



## **VII Learning Community – Meeting Proceedings**

### **Border Community Foundations: Sustainability for Community Impact**

**Rancho Viejo Resort  
Brownsville, Texas  
June 27-29, 2006**

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<b>VII Learning Community Meeting Agenda Border Community Foundations: Sustainability for Community Impact</b>
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*Rancho Viejo Resort  
Brownsville, Texas  
June 27-29, 2006*

**THE FOCUS:**

The VII Border Philanthropy Partnership Learning Community will formally launch Phase II with the theme of "Sustainability for Community Impact." As we continue to build on the learning acquired in Phase I, we will use this gathering to renew our commitment to and passion for the key Border Philanthropy Partnership goal – improved quality of life for low-income border families and communities. Part of this celebration will entail building our collective vision for the future of border community philanthropy and the impact border community foundations will wield on improved quality of life in the communities they serve. To help us think about this vision, we will engage in provocative dialogue around "the future of community foundations" assisted by Lucy Bernholz, renowned author of *On the Brink of New Promise*. Our workshop sessions will focus on several different "building blocks" of sustainability for community impact, tailored to the needs and interests of our diverse group of community foundation partners. Distinguished keynote speakers, Carolyn Milne, Executive Director of the Hamilton Community Foundation and John Davies, President of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation will share their experience in shaping the vision of leadership for their foundations. Our learning community will be rounded out by new opportunities for peer interaction and learning, renewal of personal and professional commitments, and cross-border exchanges around Phase II program issues.

**CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED:**

- What might the border community foundation "movement" look like in 2025?
- Why is "sustainability for community impact" critical for the future of *border community foundations*?
- What are the fundamental building blocks of border community foundation sustainability?
- How does our programmatic work contribute to sustainability and community impact?

## AGENDA

DAY ONE: Tuesday, June 27, 2006

**11:00 – 6:00pm**  
**Rancho Viejo Lobby**

**Registration**

**Pre-Meeting Sessions:**

**1:00 – 2:00pm**  
**Casa Grande, New Wing**

**Opening Press Conference**

**1:30 – 4:00pm**  
**Sevilla, the convention Center**

**Texas Session**

Texas Grantee border community foundations and funders will meet with the Houston Endowment and Meadows Foundation. \*The first hour of this session will be reserved for a FIMS demonstration

**2:00 – 3:00pm**  
**Monterrey, the convention Center**

**Mexico Session**

Mexican border community foundations will meet with representatives from Ford Foundation Mexico, and Inter-American Foundation

**3:00 – 4:00pm**  
**Tampico, the convention Cen**

**New Mexico, Arizona and California Session**

Border community foundations from New Mexico, Arizona and California will meet with representatives from the Ford Foundation

**4:30 – 6:00pm**  
**Saltillo, the convention center**

**Official Opening & Envisioning the Future of the BPP**

Robert Dunn, President of the Synergos Institute & Irv Downing of JP Morgan Chase and Board Chair of the Brownsville Community Foundation will officially open the BPP's VII Learning Community. Shari Turitz of the Synergos Institute and Lucy Bernholz will lead the group through a review of the meeting agenda following an interactive Phase II visioning exercise.

**6:00 – 7:00pm**  
**Saltillo, the convention center**

**Opening Keynote Address – Tackling Poverty Together; The Story of the Hamilton Community Foundation and How it is Living its Vision for Improved Quality of Life in the City of Hamilton, Canada.**

Carolyn Milne, Executive Director of the Hamilton Community Foundation will deliver our welcome keynote address. Carolyn will share with meeting participants the story of the Hamilton Community Foundation and their journey in spearheading a multi-sector, anti-poverty initiative in the city of Hamilton. Karen Yarza, Executive Director of the Fundación Comunitaria de la Frontera Norte will respond with observations from the Mexican perspective. Participants will then have an opportunity to engage in roundtable discussions, share reactions and pose questions in response to the address.

**7:00 – 8:45pm**  
**Casa Grande, old wing**

**Reception and Dinner**

**9:00pm**  
**Casa Grande, new wing**

**Late Night Movie (optional)**

A special treat for all of you movie-going, night owls! Join us for a screening of the documentary 'Letters from the Other Side' directed by Heather Courtney (75 min with Spanish subtitles). With searing intimacy and frankness 'Letters' gives voice to the side of the immigration story rarely told by mainstream American media, that of the families and communities left behind.

**DAY TWO: Wednesday, June 28, 2006**

**8:00 – 9:00am**  
**Monterrey, the convention Center**

**Networking Breakfast for non-committee members.**

**8:00 – 9:00am**

**Committee Breakfast Meetings**  
**Executive Committee Casa Grande, Old Wing**  
**Program Committee Casa Grande, New Wing**  
**Communications Committee Casa Grande, Foyer**

Newly elected Executive, Program and Communications committee members (selected candidates will have been announced at dinner the previous evening) are invited to meet and greet fellow committee members and begin the task of identifying work priorities for committees in Phase II.

**9:15 – 10:00am**  
**Saltillo, the convention center**

**Expressing Our Commitment to Growing Philanthropy in the Border Region**

Pre-assigned groups will come together and, using their creative talents, reflect on and share with colleagues the motivation behind their personal commitment to strengthening philanthropy in the US-Mexico border region.

**10:00 – 1:00pm**  
**Saltillo, the convention center**

**A BPP Dialogue on the Future of Border Community Foundations**

Lucy Bernholz, Blueprint Research and Design Inc. and Mapi Rubio, Independent Consultant will, building on the framework of *On the Brink of New Promise: The Future of US Community Foundations*, lead the group through a provocative examination of trends at the national, regional and global levels that may affect the future of border philanthropy. Respondents will comment and then groups will be formed to engage in dialogue on the future of philanthropy in the border region, and possible effects on border community foundations. (Intersession break included)

**1:00 – 2:30pm**  
**Monterrey, the convention center**

***Lunch & Roundtable Discussions on Immigration***

As the debate over immigration heats up in Washington border community foundations are reflecting on what a community foundation might do to address this issue? What could a group of border community foundations do together to respond? What is the perspective of our Mexican peers on the debate? Moderated by Bob Stark of the New Mexico Community Foundation this session will include the participation of Alison de Lucca of Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees who will frame a discussion on the potential impact border community foundations may have on the immigration debate.

**2:30 – 5:00pm**

***The Building Blocks of Sustainability Breakout Sessions***

***Future of Philanthropy's Tool Kit led by Lucy Bernholz. (US & Mexico) – This session will allow teams of community foundation representatives to practice using tools developed as part of the Future of Philanthropy project. Participating border community foundations must attend this session in teams of two that include a board member and staff person. Be sure to sign-up in advance of the meeting because space is limited. Special guest, Mapi Rubio.***  
**Casa Grande, New Wing**

***Border Community Foundation Sustainability (US & Mexico) The Role of the Board co-facilitated by Dottie Reynolds, Independent Consultant to the Synergos Institute and Vivian Blair, Consultant to Synergos Institute. Special guest, John Davies***  
**Tampico, the convention Center**

***Executive Leadership Track (US & Mexico) – What keeps you up at night as an Executive Director of a border community foundation? This is your session! Exclusively for Executive Directors it will allow participants to share – confidentially and peer to peer -- challenges and solutions commonly faced by Executive Directors of border community foundations. Session led by Shannon St. John, Consultant Triangle Community Foundation and Antonieta Beguerisse, Executive Director of Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad. Special guest, Carolyn Milne***  
**Saltillo, the convention Center**

**6:00 – 8:30pm**

***Dinner Hosted by the Brownsville Community Foundation at the Alonso Building, 510 East Saint Charles Street***

Participants will leave to dinner site at 6:00pm. The early bird bus will leave at 8:30pm to return to the hotel. A later bus will leave at 9:00pm and arrive at the hotel at approximately 9:20pm.

**DAY THREE: Thursday, June 29, 2006**

- 7:45 – 9:00am**  
**Tampico, the convention center**      ***Adopting a Family Asset Building Approach in Mexico - CANCELLED***
- This is an optional breakfast for border community foundations and funder representatives interested in learning more about the success of the Border Family Asset Building Initiative and possibilities of its application in the Mexican context. (\*This session will be held in Spanish with no translation provided)
- 8:00 – 9:30am**  
**Monterrey, the convention center**      ***Networking Breakfast & Optional Post Phase II Roundtable Discussions***
- Newly elected members of the BPP Executive Committee will host a select number of breakfast tables at which participants can discuss potential Post Phase II scenarios.
- 9:30 – 11:00am**  
**Saltillo, the convention center**      ***Real Time Consulting Sessions, Facilitated by Ann Tartre, The Synergos Institute***
- Border community foundation representatives will develop their 'case studies' and present to a pre-selected cadre of BPP peers for consideration and comment. Real Time Consulting Sessions will be facilitated by Synergos staff and funder representatives and will allow border community foundations to tap into the existing wealth of knowledge and experience residing in the BPP network.
- 11:00 – 11:15am**      ***Break***
- 11:15 – 12:30pm**  
**Saltillo, the convention center**      ***Under Fire: the Critical Role of a Community Foundation in the Face of Crisis – The Case of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, Its History and How it Came to Positioned As A Key Community Respondent to Hurricane Katrina***
- John Davies, President, shares with us the history of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the unique features of its organizational development and how these ultimately helped position the foundation as a natural leader in a time of crisis.
- 12:30**      ***Reflections and Wrap-Up***
- 1:00**      ***Official Close and Box Lunch***

## Official Opening & Envisioning the Future of the BPP

**Date:** Tuesday, June 27th

**Time of session:** 4:30 – 6:30pm

**Facilitator:** Ann Tartre

**Speaker(s):** Irv Downing, Robert Dunn, Shari Turitz, Lucy Bernholz

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

### Welcome and opening words

Irv Downing, of JP Morgan Chase and Board Chair of the Brownsville Community Foundation, opened the conference with warm words of welcome. He emphasized the important role that Learning Communities play in bringing friends together to work on common issues and to learn how to address things in a new way. He also remarked that the Learning Community was a great opportunity for everyone to get together on an issue. The issue of interest for this 7<sup>th</sup> Learning Community, he noted, is the issue of sustainability.

