida's low-income and minority residents in the 2010 Census. Because The Center is rooted in the community and is a trusted partner, it can impact the census accuracy in parts of the state where 75% of residents are low-income, Black/African American, Latino, biracial, and have limited English proficiency. Indeed, through our due diligence we have identified no other indigenous organization with the potential to touch so many people of color through a sophisticated grassroots and media campaign.

The Center is led by Gihan Perera, a nationally recognized social justice movement leader, organizer, and strategist. Perera sits on the Advisory Committee of the Philanthropic Initiative for

Racial Equity and the Board of Directors of the local chapter of the ACLU. He is also a graduate of the Rockwood Leadership Program, a Democracy and Power Fund grantee.

Once on track to add up to three congressional seats based on its population gains, Florida may now net only one or two seats, but it will be close. In fact, a 1% difference in the count will determine whether the state gains a seat in Congress. The Center has the most sophisticated state-based census outreach plan that we've seen, and it is poised to have considerable impact in increasing the count of communities of color, immigrants, and working people in Florida. We are pleased to recommend this grant for \$150,000 to support The Center's 2010 Census campaign.

Name of Organization: Public Interest Projects

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

Purpose of Grant: To support outreach for the 2010 Census.

FPOS Grant Description: 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 the Census Community Outreach Fund, which in turn is making grants to grassroots organizations in Louisiana that are working to promote an accurate count in the 2010 Census.

Previous OSI Support: \$7,930,000
\$5,675,000 from U.S. Justice Fund (2003-2009)
\$1,655,000 from U.S. Programs (2001-2009)
\$150,000 from Presidential Grants (2008)
\$425,000 from Law & Society (2001-2003)

Organization Budget: \$26,513,439

Project Budget: \$670,000

Major Sources of Support: Ford Foundation \$450,000

Amount Requested: \$165,000 over one year

Amount Recommended: \$220,000 over one year

Term: One year, beginning December 1, 2009

Description of Organization

Started in 1983, Public Interest Projects (PIP) is a 501(c)(3) public charity that operates grantmaking, technical assistance, and strategic planning programs for institutional and individual donors interested in social justice and human rights. PIP currently manages six donor funds involving more than 100 funders from a range of philanthropic institutions as well as individuals. These include the U.S. Human Rights Fund and the Four Freedoms Fund, both of which are current OSI grantees (through the Strategic Opportunities Fund and the Equality and Opportunity Fund, respectively). PIP also serves as fiscal sponsor to over 17 initiatives that are closely aligned with its overall mission, including the Funders Committee for Civic Participation (FCCP), which is a current OSI grantee (through the Democracy and Power Fund and Strategic Opportunities Fund).

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

PIP's Census Community Outreach Fund provides direct grants to community/grassroots groups that are conducting census outreach in hard-to-reach communities, located in states of interest specified by PIP donors. Through its six collaborative and partner funds dedicated to social justice and human rights issues, PIP has developed a working relationship with a broad range of local groups across the country, and the Outreach Fund has taken advantage of this relationship to identify and assess groups engaged in census outreach. The Outreach Fund (supported by the Ford Foundation) has approved or is finalizing grant awards to local groups located in six states: California, Florida, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina and Texas. PIP seeks support from

OSI's Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) to expand the work of the Outreach Fund into Louisiana.

As the nation approaches next year's constitutionally-required decennial census, the Census Bureau faces the daunting challenge of achieving a full and complete count of all persons residing in the United States. Historically, the Census Bureau has undercounted America's most vulnerable population groups: racial minorities, immigrants, children, and the poor, leading to inequality in political power, access to publicly-supported services, and private sector investment in communities where these population groups live and work.

Through due diligence and close collaboration with regional grantmakers and other stakeholders, PIP has invited proposals from local groups that demonstrate:

- A track record of organizing in specified hard-to-count communities.
- Capacity to mobilize community partners, volunteers and staff on campaign-specific goals.
- An ability and willingness to share outreach plans, strategies and targets with community partners to avoid duplication of efforts in the field.
- History of collaboration with national networks/campaigns and adapted nationally-developed outreach strategies and materials for local use in a culturally-sensitive manner.
- Track record of working effectively with public officials, pressuring them when necessary to fulfill their mandated obligations and responsibilities as they relate to community needs.
- Recognition as a trusted voice/advocate in the community.
- Positive working relationship with mainstream and ethnic media to advance community interests.
- Knowledge of and prior experience working on census outreach activities.
- Familiarity with and/or associated with current census outreach efforts led by national organizations/networks.

PIP has worked conscientiously with local census funders to identify geographic areas and communities with the greatest needs for census outreach support and to mutually address gaps in funder support. In California, for example, PIP is collaborating with Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees' California Immigrant Integration Initiative, the California Endowment, and Silicon Valley Community Foundation to complement and maximize the impact of funder census outreach support in the state. PIP also is working closely with the 2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative (led by the New York Foundation and the New York Community Trust) and the Long Island Census Outreach Collaborative (led by the Hagedorn Foundation) to avoid funding duplication, ensure maximum coverage, and identify and support grantees most closely aligned with the Outreach Fund's priorities. Linking national and local efforts to pursue coordinated strategies is one of the strengths of PIP's partnership with grantees. PIP is actively encouraging Outreach Fund grantees to work closely with national organizations and networks engaged in census outreach.

The Outreach Fund seeks to expand census outreach support to local groups working in Louisiana to engage members of hard-to-count population groups in the decennial census. With support from OSI, the Outreach Fund will target six parishes – Orleans, East Baton Rouge, Caddo, Lafayette, Terrebonne and Lafourche – home to nearly 55% of Louisiana's hard-to-count population, or 467,670 individuals who are ethnic/racial minorities, low-income, immigrants, children and/or displaced Katrina victims.

Rationale for Recommendation

On occasion, the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) undertakes special initiatives that address a time-sensitive opportunity to impact a core U.S. 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 the Census Community Outreach Fund to expand its grantmaking to Louisiana furthers the joint goals of SOF and D&P.

The U.S. Census Bureau openly acknowledges that it has to develop partnerships with community-based groups in order to engage hard-to-count populations. Effective partnerships can help address looming factors in 2010 Census outreach efforts such as: the significant growth of hard-to-count populations; the displacement of families due to the housing/economic crisis and natural disasters, like Hurricane Katrina; and the escalating fear of government within immigrant communities. The philanthropic community has the opportunity to be an active partner in census outreach by providing support for community-based groups to target members of hard-to-count populations.

Louisiana has been selected as a priority state for U.S. Programs census grantmaking based on a number of factors. The state is home to a diverse population base comprised of many of the communities of greatest concern to OSI, including victims of Hurricane Katrina, the working poor, young children, and immigrants. In total, Louisiana is estimated to have nearly 875,000 residents considered by the Census Bureau to be in the hard-to-count category – which is 20% of the state's population. OSI has made considerable investments in Louisiana over time, including long-running work in the criminal justice arena; rapid response grants to local organizations in the wake of the 2005 hurricanes and levee failures; and the Katrina Media Fellowship that supported journalists and media makers who documented the experiences of residents in the aftermath of the storms.

