



The Leadership We Need: How People of Color Are Leading the #CultureSHIFT for Racial Equity

by Malkia Amala Cyril

In May 2012, Marissa Alexander, a Black woman in Florida, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for firing a warning shot in the air in an effort to scare off her abusive boyfriend. In July 2013, George Zimmerman, who was originally identified as White but whose mother is Peruvian, was acquitted of the murder of Black teenager Trayvon Martin despite evidence that Zimmerman stalked Martin with a concealed weapon and shot him to death. Both court cases occurred in the context of a media debate on now-infamous “stand your ground” laws that was charged by racial stereotypes and resulted in verdicts many believe reflect widespread, systemic racial bias.

Social justice sectors and academia widely acknowledge the causal relationship between media misrepresentations of race and racial inequity in public policy and institutional practice. Yet few acknowledge the cause-and-effect relationship between the visible framing contests on race we read, watch or listen to, and the back-end racial inequities in media structure and policy that produce racial bias in media content. Together these forces drive racial inequity in public policy, create cumulative harms for people of color, and weaken progressive strategies for change.

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This essay examines the centrality of strategies for media rights, access and representation as part of a comprehensive strategy for racial equity; and the role of philanthropy in ensuring the racial justice leadership to transform structural racism in the media. The successes of media justice movement-building are highlighted as a targeted approach to resourcing racial equity leadership within and beyond fights for progressive policy reform.

Structural Racism in the U.S. Media

Research supports what foundation and movement leaders already know – that at the aggregate level, shifts in public opinion lead to congruent shifts in public policy.¹ Research on stereotyping in the United States reveals persistent beliefs among Whites of Black criminality, and that a racially charged public debate heavily reliant on negative racial

stereotypes reflects a pattern of racial bias. Media coverage of Black life in America mirrors trends that are statistically similar in coverage of Latinos,² Indigenous, Arab and Muslim communities³ in the United States. Coverage of Asians in America remains minimal, lacking depth, and is heavily reliant on post-race, colorblind and “model minority” frames.⁴ One poll found that more than 50 percent of Americans still want all or most undocumented immigrants deported,⁵ while a 2012 Associated Press poll found that 51 percent of Americans still hold explicitly anti-Black views.⁶

Widespread racial bias in the media is reinforced by the framing of race in schools and universities, by think tanks, and within faith-based institutions and popular culture. While the U.S. media system is a critical component of this larger superstructure, it works in concert with other institutions to shape national culture and political power structures. Commonly called the “fourth estate” because of their influence on political behavior, media institutions produce the official stories that shape values and beliefs about race. They are therefore central to organizing for racial equity, and require dedicated strategies for change. While movements for social justice tend to focus on the

explicit and visible symptoms of racial bias in the media, misrepresentations of race made visible in racially wedged media debates are the result of implicit racial bias within the media structure.

While some blame journalists, research shows that American journalism is increasingly a platform for elite voices with 86 percent of television news directors and 91.3 percent of radio news directors being White. In the words of Dori Maynard, president of the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education, “The news media and the nation are moving in two different directions. News media is getting whiter as the country is getting browner.” In an effort to bypass historic racial and economic barriers to representation, racial equity organizations and networks have turned to the internet as a platform for movement building and campaigning. Yet the United States remains

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a nation divided between those with the power to stay connected, access information and influence change online, and those without it – threatening the promise of digital movement-building for racial justice. Today, *more than 100 million Americans* live without equal access to the internet. The vast majority of those with limited or no internet access are Black, Latino, Native American, or households with incomes less than \$50,000.