In his opening words, Robert Dunn, President of The Synergos Institute, told participants: “they say that people are known by the company they keep, I’m very happy to be in your company”. He then invited those present to see the Learning Community as an opportunity to learn, to discover new people, as well as to meet up with friends. He highlighted the facilitating role the Border Philanthropy Partnership (BPP) has played in establishing new partnerships and building local capacity. He also pointed out some of the challenges that the BPP must face: the need to capitalize on opportunities and to address difficult problems. Bob ended by reading an excerpt from a The Cure of Troy – an inspirational poem by Seamus Heaney.

Shari Turitz, Director of the Strengthening Bridging Organizations Program of The Synergos Institute, highlighted the presence of twelve funders, forty-eight staff and board members of border community foundations, and Synergos staff at the 7<sup>th</sup> Learning Community. She provided participants with a brief overview of the BPP – from the first Learning Community in Ciudad Juarez four years ago until today. She highlighted the successes of the BPP – including the mobilization of \$15 million dollars for the organizational strengthening of border community foundations, the establishment of six start-up border community foundations in communities previously not served by a local community foundation, and the creation of a network of border community foundations and funders across and along the border allowing for greater leveraging of resources and the growth of a learning community. Lastly, in regards to the theme of the 7<sup>th</sup> Learning Community, Shari reminded participants that sustainability goes well beyond finance to include demonstrating positive impact on communities.

Ann Tartre, newly-appointed Director of the Border Philanthropy Partnership, provided a quick overview of the BPP’s main objectives for Phase 2. They are: 1) to build and deepen the peer learning network; 2) to strengthen the capacity of border community foundations; 3) to attract more resources to the region; and 4) to look beyond phase 2 and consider how to create a durable philanthropic infrastructure. Ann then reviewed the agenda for the 7<sup>th</sup> Learning Community.

### Envisioning the Future of the BPP

Lucy Bernholz, from Blueprint Research & Design, Inc., led the group through a visioning exercise that set the tone for the Learning Community and got participants thinking about the theme of the meeting: sustainability. “The question of sustainability”, Lucy said, “is a question related to the future”. She then invited participants to think of trends, forces, and opportunities that shape where they live and work and that need to be incorporated into the work of their community foundation in order to ensure its sustainability.

For the visioning exercise, participants were divided into two groups. The first group was asked to imagine what would happen if the US-Mexico border disappeared, whereas the second group was asked

to imagine what would happen if the US-Mexico border was made even more impenetrable. Each table discussed the expected impact of their scenario. Participants then shared the results of their discussions in an open plenary.

As participants shared their ideas, it became clear that there are some common areas that would be impacted in either scenario proposed in the exercise – though the way in which they would be impacted would differ based on the scenario.

Based on this, Lucy identified five areas of potential change and impact for border community foundations:

- 1) Family and community connections;
- 2) Economic situations;
- 3) New migration patterns;
- 4) Cultural practices and beliefs (eg. Feelings of fear, hostility, etc.); and
- 5) The role of the border in a broader global economy.

## Opening Keynote Address – Tackling Poverty Together: The Story of the Hamilton Community Foundation

**Date:** Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 6:00 – 7:00 pm

**Speaker(s):** Carolyn Milne, Karen Yarza

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

### Carolyn Milne

Carolyn Milne, Executive Director of the Hamilton Community Foundation, shared her foundation's story of spearheading a multi-sector anti-poverty initiative.

She began by providing participants with some background information about the city of Hamilton. Hamilton (pop. 500, 000) is located in the province of Ontario, approximately one hour away from Toronto – the world's most multicultural city. Hamilton is characterized by a declining manufacturing base – companies have been withdrawing from the area under the impact of globalization and, especially, as a result of increased competition from China.

The economic impact of the declining manufacturing industry has been tremendous impact for the city. In the past decade, sixty per cent of Hamilton's population has experienced a decrease in income, one-fifth of the population lives in poverty, and one quarter of the city's children live in poverty.

Carolyn shared her "aha" moment with the group. It occurred, she says, while she was attending a Transatlantic Community Foundation Network workshop. Following a presentation she made on the city of Hamilton, a colleague asked her: "How can Canada be one of the best countries in the world with such high poverty rates?". The question lingered in her mind and triggered deeper concerns: What was the role of the HCF in relation to social justice issues? What was HCF's mission and vision of a model community? Carolyn was so concerned with these questions that she brought them to her CF board and initiated a process of change.

As a result of this process and of the work of the Hamilton Community Foundation, the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (a HCF grantmaking initiative) was launched in 2005. The Roundtable is a space to educate, to promote, to discuss, and to leverage resources with the aim of reducing poverty for children. (Carolyn mentioned that a prime resource during this process was the Community Foundations of Canada website and their Social Justice Working Group).

Many lessons were learned during this process of change and leadership. Carolyn emphasized the following: 1) We can be a catalyst for change, 2) Need to create greater strategic thinking, 3) Build on momentum, 4) People want to work together, 5) Leadership begets leadership, 6) It's an evolution, not a revolution (planning/strategy is important; knowledge; involve everyone at every step), 7) You can't go it alone (the issues are simply too complex – need a multidisciplinary approach), and 8) There will always be some fallout (negative responses are to be expected, mistakes made along the way).

### Karen Yarza

Following Carolyn's presentation, Karen Yarza, Executive Director of the *Fundación Comunitaria de la Frontera Norte*, shared her foundation's story of leadership in the Mexican context.

Karen began situating her story within the Mexican context. She noted that the history of community foundations in Mexico is relatively recent and that, as a consequence, they face unique challenges. These challenges include building/developing community foundations in a country in which institutions are not seen as being trustworthy; convincing donors to give to/through community foundations (vs. direct donations); and demonstrating impact to donors in order to convince them to give, but not having funds to produce that much-needed initial impact.

Karen shared the experience of the *Fundación Comunitaria de la Frontera Norte*. At the onset, she told the group, they decided that they needed to have a clear understanding of the community's problems. They found that, in Frontera Norte, over 50% of the population is under the age of nineteen. However, despite this fact, young people have the least funds/programs allocated to them from the government and other organizations. Based on this, the foundation decided to focus their efforts on youth.

Over the past two and a half years the *Fundación Comunitaria de la Frontera Norte* has developed a "Youth Philanthropy Program". This program provides young people with training on: what is philanthropy, how to identify assets, how to create a board, how to write a project proposal, how to implement a project, and how to report on a project. Youth groups may submit project proposals to the foundation and can be awarded up to \$1,500 pesos per project. Today, there are 25 youth groups comprising a total of 270 members. The associations/groups meet once a month.

The foundation's "*caso estrella*" is a group of ten teenagers aged fifteen and in high school. They approached the foundation with a specific problem: children in their school were having trouble concentrating in class because they were hungry. The youth group's proposed solution to this problem was to build a school cafeteria. The foundation found the group's project proposal to be very idealistic – they wanted a kitchen, an eating area, even a foosball table! Nevertheless, the board agreed to grant funds for the project despite its idealistic aims - keeping in mind that the process is more important than the actual end result.

In less than six months, the youth group had completed the kitchen. The group had also succeeded in getting the government to agree to furnish it and to provide training in nutrition for the mothers who would work in it. Today, seventy volunteer mothers work in the kitchen to supply breakfast to over four hundred and fifty children.

The success of the project and the initiative of the youth group thoroughly impressed the foundation. Moreover, the Project inspired a paradigm shift within the foundation - "*demonstró que con muy poquito dinero se puede lograr grandes cosas*". Karen Yarza ended her presentation by emphasizing that foundations must seek to inspire civil participation: "*se trata de inspirar (...) aunque soy muy pobre, yo tengo mucho que dar a mi comunidad y la puedo hacer mejor*".

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Following the presentations, participants were encouraged to discuss the following two questions:

- What would you need in order to step out in social justice issues?
- What is the impact you envision?

## Committee Breakfast Meetings - Executive Committee

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 8:00 – 9:00 am.

**Rapporteur:** Ann Tartre

### Welcome and Introduction

George welcomed committee members and made some introductory remarks. He focused on the need for the community foundations to take a larger role on the committee and for the funders to take a bit of a lesser role.

### Review Roles and Responsibilities of Committee members

George reviewed how the Executive Committee has been structured in the past. The committee agreed it needs to determine how often it wants to meet.

Mariano Diaz and Antonieta Beguerisse agreed to serve as Co-Chairs of the Committee.

### Post Phase II Discussion

Shari reviewed road map for Post Phase II process. She emphasized that there are no “sacred cows”. She stressed that she thought the two main components of the BPP that participants seem to want are capacity building and the peer learning network.

The Committee had a healthy discussion about Post Phase II and the following comments were made:

- Perhaps the Executive Committee should be more engaged, map the potential opportunities themselves, not sure that they need consultant
- Need to have bi-national partnership
- Need to ensure participants answer the questions:
  - Should there be some sort of structure?
  - Is there interest beyond phase II?
- Planning for exit strategy is important, accelerate the time frame
  - Present to the network that there will be a Phase II
  - What are program ideas the Executive Committee should engage with when considering Post Phase II?
  - What does this group want to become?
- There has been too much focus on nuts and bolts of community foundations, we need more focus on programmatic issues that they share
- The program issues are the glue that will draw people together
- Ideas for a Post Phase II Model: Border Trade Alliance
  - BCFs could take on tough public policy issues
  - Have pre-amble of core values that unify border CFs
- Stability
  - How are we capturing knowledge?
  - How do we ensure institutional knowledge and allow flexibility at the same time?
- Need to really focus on engaging people on the border in community philanthropy (eg. Companies and individuals who may not yet be ready for a CF)

- Need to address how the MX CFs participate because they are always trying to catch up. They still need to focus on nuts and bolts and sustainability issues
- Sustainability is the issue – working on just helping to understand what is philanthropy
  - Need to have cases in Spanish for Mexican CFs
  - There is knowledge, needs to be documented
- Need to figure out what structure can accommodate all these various needs
- The Executive Committee decided to start its work on Post Phase II as a whole, instead of creating another advisory committee, as originally proposed.