Initially, the Outreach Fund will explore potential partnerships with grassroots groups in the New Orleans area, including: Moving Forward Gulf Coast; Advocates for Environmental Human Rights; Louisiana Justice Institute; Voice of the Ex-Offender (led by former Soros Justice Fellow Norris Henderson); and the Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association. These groups are doing critical work that is of ongoing interest to OSI. However, they are operating on small budgets and with limited capacity in terms of staffing and organizational resources. The Outreach Fund has the expertise to reach these groups at a level that is appropriate to their size and capacity. In addition, through due diligence and feedback from aligned funders and key stakeholders in Louisiana, the Outreach Fund will identify additional New Orleans and non-New Orleans area groups, based in the targeted parishes, as potential census outreach grantees.

Without a doubt, the work of achieving a full and complete count for the 2010 Census will be a challenge, especially in Louisiana as it approaches the first decennial census since Katrina. OSI's support for the Census Community Outreach Fund will enable PIP to support and partner with community and grassroots groups in Louisiana. This in turn will enable OSI to have an impact on reducing the undercount of targeted population groups in this region of critical concern to U.S. Programs. We therefore recommend a grant of \$220,000 to support this important effort.

Name of Organization: The New York Community Trust

Tax Status: 501(c)(3)

Purpose of Grant: To support the 2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative.

FPOS Grant Description: 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 contribute to a collaborative fund established by The New York Community Trust, the New York Foundation, and other foundations that are pooling resources to support nonprofit organizations engaged in outreach to hard-to-count communities in New York City with the goal of increasing the accuracy of enumeration in the 2010 Census.

Previous OSI Support: \$4,840,000 since 1996, including: the Fountain of Youth Project; Neighborhood 2000 Fund; Partnership for Family Supports and Justice; Fund for New Citizens.

Organization Budget: \$11,588,000 (FY09)

Project Budget: \$300,000

Source of Support: The New York Community Trust \$100,000
 New York Foundation \$75,000
 Durst Foundation/Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors \$25,000
 Public Interest Projects \$25,000

Amount Requested: \$75,000

Amount Recommended: \$75,000

Term: November 1, 2009 – October 31, 2010 (1 year)

Description of Organization

Founded in 1924, The New York Community Trust is the community foundation of the New York metropolitan area. The Trust is an aggregate of funds created by charitable individuals, families, and businesses to improve the quality of life for all the area’s residents. Grants made from these funds meet the changing needs of children, youth, and families; aid in community development; improve the environment; promote health; assist people with special needs; and support education, arts, and social justice. In 2008, the Trust had \$1.5 billion in assets and awarded \$168 million in grants, including \$35 million in discretionary grants. Lorie Slutsky has served as President of The Trust since 1990.

The Trust is the largest private funder of New York City nonprofits. In addition to making grants to a broad range of nonprofit agencies, The Trust is a respected convener of the philanthropic community in New York, responding to urgent problems in the City by bringing people together and working with other funders. Current collaboratives include: the Donors Education

Collaborative Fund, a joint grantmaking effort that supports advocacy for public education reform; New York City AIDS Fund, a consortium of foundations and corporations that provides a coordinated approach to AIDS grantmaking; and the Fund for New Citizens, a grantmakers collaborative to assist the City's immigrants.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

The New York Community Trust seeks support for the 2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative, a collaborative fund established by the Trust, New York Foundation, and other foundations that are pooling resources and working in close cooperation with NYC 2010 Census and the New York State Department of State to support nonprofit organizations engaged in outreach to hard-to-count communities in New York City.

The goal of the collaborative is to increase the accuracy of enumeration for New York City residents 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.

For large and diverse urban areas like New York City, there are serious obstacles to securing an accurate count, including: language and cultural barriers among different ethnic and racial groups; enumerators who are unfamiliar with the city's far-flung neighborhoods; residences that house more than one family; and mistrust of the government, despite laws protecting the privacy and confidentiality for Census respondents. Often the general public simply lacks a basic awareness about the Census and how it is used.

The two lead foundations in the 2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative are The New York Community Trust and the New York Foundation, both of which have prior experience in supporting census-related activities:

- In 1999, in preparation for the 2000 census, The Trust provided a \$30,000 grant to the New York City Planning Department to document inaccuracies in the Census Bureau's address list, using canvassing and supplemental databases such as phone records and utility bills and resulting in the addition of some 370,000 households to the address list. City officials have cited this grant as an important factor in erasing an estimated half million persons undercount from the 1990 census, thereby enabling the City's official 2000 Census population count to top the 8 million mark.
- The Fund for New Citizens, a collaborative housed at The Trust, made small grants in 1999 totaling \$61,000 to 16 organizations in support of census-related education, outreach, and direct assistance in immigrant neighborhoods.
- New York Foundation made \$175,000 in grants to organizations working to do outreach and education in preparation for the 2000 Census, targeting communities and constituencies that are historically undercounted. These organizations included the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, Medgar Evers College, New York Citizens Committee, Alianza Dominicana, and a number of smaller

groups, who were able to develop informational materials, organize door-knocking campaigns and community events, and mobilize residents throughout the city to participate in the Census.

Building on their combined grantmaking impact from the 2000 Census, The Trust and New York Foundation determined to establish the 2010 Census NYC Funders Initiative as a collaborative effort to support grantmaking related to community outreach and education for the 2010 Census. Other partners in the collaborative include Durst Foundation/ Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors and Public Interest Projects' Census Community Outreach Fund. The collaborative has received a verbal commitment for an unspecified but substantial contribution from an anonymous donor, amount to be determined based on the number of quality responses to the request for proposals. Furthermore the New York State Department of State – which has an allocation of \$2 million statewide for 2010 Census outreach and plans to award approximately \$400,000 to New York City-based groups – has also agreed to collaborate with the initiative.

The collaborative circulated an RFP in September to 150 organizations across the City with capacity and expertise in civic engagement and community organizing, and received more than fifty proposals from groups in all five Boroughs. Proposals are being reviewed currently, and the collaborative plans to make grantmaking decisions and announce awards by early December.

The 2010 Census Funders Census Initiative is co-chaired by Joyce Bove, Senior Vice President at The Trust, and Maria Mottola, Executive Director of New York Foundation. Patricia Swann, Senior Program Officer at the Trusts, is serving as project director for the initiative.

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 The New York Community Trust to support the 2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative further advances the joint goals of SOF and D&P in regard to this effort.

Census counting in New York City is incredibly difficult, and response rates have chronically lagged behind the national average. Housing is one key factor, with New York taking the national lead in the volume of multiunit housing. In addition to this, New York City is home to more or less every group that is statistically least likely to mail back a census questionnaire: young singles, African-American men, hundreds of thousands of public-housing residents, and an evolving mix of immigrants. According to Stacey Cumberbatch, New York City's census coordinator, there are currently three million foreign-born people living in New York – which is more than one-third the City's population, 600,000 of whom have arrived since 2000. ("Census: The Hard Task of Counting New Yorkers", NPR Morning Edition, June 4th, 2009)

The 2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative stands to make a significant impact on efforts by local organizations to increase the accuracy of the count in the City's hardest to count neighborhoods. With a focus on supporting outreach to Black and Latino men and a targeted focus on New York's public housing communities, the initiative is gearing its grantmaking efforts strategically to groups positioned to reach these critical constituencies. In September, the initiative circulated its census RFP to 150 organizations across the five Boroughs of New York, and received more than fifty proposals. This indicates that organizers and advocates in New York are poised and ready to take action with regard to their census campaigns and to ensure that their communities are counted – and that the funding collaborative is positioned to make a substantial impact on these efforts by providing coordinated and timely funding as well as access to training and resources. The New York Community Trust and New York Foundation are ideally positioned to lead this important effort, given their combined local expertise, their history of successful

collaboration in philanthropy, and their century-long commitment to supporting New York's most underrepresented communities.