Gaining representation online for communities of color is additionally threatened by ongoing efforts to eliminate open internet protections (network neutrality) and the expansion of digital surveillance as a tool for policing. Introduced in 2010, net neutrality rules ensured that internet users could access any website, service or application of their choice without blocking or discrimination by internet service providers. Instead of establishing rules of the digital road that would prevent discrimination, regulators have proposed unenforceable rules that would punish content discrimination or blocking by ISPs after the fact. At the same time, a White House review on big data found that information on communities of color is being collected without their knowledge or consent at an unprecedented rate, supercharging the potential for greater racial and economic discrimination by big companies and law enforcement agencies already plagued by racial disparities. That’s why more than 10 U.S. states enacted privacy laws in 2013.⁷ Without policies to keep the internet open for voices of color, and protect those voices from undue surveillance as they organize for change, the efforts of racial equity groups to use the internet to bypass structural racism in the U.S. media fall short.

At a time when Black voters have lost the protections enshrined in the 1965 Voting Rights Act, millions of immigrants face detention or deportation,⁸ the racial wealth gap has widened,⁹ and people of color are incarcerated at rates higher than in 1960 when racial segregation was the law of the land¹⁰ – the need for racial justice movements to tackle not only explicit media misrepresentations of race, but also the implicit biases embedded in the media structure itself, is of utmost importance.

Snapshot: A Movement for Media Justice is Born

Following a decade of intense media stereotypes that drove the passage of racially discriminatory policies including mandatory minimums, welfare reform and the 1996 rewrite of the Telecommunications Act, frustration with short-term, race-blind and D.C.-centric approaches to both media strategies and policies reached a tipping point. As racial

justice organizers entered the 21st century, many argued that U.S. progressive movements lacked the sufficient power and will to consistently prioritize racial equity strategies and bring them to scale. Gary Delgado, founder and former executive director of the Center for Third World Organizing and also Applied Research Center (now Race Forward), says, “It wasn’t that racial equity leadership and strategies didn’t exist; we faced inequities in funding and skepticism about the importance of a racial analysis from a largely White-led progressive movement.”

A growing movement for media justice sought to change those dynamics and inject racial equity leadership and strategies into the movement for media reform. As reported in the *Colorlines Magazine* in 2003, “Drawing inspiration from the environmental justice movement, media justice proponents are developing race-, class- and gender-conscious visions for changing media content and structure.”¹¹ In contrast to media reform efforts that sought to resist corporate media consolidation while preserving a Jeffersonian vision of democracy, the long-term goals of the media justice movement intended to repair a racially divided political and economic system through a radically transformed media. The movement, as envisioned, was broad – seeking to transform not only the framing of race and structural racism in media content, but also the media economy and structure on which these beliefs were built.

Born, as many movements for racial justice were, in the rural South, the movement for media justice in the United States got its name during a 2002 gathering at the Highlander Center in Tennessee. “We were a disparate group of media organizers, gathered on the hallowed grounds of the Highlander Center to examine what was then a growing divide between ‘mainstream’ media reform efforts and the emergence of local media activism to fight racism and poverty,” says Makani Themba, executive director of the Praxis Project. Steeped in songs and strategy sessions, Highlander Gathering attendees concluded that media and technology should serve all the people with a movement powered by the grassroots leadership of organizations based in communities of color. Radicalized by a diverse cross-section of social movements, including the DIY (do it yourself) independent media movement, the growth of a global movement for human rights, and domestic campaigns to counter the criminalization of people of color, a growing set of local organizations emerged in the early 2000s. These organizations were intent on transforming the double-bind of racial inequity and opportunity embedded in mainstream media, movements for media change, and the philanthropic strategies for both.

The movement for media justice had a hard beginning. There were no explicit funding streams for strategies focused on racial and economic equity within media reform. Philanthropic resources for media reform instead targeted White-led organizations based in the Washington D.C. beltway.¹² Until the Highlander Gathering in 2002, racial equity leaders working on media content, ownership and structure were disparate, disconnected, and rarely invited to shape national strategies for media reform. With strategic support from the Ford Foundation, early network formations like the Media Justice Network were established alongside early foundations like the Media Justice Fund of the Funding Exchange, and the Media Democracy Fund. The leadership of all three organizations sparked a new focus on racial equity within media reform.