#### **Review Phase II Funding/Budget**

- Need to look at budget for next two years and see how it related to Phase III
- What would Phase III look like and what resources do we need?
- Next six months try to close gap – ask for help from Executive Committee to raise money or make cuts
- Carlos Slim was suggested as potential connection –named in Forbes magazine as one of the 10 richest individuals in the world
- The Executive Committee needs to look at what have we promised funders in terms of goals and obligations already
  - What did we say we'd provide in terms of services and activities?
  - How is budget allocated?
  - What is the case to be made for additional funders? What do we need?
- Companies – Southwest Airlines, Coke – need to work with companies that have shared values with BPP
- Should explore bi-national banking – BBBA

#### **Next steps**

- a. Cancel FAB Breakfast and have all of the Learning Community participants engage in Post Phase II discussion on Thursday morning – Executive Committee will drive this so that they can solicit input now. Mariano and Tone will collect notes from the discussion, analyze, and feed back to the Executive Committee
- b. Schedule a conference call soon to discuss this issue
- c. Create a prospect list (each member of the Executive Committee be pre-pared to share ideas for potential funders)
- d. Explore whether existing funders like Kellogg may be interested in providing additional funds to support the exploration of a sustainable network.

## Committee Breakfast Meetings - Program Committee

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 8:00 – 9:00 am

**Facilitator:** Vivian Blair

**Rapporteur:** Christiana DeBenedict

### Participants:

Barbara Brown – Senior Program Officer, Community Foundation of Southern Arizona  
Stephanie Johnson-Burick – Executive Director, Community Foundation for Southern New Mexico  
Miroslava de la Garza – Executive Director, Fundación Comunitaria de Matamoros  
Linetta Gilbert – Program Officer, Ford Foundation  
Marcy Kelley – Deputy Vice President for Programs, Inter-American Foundation  
Robert Stark-Executive Director, new Mexico Community Foundation

### Members Not Present at Learning Community:

Eusebio Martin Alonso Cisneros-Board Member, FECHAC Cd.Juarez  
Rudy Gugliemo Jr. – Program Officer, Arizona Community Foundation  
Yolanda Walther-Meade-Board Member, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad

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## 1. Introduction

Vivian introduced the following topics: the role of Synergos, the role of the Program Committee and the 8<sup>th</sup> Learning Community.

In regards to the logistics of the program committee meetings, the following decisions were made: committee meetings will take place every 3 months via conference call, the committee co-chairs will be decided on the first conference call meeting.

The following goals of the program committee were outlined: the committee should define its own goals, the committee needs to consider the transition from phase II, the committee will help plan the 8<sup>th</sup> Learning Community in April.

## 2. Discussion of Upcoming Events

### a. Grassroots Community Development Mexico Thematic Meeting- Sept. 26 & 27

Marcy suggested that the program committee try to connect more with board members. She feels that the board need to have a better understanding of program. She suggested a more “hand-on” orientation and field trips to achieve this. She also suggested that, is possible, two board members participate in meetings.

Linetta informed the committee of the neighborhood small grants network. She also suggested training on how to engage the board. She also recommended fieldtrips for individual donors.

### b. Youth In Philanthropy Thematic Meeting (Us & Mexico) Tbd Oct. Nov. Dec. 2006

**ACTION** – Christiana to send notes from the Border Youth meeting to Program Committee  
The Border Youth meeting is scheduled for November 16 & 17, 2006.

Linetta pointed out that many border community foundations started working with you a long time ago. She suggested Cindy Sessler-Ballard as a resource person for the meeting. She also suggested to call the office of the Group of Foundations for Youth (in Europe) to get more information. Since many new democracies are similar to border CFs, she believes that this group may be a good resource.

### c. 8<sup>th</sup> Learning Community In New Mexico – April 2007

Is there a theme for the upcoming Learning Community?

- Impact of Immigration
- Stephanie Johnson-Burick suggested the university as a resource (she has a contact-Pr.Everitt Eginigton)
- Vivian suggested the possibility of co-hosting with two partners. She also suggested themes around “What is important to the CF’s?”, eg. youth and health
- A review of the evaluation forms from the 7<sup>th</sup> Learning Community was suggested.
- Maybe finding funders would be easier if we had a theme, ex: health

Other thoughts on 8<sup>th</sup> Learning Community:

- The Learning Community is an opportunity to invite other funders, especially those who are interesting in growing.
- The upcoming Learning Community in April 2007 will be the second to last one. The committee asked what will happen if and when Synergos steps out? The committee needs help with this transition. Lucy Bernholz was suggested as a resource person to help with this.
- The Learning Community advisory committee should include a program person. It was also suggested that a member of the executive committee be included – need to schedule a conference call.
- Should the university be included? What is the value? Should we engage them in a different way?
  - Researchers are disconnected-too theoretical not practical
  - Community colleges are excellent resources ex: Pima College
  - In Matamoros, colleges on both sides of the border are trying to integrate
- Border Book Festival – try to coordinate the Learning Community around the border book festival. A good way to celebrate the “beauty of the culture”.
  - Linetta – notes that “culture is Life” don’t just celebrate Food, ex: New Orleans Jazz & Food is only celebrated
  - Linetta - Don’t forget funders. What will CFs do to incorporate and fund culture?

Other:

- Further discussion around WINGS – global launch for CF’s funds 15-50,000 dollars\* could be a key point in the sustainability – looking towards the future—

## Committee Breakfast Meetings - Communications Committee

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 8:00 – 9:00am

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

Present:

- Claudia Basurto (Chair) – Board Member, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad
- Alma Cota de Yañez – Executive Director, Fundación Empresariado Sonorense A.C. Nogales
- Antje Lear – Program Officer, Santa Cruz Community Foundation
- Elvira Ramos – Executive Director, Brownsville Community Foundation
- Maria Quezada – Border Philanthropy Partnership Fellow, Yuma Community Foundation
- Dotty Reynolds – Independent Consultant to the Synergos Institute
- Michelle Jaramillo – Program Officer, Synergos Institute and Synergos Staff Liaison to the Communications Committee
- Christine Dwyer - Synergos Institute Intern

Not present at Brownsville Learning Community:

- Julieta Mendez – Executive Coordinator, International Community Foundation

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### General Summary

The newly formed communications committee, for the third and last round of committee representation for the BPP as we know it, met together for the first time for a meet and greet session at the 7<sup>th</sup> Learning Community in Brownsville, Texas. Some members such as Alma Cota and Maria Quezada had served on this very committee previously and many others were new members. The objective of this meeting was to for members to introduce themselves, for the committee to elect a chair, and for members to identify a time for the first teleconference for the committee.

Additionally, Michelle Jaramillo encouraged committee members to begin to think of what areas of work were priorities for them and what activities and objectives they would like for this committee to realize, noting in particular not only the internal communications functions of the committee (intra-network sharing of learning, resources and knowledge between border community foundations) but also external communications functions (helping border community foundations raise the profile of their foundations in their respective organizations and raising the profile of the partnership in order to outreach and attract greater attention and resources to the region at large).

### Specific Conclusions

Claudia Basurto from the Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad was named Chair of the Committee. Claudia had worked in the areas of public relations, media and image consulting for many years and most recently was instrumental in the success of two press campaigns related to the BPP; that of the corporate study release and the 6<sup>th</sup> Learning Community in Tijuana.

The committee identified Wednesdays and Thursdays between the hours of 9am and 12noon (PST) as the best times for future committee teleconferences

Due to time constraints the committee determined that a brainstorming session to discuss desired committee objectives and work priorities needed to be put off until the following convening of the committee.

Michelle agreed to write up the notes and send these along with potential times and dates for the next call.

## Expressing Our Commitment to Growing Philanthropy in the Border Region

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 9:15 – 10:00 am

**Facilitator:** Ann Tartre

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

The second day of the 7<sup>th</sup> Learning Community began with a personal reflection. Ann Tartre invited participants to take a moment to reflect on their own personal commitment to the Border Philanthropy Partnership. Participants were encouraged to ask themselves: Why am I here? Why do I do this work? What inspires me?

Following this personal reflection, participants shared their thoughts with the group. The following is a summary of the responses that emerged:

- To create an environment of change; provide the community with role models.
- We're involved in this work so that we can express the love of god.
- To have both personal satisfaction and to nourish a sense of legacy / desire to leave something behind for the community.
- Volunteerism.
- I'm inspired by the impact that we can have collectively/together.
- To work in an organized entity, to have impact, to foster growth in the communities.
- The need to focus on money distracts from the need to assist the communities.
- *Pensar que en la humanidad hay mas bondad que maldad; cambios en la humanidad nos motiva a trabajar duro para que otros también entiendan la necesidad; nuestro trabajo es importante; hay que hacerlo conjuntamente.*
- It's a powerful way to exchange money/financial resources on both sides of the border; if we can make enough of an impression perhaps the government will realize that walls/a border aren't necessary.
- It's my job. I want to encourage and support local leadership. I want to help create an agenda for the community.
- Have a strong belief that in most places in the world, the locals know what's best for them and how to achieve change.
- It's inspiring to see the coming together of two groups: people with money/resources and people with no money/resources but good ideas.

## A BPP Dialogue on the Future of Border Community Foundations

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 10:00 – 1:00 pm

**Speaker(s):** Lucy Bernholz, Mapi Rubio

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

In this session, participants examined trends at the national, regional, and global levels and learnt of their potential impact on the future of border philanthropy. Lucy Bernholz, from Blueprint Research & Design, Inc., presented national trends in the US. Mapi Rubio, from Vivian Blair & Associates, presented the national trends in Mexico.