We therefore recommend a grant in the amount of \$75,000 over one year to The New York Community Trust to support the 2010 Census Funders NYC Initiative.

Name of Organization: Centro por la Justicia/ Southwest Workers' Union

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

Purpose of Grant: To support outreach for the 2010 Census.

FPOS Grant Description: 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 the Southwest Workers' Union's *Cuentanos Bien* census outreach campaign, aimed at minimizing the undercount of Latinos and African Americans in Texas.

Previous OSI Support: N/A

Organization Budget: \$525,000

Project Budget: \$126,118

Major Sources of Support:

Marguerite Casey Foundation	\$100,000
Ford Foundation	\$100,000
J. Smith Noyes Foundation	\$25,000
Energy Action Coalition	\$40,000

Amount Requested: \$100,000 over one year

Amount Recommended: \$125,000 over one year

Term: One year, beginning November 1, 2009

Description of Organization

Centro por la Justicia is the fiscal sponsor for the Southwest Workers' Union (SWU). SWU is an organization of low-income workers and families, community residents, and youth, united to advance worker rights, environmental justice, and community empowerment. Based in San Antonio, Texas, SWU empowers and organizes its 3,000 members through education, leadership development, and direct action. Its aim is to build multi-generational grassroots power to create sustainable systemic change for social, economic, and environmental justice and to build the movement for dignity and justice.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

The grant supports SWU's *Cuentanos Bien* 2010 Census outreach campaign that combines direct grassroots outreach, mapping, and trainings to increase the count of Latinos and African Americans in Texas.

More specifically, SWU will target identified hard-to-count districts in the City of San Antonio, City of Hondo, and the Mexican border counties of Hidalgo, Starr, Willacy, and Cameron for a grassroots door-to-door campaign. These districts are highly impoverished and are over 95% people of color. The border areas are predominantly rural regions populated by new immigrants living in unincorporated *colonia* communities. SWU has extensive civic engagement experience in these regions and has already identified many of the homes without addresses or on nameless streets on which to target its outreach campaign.

SWU is developing bilingual flyers, posters and outreach materials, especially targeting the Latino and immigrant communities to counter a recent census boycott by a Latino Evangelical group and to encourage census participation. Beginning in January, organizers and volunteers will begin the process of targeting community centers, churches, neighborhood associations, flea markets and homes to educate the community about the census process, its importance, and how to complete the forms. SWU will organize several community art events to highlight the importance of the census and increase community awareness. This strategy will work in tandem with targeting media outlets, particularly Spanish media, to demystify the census process and demonstrate engagement by trusted community partners.

In a unique partnership known as the South x Southwest Experiment, SWU will work with Mississippi-based Southern Echo to map block-by-block the hard-to-count neighborhoods in various parts of Texas. These maps improve the ability of community members and public officials to hone their census outreach. Southern Echo has the experience and expertise to create maps at street level of hard to count areas. These maps utilize the most recent data to create high resolution maps at a much smaller scale than those traditionally produced.

In addition to mapping, the partnership with Southern Echo is aimed at increasing the count of African Americans in Texas. SWU will conduct “train the trainers” workshops in African-American communities in San Antonio, Houston, Austin and Dallas. These trainings will focus on the importance of participation in the census and overcoming the existing mistrust of government officials to ensure that everyone is counted. Trainers will receive a one-day intensive training that will prepare them to conduct outreach to neighborhood organizations and church groups. The trainings are designed to be replicated with partner organizations, such as neighborhood associations and churches.

Rationale for Recommendation

On occasion, the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) undertakes special initiatives that address a time-sensitive opportunity to impact a core U.S. 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 the Southwest Workers’ Union to support its census outreach campaign in Texas furthers the joint goals of SOF and D&P.

Texas was selected as a priority state for U.S. Programs’ census grantmaking based on a number of factors. It is a long-time priority state for U.S. Programs, ranking only behind California as the state with the highest number of people living in “hard to count” areas. Texas is also projected to have the biggest change in reapportionment with the potential to add four seats to its Congressional delegation. And the growth in population for Texas consists mostly of Latinos and African Americans – priority communities for U.S. Programs.

Through our due diligence we have identified SWU as one of the only organizations positioned to employ grassroots outreach to both Latinos and, through its partnership with Southern Echo, African Americans. SWU is rooted in the community, which will prove vital to influencing people to trust the government and participate in the census. SWU’s members are approximately 75% Latino, 10% African-American, 5% Asian, 5% indigenous and 5% Caucasian. Three-fifths of the members are women, 15% are youth under 20, and over 75% live below the poverty line.

In addition to proper mapping, training and education, having “boots on the ground” is key to improving the census count. SWU will run a traditional grassroots campaign that places canvassers in the field to increase the accuracy of the census in areas that are most likely to experience undercounts. Again, through our due diligence we identified SWU as one of the only groups with the reach and expertise to run this type of census campaign in Texas.

SWU is ably led by Genaro Rendon, an experienced community organizer and alumni of the Rockwood Leadership program, a Democracy and Power Fund grantee. Rendon's census team consists of two experienced immigrant organizers; with this grant SWU will hire four additional community leaders to assist in the door to door work.

We are pleased to recommend this \$125,000 grant for SWU's *Cuentanos Bien* 2010 Census outreach campaign.

Strategic Opportunities Fund - 11/23/09 Docket

Name of Organization: Advancement Project (www.advancementproject.org)

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

Purpose of Grant: to support its work on the “Dismantling the School-to-Prison-Pipeline Project”

FPOS Grant Description: This grant is recommended as part of an initiative coordinated by the Strategic Opportunities Fund to support work that seeks to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions and arrests in public schools in effort to dismantle the school to prison pipeline. This grant will support Advancement Project’s *Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track Project* to expand the network of grassroots organizations working on these issues, to support local campaigns, and influence the debate around the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Previous OSI Support:

Total:	\$3,925,000	
Program on Law and Society	\$1,360,000	2000-5
U.S. Programs, General	\$50,000	2002-3
Governance and Public Policy	\$150,000	2002-3
CJI Policy and Research	\$150,000	2002-5
Racial Justice Initiative	\$600,000	2005-10
The After Prison Initiative	\$200,000	2005-7
Strategic Opportunities Fund	\$550,000	2006-8
Progressive Infrastructure	\$400,000	2006-8
OSI-B/Education and Youth Dev.	\$65,000	2007-8
Transparency and Integrity	\$400,000	2008-10

Organization Budget: \$5,097,300

Project Budget: \$244,800

Source of Support: Atlantic Philanthropies

Amount Requested: \$230,200

Amount Recommended: \$230,000

Term: January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010

Description of Organization:

The Advancement Project (AP) is a national civil rights organization that employs a mix of advocacy, community organizing, communications efforts, litigation, and public policy reform to help build a fair and just multi-racial democracy in America. Founded ten years ago by veteran civil rights lawyers, AP has grown to a staff of more than 30 attorneys, advocates and communications experts with a budget of over \$5 million annually. The organization is co-directed by Judith Browne-Dianis and Penda Hair; Browne-Dianis is also a Board member of FairTest and a Convener of the Forum for Education and Democracy (both also slated for OSI support). AP has offices in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles, California. The Advancement

Project works in three core programmatic areas: (1) Power and Democracy; (2) Strategic Initiatives; and (3) Opportunity to Learn.