Building off this work and a new era of racial justice leadership ushered in by the Applied Research Center, the Center for Third World Organizing and others, the now-defunct We Interrupt This Message launched the Youth Media Council – the first project to explicitly develop the leadership of youth of color in California to counter systemic racism in the media. The Youth Media Council quickly grew from local to national scope, gaining coverage in outlets such as Essence Magazine and the Village Voice, garnering book chapters – and ultimately bringing the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to Oakland, a historic Black community, for the first time in history. Changing its name in 2008, YMC was reborn as the Center for Media Justice.

The Allied Media Projects (AMP) in Detroit and the Media Mobilizing Project (MPP) in Philadelphia also emerged as powerhouse local groups with a growing national reach. From AMP's Allied Media Conference, an annual gathering of some of the nation's most innovative leaders in media, technology and social change, to MMP's emerging CAP Comcast Campaign, a Philadelphia-based fight to counter the power of the telecommunications industry in local communities through fair franchising – these and hundreds of other community groups emerged on the scene intent on disrupting the status quo with creative approaches that brought together community organizing, media, and arts and culture through the lens of racial and economic equity.

As these equity-driven organizations began to invest in both local and national strategies for media-based social change, sharp inequities in funding presented a barrier to national engagement. In response to a growing call for racial equity leadership within the movement for media reform, a handful of thoughtful foundation partners launched new funding streams and strategies intended specifically to diversify a base of leaders, and strategies for progressive communications and media infrastructure.

Foundations at the Frontline

One of the first to take on this challenge was the Media Democracy Fund. Founded by Helen Brunner in 2004, the Media Democracy Fund (MDF) mobilizes a global orientation with grants that protect the public's rights in a digital age. With a focus on free speech, equal opportunity, open access and diverse voices, MDF connects digital rights to larger movements for racial equity, economic justice and human rights. As a national collaborative of foundations, MDF partners with dozens of philanthropic organizations and individual donors to ensure that as the world moves online, human rights and racial equity does too. MDF's unique model of funder collaboration ensured the existence of infrastructure for grassroots collaboration, and that foundations that prioritize racial equity and human rights have a viable vehicle through which to counter structural racism in the media.

One key contributor to the Media Democracy Fund, and by far the largest investor in media rights and movement building in the United States, is the Ford Foundation. An explicitly social justice-oriented foundation, the Ford Foundation mobilizes a cross-cutting approach to cultural change – supporting communications infrastructure, art, digital movement building, and media reform strategies both domestically and internationally. As a key investor in the Civil Rights and Media Justice Table established in 2011, the Ford Foundation provided key infrastructure for collaboration amongst racial equity and public interest groups concerned with media reform. Ford is joined in this commitment by Open Society Foundations with its targeted focus on engaging racial equity sectors, and the Nathan Cummings Foundation with grantmaking that connects the leadership and breakthrough strategies of artists of color to key fights on media and cultural policy issues. Along with The California Endowment, the Compton Foundation and others, these foundations have expanded the pool of resources for media and cultural strategies led by communities of color.

As a result of these targeted investments, media reform organizations launched by almost universally White leadership and staff have seen their teams diversified; while local media organizations led by or based in communities of color have seen extraordinary growth. Organizations like the Media Literacy Project in Albuquerque, the Rural Strategies Center, Native Public Media, and the Utility Reform Network are all examples of targeted investments turning into powerful leaders with the capacity to diversify and expand the base for media reform, and to mobilize racial equity strategies within what was once a discrete and reactive social justice sector.



