

Welcome to Our New Web Site

We have just recently launched our new web site. It has been almost 5 years since we have had a major change on our site. Ron Hanft and Linda Thurston have been at the forefront of re-working our site and we are all very proud of the work they have put in. Please visit, look around and tell your friends about the new site. www.fex.org

Some of the new or improved features include: donor testimonials, featured grantees, references or links to member funds throughout the site, online giving opportunities, 'advise grants online' feature for donors with DA Funds, more grant application information online, grants lists and FAQ's, publications available or ordered online, a Newsroom, and links to other resources for grantees and givers

The Story of The FEX Web

The Network Website Project has proceeded along three tracks. In the first part, the Member Fund Independent Web Site Development, the 11 member funds who have, or are about to launch, their own sites have participated in a site evaluation and development process this past spring and summer. Consultants Madeline Stanionis and Nick Allen of

"donordigital.com" prepared a self-assessment questionnaire for each fund which staff completed and sent back to the consultants. Madeline and Nick then completed their own online evaluation and recommendations for each site. Then, staff from 10 of these funds participated in regional training workshops on website development with the consultants. The workshops were evaluated very highly both for the content related to developing websites and as an experiment in regional network events.

In part two, the Member Fund New Website Development two full member funds have not been able to develop a plan for an independent site up to this time. Ron Hanft and Linda Thurston visited these funds last spring and offered network assistance in building new sites. The staff responded very positively and had prepared some initial site ideas prior to the meeting. Both funds have established Internet domain names, found local website builders who will work with them in developing a site, have submitted budgets for the project, have begun new site construction and have prepared a temporary page for the new Network web site. The Network Website Project has assisted with a grant of \$5,000 toward the total costs of the new sites. Also, Linda is available to the funds for coaching through the site building process as needed until the sites are launched.

In part three Upgrading the Network/National Office Website, a team of five staff, the "Websters", worked with site builders from PraXis Consultants headed by Diane Greene Lent in the construction of a new Network website. Both the design and content of the site are new, with more information and services offered to both grantees and donors

On Hostile Ground—A documentary

"On Hostile Ground, a new feature-length documentary by Jenny Raskin, Liz Mermin and Catherine Gund, is a powerful look at the stresses on both abortion clinics and abortion providers in communities across America. It is also a testament to the providers' commitment, courage and perseverance. Working Films developed and is managing a statewide and national Access Campaign, focused on "thoughtful re-consideration" of this controversial issue, supported in part by The Funding Exchange and the Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media." - Robert West, Working Films, NC

Through their grant from the Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media, the organization Working Films

is using the film *On Hostile Ground* as the catalyst for a statewide organizing effort for reproductive rights. Specifically, they are targeting the campaign of violence against abortion providers in North Carolina. The film, which puts a "human face" on abortion provision and challenges the campaign of misinformation perpetuated by the anti-abortion movement, offers a perfect tool for the North Carolina Access Campaign. Working Films is using the film to initiate strategy dialogues throughout the state. As part of the Medical Campus Campaign, the film is used to educate medical students about the shortage of abortion providers and to promote a discussion of the issue on medical school campuses, where it is often considered off limits. This will be accompanied by The Interfaith Dialogue Campaign, encouraging faith communities to view abortion within the context of public health access rather than religion

You've Helped

Since 1987, the Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media has been one of the very few sources of pre-production and distribution funding for innovative and creative political artists working in film, video, and radio. The unique achievements of Robeson grantees - and the impact of their voices and visions in challenging the status quo and tempering truisms - has often been recognized by progressive as well as mainstream audiences, critics, and activists. Now it's time for us to come together and re-affirm the critical importance of independent media as a bulwark against local, national, and global repression.

Come celebrate the extraordinary work of the Paul Robeson Fund. Help insure that we can continue to support the artists who stand strong and shout out loud against censorship and the crushing onslaught of greed and bigotry.

Please join us on September 10. All ticket donations will go to the Robeson 2002 Fund for their future grantmaking

WE MADE IT A MILLION!

Yearlong Fundraising Campaign for FEX's OUT Fund A Success

Thanks to all of you who helped us raise extra monies for radical queer organizing, beginning with our special event last September honoring David Becker and the OUT Fund for Lesbian and Gay Liberation. That event, and the excitement it generated, was the kick-off for a twelve-month campaign to raise \$200,000 for the OUT Fund's grantmaking. Throughout the year, you responded generously - and, often, repeatedly! - to our appeals for contributions, culminating in a special "Pride Month" mailing to OUT friends and supporters which included a personal appeal from longtime donors Shad Reinstein and Jody Laine.