The Opportunity to Learn Program has targeted educational justice issues, including school desegregation, special education, high-stakes testing, and school construction. It is most widely known, however, for its decade-long effort to expose the school-to-prison pipeline and the negative consequences of punitive school discipline policies. AP highlighted the disproportionate effect that these policies have on youth of color and boys, in particular. It was also the first organization to shine a light on the increasing use of police and courts by schools to handle what were once typical student disciplinary matters. As is characteristic of its programmatic work, AP's operating strategy has been to build a grassroots movement to address local, institutional and structural barriers that exclude youth from school. Working with community-based partners, it has provided legal and policy research, advocacy, litigation, and communications strategies to organized communities to help them diagnose and address the policies and practices at play in local settings. AP has worked in many cities, including Baltimore, Maryland; Denver, Colorado; Chicago, Illinois; and Palm Beach County, Florida. In each location, its built relationships with community groups and school officials, helped to reform disciplinary policies, and advocated for increased prevention and intervention resources. In Baltimore and Denver, for example, AP was the primary drafter of new student conduct policies. Denver's new policies have been called the most progressive in the nation; in their first year of use, Baltimore's new code lowered school suspensions by more than a third.

AP has also worked to extend and connect the lessons learned through its "on-the-ground" work related to state and national policy reform efforts. In addition to its 2000 National School Discipline Summit, AP partnered with the Harvard Civil Rights Project to publish *Opportunities Suspended: The Devastating Consequences of Zero Tolerance and School Discipline*. Over the course of the next ten years, AP has continued to publish major reports detailing how school discipline policies push students out of school and into the juvenile justice system. It has also created www.stopschoolstojails.org, a website that contains information about the pipeline and local campaigns, and supporting *Action Kits* to help parents, youth, advocates, and educators address the schoolhouse-to-jailhouse track locally.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought:

In October U.S. Programs issued a Call for Proposals to a discrete number of non-profit organizations that work to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions and arrests in American public schools. OSI developed the RFP to capitalize on the opportunity to educate a broad audience about the connection between the School-to-Prison Pipeline and public school policies that will present itself during the public debate about the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2010. AP was one of the invitees and is requesting funds to engage in a multi-pronged, coordinated advocacy effort to:

1. launch a national campaign that connects the school-to-prison pipeline to school discipline and school accountability policies and is supported by its local partners, grassroots organizations and local, state and national educators and policymakers;
2. inform the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization debate;
3. spotlight the disparate impact of school discipline policies through Title VI filings;
4. eliminate educational policies and practices that result in the over-criminalization of young people and, especially, males and youth of color; and,
5. coordinate the work of OSI's grantees under this RFP to dismantle the School-to-Prison Pipeline (STPP).

To accomplish these objectives, AP plans to build on three of its education and organizing efforts that it has scheduled to begin in January 2010. The first of these is its Stop-Schools-To-Jails Action Camp, which provides intensive training for up to 70 grassroots organizations nationwide.

The second is a partnership effort with the Forum for Education and Democracy and the Alliance for Educational Justice, where AP will host a 15-city series of educational justice meetings for advocates and organizers. The third is the publication of AP's newest paper, which describes the interplay between zero-tolerance school discipline and high-stakes testing policies, focusing on how the *No Child Left Behind* version of the ESEA has intensified the punitive nature of many schools' student behavior policies. These three efforts are designed to make the link between school accountability and discipline more concrete, to arm stakeholders with additional advocacy strategies, to increase the number of advocates committed to dismantling the STPP, and to develop shared demands for educational justice in U.S. public schools.

The addition of OSI funds would allow AP to launch a national effort that would exploit the opportunity for debate provided by the reauthorization of the ESEA to make the link between its policies and the reinforcement of the STPP – including a narrowed curriculum, intense testing focus, punitive school discipline policies, and the increased prevalence of school exclusion practices. AP proposes to use OSI funding to support a new full-time staff attorney, the salary of a Skadden Fellow after his fellowship ends, and a part-time media manager, as well as to develop an enhanced web site, provide support staff travel to briefings and advocacy meetings. Its program plans include:

- organizing meetings with key education organizations and stakeholders to educate their staff about the linkage between accountability and STPP;
- building an alliance of national organizations that are committed to dismantling the pipeline;
- expanding its media outreach to ensure a wide readership of its report on ESEA and the STPP;
- providing briefings and materials for national policymakers; and,
- launching a national on-line campaign that includes updates of local and state supporting efforts and offers webinars and other resources to inform and further develop its network of advocates.

AP also plans to provide additional support in four communities to shine a national and local spotlight on the racially disparate impact of school accountability and discipline policies. Specifically, it plans to work with local partners to research and file Title VI complaints² with the U.S. Department of Education. These complaints would serve to identify the relationship between these two sets of policies as a national problem, would ensure that STPP issues were a part of the ESEA reauthorization dialogue, and would pressure the Department to act and address these inequities.

Finally, AP plans to serve in a coordinating role for OSI's STPP grantees, helping to leverage each organization's expertise and strengths, to strengthen organizational relationships and combined efforts, coordinate communications' strategies, develop shared policy priorities, reinforce each other's efforts on key issues as needed, and to work efficiently together throughout the grant. To this end, AP plans to organize a full-day meeting with all grantees in December 2009 to share plans and develop a coordinated work strategy for the next year. Specific coordination activities may include publication of individual reports in a series, joint policymaker briefings, common messaging about school discipline and accountability policies, a joint web presence and joint advocacy strategies. AP will also convene monthly conference calls and as-needed in-person meetings to allow grantees to update each other on advocacy efforts, resources, successful strategies and challenges.

Rationale for Recommendation:

² Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in the use of federal funds. This under-enforced law permits the federal government to order remedies against state and local agencies where racial disparities exist.

The proposed grant to support the LDF's efforts to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline is being recommended by OSI-Baltimore and the Criminal Justice Fund, Equality and Opportunity Fund and Strategic Opportunities Fund which have been working collaboratively to support timely strategies that aim to inform the 2010 debate about the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* Reauthorization. The effort is part of a broader cross-program strategy to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. The grant is a rapid response initiative that also aligns with the Strategic Opportunities Fund's commitment to fostering cross-program collaborations that deepen the reach and impact of our grantmaking. The upcoming debate expected in 2010 on reauthorization of the federal ESEA creates an opportunity to inform the public debate on how the school accountability measures of the Act may be used to reduce the number of suspensions, expulsions and school-based arrests, which feed the school-to-prison pipeline.

The Advancement Project is the pre-eminent national organization focused on defining, analyzing, highlighting and dismantling the School-To-Prison Pipeline. Its decade of local, state and national work has made it a leader among educational justice organizations, due to its deep content expertise and the comprehensive, supportive advocacy strategies it employs to help its community partners. Since its inception, AP has consistently proved itself to be an effective advocate and partner, substantially reducing the suspension, expulsion and school-based arrest rates in each community in which it has worked.

AP's extensive on-the-ground experience in schools and communities, together with research on school discipline and national education policies, have convinced its staff that punitive student discipline practices and test-driven accountability are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. As is true of SOF staff, they see zero-tolerance policies, narrow, test-driven curricula, and the intense pressure to raise test scores as forces that have combined to make many schools hostile and alienating environments which directly and indirectly push young people away from a productive life and towards the juvenile justice system. Because the reauthorization of the ESEA in 2010 will generate an extensive, national debate on U.S. educational goals and outcomes, AP staff believe that the time is right to launch a national campaign to address the educational policies that have allowed the STPP to become so deeply entrenched.