The Campaign for Prison Phone Justice: A Success Story

In 2007, African-American grandmother Mrs. Martha Wright amended a 2003 petition to the Federal Communications Commission to establish benchmark rates for long-distance inmate prison-calling services on behalf of her grandson. According to a report¹³ published by the Prison Policy Initiative,¹⁴ exorbitant calling rates make the prison phone industry one of the most lucrative businesses in the United States today. The report provides a compelling description of how the prison telephone market is structured to be exploitative because it grants monopolies to producers, and because the consumers have no comparable alternative means of communication. Exorbitant prison phone rates threaten the potential for organizing within prisons, weaken strategies to counter mass incarceration and racial disparities within the criminal justice system, and fly in the face of research that clearly links inmate phone access to reduced recidivism. Contrary to popular belief, the high price of calling home for prisoners is not a discrete issue affecting only a percentage of the population. In fact, it affects the entire population of roughly 2.4 million people incarcerated in the U.S.¹⁵ and the additional millions of family members forced to pay the costs. These predatory rates disproportionately harm families of color, as people of color comprise more than 60 percent of those incarcerated,¹⁶ and an even greater percentage of those jailed more than 100 miles from home.

In 2003, the emerging movement for media reform didn't have an explicit vision for racial or economic equity. There were few funding streams dedicated to the cause of building progressive media infrastructure or leadership within racial justice sectors, and even fewer media reform organizations led by people of color. Without racial equity leadership, strategy or capacity, the movement for media reform was ill-equipped to confront racial inequity within media rights, access or representation.

By 2012, conditions had changed. Over almost a decade, a steady infusion of targeted resources from key foundations working in partnership with leaders in the field had expanded the base of people of color working for media and technology access and rights. These resources helped launch new alliances like the Media Action Grassroots Network in 2004 and the Civil Rights and Media Justice Table in 2011, and

strengthened a host of local organizations with an explicit commitment to media reform for racial equity, including criminal justice organizations Working Narratives and Prison Legal News. After 10 years of inaction by the FCC and the movement for media reform, these organizations partnered to launch the Campaign for Prison Phone Justice.

The campaign successfully leveraged the progressive media infrastructure of Spitfire Strategies and Anzalone Consulting; the artist leadership of film production company Participant Media and award-winning Black filmmaker Ava DuVernay; the multilevel partnership of organizations like the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Free Press, Public Knowledge and others; and a pipeline of grassroots social justice leadership coordinated by MAG-Net. Together – along with Prison Policy Initiative, Sum of Us, CREDO, ColorofChange, the United Church of Christ and more – the issue gained bipartisan congressional support and widespread media coverage, ultimately winning the historic passage of an FCC ruling to cap the cost of interstate phone calls from prison in 2012.

The potential to achieve racial equity within the arena of media rights and representation is no different than the potential to achieve it within movements for immigrant rights, worker rights, environmental justice and the larger fight for human rights in the U.S. Through the Campaign for Prison Phone Justice, reform and civil rights organizations partnered with allied foundations to invest in grassroots leadership of color. Together, they framed, mobilized and won. This could not have happened without a cadre of frontline leaders of color with the capacity and resources to bring racial equity goals to bear and leverage partnerships across diverse arenas of political practice within a traditionally White-led reform sector.

This victory was not inevitable. As is true in sectors of a largely White-led progressive movement, strategies for racial equity required strategic funding. With foundation leadership, a racial equity fight that could not have gained traction in 2003 won big in 2012, and strengthened both the movements for media reform and for racial equity in the process.

An additional key outcome of strategic investment was the decision by the Media Democracy Fund, the Ford Foundation, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, Open Society Foundations, the Frances Fund and others to focus an intentional strategy on building infrastructure for cross-sector and multiregional collaboration for media representation and rights. The Media Democracy Coalition, the Civil Rights and Media Justice Table, and the Media Action Grassroots Network emerged from this strategy. Adopted by the Center for Media Justice in 2008, MAG-Net now represents the largest multi-issue action network for media justice in the country with over 175 affiliate members nationwide. In partnership with the Civil Rights and Media Justice Table, hundreds of racial equity groups are now positioned to insert a powerful racial equity voice in policy and media debates on mass surveillance and digital privacy. Building off initial investments in grassroots leadership and collaboration, these foundations helped grow intermediary infrastructure and supported communications agencies, artists, filmmakers, legal intermediaries, public interest advocacy groups, research and academic strategies, technologists and the strategies of the global South.