We are thrilled to announce that, at their August 10-12 meeting in New York at the FEX offices, OUT's grantmaking panel was able to allocate over \$200,000 in monies to 15 groups who are fighting for progressive social change within and beyond queer communities nationwide. For the first time, and due to your generosity, 4 groups also received multi-year grants. For a full listing of FY 2001 grants, please go to our website, www.fex.org

THANK YOU for your support - and a special "thank you" to our many "straight but not narrow" friends in the Funding Exchange who recognized the importance of lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender issues to the overall fight for progressive social change

Please Join the Friends and Supporters of the Funding Exchange
 In Celebrating 15 Years of
The Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media

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Monday September 10th, 2001

6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**The Culture Project
 49 Bleeker Street
 New York City**

Multi-Media Reception featuring excerpts from past Robeson awardees

Program featuring comments by
Stephanie Black ("Life and Debt")
Amy Goodman ("Democracy Now!")

Lillian Jimenez (The Film Fund and the Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media),
 and others.

Special screening of "Life and Debt"

Refreshments by Innovative Events
 Contributions accepted at the door

**Please RSVP to Peter Diaz at peter.diaz@fex.org
 or 212-529-5356 ext. 318.**

Sponsors and Host Committee (in formation)

Anonymous (2), Nancy Meyer & Marc Weiss, Ben & Emily Achtenberg, Dr. L. Diane Bernard & Joan R. Heller, Stephanie Black, Robert Boehm, Ann Cammett & Marcia Gallo, Peter Diaz, Joanne Doroshov, Tami Gold, Amy Goodman, Ellen Gurzinsky, David Haas, Ron Hanft, Jean Hoffman, Lillian Jimenez, Scot Kala'akea Nakagawa, Karl Bruce Knapper, Sharon Maeda, North Star Fund, Don Perry & Thomas Allen Harris, Amelie L. Ratliff, Michael Ratner & Karen Ranucci, Anthony T. Riddle, Nan Rubin, Julia Segrove Jaurigui, Walden Asset Management

This article appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on Monday, August 27, 2001

Charitable groups are among those that want your tax rebate

Some in the nonprofit sector would like contributions to also send a message to Washington for social and political change.

By Jane M. Von Bergen
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Christie Balka figured she had stumbled onto something when a regular donor sent Bread and Roses Community Fund a letter and a check.

The donor wrote that she would rather give her tax rebate to an organization that was pushing the government to spend money on the poor than return it to the middle- and upper-class people who already earn at least enough to pay taxes.

"We had an idea that we had a spontaneous tax rebellion on our hands," said Balka, who heads the Philadelphia social justice group.

Across the country, everyone - from retailers to car dealers - wants a slice of the nation's \$1.35 trillion rebate pie. Car dealers trumpet that they will double the rebate if a consumer buys a car with them. Retailers entice shoppers with additional bonuses if taxpayers spend their rebate dollars in stores.

Charities also hope that the government's refund largesse will translate into increased donations.

But some nonprofit groups, such as Bread and Roses and Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, want taxpayers to do more than spend money - even for worthy charitable causes.

In letters to their regular donors, they are asking for taxpayers not only to give their rebates to help the needy, but also to use that rebate to send a message to Washington, via letters and Web site petitions.

"The message is critical," said Shelly Yanoff, who heads Citizens for Children and Youth, an advocacy group. "We think this is a poor policy choice. We want our elected officials to vote for the common good and not to return money to individuals, but rather to build a better society."

In nonprofit circles, there is a philosophical division between those who provide direct service to the needy and those who advocate social and political change to alleviate poverty.

One group, for example, might set up a free food pantry. A foundation such as Bread and Roses would, by contrast, finance groups that advocate living wages or better conditions for child-care workers.

"Though we know these donations do not make up for government funding shortcomings, this money will be well used by local grassroots organizations fighting for

Creative Ways to Give



a just and equitable society," Bread and Roses wrote in a letter it sent in June to its regular donors.

"Plus, you'll be sending a clear message to the administration and Congress that you want to reverse our nation's priorities - you value education, living-wage jobs and health care more than a small one-time rebate," the letter said.

In the nonprofit community, there is some concern that President Bush's push or an expanded role for charities and his faith-based initiative are really way for the government to back out of its social welfare obligations.

Balka, the head of Bread and Roses, said: "We don't believe philanthropy should do the job of government, so we are asking people to send money to organizations who are holding the government accountable."

As of late last week, \$15,000 has come in to Bread and Roses. "Some people are sending in their whole IRS checks, which is a riot," Balka said. "Some of the checks are coming in with very outraged notes."

She said her group has joined with others with the same mission. Among them is the Boston-based United for a Fair Economy, which has mounted a "Reject the Rebate" campaign. So far, United for a Fair Economy is reporting more than \$180,000 in rebate pledges, Balka said.

"We want to pay more taxes, not less," wrote Audrey Fisch of Westfield, N.J., on United's Web site. "We don't need more McMansions and SUVs. We need more schools, health care and public transport."

The idea of returning a rebate is not new.