Based on AP's record of successful advocacy and reform efforts over the past ten years, its leadership in the educational justice field, its extensive relationships with other advocates and organizations, and the opportunity to raise the profile of this issue in the coming year, SOF staff recommend approval of a one-year project grant of \$230,000 to the Advancement Project to support its work on the "Dismantling the School-to-Prison-Pipeline Project."

<u>Name of Organization:</u>	Education Law Center
<u>Tax Status:</u>	501(c)(3) public charity
<u>Purpose of Grant:</u>	to support a network of Pennsylvania-based education and juvenile justice organizations and advocates who seek to dismantle the school to prison pipeline
<u>FPOS Grant Description:</u>	This grant is recommended as part of an initiative coordinated by the Strategic Opportunities Fund to support work that seeks to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions and arrests in public schools in effort to dismantle the school to prison pipeline. This grant will support the Education Law Center and the Juvenile Law Center, a sub-grantee, to create and support a Pennsylvania-based network of organizations and advocates seeking positive approaches to school climate.
<u>Previous OSI Support:</u>	None
<u>Organization Budget:</u>	\$1,650,890
<u>Project Budget:</u>	\$200,000
<u>Source of Support:</u>	None
<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$200,000
<u>Amount Recommended:</u>	\$200,000
<u>Term:</u>	January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010

Description of Organization:

Education Law Center of Pennsylvania (the Center) is a non-profit public interest law firm that engages in legal advocacy and public education efforts to ensure that children and youth in Pennsylvania have access to quality education. Since 1975, the Center has worked to improve educational programs and parental involvement activities and increase school funding for Pennsylvania's most vulnerable youth - poor children, children of color, children with disabilities, English language learners, and children in foster homes and juvenile institutions. Its strategies include legal advocacy, trainings of peers and parents, public education and communications. The Center has a staff of sixteen, including nine attorneys, a communications director and a research fellow. It maintains offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, PA.

Since its inception, the Education Law Center has worked to address and eliminate issues of school discipline and exclusion in Pennsylvania's schools. Specifically, it published reports and fact sheets and conducted trainings for advocates on ways to end the following practices: the exclusion of children with disabilities and English language learners; racial disparities in school discipline; inadequate educational services for children in juvenile justice facilities and child welfare institutions; the overuse of alternative school placements for youth returning to schools from juvenile correctional facilities and the use of seclusion and restraints in public schools.

The Center uses the law and research on best practices to advocate for policies and programs that create positive school environments where members of the school community (students and teachers) are treated with respect, and where there are high expectations of students and supports

in place that will help all students to succeed. Shortly after the passage of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the Center published materials and conducted trainings for education advocates who were interested in using provisions of the Act to further their school improvement goals.

In its education reform efforts, the Center partners with a network of Pennsylvania-based organizations, including the Juvenile Law Center, which is a long-time grantee of OSI and an expert in the juvenile justice field. As part of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change juvenile justice reform initiative, the Juvenile Law Center is coordinating the work of Pennsylvania advocates, including the Education Law Center, who seek to reduce the use of alternative school placements for youth returning from juvenile correctional facilities and eliminate barriers to school reentry.

Over the years, the two organizations also have completed projects to promote Medicaid financing for education and health care services for delinquent youth; education of foster youth; services to youth with disabilities in juvenile institutions; and education of youth who are adjudicated delinquent and held in juvenile correctional facilities.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought:

In October the Strategic Opportunities Fund issued a Call for Proposals seeking proposals from a discrete number of non-profit organizations that work to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions and arrests in American public schools. OSI developed the RFP to capitalize on the opportunity to educate a broad audience about the connection between the School-to-Prison Pipeline and public school policies that will present itself during the public debate about the reauthorization of the federal *No Child Left Behind* version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2010. Education Law Center submitted a request for \$200,000 over one year to support the work of a Pennsylvania-based network of education and juvenile justice organizations that seek to promote positive approaches to school climate, take concrete steps to reduce student push-outs through unfair school discipline practices; and promote school reentry of youth returning for delinquency placements. Education Law Center will re-grant a portion of the requested funding to the Juvenile Law Center. Together, the organizations will push for these reforms using the impending reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (the Act) as an opportunity to raise awareness on how school climate may be improved without criminalizing student misconduct – leading youth from schools to prisons.

Specifically, the Center will utilize legal advocacy, research, outreach efforts and communication strategies to dismantle the school to prison pipeline. Working very closely with the Juvenile Law Center, the Center will develop a brief working paper on school climate issues in Pennsylvania. This document will summarize data analyses and research conducted by the Center, over the proposed grant year, on the following issues:

- The use of school discipline to exclude students with low academic performance from school during standardized testing required by the Act;
- The definition of “highly qualified teacher” under the Act and the need to expand the definition to include teachers’ ability to: teach students with diverse educational and social needs; and create a positive classroom/school climate by rewarding good student behavior and addressing student misbehavior in constructive ways;
- Data collection under the Act and how it should include school discipline incidents (suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests);
- The “Unsafe School Choice Option” under the Act that creates a system for labeling certain schools as persistently dangerous and give students an option to transfer to other schools, but does nothing to improve the school climate at the school from which students transfer; and

- The fact that the Act does not deal in any way with alternative schools where students with disciplinary problems are placed. Many youth who return from juvenile correctional facilities are automatically placed in these schools in Pennsylvania. In the Commonwealth, these schools are not required to hire “highly qualified teachers” or report testing data and thus avoid any academic accountability requirements under the Act.

The Center will solicit feedback on an initial draft of the working paper by reaching out to over 20 local and statewide networks of education and juvenile justice advocates, students and families. Some of these networks were initiated and staffed by the Center, such as the Teacher Quality Coalition and Juveniles 4 Justice. The Center and its partner are active participants in other networks, such as the Juvenile Court Judges Commission, Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, and Philadelphia Anti-Zero Tolerance Coalition. The outreach will be conducted through face-to-face meetings in several areas around the state and other methods of communications such as posting information on the Center’s website.

During the proposed grant period, the Center will provide technical assistance to network members who are engaged in advocacy related to reforms in school climate and school improvement. These reforms might grow out of legal cases involving a single student, such as a school disciplinary matter, or broader policy issues.

The Center will also coordinate and facilitate meetings between members of the network and national partner organizations, including those funded by OSI, that are involved in the debate around the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, school climate and school discipline issues.

The information gathered through these activities will be used to develop a final paper/report by the end of the proposed grant period. The report will be authored by the Education Law Center, the Juvenile Law Center and possibly national partners. It will detail major concerns about school climate and make policy recommendations that will inform the overall debate on the No Child Left Behind reauthorization.

Rationale for Recommendation:

The proposed grant to support Education Law Center’s efforts to promote positive approaches to school climate is being recommended by OSI-Baltimore and the Criminal Justice Fund, Equality and Opportunity Fund and Strategic Opportunities Fund which have been working collaboratively to support timely strategies that aim to inform the 2010 debate about the NCLB reauthorization. The effort is part of a broader cross-program strategy to dismantle the school to prison pipeline. The grant is a rapid response initiative that also aligns with the Strategic Opportunities Fund’s commitment to fostering cross-program collaborations that deepen the reach and impact of our grantmaking. The upcoming debate expected in 2010 on reauthorization of the federal No Child Left Behind Act creates an opportunity to inform the public debate on how the school accountability measures of the Act may be used to reduce the number of suspensions, expulsions and school-based arrests, which feed the school-to-prison pipeline.