Together, these targeted investments made possible the successful representation of low-income families in the digital television transition, helped block the merger of AT&T and T-Mobile, supported the passage of the first rules for net neutrality in the United States, helped reform interstate prison phone rates, and supported the advancement of civil rights principles for digital privacy in the era of big data. Each of these supported campaigns engaged explicit strategies for racial equity previously unseen in the movement for media reform. While all of these victories for media infrastructure and rights expanded the media rights, access and representation of communities of color, the greatest victory of targeted philanthropic investment was the comprehensive and cross-cutting movement that was built. Together with field leaders, frontline foundation partners boldly targeted resources to fill gaps in sector leadership – strategy and collaboration that brought racial equity from the margins of media reform to its core.

Funding the #CultureSHIFT for Racial Equity: Opportunities for Change

Research shows that at the aggregate level, shifts in public opinion lead to congruent shifts in public policy.¹⁷ A 2008 study *On Message* echoed the need for this approach.¹⁸ This study, a partnership between the Association of Black Foundation Executives and Hispanics in Philanthropy, found that the three most common barriers to campaign victory for social change groups in Black and Latino communities were the lack of dedicated resources for strategic communications by community organizing groups, corporate media ownership, and a history of media bias. This assessment was further underscored in a 2012

report *Echoing Justice* that proposed recommendations to funders on how to seed the success of a broad range of communications, media, arts and technology activities for racial and economic justice.¹⁹

With a shared understanding of the full spectrum of the ways public opinion is generated, grantmaking for cultural change – especially for racial justice outcomes – has the potential to make unprecedented change. Three key approaches could make all the difference.

Prioritize progressive media infrastructure and strategy as a critical arena for increased funding as part of philanthropic investments in racial equity.

According to the 2011 report by Media Impact Funders (formerly Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media), *Why Fund Media*, the top four barriers to funding media strategies are sticker shock; concerns about powerful media gatekeepers and the influence on distribution; risks associated with funding individual practitioners, producers and consultants; and a lack of clarity about the value of diverse media strategies in amplifying grantee impacts.²⁰

Data in the report *Foundation Support For Media in the United States* that tracked investments from 2009-2011 revealed that foundations are increasingly supporting media-related work across multiple areas including journalism, news and information, media access and policy, media applications and tools, media platforms, telecommunications infrastructure, and public broadcasting.²¹ This trend should be built upon and leveraged to support specific strategies for racial equity.

Invest in relationships, networks, and leadership of color within and distinct from reform sectors.

According to the report *Pathways to Progress*, foundations can contribute to increasing racial equity by funding activities that strengthen relationships, networks and leadership of color.²² Examples of critical investments that strengthen relationships within and across sectors include funding strategic convenings like Opportunity Agenda's annual Creative Change gathering,²³ targeted sector support from Rockwood Leadership, and supporting the Allied Media Conference.

Make targeted investments that support explicit campaigns and strategies for racial equity across diverse movements and sectors.

The conservative right has followed a 40-year strategy of building and maintaining its own media infrastructure to leverage a war of ideas through cultural battles that engage everything from Hollywood to think tanks to schools

and news media. These culture wars rely on widely and deeply felt racial stereotypes to discredit the effectiveness of government, while shoring up support for corporate control of civil infrastructure. Conversely, U.S. progressive movements have only recently begun to lead powerful and connected strategies for controlling public debate. From frontline movements for immigrant rights and low-wage worker protections, to movements reforming a racially discriminatory criminal justice and educational system – powerful strategies for cultural change are emerging. These emergent strategies are led by the canaries in the coal mine – those who are not only the first to experience the harms of structural racism and its manifestations in American culture, but also the first to see freedom's light and strategies to guide the way out of the darkness.

While foundations should never guide the way, they can provide a powerful wind that can strengthen the wings of these canaries and give them the visibility, resources and partners to lead us all home.



Malkia Amala Cyril is the founder and executive director of the Center for Media Justice, launched in 2008 to strengthen the media activism and communications capacity of grassroots social justice movements. Cyril's award-winning work has empowered social justice leaders and organizations with the skills and strategies they need to navigate the media environment of the 21st century. Appearances include "News for All the People: the Epic Story of Race and the American Media," "The New York Times," "Politico," "The Huffington Post," "Media Matters," "Democracy Now," "Essence Magazine," the "Village Voice," "The Advocate," and documentaries including "Outfoxed," "Broadcast Blues," and "MissRepresentation."

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Moving Forward on Racial Justice Philanthropy: Highlights

This article can be found in Volume 5 of PRE's Critical Issues Forum. The full volume and individual articles and case studies are available to download at www.racialequity.org or use the QR code to access the full PDF on your digital device.

Articles in the Full Volume

Has There Been Progress on Racial Justice in Philanthropy?

Lori Villarosa

This introduction poses questions of how we collectively measure progress toward advancing racial justice in philanthropy. It also considers the more specific question of progress toward the Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity's goal over the past decade, of increasing the amount and effectiveness of resources aimed at addressing institutional and structural racism. It recognizes the importance of taking stock even amidst challenging times, not to invite self-congratulations or frustration, but to help cull lessons learned in an effort to raise the bar going forward.

The Structural Racism Concept and Its Impact on Philanthropy

Daniel Martinez HoSang

While a structural racism analysis has certainly been adopted in some sectors of philanthropy and in a number of policymaking circles, this approach has also faced important challenges. Perhaps because disparities are relatively easy to document and communicate, they often stand in for the entirety of a structural racism analysis. While much of the contemporary culture of philanthropy emphasizes short-term deliverables and returns, funders committed to ending structural racism must be prepared to afford groups the time, space and resources that this type of analysis requires. This article argues that philanthropic support could assist grantees in deepening the application of a structural racism analysis to their work with the goal of creating more robust organizing and advocacy approaches.

Reflections from the Inside: Philanthropic Leaders on Racial Justice and Grantmaking

Rick Cohen

Based largely on interviews with 21 racial justice and equity leaders in the field, this article shares stories, experiences and reflections on how the sector has changed and evolved in addressing race over the past 20 years and into the present. It is important to acknowledge progress where it has been made and to lift up possible guideposts for those coming into the work more recently either as new grantmakers, or perhaps those moving at a different pace. As critical as the needs are in the communities we aim to serve, the field of philanthropy must continue to push for deeper impacts and greater progress in addressing racial inequities. Varied perspectives of funders and others in the field of philanthropy – all of whom have seen both struggle and progress – are shared as a way to help consider where we have been and encourage us to go further.

Walking Forward: Racial Justice Funding Lessons from the Field

Julie Quiroz

Fifty years after the major victories of the civil rights movement, racial justice activists share a sense of bitter dismay at what Judith Browne Dianis, director of Advancement Project, calls a “new normal” of racial injustice that is actually painfully old. The concerns and questions raised in this essay are based on perspectives offered by several racial justice activists with breadth and depth of experience, sharing views echoing other leaders in the field in recent reports. In this time of great challenge, we asked, how can foundations support the field of racial justice organizing to walk forward? What wisdom can foundations draw from the past in order to move more effectively toward the future? What, if anything, has worked? This article shares critical lessons from the field with funders.

Funding at the Intersection of Race and Gender

Kalpna Krishnamurthy

What exactly is intersectionality? And why is it important for funders to understand it? Intersectionality is an analytic tool that helps us to see how various identities interact with different systems of oppression. This essay discusses the evolution of social change approaches that simultaneously address gender and race, or sexuality and race, and incorporates analysis of funding trends with insights from people of color who work on these issues in philanthropy. It also provides examples of how intersectional efforts can lead to stronger base-building and to policy victories over time, and recommendations to funders.