### Lucy Bernholz

Lucy opened the session by providing an overview of the main findings from the provocative report she co-authored “On the Brink of Promise: The Future of Community Foundations”.

An inescapable reality that emerged from the report is that the field of community philanthropy is changing. This change is a result of some important forces:

1. **Economic and market pressures.** The shift from an industrial economy to an information-based one has unleashed new fortunes, new poverty, new politics, and new global relationships.
2. **Demographic changes.** The composition of the population and social dynamics are changing. The most significant are an aging population and an increasingly diverse population, resulting from immigration. Community foundations will need to serve the interests and needs of these emerging groups.
3. **Changing expectations for regulation and accountability.** Increased regulatory and public scrutiny. These changes represent an increasing challenge for foundations and generated considerable anxiety and uncertainty for foundations.
4. **The commercial sector as innovator.** Philanthropy, which has a large nonprofit and mission-driven side, now has to contend with an emerging private sector (includes commercial banking, estate planning, and financial management). The private sector has only recently emerged - in the last 12 years. The private sector is equipped with financial resources and is now leading the market with new ideas and marketing. This has contributed to the creation of a two-part philanthropy industry. There is great potential for partnership between these two parts.
5. **Changing relationships between sectors and new expectations for public problem-solving.** Ongoing structural shifts in government services and corporate responsibility will require philanthropy to continually assess these relationships as it defines its role in public problem-solving.

These forces, and their consequences, have some important strategic implications for community foundations. Indeed, the report suggests that community foundations will need to adopt a new mindset, formulate new purposes, and use new models in order meet emerging challenges and opportunities.

Three subtle but significant shifts are:

1. **A shift in focus from institution to the community.** With many other types of organizations able to handle the services that community foundations have traditionally managed – often with lower costs and greater efficiency – community foundations more than ever before will need to “walk the talk” of community benefit and demonstrate their value by emphasizing their impact on and accountability to their communities.
2. **A shift from managing financial assets to long-term leadership.** The purpose of a community foundation is not to see who has the biggest pile of money, but that it is there and it allows the foundation to function in the community as a permanent resource. Community foundations will need to articulate the link between their demonstrated, principled leadership in communities and

the promise that permanent resources can be used nimbly and effectively to address the pressing problems of the future.

3. **A shift from competitive independence to coordinated impact.** Community foundations will need to work together toward common goals. Community foundations need to figure out how they can be indispensable additions to communities' improvement strategies and to donors' portfolios of giving options.

## **Mapi Rubio**

Mapi presented the main findings from a report she co-authored entitled "Community Foundations in Mexico and their Future Perspective".

Mapi opened by stating that to speak of community foundations in Mexico is to speak of a paradigm shift. She invited the US community foundations to become more bilingual – in terms of culture; become transcultural. She reminded participants that the process of community philanthropy in Mexico is new and very different to that in the US and therefore asks the US community foundations to be patient.

Indeed, the philanthropic base is very weak in Mexico – there are currently twenty-two community foundations in thirteen states. Mexicans tend to be suspicious (*desconfiar*) of others. Furthermore, there is no tradition of volunteerism in Mexico or of getting involved with associations.

Within this context, the following trends may influence the future of community philanthropy in Mexico:

- **Economic trends.** Mexico has a long-standing relation of dependence with the US. Mexico also has uneven internal economic development which leads to internal migration. This migration exerts particular pressure on border communities and impacts areas of health, education, housing, and environment. The result is an increased demand for programs to attend to the immediate needs of the population.
- **Political-economic trends.** The results of the upcoming elections (on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006) could influence future national policies and outcomes.
- **Demographic trends.** Mexico will see a booming youth population for the next 20 years. Also, increased female and family migration is leading to a decrease in the amount of remittances to Mexico.
- **Philanthropy regulatory framework.** The Mexican government is beginning to value civil society organizations and their contribution to community development. However they are demanding to see results/impact. Civil society organizations must build their capacity in order to respond to the government's demands in regards to accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, and social impact measures.
- **Business trends.** Accountants are beginning to create rules and regulations for CSOs. There are no commercial fundraisers to compete with yet. Financial and insurance institutions have not yet created adequate products for community foundations.
- **Relationship between sectors.** The government is facilitating the work of CSOs. Some community foundations support organizations are competing for resources and assistance.

Given the current trends in Mexico, challenges to the sustainability of Mexican community foundations are:

- Identity
- Coherence
- Position in relation to other civil society organizations
- Institutionalization of citizen's proposals ("propuestas ciudadanas")

## **Discussion**

Following the presentations on current trends impacting community philanthropy in both the US and Mexico, participants shared their comments in an open plenary. The following is a summary of comments:

- Mexican migration to the US is young and productive vs. American migration to Mexico is older and retired
- Mexico doesn't have the same competition as in the US – Mexico provides direct services vs. US uses intermediary NGOs
- The provision of direct services by Mexican community foundations is a strategy to increase visibility/credibility; part of the identity crisis of community foundations in Mexico (Mapi)
- In Latin America, there is no tradition of giving. Community organizations carry out direct work because it increases credibility.
- Mexico has the opportunity to grow because there are very few community foundations
- Recommendation: consider differences but focus on opportunities
- Need to break paradigms, change traditional ways of doing philanthropy; resource mobilization, community/civic participation; market the idea of a community foundation as a tool/agent for change
- Q: What kind of problems can CFs have in homeland security?  
A: The amount of paperwork is increasing. To give money to Mexico, US foundations have to ask more paperwork of Mexicans and need to ensure that they are not on terrorist lists or narco lists before they give the funds (following the Patriot Act).
- Changes on the border: rise in drug trafficking and kidnapping, increasing numbers of Mexican elite are moving from Mexico to the US leading to a hollowing of the border, this is a problem because the elite are no longer giving to their communities, instead they are giving to the US communities in which they have established themselves
- With parents and children living on opposite sides of the border, estate planning/taxes has become more complex/complicated
- There is a need to create philanthropy in Mexico, there is a need to plan donations, to show long term impact, it's not only a matter of asking for money but showing results
- Last year, there was a huge flow of money out of Mexico; the results of the upcoming elections could cause another outflow
- Q: What is the role of the Catholic Church in Mexico/in helping philanthropy?  
A: The Church's role is diverse and controversial; it contributes/ adds to community development, offer many youth programs (Mapi)
- We (Mexicans) have a problem with certain governments. They see us as competition. They think that they are responsible for the social situation. However, elections are every four years and so politicians' thinking is not long term. Community foundations in Mexico need to have the government's trust in order to look after social problems, the government should delegate that responsibility to us.

## Exercise

Following the presentations and discussion on national trends in community philanthropy, Lucy led the group through a practical exercise. The goal of the exercise was to determine what the main issues are around philanthropy for Mexico and the US. Participants were asked to think of the Mexico issues, US issues, and shared issues. Then the group was asked to identify the challenges of addressing issues jointly and thinking of potential opportunities.

Mexico	Shared	USA
Scarcity of nonprofit organizations Developing a culture of long philanthropic investment Building trust locally DIF is an existing resource Mexican families have their own informal ways of giving/group contributions, eg. For sick relatives, for quincena. It's a	Movement of people (migration) Economic environment (interdependent) Civic engagement/philanthropy – how it is practiced/what it means Building trust (need to) – across cultures and within cultures New understanding of roles – government/business/community foundations	Abundance of nonprofit organizations Understanding multiple traditions of philanthropy and bringing community foundations back to the basics of community (rather than sole focus on \$) Building trust across racial/ethnic communities

<p>different model of giving. Taxes – something that needs more work; we need to successfully pressure the Mexican government vis-à-vis fiscal issues (eg. Tax incentives for corporate donors)</p>	<p>Shared environment/shared environmental issues Shared service clubs (eg. Rotary, etc.) Health issues along the border (tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, health care access) Actions of immigrant associations / transnational groups Role of the media in the border region; media often contributes to violence; portrayal; messages</p>	
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After this exercise, the group was given the task of considering the list of shared US-Mexico issues. Participants were asked to think about what their organization is currently doing in regards to one of the listed issues. Each table engaged in a discussion in which each participant shared what their organization is currently doing. In an open plenary, the following comments were made:

- We talked about civic engagement; bringing people together from both sides of the border (Paul)
- Community/civic participation focused on youth; youth exchanges; build tolerance (Karen Yarza)
- Migration issues (from within Mexico) with local organizations; indigenous schools (gardens, libraries, etc.), indigenous people that are migration to Baja California
- Contacts with Rotary Club/ San Diego
- Environmental health; conducted a study of a landfill; it affects both sides of the border because there are people who are dying between Mexico and the US
- American senior citizens (in Mexico) are opening funds in Mexican foundations
- Youth Leadership Program in Baja California – project in Tijuana
- Civic engagement in Baja California/ San Diego; try to get people to better understand the border; publications “blurred borders”, “shared destinies”, and “the ties that bind us” (USD); importance of looking at transnational communities (Richard Kiy, ICF)
- Share community knowledge through convening, providing leadership, being out in the community and talking about what we know
- Bi-national programs: attention to repatriated minors since there is a huge flow that is returned at that area of the border; support in identification and family integration; promoted a program of anonymous “denuncia”; efforts to address the issue of youth on both sides of the border; environmental program – exchanges between the universities of El Caso and Ciudad Juarez (Ojinaga)
- Similar/complimentary changes in demographics; role of the community foundations in bridging those two groups; see how they compliment each other; eliminate stereotypes (Bob Stark)
- Violence against women; awareness campaign on both sides of the border (Frontera Women’s Foundation)
- Six working groups; One is new program entitled Endow San Diego; trying to address the issue of public policy with new committee; have a media person who has good contact with local media (San Diego Foundation)

Following this discussion, participants were then asked to think about the resources that would be needed in order to carry out these joint initiatives. The following comments were made:

- The Council on Foundations website is a great resource – adnet, ceonet, pronet, \$net
- Work done in identifying corporate philanthropy: directory of maquiladoras and corresponding foundations in the US; need strategy to work together
- Manage the BPP as a bi-national network; work together in order to, for example, succeed in influencing fiscal reforms; be seen as a force/leader

- Take advantage of the study/database to create consciousness/awareness and gain the support of the maquiladoras; change fiscal disincentives in Mexico for maquiladoras to give

The session ended with Lucy recommending that the list of shared issues be synthesized and handed to the Executive Committee for them to use as a resource. Then, participants were given the following task to take home with them: "Reflect on the list. From your perspective/in your community, how might you begin working together on something? Shared issues/ opportunities vs. their/my problem".

## Lunch & Roundtable Discussions on Immigration

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 1:00 – 2:30 pm

**Facilitator:** Vivian Blair, Bob Stark

**Speaker(s):** Alison De Lucca

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

Vivian Blair opened the session and explained that the aim of the discussion was to provide an opportunity for community foundations to contemplate the possibility of addressing the topic of migration.

Bob Stark began by stating that migration is a complex and difficult topic but one that is vital to all those involved with the BPP. He encouraged participants to think about the images that come to mind when they think of migration. He then asked to what extent these images were influenced by the media, by real people, by movies, by smuggling reports. He then suggested that perhaps there is a need change how we think and talk about the topic of migration. Lastly, Bob introduced Alison de Lucca from Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR) – a resource to help to reframe the discussion around migration and to see immigrants as an asset to building communities.

Alison De Lucca began by reviewing GCIR's mandate which is to create a space for education and networking for foundations in relation to the topic of immigration. She informed participants of a new resource they have developed: the Immigrant Integration Toolkit. She explained that the toolkit provides a framework to help foundations play a role in assisting immigrant integration. In addition, the toolkit includes a filmography that foundations can use to facilitate discussion around the theme of immigration.

Alison went on to explain that GCIR promotes immigrant integration as opposed to assimilation. An integration approach recognizes that added value that immigrants bring to communities. She added that a community-wide and multi-sectored planning approach is required for successful immigrant integration. Indeed, immigrant integration includes language acquisition, equal opportunity and treatment, and civic engagement. She highlighted the need to emphasize commonalities among community members rather than foster divisive thinking and fighting over resources.

Alison also provided a brief update of the current state of the proposed federal immigration reform. She presented two differing positions on the issue - explaining that the house is very focused on national security whereas the senate recognizes the economic contribution of immigrants to the national economy (market approach). According to her, more and more foundations are supporting comprehensive immigration reform. In fact, with support of their communities and foundations, many immigrants have organized and protested against the proposed immigration law.

Following Alison's presentation, a clip from the PBS series "The New Americans" (included in GCIR's Immigrant Integration Toolkit) was presented. The following is a compilation of discussion that ensued from the presentations and movie clip:

- Claudia Basurto explained that Mexicans do not like the word "integration" because it seems one-sided. Instead, Mexicans prefer to use the word "intercultural". Alison responded by explaining that GCIR defines "integration" as a dynamic two-way process in which there is mutual responsibility.
- Bob Stark remarked that there is a slight difference between migration versus immigration. He questioned which term is most appropriate to use.
- One participant remarked that the problem of immigration is complex. He argued that Mexicans who have stayed on the other side in the US after having passed the wall present a problem. They are Mexicans, not Americans, but many of them reject the label "Chicano" which they associate with rebels.

- Mexicans that marry Americans but keep the last name of the father. As a result, their children feel rejected because of their last name.
- Karen Yarza encouraged participants that the issue of migration not only be seen as involving the movement of Mexicans to the US. She argued that there are people in border cities from all areas of Mexico that come to look for work in the maquiladoras. These migrants don't have the intention of going to the US. However, they never see the city as their own that creates problems since they don't take ownership of their city and get involved in the community. Karen also pointed out that there are a lot of deportees in border cities - they get returned from the US to the border not to their original cities. This presents another problem for Mexican border cities.
- Silvia (from Matamoros) noted that dealing with migration issues requires an understanding of the laws and legal framework. She suggests that BCFs need to have a basic understanding of the situation in order to have a congruent voice.
- Richard Kiy explained that the problem is that many immigrants stay in the community. For example, 43% of Tijuana migrants stay in Tijuana. An even greater problem is that these migrants are not included in population data. As a result, the official stats used by the government to determine allocation of funds do not take into account the migrant population and are therefore insufficient for the area's population. He suggests that both Washington and the D.F. should be informed about the reality of migrants in border cities.
- A participant commented that the allocation of tax money for potable water is based on an INEF study which doesn't take into account migrant populations.
- Bob Stark remarked that there is a lot to learn about the implications of migration on both sides. He put out the question: what does immigration mean on the Mexican side?
- Mariano Diaz urged that we need to develop our own template, our own unique voice on the issue of immigration. This voice must be informed by both sides and reflect both opinions.
- Alison de Lucca noted that the BPP has a great opportunity for rich bi-national exchange on immigration. It is important to think that immigrants are here to stay. It is also important to look at circular flows/transnationalism (some foundations such as Ford and Rockefeller are currently looking into these topics).
- Rafael remarked that people migrate out of NEED and for many different reasons. There are many different perspectives and experiences of migration.
- Richard Kiy noted that many people assume that immigrants want a path to citizenship. Instead he suggests that there is a need to understand that most migrants just want to be able to circulate (ie. Work and go home).
- Alison de Lucca pointed out that mixed-status families present another challenge that must be dealt with.
- Judy Gresser shared that the Yuma Community Foundation has decided to focus on the circulatory nature of migration – commuter program. Migration seen more as simply commuting.

To conclude the session, Bob Stark remarked that the program committee plans to come up with ideas or maybe a program in regards to immigration. He added that the committee will look at how community foundations and the BPP can make a contribution on the issue. Vivian Blair encouraged foundations to start thinking about how they want to tackle (or not) the issue of migration. She also mentioned that the BPP has hired an intern (Christine Dwyer) to help community foundations address the issue of migration.

## The Building Blocks of Sustainability Breakout Sessions – Future of Philanthropy's Tool Kit

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 2:30 – 5:00 pm

**Speaker(s):** Lucy Bernholz, Mapi Rubio

**Rapporteur:** Michelle Jaramillo

Building on the observations and themes presented in their keynote address, Lucy Bernholz accompanied by Mapi Rubio walked a group of community foundation practitioner teams through the application of tools developed for the toolkit of the On the Brink of New Promise; The Future of U.S. Community Foundations report. Lucy Bernholz explained that the toolkit consisted of a series of discussion guides that could allow a community foundation staff and board to address issues raised by the report while localizing these in the context and present realities of diverse communities.

Participants were asked to recall the morning's plenary session in which we were encouraged to think about regional and national trends and forces that are impacting the work of philanthropy and community philanthropy organizations in the border region. Participants were asked to make special note of the of those forces they felt their foundations were least prepared to address. With this mind, Lucy Bernholz introduced the first tool, Mapping Community Philanthropy:

Participants learned that this tool is meant to help community foundations identify all of the philanthropy organizations operating in their communities, in order to understand the resources and relationships that can be brought to the table. This tool can be used for discussions with foundation staff, board, and advisers, but it is also a good way to begin to incorporate representatives from other community philanthropy organizations into the process to help obtain a broader set of perspectives and begin a larger conversation about the relationships between organizations and the roles each can play. It is important to recognize that other organizations should be included in the exercise as peers and partners, not simply as groups that will help achieve the foundation's mission. An external facilitator may be helpful in setting the appropriate tone for the session.

Using the Mapping tool in a mock exercise during the session participants observed:

- 'I was surprised that I did not know who was doing what. I thought I had a better understanding of the players in my community. This made me realize there is still much more to uncover.'
- 'I realized that what is missing are actors that work on single issue funds in my community. Using this tool you uncover what is being done as much as the gaps.'
- Often there are preexisting individual relationships between staff members and board members with board and staff of other organizations that are unknown. It is important then to have this filled out by entire board and staff to capture the social capital contained within the group that is otherwise not apparent.
- Community Foundations have a hard time saying *No*. Having a solid mapping of other philanthropy organizations within the community gives you a good understanding of what others are doing and their special capabilities. The Community Foundation can then effectively refer queries to alternative organizations and that way build up their own social capital while maintaining the focus on the specific work of a community foundation.

Participants then turned to the second tool presented in the session, Prototyping Community Solutions. This tool is intended to help community foundations brainstorm creative and effective new solutions to pressing community needs. It allows us to explore in greater depth what it actually means to provide strategic leadership in our community. The worksheet begins by identifying a community issue where action is needed. It then helps us and other community members

“prototype” what type of action is necessary to address the issue, who can do what, and what it will take to get the job done. The exercise can be repeated for each community issue you are considering.

Building on a mock application of the Prototyping Community Solutions tools, the larger group gathered to discuss programs for the elderly in border communities as the sample key community issue.

The following observations were made:

- Solutions mean addressing behaviors in the communities, of partners and agencies
- Partnering and collaboration are an opportunity for greater impact
- The greatest impact requires a clear mapping of other organizations before embarking on a prototyping community solutions exercise
- Challenges include the relative youth and newness of many of the foundations present; how to obtain trust when you have such a short track record?
- Community foundations have a tendency to put to little attention on the role of government and other like partners.
- A particular value add a community foundation brings is its relationship with banking/financial entities in the community
- A community foundation can rely heavily on the existing social capital it has to bring in partners and challenge them on what can be done collectively to address key community issues.

In keeping with the broader message of the previous day’s and morning’s plenary addresses, border community foundation representatives participating in the session were reminded of the critical importance of strategic partnerships and proactive community leadership in ensuring community foundations remain relevant, valued organizations in the future.

**The Building Blocks of Sustainability Breakout Sessions -  
Border Community Foundation Sustainability:  
The Role of the Board in Assuring Sustainability of a Community Foundation**

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 2:30 – 5:00 pm

**Facilitator:** Vivian Blair, Dottie Reynolds

**Speaker(s):** John Davies

**Rapporteur:** Rowena Sison

Vivian Blair and Dottie Reynolds welcomed the new board members. The meeting was held in a bilingual setting - Spanish and English. The session began with a round robin introduction of each participant.

Following introductions, the importance of a community foundation's "**mission**" was noted. Many remarked that most foundations have to, at some point, revise their mission. FECHAC informed the group that they have changed and revised their mission a number of times based on the community's needs. According to Rafael Arriola, the San Diego Community Foundation changed their mission after 30 years, also out of necessity.

Dottie spoke on the importance of broadly-stated mission statement in order to prevent modifications. She did however note that it is quite customary for organizations to revisit their mission every five years. Nonetheless, Dottie emphasized that it is important to have a mission that members believe in and that they can articulate the mission sincerely. Based on the mission, John Davis stated that it is the strategic planning that will then need to be redefined. Dottie explained that some do not understand the importance of civil society, the notion that ordinary people can make decisions on money and who to give to. The source of permanent support plays an important role in non-profit. The intention is to reflect, discuss and provoke. According to Barbara Brown, the US is an incubator for ideas to send out.

The group was later divided into two smaller groups. Dottie facilitated the English group and Vivian led the Spanish-speaking participants.

**Group 1 with Dottie Reynolds**

Rafael Arriola put forward that the general population does not have much knowledge of community foundations. Dottie asked about the non-profit field in Mexico – suggesting that it may not be as large as the one in the US. Karen Yarza responded that it is important to know about the history of Mexico in order to understand the evolution over the years. The government played an important role in ensuring that civil society kept quiet. There have been student movements and now there is a transition - the government is changing. Currently, there are 22 community foundations in Mexico. New enterprises are also on the rise and non-profit groups are now emerging.

Karen continued that non-profits are struggling to find their own identity, a pass through breach with donors and non profit than endowments. Dottie reassured her by stating that where community foundations are new and have local support, the endowment will come but it is a very slow process. Karen explained that in Mexico there are no tax benefits to give inheritance to charity. Judy emphasized the importance of test driving the community foundation to see the services they provide and communicate with them. Growth comes from existing donors.

**What is your Community foundation specifically doing to assure sustainability?**

In Las Cruces, Christi Martin explained that they have done the test drive and cultivated the first gift based on relationships, by building trust and educating the donors. In her words, "when people see what you do that's when you get money". Dottie explained that smaller gifts are better because it can lead to endowments. Pat, from the Frontera Women's fund, participates in the Houston Endowment matching grants program and explained "the more strings the more complicated it gets". It is the timeframe which causes people to go into a campaign mode. The danger about this is that it is repetitive.

For the San Diego Community foundation, the importance of getting reports to the funders is crucial. Making sure that the funders are aware of what has been done with their money is of great importance.

“What makes you think your organization will go on forever?” The importance of a strong board, money, and evaluating the sustainability of the community foundation.

**What is a board member’s role? In what ways does a board member fulfill this role? And, what skills does a board member need to become more efficient and effective?**

One way the board can be effective is by educating the outside and showing donors how they can benefit. In Mexico, trust is of great importance as is trying not to touch the assets base and making sure that laws do not change. Also in Mexico, tax deductions are very small. Karen Yarza emphasized the importance of gaining the trust of the community by showing their talents and knowledge with existing community grassroots organizations. She added that it is very complicated to give in Mexico and that there are numerous obstacles - one being that funders can only give to registered organizations. At the moment the University of Mexico is working on a project with the IRS. In Mexico, community foundations or foundations are not regarded as the same as non-profit.

The board needs to be crystal clear without any questions and that is one way trust is built. Barbara answered to the fundamental building blocks of a CF Sustainability, and explained that sustainability, deciding what service that the foundation provides will determine the money you need. The board must provide administration. Dottie reaffirmed with the group that boards are very important and needed. There is a need to promote this with friends and provide a detailed budget. Staff members need to talk about the programs and board members should help to open doors and network.

Karen explained that in Mexico talking about money makes one very uneasy. The skills needed from board members is the ability and willingness to meet people and share stories that will help get more funding. The board member must become an advocate for the group. Karen gave the example of her board which consists of eighteen people. Some move to Mexico City and agree to invite new people. The question is why do we need so many board members? A big group is difficult. Dottie explained that it all depends on what you want to do but you must define your responsibility. She added that it helps to have board members experienced in certain fields. Dottie shared that she has worked for seven people with a board of twenty and had a board that showed diversity.

**To what extent do board members and staff demonstrate commitment to the vision and belief in the mission?**

Arriola shared the example of the San Diego Community Foundation. It has funds in the foundation including employees. Arriola emphasized the need to establish a board advisory committee for advice. Christie from Las Cruces mentioned that the importance of donor relations and is not often mentioned. One piece of advice given by Arriola was to find out if there has been someone devoted to funds, suggesting that even if you receive money from bequests it is important to follow-up; send a note to the relatives and you'll get money. Karen explained that in Mexico many do not report, they send funds to their hometowns.

**Overview**

- Difficulties with Mexican Laws authorizing charities to be grant recipients
- The role board members can play
- Common problems such as not talking about money and the fear of asking for money. Board simply talks without mentioning money, need to request money for a specific fund
- Sustainable foundations need to change fees but can't pay for operations until they are larger
- Commitment of board members - human resources are as important as the financial resources of the foundation
- Having an adequate endowment is a great cushion

- Raising permanent funds
- No estate taxes in Mexico. The CF is a recipient for those who do not have heirs.
- Remind the US foundations that they have not been built on the wealthy but those who were willing to share.
- Importance of donor relations- San Diego has a specific person assigned for donor relations
- The board needs to share what they do and who they know.
- Skills involve building understanding through stories, opening doors, and basic networking.
- Test drive the foundation before actually giving to them, they need to get to know you believe in you.
- Announcement of new donors
- Confidence in the foundation within the community

### **Group 2 with Vivian Blair**

#### **The importance of the board:**

1. Open doors
2. Donor participation
3. Be vigilant
4. To voice the experiences of the community foundation
5. To be the supplier of knowledge

#### **To be a board member:**

1. Is a great privilege
2. Must have conviction
3. There is a need to be proactive
4. Must have the trust of the community
5. The need to be a great leader

## The Building Blocks of Sustainability Breakout Sessions – Executive Leadership Track

**Date:** Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>  
**Time of session:** 2:30 – 5:00 pm  
**Facilitator:** Shannon St. John  
**Speaker(s):** Carolyn Milne  
**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

Shannon St. John led the session for executive directors. During the session, the following three (3) main issues emerged: 1) getting things done while staying focused, 2) board engagement, and 3) operating funding.

### 1) Getting it all done/staying focused

Shannon suggested that directors need to work on identifying what “it” should be (focus/mission) or is for any given community foundation. Setting priorities is important. Being a victim of one’s own success happens when a CF becomes known and then “the phone keeps ringing and everyone wants us to do everything”.

To remedy this problem, Shannon suggests delegating attending community events to other board members and/or staff. Also, the idea behind having a specific mission statement is that it allows the community foundation to “say no”. A general mission such as “improving the quality of life in X” can be made more specific by adding on a date or a measure.

### 2) Board engagement

Board engagement is of key importance for community foundations. Executive directors need to work on: gaining the commitment of the board, having the board mobilize financial contributions, and considering the composition of the board (including those capable of giving).

There are many in which to further engage the board:

- Written Board responsibilities (most had)
- All expected to give (or all expected to give OR get)
- Include staff in expectation to give
- Term limits enforced
- Board retreats for education
- Board mini-retreats (every 3<sup>rd</sup> Board meeting, deal w/ just one focused topic)
- Board to make 3 real policy decisions at each meeting
- One-on-one contact between CEO and each Board member on a regular basis OR Bd Chair and Ceo meet informally w/ 1-2 other Board members 1x per month.
- Board Chair, not CEO, to address Board “issues” or “problem” Board members, including micromanagement issues.
- Send pictures to the Board in addition to written materials in order to communicate
- Crisis as opportunity: crises can galvanize the Board

### 3) Operating funding

There is a need for more personnel in the area of operating funding. As a side note, Shannon points out that this areas would really benefit from concentrated sustainability work.

In regards to operating funding, Shannon made various conceptual distinctions:

- Distinction between grantmaking and operating funds (they understand this)
- Distinction between “gifts and grants” and “self-financing” (they also understand this)

- Distinction between pass-through and endowment (they understand)
- Stages of development: start-up, survival, sustainability

Shannon helped clarify some better versus lesser sustainable sources for gifts and grants. The better sources she recommends are local sources and individuals. The lesser sources include those that are non-local, foundations, and corporations.

There are various ways in which community foundations can self-finance. One is the operating endowment income. Another is by collecting fees on funds (US foundations have this, Mexico believes it needs them, not sure how to get to them, general curiosity about fee schedules) or fees for services (consulting, grantmaking). Foundations can also make grants to oneself or use revenues generated by property.

Finally, during the session, a question was asked about making the pitch for operating funds in the start up stage to a local individual. Shannon used a role play to illustrate how this could be done. In her opinion, it seemed to be the single most appreciated thing in the session.

## Breakfast & Post Phase II Roundtable Discussions

**Date:** Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 8:00 – 9:30 am

During this session, participants were asked to discuss the following five (5) questions regarding the future of the BPP. The following is a summary of the results of the discussion.

### 1. Should we have Phase III?

Overwhelming the answer was “yes”. Participants value the relationship between Synergos and the BCFs and have a strong desire to continue working together. The Learning Community is seen as a highly valuable and important resource for the BCFs and something that should continue on into Phase III.

It was noted that the Border culture is unique. The disparity between the larger foundations and those that are not so far advanced was not perceived to be a problem. The payoff for the larger foundations is the creation of local partners. The learning experience in Mexico has been the value of sharing. A communications network was deemed to be of primary importance, as is the issue of transference of skills.

### 2. What do we want to see in Phase III?

- More meetings. Participants suggest that these meetings could be smaller than LCs and focus more on mentorship, coaching, and studying practical cases to “really ground our learning”. Indeed, participants ask for more intensive technical assistance and one on one coaching.
- Greater board involvement and training. Participants suggest including board members in BPP events and activities, doing more board outreach, and using TA funds to “achieve increased professionalization of boards and staff”.
- A unified BPP voice/image. To better influence; have an opinion.
- Increased sharing. Participants suggest a listserv or website to channel communications. Also, experiences and lessons learned should be documented by the BPP – to create an organizational memory.
- Increased focus on border issues. Participants suggest that BPP members could implement cross-border projects to address common issues.
- Greater autonomy for BCFs. The BCFs would like to be less dependent on Synergos, more demanding of BCF members. Participants suggest that perhaps BCFs could pay “dues” or make some other contribution to the BPP.

### 3. What issues would like to see Phase III address/tackle?

- Develop a common list of BPP principles and values and define clear objectives for the partnership.
- Increase Synergos input to individual BCFs (eg. Recommendations and coaching).
- Elevate the role of the Executive Committee; increase the involvement of BCFs in strategic planning.
- Address common programmatic themes in a joint manner: eg., violence, health, environment.

- More work around the issue of migration. Participants suggest convening a task force to identify common interests and, along with program committee, develop a program to address the issue.
- Promote bi-national communication, engagement, and work.

#### **4. What are the potential joint programs?**

- Strengthen Mexican BCFs; encourage corporate social responsibility and giving in Mexico; look at cross border giving taxation.
- Engage multiple sectors – business, corporate, government and other civil society organizations.
- Address the issue of migration (if it is considered a common objective for both US and Mexico).
- Address health issues - especially diseases and conditions that confront border communities, eg. diabetes and cardio vascular, tuberculosis, etc.
- Integrate youth into philanthropy.
- Address trans-border environmental issues (water, Rio Grande).

#### **5. What are our common values that make us work together? What of the BPP should be retained?**

- Commitment to change; leadership for change
- Trust, friendship, respect, solidarity
- Sharing, honesty, openness
- Family
- Love of the border culture; respect for culture

**Date:** Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 9:30 – 11:00 am

**Facilitator:** Ann Tartre

### **Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico**

**Case Title:** Expanding the Donor Base of an Emerging Community Foundation

**Presenter:** Stephanie Johnson-Burick, Executive Director of Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico

**Background:** The Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico (CFSNM) was founded in 2000 by a group of local leaders to serve the people of southern New Mexico. Originally conceived as the Las Cruces Community Foundation, the board extended the area served by the foundation to all of Southern New Mexico in 2003. This area extends north to Socorro County, east to the Texas border, and west to the Arizona border, an area of 64,330 square miles and with a population of 569,749 residents. However, most of the work done by the CFSNM is targeted on the counties of Grant, Sierra, Otero, Luna, Hidalgo, and Doña Ana County. This entails 25,057 square miles and 294,864 residents.

The Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico also has a supporting organization, The Healthcare Foundation of Southern New Mexico (HFSNM), originally incorporated as Memorial Medical Center Foundation. Memorial Medical Center Foundation was incorporated in 1988 to aid, assist and benefit Memorial Medical Center. When the hospital was leased to a for-profit corporation in 2004, HFSNM became a supporting organization of CFSNM. The HFSNM manages assets in excess of \$10 million, consisting primarily of the physical building (First Step Center) of \$4.7 million, with \$3,000 in distributable income produced annually from the First Step Center Endowment and \$58,700 in distributable income produced by other restricted and unrestricted endowments to meet the health care needs of the people of Southern New Mexico.

Total assets of CFSNM (exclusive of its supporting organization) are \$840,893, with \$548,335 in invested funds. Thirty-one agencies hold endowments, and another 17 individual endowments are held, from which \$2,000 is available annually for discretionary grantmaking.

The first executive director of CFSNM retired in June 2005 and returned on a contractual basis from October 2005 to February 2006. The current director has been on board since January 31, 2006. The board of directors has expanded from twelve to seventeen members, sixteen of whom live in the Las Cruces area.

**Challenge:** The expansion of the area served by the CFSNM presents both an opportunity and a challenge: expanding its donor base.

#### **Questions:**

- 1) What are some of the proven strategies CFSNM can use to reach out into the surrounding rural areas?
- 2) Should the CFSNM pursue development of specific program initiatives ( i.e., child abuse and neglect prevention) as a way of demonstrating its value to surrounding communities? If so, are there particular program initiatives that have proved to be most effective?
- 3) How can CFSNM best reach the professional advisor community in outlying areas?
- 4) How can board members help in this outreach effort?
- 5) How do you get board “buy in” with such a young organization?

## RTC Discussion:

### Opportunities:

1. Development: build money/endowment – role of the board
2. Mission/impact: make an impact on the border

Development/strategic growth objective: build endowment to \$5 million within two years

- As a new ED, have a one-time branding opportunity; what is the ED's vision for the community?

### Need to prioritize:

“First, feed the lions,  
Then, water the horses,  
Lastly, kill the dogs.”

In this case: the lions are the board, the horses are the focus, and the dogs are the other boards that the ED is currently sitting on.

- Mission branding is the number one priority – need to have a clear mission in order to be able to raise \$5 million in next two years
- In order to determine mission, look to existing community needs assessments/data/reports
- The foundation is already involved in health care; child abuse program (Childsafe) – it's possible to continue building on these (ride the horse you're already on); build on strengths
- Try to define/think of other possible horses and use them to brand
- You could broaden your existing horse (eg. Child abuse); look at root causes; expand program; comprehensive approach; work with: schools, parents, authorities, health, church, etc.
- Funders don't want to fund new initiatives; they prefer to build on something already there
- Be wary of creating new programs to meet donor needs/wants
- BUT the healthcare foundation wants a new initiative, eg. Diabetes. So what to do? Need to focus, have one focus and use it as a springboard
- Need to be known in something in order to attract donors
- What “horse” will allow you to “feed your lions”?
- Diabetes – could focus on diabetes in children, eating habits, nutrition
- Fundraising strategy: involve the doctors/in-house physicians; employees without funds are an untapped pool of donors
- Make mission/branding broad enough so that in a few years you can broaden scope; but for now need to focus in order to stabilize the organization/foundation
- If looking for next thing, look to existing research/data/studies
- Existing endowment – do they have plans to grow and contribute to their endowment?
- Endowment-building campaign can contribute to the goal of raising \$5 million (“start where the kitchen's hot”)
- Four possible horses:
  1. Health
  2. Children
  3. Endowment
  4. Non-endowment
- Use Peggy to create contact lists and plan to attend meetings together
- Is the board ready for new issue identification already? Ready for border issues (BPP)?
- Do you have a time to meet with the board? To discuss the mission? Start floating ideas by the board to help in defining the 'horse', find out their expectations (\$) ASAP
- Need to quit being a member on other boards ('dogs'); service the agencies that have endowments with your foundation, don't be on their board or only work with the agencies that have endowments with you

## **Fundación Comunitaria de Matamoros A.C.**

**Título:** Desafío que enfrentan Directores Ejecutivos de Fundaciones Comunitarias Fronterizas; el caso de FCMAT.

**Presentado por:** Miroslava de la Garza, Directora Ejecutiva de la FCMAT

Un problema real que enfrento como directora es la preocupación para lograr la sustentabilidad y sostenibilidad de la fundación, por lo tanto como asegurar la permanencia de la fundación en la comunidad, como lograr que el proyecto de fundación comunitaria perdure, al no contar con recursos económicos suficientes para la operatividad.

La creación de los fondos de operación y patrimonial, en el corto y largo plazo, se obtiene del porcentaje por los servicios que ofrece la fundación a los donantes y de los recursos económicos que aportan los asociados.

No se ha logrado la apertura de fondos con donantes locales y las aportaciones de los asociados se enfocan a cubrir los gastos de operación.

No se ha logrado transmitir, vender o sensibilizar a los donantes locales el concepto de la fundación.

### **Preguntas:**

1.- Como convencer o sensibilizar al donante local que le conviene pagar a la fundación comunitaria para canalizar sus donaciones ya programadas a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil? Cuales son algunos servicios que le podemos ofrecer dado que somos una fundación nueva.

2.- Que actividades puede hacer la fundación de tipo promoción y que sean validos para obtener recursos para la operatividad y no competir con las organizaciones de la sociedad civil locales? Sugiere realizar actividades de procuración exclusivamente para la operación?

3.- En que forma y en que proporción deben participar en la sostenibilidad de la fundación los organismos externos que impulsaron la creación de este nuevo reto, los asociados fundadores y los donantes pagando por los servicios que ofrecemos, en el inicio de sus operaciones en la comunidad? Durante cuanto tiempo debiera permanecer el órganos de gobierno?

### **Discusión RTC:**

#### **Recomendaciones**

- Maquilas – pedir para incrementar recursos humanos
- Genera recursos economicos – maquilas
- Patrocinar cursos
- Realizar un seminario de RSE como “reichele” para desarrollar enlaces con la fundacion
- Sensibilizar
- Colaborar estratégicamente – cual es el interes de la empresa
- Que el consejo participe en el desarrollo de la estrategia para buscar/ identificar un donante e enlazarlo a una causa especifica – “cundina” coperacha
- Mostrar; darte a conocer
- Darle oportunidad a voluntarios
- Vivir proceso hasta llegar a donantes
- Utilizar medios de comunicación
- Presentar la fundacion no en la oficina pero hacer visita con una organización
- Paciencia y seguimiento

- Eventos estrategicos exclusivos
  - Patrocinadores
  - Consejeros lo organizan
  - Tiene que ser muy estrategico
  - “Como va a aprovechar la fundacion?” Es mucho tiempo/ recursos para planear
- Aprovechar a lo maximo las alianzas
- Buscar la colaboración de otros socios comunitarios

### Plan

Mediano plazo:

- Identificar intereses/ necesidades de maquilas
- Hacer diagnostico de empresarios/ empresas con mejores practicas

Mas corto plazo:

- Formar alianzas estrategicas
- Impulsar la participación de los consejeros

## **Texas Valley Communities Foundation**

**Case Title:** The Solo CEO: Balancing Board Management with Day to Day Operations

**Presenter Name:** Charo Mann, Executive Director of the Texas Valley Communities Foundation

**Background:** TVCF is a very new community foundation located in the Rio Grande Valley area of S. Texas. Community Foundations are new to this region, and TVCf has encountered its challenges along the way. For the past year, the Foundation has been participating in the Texas Challenge Grant program, supported by the Houston Endowment to provide border CFs in Texas both operational, grantmaking and endowment matching funds. These funds are paid out based on agreed upon benchmarks which the foundations have to meet every six months. The program also provides technical assistance in the form of coaching/consulting from Dorothy Reynolds and Synergos Staff.

About two months ago, a new Executive Director was hired, and there is a part time Administrator Assistant. The Foundation just secured a new in-kind office in May, a new in-kind office furniture, just launched a new webpage, a new e-mail address, transferred all accounting data to Quicken for Non-Profits, just started its first grantmaking cycle and a new board member have come onboard. The Foundation is working on marketing material and trying to secure its first Fund.

**Challenge:** How does the CEO of an emerging Community Foundation balance all the various roles she plays, particularly with respect to splitting time between managing/engaging board members and day to day operations of the Foundation.

### **Issues to Discuss:**

- 1) What are suggested strategies the new CEO can use to ensure that day to day operations of the foundation are attended to (including meeting the benchmarks) while she also works to expand and engage the board at this critical stage in the development of the CF? How should she split her time?
- 2) What is the best process for expanding and engaging the board?
- 3) What kind of characteristics should TVCF be looking for in board members while it is in “start up” mode?

## RTC Discussion:

1. Make list of time-sensitive issues
2. Board needs to be engaged and understand what exactly is needed
3. Get a close partner on the board
4. When have task list, assign tasks to board
  - FESAC – transport, eg. Board members volunteer to drive special guests and funders to airport as a way to make connections with them
  - Board members that have secretaries can ask them to do some calls for the CF
5. Interview every board member and see what they can do – each one is unique
6. Board has two functions:
  - Setting Vision/Mission
  - Asset Development
7. Create written roles and responsibilities for Board Members and share during recruiting, and during annual meetings
8. Create a strategic plan: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, roles and responsibilities
9. Create time management strategies:
  - Chunks of time for pieces of work
  - Workplan (6-12 month)
10. Use administrative assistant to screen calls
11. Do the things that put a check in the hand today, then things that put money in your hand tomorrow, then everything else
12. Ask for help
13. Use volunteers-data entry
14. Expand board, include more women, younger members. Prioritize board recruitment!
15. Ask board members for resources like secretaries for things like database entry
16. Recruit attorney and accountant, law enforcement, editors of local paper
17. Recognize new board members publicly
18. Use small town papers – they are looking for stuff
19. Create board terms; recommended: three 2-year terms
20. Characteristics to look for:
  - Passion
  - Commitment
  - Financial commitment
21. Have vetting process for board recruitment
  - Have current board members ask potential board members if they are interested
  - Have the potential board member meet with board chair and one other individual board member
  - After meetings, those board members who met with the potential new person make recommendation to full board (if there is no governance/nominating committee in place)
  - Board votes
  -
22. Use Synergos and BPP to help board members “take their blinders off” and become more aware of the whole community
23. Bring in “regular” person to the board (not wealthy but bright)
24. Test new potential members on committees first

## **Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad**

### **RTC Discussion:**

- Start with today
- Involve the board
- Hire interns
- Someone setting standards
- Bury the past
- Think like an auditor
- Affiliates: Who is keeping what?
- Scan key documents into FIMS – including Annual Reports
- Backup off premises
- Knowledge management professionals – Interns: Library Science
  
- Don't customize FIMS too much
- Invest in staff training – all modules of FIMS
- Use speakerphone/ several staff
- FIMS in Spanish for Mexican foundations
- Knowledge management in budget
- Council of Foundations – recommendations on archiving
- Keep press clippings
- After action meeting – maintain the records; lessons learned; memo
- Investment management – mar of mars, index funds, watch month to month
  
- Board member fiduc responsibility
- Outsource accounting
- Cost studies: FSG
- Keep “just a little longer”
- Succession
- Joint back office actions by MX foundations or affiliate for back office with larger foundation
- Web based grant reports
- Encourage NGOs to be more computer-based
- Computerized grants and evaluation
- Foundation source – grant tracking

**Under Fire: the Critical Role of a Community Foundation in the Face of Crisis – The Case of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, Its History and How it Came to Positioned As A Key Community Respondent to Hurricane Katrina**

**Date:** Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 11:15 – 12:30 pm

**Facilitator:** Shannon St. John

**Speaker(s):** John Davies

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

Shannon St. John introduced John Davies. John began by thanking all those for their response and international support after the hurricane.

John described the hurricane is a metaphor for the opportunities and challenges of a community foundation. He then went on to tell the story of how the Baton Rouge Area Foundation responded to Hurricane Katrina.

The Friday before the Hurricane hit, the community foundation phoned New York City and Oklahoma City to learn from their experiences and knowledge in disaster preparedness. All of New Orleans was being evacuated to Baton Rouge. Even before the hurricane hit, the team knew that people would not be returning. They knew that this was not a case of evacuees but of relocation.

To prepare, the community foundation phoned the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to ask for help. With their help, six information centers were established in Baton Rouge – one of which was located the foundation's office. Weekly meetings were held to coordinate activities.

Two funds were set up to help with the disaster: The Hurricane Katrina Displaced Residents Fund and the Hurricane Katrina New Orleans Recovery Fund to help rebuild civic institutions in New Orleans. Since having people submit proposals for funding was out of the question, the foundation sent its program people out into the field to carry out needs evaluations. Based on their evaluations, checks were issued two days later and handed out to those in need.

In ten days, one million dollars had been donated online. To date, forty-two million dollars have been received and 500,000 donations have been made.

The foundation offered its services to the Louisiana Recovery Authority. Together, they established an executive committee and fundraised. Four levels/contracts were determined:

- Plan the region
- Plan the city
- Write a book on the typical Louisiana architecture/houses
- Provide health services to low-income people; carry out a study to rebuild the hospitals in the region

Leading efforts around smart growth for the city and surrounding region was not new to the BRAF. Indeed it was the foundation's long and proven track record in contributing to visionary leadership on community planning and revitalization that enabled it to be a natural leader in a time of extreme crisis. Some time before Katrina, the BRAF found itself facing a city center that was dying. People with money were moving out leading to segregation of rich and poor. The intention was to make the city center lively and interesting so that people with money would want to stay. They brought in urban experts from the school of new urbanism (founded by Stefanos Polyzoides).

This led to the creation of a new organization: PLAN Baton Rouge. They established a program to rebuild the city center sponsored by the community foundation. Eight years later, more than \$1 billion has been raised. The Shaw Center for the Arts (\$24 million) has been built – it is 50% owned by the community foundation and the theatre it houses is run by the community foundation. They have also renovated the

historic Hilton hotel (\$64 million) and are converting the abandoned Bon Carre shopping centre into office space (\$50 million). They also have another project to revitalize the Old South Baton Rouge neighborhood – they plan to convert it into Smiley Heights. This will see one of the poorest neighborhoods being converted into a complex with 1200 houses/apartments housing people from various income levels.

In 1992, W. Marvin donated his company (and its real estate portfolio) to the Foundation. This led to the creation of the Marvin foundation worth \$64 million.

### **Question period**

Q: How did you achieve harmony between the rich and the poor?

A: A community composed of both rich and poor, various economic levels, favors community dynamics and allows for better understanding between economic groups

Q: How did the structure of the Baton Rouge Community Foundation change after the hurricane?

A: The word “risk” was redefined, we didn’t have a choice. We signed contracts before having the money. [Because they simply had to.]

Q: Could ‘new urbanism’ work in Mexico? As a tool to break down barriers?

A: The case of Smiley Heights in Baton Rouge is new urbanism taken to a new level. Usually, new urbanism means designing neighborhoods to be pedestrian and high density housing areas. The mixed income characteristic is an ‘add-in’ we’re trying. [We think] the way to attack poverty is to mix it in [rather than isolate/segregate them]. Smiley Heights will have working poor, not welfare recipients. That’s too high a bar [too much difference].

## Reflections and Wrap-Up

**Date:** Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup>

**Time of session:** 12:30 – 1:00 pm

**Facilitator:** Ann Tartre

**Rapporteur:** Christine Dwyer

Ann Tartre wrapped up the Learning Community with a few brief closing words. She reminded participants that the theme of the meeting was sustainability. Based on the previous days, she concluded that it seems clear that sustainability means something different for each community foundation and that there are various paths to sustainability.

Despite this, Ann highlighted some important steps that can help ensure the sustainability of all community foundations. Firstly, community foundations need to identify and adapt to both local and international trends. Secondly, community foundations need to strategically analyze data and take leadership on addressing pressing issues. Lastly, systems in institutions and community foundations need to be strengthened.

Ann ended by reminding participants that balance is important. We must balance resources versus dreams. We must balance projects versus donor needs. And, as the BPP, we must balance differences between Mexico and the US. Finally, Ann suggested that the BPP network itself is a tool for sustainability – helping to build bridges and create connections between community foundations on both sides of the border.