The Education Law Center will engage in research and promote education policy reforms at the local, state and national levels. Its partnership with the Juvenile Law Center presents a great opportunity to organize both education and juvenile justice advocates in Pennsylvania who serve the same youth population, but often do not work together on reform efforts. Finally, even though the Education Law Center proposes to support a network of Pennsylvania-based organizations on school discipline reform and school-to-prison pipeline issues, it also is well connected to similarly-situated national organizations such as the American Bar Association and the Advancement Project. Therefore, any Pennsylvania-based advocacy work will inform national policies and vice versa.

We therefore recommend a grant award in the amount of \$200,000 over one year to support a network of Pennsylvania-based education and juvenile justice organizations and advocates who seek to dismantle the school to prison pipeline.

Name of Organization: National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest)

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

Purpose of Grant: to support public education, training and advocacy to raise the visibility of high-stakes testing

FPOS Grant Description: The National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest) will expose to the public and policymakers the role of high-stakes standardized testing in supporting the school-to-prison pipeline, and expand the range of national, state and local organizations and alliances working to combat these problems.

Previous OSI Support: \$25,000 SOF Technical Assistance - 2005
\$140,000 SOF - 2004

Organization Budget: \$400,000

Project Budget: \$200,000

Major Sources of Support: Ford Foundation
National Educational Association

Amount Requested: \$200,000

Amount Recommended: \$110,000

Term: January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010 (1 year)

Description of Organization

FairTest is an advocacy organization that focuses on eliminating the racial, class, gender, and cultural barriers to equal opportunity posed by standardized tests, and preventing their damage to the quality of education. They work collaboratively with like-minded organizations and are a key source of information on the misuses of high stakes testing while proposing new ways to rethink accountability. FairTest has a long track record of accomplishing a great deal with limited funds. For nearly 25 years, FairTest has been the nation's only organization focused solely on the misuse and overuse of testing as well as the promotion of high-quality assessments. Since passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) version of the Education and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), FairTest K-12 reform efforts have included leading national campaigns to overhaul the law, along with complementary state and district reform campaigns. They have built extensive coalitions and established ongoing relations with many organizations at all levels. For example, FairTest organized and chairs the Forum on Educational Accountability (FEA). FEA grew out of the FairTest-initiated *Joint Organizational Statement on NCLB*, signed by 151 national education, civil rights, religious, disability, parent, labor and civic organizations. FEA has produced reports recommending a thorough overhaul of the NCLB version of the Education and Secondary Education Act. These documents have influenced the positions of many organizations, pushing key reform concepts into the forefront of policy discussions.

FairTest has worked intensively with local activists in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Chicago, and less intensively in other states, including Florida, Texas, and California. They have provided technical assistance for collaboratively crafted policy initiatives, including redesigned state assessment systems, which local groups have used in their advocacy.

In the past year, their support in Pennsylvania produced significant improvements in a state plan to mandate new graduation tests. In Texas, they aided groups that successfully ended promotion tests in grade three.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

In October the Strategic Opportunities Fund issued a Call for Proposals to a discrete number of non-profit organizations that work to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions and arrests in American public schools. OSI developed the RFP to capitalize on the opportunity to educate a broad audience about the connection between the School-to-Prison Pipeline and public school policies that will present itself during the public debate about the reauthorization of the federal *No Child Left Behind* version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2010. FairTest was one of the invitees and is requesting funds to develop and implement an initiative by which activism at all levels can be mutually reinforcing, so that local advocacy influences national policy formation, while national reform efforts support local advocates in overcoming the school-to-prison pipeline in a multi-pronged, coordinated advocacy effort.

FairTest's project is designed to expose the role of high-stakes testing in stoking the school-to-prison pipeline and, simultaneously, to expand the range of national, state and local organizations and alliances effectively working to combat the problem. Shifting education policy, particularly the federal "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) law, away from low-quality tests and punitive accountability rules will remove the intense pressure to narrow curriculum, undermine school climate, and push students out. Even grassroots activists who recognize the damage to school quality and equity from NCLB commonly view the law as a distant, hard-to-affect problem. This project will develop and implement means by which activism at all levels can be mutually reinforcing, so that local advocacy influences national policy formation, while national reform efforts support local advocates in overcoming the school-to-prison pipeline. Together with their partners, FairTest will develop a national alliance of key organizations plus a network of strong local coalitions that can win over key educational decision-makers at national, state and local levels.

FairTest will utilize its national alliance of organizations focused on changing NCLB testing and accountability requirements to engage in public education around the central role that NCLB and high-stakes testing play in expanding the school-to-prison pipeline. Working collaboratively with the Advancement Project and other allies FairTest will:

1. Help signers of the *Joint Statement* educate their staff, members and communities on the inter-relationships among NCLB, high-stakes testing and the prison pipeline, and potential solutions. They also will identify and work closely with the most promising school reform and civil rights organizations and groups with community bases, which they will select based on interest, size, diversity, and likely effectiveness. This campaign will include preparation of materials tailored for dissemination to their members and networks.
2. Work with the Advancement Project to develop, sponsor and promote a forum for members of Congress and their staffs to educate them on this issue and possible policy alternatives.
3. Lead the Forum on Educational Accountability (FEA) in holding a series of public forums in Washington to present a range of possible alternatives to current federal law, all of which have implications for the pipeline.
4. The Advancement Project with FairTest support will hold a national 'webinar' for local and state advocates to learn more about the issue and develop collaborative strategies for strengthening public education and advocacy. In addition to providing expertise on testing and its consequences, FairTest will involve participants from its local and state activist networks. Webinar preparation and follow-up will also enable local activists to contribute to as well as learn from the national discussion, strengthening work at both levels.

5. FairTest also will participate in some of the regional meetings convened by Advancement Project and Forum on Education and Democracy, as well as help bring local activists to those meetings and make FairTest materials available to them. These regional meetings will bring local organizers and advocates together to advance the Rethink Learning Now campaign, of which FairTest is a part.

Rationale for Recommendation

The proposed grant to support FairTest's efforts to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline is being recommended by OSI-Baltimore and the Criminal Justice Fund, Equality and Opportunity Fund and Strategic Opportunities Fund which have been working collaboratively to support timely strategies that aim to inform the 2010 debate about the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* reauthorization. The effort is part of a broader cross-program strategy to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. The grant is a rapid response initiative that also aligns with the Strategic Opportunities Fund's commitment to fostering cross-program collaborations that deepen the reach and impact of our grantmaking. The upcoming debate expected in 2010 on reauthorization of the federal ESEA creates an opportunity to inform the public debate on how the school accountability measures of the Act may be used to reduce the number of suspensions, expulsions and school-based arrests, which feed the school-to-prison pipeline.

FairTest will focus on key national outlets that heavily influence public and policymaker opinion, including bloggers and columnists, as well as media in states and localities in which they are engaged. Coordinating with the Advancement Project, they will market news releases, fact sheets, and advisories to reporters and bloggers to make the testing-to-prison pipeline part of their public discourse. They will also place opinion columns, letters to the editor and blog posts. FairTest and its allies will develop effective uses of new media, such as interactive websites, YouTube, Facebook and similar social networking sites. Their efforts will build on the commonality of shared experiences, for example among students on testing, discipline, and dropping out. The electronic communications will be linked to forms of activity that can deepen understanding, change public discourse, and shape policymaker thinking. They will test new media interventions they think can be effective. They will disseminate their results and encourage similar actions in other locales, working toward 'going viral' at multiple levels, then using the resulting knowledge and energy to effect change.