Timeline of Race, Racism, Resistance and Philanthropy 1992-2014

By Larry Raphael Salomon, Julie Quiroz, Maggie Potapchuk and Lori Villarosa

This historical timeline attempts to capture, in one place, many significant moments, events, controversies and victories that have defined the racial landscape since the turbulent days following the LAPD/Rodney King beating verdict over two decades ago. It invites reflection aimed to understand the past and help us be more strategic moving ahead. How did particular moments contribute to an understanding of race and racial justice? How did foundations learn and shift? How did foundations' responses make grantees more able or less able to respond to critical crisis and opportunity? What dimensions of structural racism were present in a given moment or situation? Did foundations help elevate the structural dimensions and potential responses? How can they do so today?

Case Studies in the Full Volume

Woods Fund Chicago: Adopting Racial Equity as a Core Principle

Lisa McGill

Woods Fund Chicago recently named racial equity as the core principle guiding its work. In the case study, the Woods Fund shares some lessons about moving from principle to practice. One of its first steps was to ask questions about organization's racial analysis in the application process, which proved to be necessary to change the dynamic in a community organizing culture that treated race issues as implicit, rather than an intentional focus. While managing board and staff transitions, Woods Fund Chicago examined grantmaking data to inform their approach to racial equity, and will continue to experiment and deepen its strategic approach.

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation: Advancing Racial Equity in the New South

Lisa McGill

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation has a long history of tackling the impacts of racism in the South. It recently began shifting from an embedded, implicit value of racial equity to an explicit goal with which the foundation is increasingly and publicly identified. Amidst North Carolina's civil rights history and current racial justice efforts, the foundation has been working to put some teeth in its equity goals while maneuvering political challenges, building capacity of grantees and creating a dialogue on race and social justice throughout the state.

The California Endowment: Racial Equity Grantmaking in a Place-based Initiative

Maggie Potapchuk

The 16th largest foundation in the country, The California Endowment is in the fourth year of a 10-year commitment, the Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative. A place-based grantmaking initiative in 14 California communities, BHC has been described as a different type of grantmaking for TCE – an integration of activities, a greater coordination with community sites on policy advocacy, and a process of applying a structural racialization framework. PRE's case study on BHC provides an opportunity to share this foundation's story about its learning at an early implementation stage.

Akonadi Foundation: Movement Building – Locally with a Structural Racism Analysis

Maggie Potapchuk

Akonadi Foundation is one of the very few foundations in the U.S. that has explicitly integrated a racial justice framework into its grantmaking from the start. It has a 14-year history that holds many lessons for funders looking to make the greatest impact on deeply rooted issues of racism. The foundation's ecosystem approach to grantmaking, investment in movement building and prioritization of shifting cultural norms demonstrates the "how" of applying a structural racism framework to local grantmaking in Oakland, California. At the center of Akonadi's work is a relationship-based approach to strategic partnerships with community groups.

PRE Critical Issues Forum, Volume 5

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The goal of the Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity (PRE) is to build the amount and effectiveness of resources aimed at combating institutional and structural racism in communities through capacity building, education and convening of grantmakers and grantseekers. We are grateful to those foundations whose generous multiyear general funding has supported our work over the past several years, including allowing us to produce this Critical Issues Forum volume: the C.S. Mott Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Ford Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies. In addition to these foundations, we appreciate all of the funders who have provided support at key points during our first decade, including the Akonadi Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Marguerite Casey Foundation and The California Endowment. PRE is a project of the Tides Center.

Views expressed in this document are those of its authors and should not be attributed to the Tides Center or its funders.

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PRE Critical Issues Forum, Volume 5

Design: Center for Educational Design and Communication, www.cedc.org

June 2014

