

The OUT, Saguaro and Robeson Funds: Funding for Real, in Hard Times

By Charlene Allen

Organizer Betty Petty put it best during a recent FEX site visit to the Mississippi Delta:

"Funders up North need to understand: We're living life for REAL in Mississippi."

Betty's words epitomize the value of Activist Advised grantmaking in rural, isolated, and marginalized communities. We, as funders, need to understand the real struggles and the often low-key, grassroots organizing work that impacts real lives. At the Funding Exchange, we come to understand communities across the country through the involvement of regionally diverse, activist grantmakers, working through our Activist Advised Funds

This winter and spring, FEX grants staff conducted site visits in Georgia, Mississippi and Florida, and attended the Southern Human Rights Organizing Conference. We found, unequivocally, that FEX Activist Funds were supporting the most progressive grassroots organizing in the Deep South and were among few Northern funders who could make such a claim. Saguaro Fund grantees, like the Indianola Parent/Student Group in Indianola, Mississippi, were mentioned repeatedly by community members as the groups they relied on most. While LGBT work was less prevalent, the OUT Fund took clear leadership in funding newly-established groups and those advancing the most progressive agendas, such as Affirm, in Greenville, South Carolina. These findings hold true not only in the South, but across the country.

As for the Paul Robeson Fund, has there ever been a more critical time to support independent media? Four of last year's Robeson grantees produced programming directly addressing US foreign policy and its promotion of violence at home and abroad. One Robeson filmmaker, Kathleen Foster, has since been funded through the FEX Emergency Fund for broad distribution of a documentary about the detention and disappearance of Arab, Muslim and South Asian people, after September 11, 2001.

In these conservative times, grassroots organizations are reaching out to us in record numbers. This year the Funding Exchange OUT, Saguaro and Docket (OSD) grantmaking programs received the highest number of proposals in their history, a full 1/3 increase over last year. Please give generously to these Funds, supporting the groups that change lives and provide fuel for a movement under siege.

Stop the war at home and abroad

By Jerry Snee

At this most critical juncture, the Funding Exchange wishes to honor and acknowledge the work of those communities, organizations and coalitions working so fervently for just, peaceful resolution to the war at home and abroad.

Founded in October 2002, Funding Exchange grantee, **United for Peace and Justice**, has provided a vehicle for more than 300 local groups and national organizations to work cooperatively in the developing anti-war movement, notably organizing the massive anti-war rallies in New York on February 15, and in San Francisco on February 16, 2003. They coordinated with organizers throughout the nation and the world who organized protests in hundreds of American and European cities as well as Tokyo, Cairo, Istanbul, and elsewhere. There were rallies of millions nationally and internationally, voices calling for justice, and diplomatic solutions. Masses mobilized for peace in spite of the Bush administration's enmity, terror alerts, and local New York City law enforcement's attempts to undermine the demonstrations and block their exposure to the media and public.

You've Helped

Leslie Cagan of **United for Peace and Justice** notes that the organization has, in its short history, "played a leading role in coordinating several national days of local protests and has lent important support to a broad range of peace and justice initiatives and actions. In the two days following the beginning of the U.S. war against Iraq, local actions took place in at least 500 cities and towns around this country, and United for Peace and Justice was a central organizer in that effort". They have shown with their presence in a broad range of rallies that there was - and continues to be - strong worldwide opposition to the Bush Administration's war against Iraq and its post-war actions in the region.

On the horizon, **United for Peace and Justice** is mobilizing to demand the immediate end to U.S. occupation of Iraq, focusing its resources and efforts in three major areas: calling for international oversight of the post-war transition within Iraq itself; placing the Iraq crisis within the context of U.S. foreign policy and challenging its pre-emptive strike policies and empire-building strategies; and organizing domestically against inflated military spending and attacks on civil liberties here at home.

For more information about **United for Peace and Justice** and to learn how you can help, call them at 212-603-3700 or visit <http://www.unitedforpeace.org>

Arizona Fund Hoping to Join FEX Network

With the goal of raising and distributing \$100,000 for progressive social change in southern Arizona, a new group of activists in Tucson has been working to start what they hope will become the next affiliate member of the Funding Exchange.

The working group of the Southern Arizona Fund for Social Change, as the effort is temporarily called, is looking forward to its first planning retreat at the end of April. **Donor-activist and organizer Shannon Cain** reports the group has already raised \$20,000. "We are so gratified by the moral support and advice we have already received from the terrific Funding Exchange staff," Cain said. "With this kind of wisdom and help, we feel confident about meeting our goal and creating a sustainable source of revenue for social change here in the Arizona/Sonora border region."

For more information or to make a pledge toward this new fund's first grantmaking round, please call (520) 971-9502.



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"Change, Not Charity"

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FEX Funds Peace and Antiwar Organizing

By Ellen Gurzinsky

Today we sit watching the US media's images of the end of the war in Iraq and the beginning of a US military occupation. It has been a "clean war". The US media has not shown how this war has affected the lives of Iraqi civilians and children. But the Internet and access to other unbiased journalists have brought some of those more real images to us.

I have no doubt that the Iraqi people are relieved at the idea of "regime change", but now it is up to the Iraqis themselves to figure out what their democracy will look like. Peace activists must continue to organize so that assistance in building the new Iraq comes from the United Nations peacekeeping efforts and not from US and British military efforts.

Meanwhile here at home, Tax Day has come and gone, and we are confronted with the extent to which our tax dollars are going to the military rather than our crumbling schools and overstretched health care system. The US spends \$400 billion a year on the military. This amount is more than the defense budgets of the next 14 biggest militaries combined. The current war in Iraq will cost at least \$75 billion in addition to that \$400 billion. Couldn't this money be better spent on social programs?

The Funding Exchange network so far has allocated more than \$1 million to support national and local peace and antiwar efforts in recent months. These efforts include support for organizations and coalitions who are organizing in communities against the war, as well as the repression and the curtailment of civil liberties. These grants reflect our funds' commitment to support new models of organizing rooted in immigrant and people of color communities, and to build those infrastructures for the future.

Grantees include:

Racial Justice 911: A national network of racial justice organizations that seeks to build the power of people of color communities during a time of war. "War" describes not only US military engagements, but includes a wide range of international acts of aggression such as economic sanctions and environmental destruction, as well as the low-intensity warfare against people of color communities within the United States.

War Times: *War Times* is being produced to help broaden and deepen the fight against Bush's dangerous program of "permanent war against terrorism at home and abroad" by compiling information and analysis, and putting them into the hands of large numbers of readers.

Iraq Pledge of Resistance: Following in the tradition of nonviolent resistance of Gandhi and King, they are a nationwide network of individuals and groups in over 55 cities that create the conditions under which the public and members of Congress can recognize the destructiveness and immorality of a war against Iraq through mass, coordinated nonviolent action.

And locally, FEX funds supported the work of organizations like:

Crossroads Fund, Chicago, IL: Arab American Action Network A network that is developing a curriculum and education project for the Arab community regarding their basic human rights and civil liberties, focusing on such issues as: Anti-Terrorist legislation, "Know Your Rights" workshops, and INS and FBI regulation.

Bread and Roses Community Fund, Philadelphia, PA: Unite for Peace. A coalition of peace activists and members of local Christian, Muslim, and Jewish congregations who are organizing members of their communities in opposition to the war and the harsh restrictions on civil liberties.

McKenzie River Gathering Foundation, Portland, OR: The Northwest Project. The project works to improve media coverage of the anti-war movement. The project is creating a database of peace groups in Oregon and works with them to bring their voice and activities more prominently into the media.

In order to sustain this network, our efforts must reflect this global movement by expanding and strengthening our international connections and analysis. A sustained global response to the war in Iraq is of the utmost importance due to its global consequences. At the same time, it will also be necessary to continue supporting and working with the domestic movement, in order to broaden its focus from the war to a larger question of peace and justice. Together we need to make the most of this opportunity!

Ford Grant for FEX Network

By Ron Hanft

It's official. The Ford Foundation has awarded a grant of \$500,000 over two years to the FEX network to increase the base for social justice philanthropy.

The two-year project was initiated with a briefing at the Development Staff Peer Group meeting in Atlanta, Feb. 23-24. Each member fund is eligible to receive \$13,000 each year for special projects to increase their overall donor outreach capacity and/or to experiment with new methods of reaching new donors.

The project will begin with identifying current best practices in donor programs throughout the network. But ultimately the network is interested in finding better ways to diversify our donor base in regard to race and ethnicity.

In April, member funds will send in letters of request describing how they will use their portion of the grant. A network review committee will award the grants. Comparing experiences in the use of this grant will offer new opportunities for collaboration and learning from each other in the FEX network.

The FEX national office will coordinate the project and provide an evaluation and report writing consultant. During the second year, a report of learnings from the member fund projects will be compiled. This report will also become the basis for a second application for renewed support from Ford. Stay tuned!

Some Docket Groups are Still Waiting for Your Gift

With your support we have been able to make a total of 58 grants worth over \$190,000 to 38 groups out of 43 in our docket. Among those 38 groups funded, 28 have received at least \$3,000 in total grant dollars. However, the following groups - Campaign to End the Death Penalty; CENZONTLE; and Partnership Project - who haven't received any money to date are waiting for your docket gift.

We will close The 2003 Docket fundraising on May 15.

Make an on line gift to the Funding Exchange here: http://www.fex.org/2.2_makeagiftindex

Get a copy of our Planned Giving Guide and create a lasting legacy for "Change not Charity"

War is the Wrong Answer for Our Economy and Our Global Community

By John Harrington

suffice it to say, the US invasion of Iraq is immoral, unjust and unnecessary. It is a violation of international law, national sovereignty, the United Nations Charter; will undermine international cooperation for at least a decade and has already divided the American people. This unilateral military act (the “coalitional forces” cover is a hoax) will only further destabilize the Middle East, increase tensions between Turks and Kurds, and the Iraqis and Iranians. It will isolate the United States from our traditional European allies and most of the developing world, especially the Arab world, and rally Al Qaeda terrorist recruiting. It will also cause immense human suffering and the deaths of thousands of individuals of all nationalities, mostly innocent Arab civilians, who have already suffered twelve years of economic isolation and United Nations sanctions.

What a crime it is for the largest and most powerful democracy in the world to “bomb them back to the stone age” (using an obviously timeless quote from General Curtis LeMay regarding Vietnam). After our country has destroyed the entire infrastructure of this poor Third-World country, will we then actually spend billions in US aid to rebuild the country when we can’t even end poverty and illiteracy and provide educational opportunities to citizens in our own country?

The Bush Administration’s war will not be over quickly, because the US will represent a predominately white, Christian occupying power in a Moslem Arab country in the Middle East. This will cause more bloodshed than if Israel occupied Palestine, Gaza and the West Bank all at once by military force. It will mean that thousands of American soldiers (mostly young kids with big guns) will be put in harm’s way on a daily basis, subjected to random sniper attacks, knifings, bomb attacks and other brutal acts not experienced by American military personnel on such a large scale since Vietnam. Many military analysts have already been quoted as saying that the US will need to occupy Iraq for at least two years, at a cost of over \$100 billion per year to rebuild the country. Instead of Al Qaeda traveling all the way to the US to kill Americans, there will now be 300,000 new targets in the Middle East. Bin Laden could not have done a better job of manipulating US leaders. Thanks, George W.

Many US companies have already been bidding on contracts to rebuild Iraq’s infrastructure and the irony is that US taxpayers will pay for the war by not only dying, but by paying military and weapons contractors to destroy Iraq, as well as paying corporations like Vice President Dick Cheney’s company, Halliburton, to put out oil well fires. Americans will spill blood for oil as our military, under the direction of Tommy Franks, will control Iraq’s vast petroleum potential with proven reserves of over 112 billion barrels, second only to Saudi Arabia and the cheapest to extract (about \$2 per barrel), making big fat margins for our oil oligopolies.

This being said, what can investors do to stop this senseless violence and put economic or financial pressure on the Bush Administration and large corporations that continue to profit from the Al Qaeda

September 11 attack and the U.S. war in Iraq?

Naturally, investors can avoid investing in weapon manufacturers and defense contractors and companies which profit from this conflict, such as Halliburton, which will not only profit from the war in Iraq, but has already profited from building prisons in Cuba for alleged terrorists being held in Guantanamo.

With big budget-busting deficit spending coming up, the US Treasury will be raising more money to pay for the war by auctioning treasury bills and bonds. Don’t buy them. Instead, buy federal agency bonds to finance housing, small business and farm loans, and buy municipal bonds to support transit, alternative energy, education and veterans’ housing. It’s also a good time to buy Euro - and Swiss franc-denominated bonds to support those countries’ governments which opposed President Bush’s imperial war. Before someone calls me unpatriotic for suggesting investors invest in foreign government bonds, it’s critical to remember that portfolio diversification is the heart of the prudent person rule and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. It is an important act to take in uncertain and volatile global economic times, especially the diversification of one’s assets into other hard currencies: Ask any corporate treasurer. It’s not just avoiding investing in weapons and

treasuries, it’s also refusing to buy products of large brand name corporations and banks which are largely responsible for exporting US jobs and your investment dollars to sweatshop economies and governments that are bribed to hand over the developing country’s natural resources to corporate management. This means you have to invest, bank and shop locally, and become an active and vocal shareholder. Contact your pension administrator and mutual fund advisor/manager and tell them how you want your stock or mutual fund shares voted.

Keep your money invested and bank in your local community. You can avoid the large multinational banks that export capital, and bank with smaller savings banks, credit unions and community loan funds.

Keeping your consumer dollars close to home is also important. Why eat only processed, genetically modified, tasteless corporate food in containers, transported at great cost long distances, when viable local grocers, farmer’s markets and neighborhood produce is only minutes away? We can be smart, healthy consumers supporting our local economies.

In addition to investing and consuming responsibly, the third leg of the stool to peaceful economic participation is philanthropy and participating in community affairs. That means giving money to those organizations you trust to bring about a major change in our world. That also means volunteering to work for a non-profit as a volunteer in your community, or serve on boards of non-profits that are supporting progressive social change.