We therefore collectively recommend a grant of \$110,000 to support FairTest in their work towards dismantling the harmful effects of policies that drive the School-to-Prison Pipeline.

<u>Name of Organization:</u>	The Forum for Education and Democracy
<u>Tax Status:</u>	501 (c)(3) public charity
<u>Purpose of Grant</u>	To build public will for reform of education policies that will end excessive reliance on punitive behavioral measures in schools and restore the focus on learning
<u>FPOS Purpose of Grant:</u>	The purpose of this project is to articulate a new agenda that restores the focus of public education reform to its rightful place – on learning (as opposed to testing), and on the core conditions that best support it for all children. A shift in thinking and priorities will result in policies that help end the excessive reliance on punitive behavioral measures in schools, and positively impact the dropout crisis by restoring attention to the environmental supports young people need in order to feel engaged, supported and challenged.
<u>Previous OSI Support:</u>	\$490,000 (SOF 2004, 2007)
<u>Organization Budget:</u>	\$1,295,414
<u>Project Budget:</u>	N/A
<u>Source of Support:</u>	
<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$200,000
<u>Amount Recommended:</u>	\$200,000
<u>Term:</u>	January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010 (1 year)

Description of Organization:

Founded in 2003, The Forum for Education and Democracy (the Forum) is a national education “action tank” that advocates for a system of American public education that is aligned to help all children learn how to use their minds well. The Forum’s commitment is to create the conditions for a public dialogue and policy environment that ensures access to a challenging and engaging public education for every child. In particular, they promote policies and practices that equip all young people with the skills and self-confidence they need in order to become fully participating members in a democratic society. The Forum began their work in Ohio, intentionally outside of “the beltway,” in order to establish their credentials as reality-based practitioners who could help inform and educate policy makers. In 2007 with OSI support, they established their national office in Washington D.C. to enable the Forum to capitalize on their growing national influence.

The Forum’s fourteen conveners and current board members are a diverse, experienced group of educators that have served over time as the chief architects of the education reform movement. Together, they represent the leading voices in the field on a wide range of issues affecting young people and public schools. Together, these fourteen thought leaders that comprise the Forum’s

board have shown that educational experiences traditionally reserved for the elite could benefit all students and communities, regardless of background.

To that end, the Forum engages in educational work and policy analysis in support of equitable, engaging, and community-based public schools that provide children with the habits of heart and mind which democratic life requires. They view public education as the bedrock upon which democracy rests and work to help America fulfill its commitment to equal educational opportunity for all its citizens.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought:

In October U.S. Programs issued a Call for Proposals to a discrete number of non-profit organizations that work to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions and arrests in American public schools. OSI developed the RFP to capitalize on the opportunity to educate a broad audience about the connection between the School-to-Prison Pipeline and public school policies that will present itself during the public debate about the reauthorization of the federal *No Child Left Behind* version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2010. The Forum was one of the invitees and is requesting funds to engage in a multi-pronged, coordinated advocacy effort.

The Forum believes the best way to address symptomatic problems such as the rise of zero tolerance policies, the spread of a high-stakes testing environment, and the entrenchment of the school-to-prison pipeline (STP) is by articulating a new federal agenda that restores the focus of public education reform to its rightful place – on learning (as opposed to testing), and on the core conditions that best support it for all children. To that end, for the next 12 months the Forum will execute a number of mutually reinforcing activities, all of which will be organized under the frame of a single campaign, Rethink Learning Now (rethinklearningnow.com), which launched in September 2009 in partnership with a number of other education and civil rights organizations, and which identifies three core pillars of a high-quality public education: powerful learning environments that help all young people thrive – and stay – in school; a highly effective teaching profession that places well-prepared, experienced master practitioners in all schools and all communities; and a system committed to ensuring fairness for all children. Their ultimate goal is to integrate the voices of people in the field with specific policy solutions for each of the campaign's core pillars. Two components of their strategy are:

- A collaborative effort with the Creative Coalition (CC), the leading advocacy organization of Hollywood activists. CC will organize and launch *Greenlighting a Better Education*, a film initiative that will kick off at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival and feature a “jury” of noted creative and production talent who curate a short film/psa competition of pitches for short films that illustrate both the positive components of the Rethink Learning Now campaign, and the negative aspects of the current system with regard to STP, pushouts, and high-stakes testing policies.
- With their allies at the Advancement Project as the lead organization, the Forum is helping to facilitate the planning and execution of up to 14 different regional meetings in 2010, at which core campaign partners and local advocacy organizations will come together to focus on the greatest needs of their local communities, learning more about the larger body of grassroots work (stories, policy recommendations, etc.) being seeded across the country, and deciding what their next steps will be to mobilize a larger movement. The Forum and its campaign partners will co-sponsor a three-day national summit in 2010, at which educators, civil rights activists and young people build on the outcomes of the regional meetings and activities and identify action-oriented next steps in the shared national effort to end the era of high-stakes testing and the school-to-prison pipeline, stop the unconscionable practice of push-outs, and secure a high-quality public education for every child.

Rationale for Recommendation:

The proposed grant to support the Forum's efforts to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline is being recommended by OSI-Baltimore and the Criminal Justice Fund, Equality and Opportunity Fund and Strategic Opportunities Fund which have been working collaboratively to support timely strategies that aim to inform the 2010 debate about NCLB reauthorization. The effort is part of a broader cross-program strategy to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. The grant is a rapid response initiative that also aligns with the Strategic Opportunities Fund's commitment to fostering cross-program collaborations that deepen the reach and impact of our grantmaking. The upcoming debate expected in 2010 on reauthorization of the federal No Child Left Behind Act creates an opportunity to inform the public debate on how the school accountability measures of the Act may be used to reduce the number of suspensions, expulsions and school-based arrests, which feed the school-to-prison pipeline.

The Forum for Education and Democracy is a much-needed progressive institution to champion public education's ultimate purpose and propose policies and practices that will lead to improved outcomes. Supporting the work of the Forum would go a long way towards promoting ideas and values that OSI cherishes. The Forum is an 'action tank' comprised of leaders in the education reform movement that are advancing a vision of a system of strong public schools for a strong American democracy. They focus on ways to democratize the public education system by bringing to the fore matters that are not even on the table. They are therefore a vital partner in the school-to-prison pipeline work. They actively work with more than twenty national and local education and civil rights organizations on these issues, including the Advancement Project, Aspira, Education Law Center, Fair Test, the NAACP, the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE), the National Congress of American Indians, and the Public Education Network – a majority of which are existing OSI grantees, with several groups part of this STPP initiative.

We therefore collectively recommend a grant of \$200,000 to support The Forum for Education and Democracy's work towards dismantling the harmful effects of policies that drive the School-to-Prison Pipeline.

Name of Organization: NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF)

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

Purpose of Grant: To support LDF's Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline initiative as it challenges racially discriminatory school disciplinary policies and practices

FPOS Grant Description: This grant will support LDF's effort to seize the opportunity presented by the reauthorization of the *No Child Left Behind* version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to fundamentally reframe the discussion about school discipline and safety with the goal of reducing reliance upon zero-tolerance and other overly punitive and exclusionary discipline policies, and increasing support of practices designed to make schools safe.