Last year, Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth pushed Pennsylvanians to "give back the giveback" by donating their \$100 property-tax refunds to the schools. The legislature earmarked \$330 million from the state surplus for property-tax relief.

Yanoff, who heads Citizens for Children and Youth, said the effort netted widespread publicity and just under \$100,000 in donations to Philadelphia schools. Other school districts, including those in Lancaster, Harrisburg, Bensalem, Bristol Borough, Norristown, Lower Merion and Coatesville, also received rebate money. But Philadelphia schools have proved to be the largest beneficiary.

Yanoff's group and similar groups in 17 states - all members of the National Association of Child Advocates - are again pushing the idea of sending the rebate to schools and a message to Washington.

"A billion-dollar tax cut when millions of children are in crumbling schools and overcrowded classrooms is not a good investment," Yanoff said. "Our should go to respond to public need, and a public need is a good education for our children."

*At the Funding Exchange, we've helped the "Reject the Rebate" campaign initiated by United for a Fair Economy by receiving rebate contributions for their donor-advised fund here, the Fund for Tax Fairness. Grants will be made by UFE activists to groups fighting for economic justice***G**

Makes You Wanna Shout - How Grants Get Made at Robeson

by Catherine Gund

This spring I was asked to consult for the Robeson Fund as the staff prepared to widdle down their nearly two hundred applications. The process of making grants at Robeson, I learned, is one of rigor, humor, and wonderful political savvy. What more could we -- as social issue documentary film and video makers and Robeson funders - want from our one and only national grantmaking body?

Fifteen years ago, Robeson distinguished itself not only as the sole funder of exclusively political and socially relevant non-fiction media. The organization went further to focus on the two stages of production most ignored both by other funders and by the makers ourselves. That is pre-production and distribution. In other words, the beginning and the end.

Often media doesn't get made because producers can't get going (i.e. can't get funding to cut a trailer, can't take time to do research without being compensated, can't stop to think about what they want to make, why and how). I noticed that many applicants don't know how to budget the pre-

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production phase, most likely because they've never considered the possibility of having one before.

As for distribution, makers need to prioritize the uses of their work and not just let great potential sit on an educational distributor's shelf or screen in a few small festivals. Good media is a vital and under-used tool for social justice organizing, education, outreach, and advocacy.

So the grants staff of the Funding Exchange and I conducted the preliminary review of applications before sending about eighty of them on to the illustrious community funding panel. At that stage, five filmmakers, curators, and funders, will gather for two packed days to evaluate the finalists.

Applicants (and donors) can rest assured that each project is reviewed by several professionals in the field who are committed to understanding the incredible range of issues that are covered, as well as to funding accessible, useful and high quality work that is sure to reach its grassroots constituency.

Robeson is influencing the field with more than money. Theirs is a model grantmaking process. But also, their application process makes producers think about what it is they're doing and how they might be most strategic and effective in creating social change.

We Are Doing Fine

One of the tensions of working at the Funding Exchange is, of course, that while the stock market soars, an indication that the global corporate economy is flourishing, our investments

also increase as does our ability to move more money to movements who are invested in fighting the effects of globalization here and internationally.

Needless to say we enjoyed a few good bull market years; our regular donors increased their giving both to our grantmaking programs and to their donor advised funds. We also opened many new funds, bringing new donors into the fold.

Many of you asked me how we did financially last year, fiscal year 2000, given the dip...well, the crater... in the market. We were told by our auditors this time last year that we and our financial managers handled all of our



Ellen's Corner

investments wisely. While many organizations suffered great losses, we did not. In fact, we had a surplus in our operating budget which helped finance some new projects as well as some minor renovations round the office.

On June 30, 2001 we closed out fiscal year 2001; our board room is currently a war room for the auditors. While the final figures aren't in yet, I think it's safe to say that the Funding Exchange has had *another* great fiscal year. These are the highlights:

For the first time in our history, the Funding Exchange gave away over \$5 million in grants.

"We Made it A Million." Through a special fundraising initiative, the OUT Fund was able to allocate a record breaking \$200,000 this past grantmaking cycle. This brought the total of grants made over ten years to \$1,000,000.

We raised more than \$600,000 for the activist-advised funds' 2001

grantmaking.

We secured \$200,000 for our Criminal Justice Initiative. This unique group of donors and activists are about to meet again as a group on September 28 to review proposals and allocate these funds to community organizations around the country.

We raised over \$350,000 for groups represented on our grantmaking docket. This amount assured that every group on the docket received some funding, and many groups received more than the recommended \$6000.

We met our goal of a \$1,500,000 operating budget again this year and with the surplus, began the network-wide planned giving project and rebuilt our network website which will be launched this week.

The network endowment hit \$16,000,000 last year and endowment payouts for 2002 will be a record \$57,000 per fund.

We can't do it without you. Thanks for your continued support ☐