Speaking of social change, why not vote? I know that few Americans do it, it’s old fashioned, troublesome and nauseates you to think about voting for any of the numerous morons who run for office; but what the heck. He or she will be “your moron” and maybe if they practice enough, they will be able to play a tune on the piano. They may even be able to represent you and provide some progressive leadership.

Lastly, we all have a right in our great democratic country to protest, demonstrate and voice our opinion. Lots of people died for these rights and we had better exercise them. Who knows, maybe one day we’ll have more people voting and demonstrating in our streets than watching sitcoms and soaps on corporate-controlled commercial television ☐

John Harrington is a resident of Napa, California and a Registered Investment Advisor. He is President/CEO of Harrington Investments, Inc. and manages Global Partners, LLC. Both companies utilize a comprehensive social and environmental criteria for investing. He spent four years in the military during the Vietnam War.

Strong Believer in Door-to-Door Organizing

By Peter Diaz

Carel Mulder drives fast. I was his invited guest to a Neighbor-to-Neighbor (N2N) event in Cambridge last December. I braced myself against the car door, resisting the centrifugal force created by Carel’s racecar maneuverings through Harvard Square, as I inquired into his grantmaking, his door-to-door activism with N2N and his work with the University of Massachusetts’ (UMASS) Minority Research Program in South Africa.

Carel met John Maher, former Director and organizer at N2N, at a Funding Exchange conference a few years ago. Drawn to N2N’s organizing work on a single payer healthcare system for Massachusetts, their conversation centered on a modified Canadian healthcare plan. Carel’s interest in healthcare and politics influenced some of his future grant making.

Carel’s activism began long before his anti-Vietnam war activities as a post-Doctoral student in San Diego. Politicized by the German invasion of Western Europe, Carel helped distribute and later produced illegal newspapers in Nazi-occupied Holland as a boy. As a teenager he and his brother left The Hague and returned to his great-grandfather’s large farm for safety. As his

resistance to the German occupation grew, his interest in socialist thinking further developed.

Not only a financial supporter of N2N, Carel is also an active volunteer. “I still take part in the door to door organizing and election day ‘drives to the booth’ at housing projects in Worcester.” He is driven by his belief that Massachusetts residents are in fact more progressive than the State’s elected officials.

As a long-time donor to the Funding Exchange, Carel established closer ties to the donors and staff at FEX in 1998, when he participated in the FEX-sponsored donor trip to South Africa. He not only made new friends, (“I met Mary Tiseo on that trip”) but forged new connections (“Mary introduced me to the Dean of a Medical School in South Africa”). He has returned to South Africa several times since that first trip. As a semi-retired professor of microbiology, specializing in virology, specifically the H.I.V. virus, Carel now runs a project for UMASS’s Minority Research Program that brings students of color to South Africa for 10 weeks to study and perform field research on H.I.V.

Carel’s ability to articulate the difficulties and successes of his research and his continuing belief in progressive community based organizing are inspirational ☐

FEX
In
Person

Yep, it’s been 25 years

Well, the Funding Exchange network is coming up on 25 years. Yep, it’s been 25 years since those six member funds - North Star, Vanguard, Liberty Hill, Bread and Roses and Mackenzie River Gathering - founded the national FEX to further the mission of community-based social justice funding.

In preparation for the next 25 years, the FEX network is engaged in a process of understanding the impact that we as a network have made and are preparing to re-position ourselves in leadership for the next 25 years.

At the board meeting in February, the FEX board of directors engaged in a preliminary visioning exercise. The board was asked to consider the question: What has been the impact of the FEX network over the last 25

years? Here are just a few of the responses.

- ▶ FEX fosters the belief in “redistribution of wealth” not in accumulation of wealth.
- ▶ FEX practices the integration of social justice and funding systemic change.
- ▶ FEX provides an entrée to philanthropy for those who might not

Ellen’s Corner

have otherwise considered themselves grantmakers - both donors and activists alike.

▶ FEX provides opportunities for education that blur the differences between the roles “donor” and “activist”.

▶ FEX demystifies the concept of philanthropy and gives opportunities for ownership to activists around the country.

▶ FEX has always given general support.

▶ FEX provides opportunities for people of color to take leadership and decision-making roles in philanthropic organizations.

▶ FEX is a “first funder” to many organizations and movements.

▶ FEX continues to leverage monies from larger foundations for local organizing.

▶ Historically, FEX has always responded to political crisis and continues to do so.

▶ FEX funds have become institutions of change in their communities.

▶ FEX folks founded NNG and other progressive grantmaking organizations.

▶ FEX funds provide technical assistance to build local and regional capacity.

What other impact has FEX had in the last 25 years? In your region? In the way that you look at your own philanthropy? Please drop me a line and let me know your thoughts. I’d love to hear from you.

Thanks.