Previous OSI Support: \$1,375,000
\$200,000 U.S. Justice Fund General Fund (2008); \$350,000 Progressive Infrastructure (2007); \$300,000 U.S. Justice Fund/Re-entry (2000); \$200,000 Criminal Justice Initiative/Policy and Research/Civil Rights (2003); \$200,000 U.S. Justice Fund/Race and Class Barriers to Social Justice (2005); \$200,000 U.S. Justice Fund/Special Opportunities (2005); \$50,000 Criminal Justice Initiative/Policy and Research/Policy Reform (2003); \$25,000 Center on Crime, Communities and Culture (1996)

Organizational Budget: \$13,900,000

Project Budget: \$ 224,825

Sources of Support: Support for LDF's Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline initiative includes:

Amount Requested: \$200,000

Amount Recommended: \$200,000 (from project code 21081: Strategic Opportunities Fund)

Term: 1 year (December 1, 2009 – November 31, 2010)

Matching Requirements: None

Description of Organization:

Founded in 1940 by Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) is a non-profit legal organization with the mission of achieving racial equality for African-Americans and, ultimately, all Americans. LDF has a rich history that includes the landmark 1954 victory before the U.S. Supreme Court in the school

desegregation case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Though the promise of *Brown* remains unfulfilled half a century later, LDF remains committed to the premise that quality education, along with meaningful economic opportunities, the right to vote and fully participate in democracy, and the right to a fair criminal justice system, are fundamental human rights. LDF's "Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline" initiative, launched in 2001 is a logical continuation of this work, which capitalized upon institutional expertise in both education and criminal justice.

Drawing upon years of experience in addressing concerns of African American students and parents, since the early stages of this project LDF has made strategic connections in New York City and various Southern states, and has developed an expertise in the area on a national level. In 2007 and 2008, LDF worked with the Student Safety Coalition of New York (a partnership of the NYCLU, Make the Road New York, the Urban Youth Collaborative, and others) to address the school-to-prison pipeline in the City's public schools. Responding to several high-profile student arrests on high school campuses in Florida, LDF collaborated with Advancement Project and the Florida Conference of NAACP Branches in 2005 to conduct a series of public hearings on racial disparities in school discipline. The Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC), in which LDF is a key partner, is a national campaign that fights the school-to-prison pipeline using a human rights framework. Seeking a private forum for resource-sharing surrounding the school-to-prison pipeline, in early 2007 LDF—with the ACLU's Racial Justice Program (RJP), Harvard Law School's Charles Hamilton Houston Institute, the Juvenile Law Center and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)—created schooltoprison.org, a password-protected clearinghouse for school-to-prison advocacy materials, that allows community members, litigators and policy advocates to share methods and materials that can be replicated nationwide.

Description of the Project for Which Funding Is Sought:

In October the Strategic Opportunities Fund issued a Call for Proposals (CFP) seeking proposals from a discrete number of non-profit organizations that work to reduce the inappropriate and harmful use of suspensions, expulsions and arrests in American public schools. The CFP grew out of OSI's interest in supporting timely strategies that aim to inform the 2010 debate about the *No Child Left Behind* version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization. LDF submitted a request that seeks to take advantage of the opportunity presented by this reauthorization to fundamentally reframe the discussion of what it means for no child to be left behind, and consequently to reshape policy with the goal of reducing reliance upon zero-tolerance and other overly punitive and exclusionary discipline policies. Over the course of the next year, LDF would like to engage in nationwide public education for parents, students, educators, and communities about the ways in which suspensions, expulsions, and arrests are harming the nation's children. Given that the school discipline conversation has been dominated almost exclusively by zero-tolerance for the past decade, LDF seeks to have these community dialogues serve as a collective reorientation regarding the goals of our educational systems and how school safety fits in. In particular, LDF would like to (1) re-envision NCLB's focus on "persistently dangerous" schools by conducting a national conversation instead on what it means to have safe schools and how to create and support them; (2) advocate for changes in the way that schools collect data on discipline, to require all schools to collect data about suspensions and expulsions that is disaggregated by race, gender, categories of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, school dropout rates, transfers to alternative schools and GED programs, school expulsions, and school-based arrests; and (3) encourage technical and financial assistance to schools by helping

to reduce reliance upon suspensions and expulsions and reduce the number of school arrests by supporting implementation of proven behavioral intervention practices.

Rationale for Recommendation:

The proposed grant to support FED's efforts to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline is being recommended by OSI-Baltimore and the Criminal Justice Fund, Equality and Opportunity Fund and Strategic Opportunities Fund which have been working collaboratively to support timely strategies that aim to inform the 2010 debate about NCLB reauthorization. The effort is part of a broader cross-program strategy to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. The grant is a rapid response initiative that also aligns with the Strategic Opportunities Fund's commitment to fostering cross-program collaborations that deepen the reach and impact of our grantmaking.

The upcoming debate expected in 2010 on reauthorization of the federal No Child Left Behind Act creates an opportunity to inform the public debate on how the school accountability measures of the Act may be used to reduce the number of suspensions, expulsions and school-based arrests, which feed the school-to-prison pipeline.

A complex set of practices and policies contribute to what is now known as the school-to-prison pipeline. At the core of the pipeline, however, are three sets of school-based disciplinary actions: student suspensions, expulsions, and arrests, the latter often by campus police. The NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund has long been a leader in responding to this crisis for nearly a decade. In 2005, LDF published "Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline," a seminal study of the policies and practices that push students from our country's schools to its criminal justice system. With a particular eye on the ways in which school disciplinary policies disproportionately impact African American youth, the report offered information on various aspects of the school-to-prison pipeline, including suspensions and expulsions, the under-resourcing of public schools, the racial achievement gap, and the juvenile justice system. Since the 2005 report, LDF has maintained a national voice in the growing dialogue about these problems, and has engaged with grassroots advocates to confront particular local problems as well.

Staff is particularly enthusiastic about LDF's proposed focus on the need for data disaggregated to expose the more particularized impact of excessive disciplinary policies, and its goal of reframing NCLB's focus from identifying and punishing "persistently dangerous" schools to defining and helping to develop "safe" schools. NCLB's "persistently dangerous" school provision, which requires each state to identify schools that exceed certain levels of serious violence on campus, has been criticized as ineffective because it encourages schools not to report serious incidents because those labeled persistently dangerous must give their students the option to transfer; each state creates its own definition of persistently dangerous, so there is no consistent meaning or standardized measurement; and, perhaps most notably, no federal funding is attached to the label in order to assist schools in improving safety measures. Moreover, the persistently dangerous label, when coupled with NCLB's Annual Yearly Progress measurements, in many cases likely contributes directly to the school-to-prison pipeline by placing schools in a position where it "makes sense" to push out those students who have behavioral issues or who do not meet testing standards. In addition, the focus on persistently dangerous or "bad" schools fails to move us toward an affirmative conversation about what safe or "good" schools look like, and how the federal government can help states and local educational agencies achieve them.

LDF has strong local and national partners, and has devised a sound strategy to work with schools, communities, and education and juvenile justice advocates nationwide to develop a meaningful definition of “safe schools,” and to then propose ways in which such schools may be achieved within NCLB’s provisions. The final step of LDF’s proposed initiative is a large-scale media and public education effort to release the working group’s findings and empower communities with information that they can then take to their state and local school and political officials. This proposed effort will coincide with the reauthorization of ESEA, and the findings resulting from this work – a new knowledge base about school discipline and safety – has the potential to contribute powerfully to the discussions surrounding reauthorization. For these reasons, staff recommends a \$200,000 grant over one year to the NAACP-LDF to support its work to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline.