

## Just the Facts, Ma'am, and Nothing But the Facts

YOU asked us to make our Grantmaking Docket shorter and more user-friendly, and that's exactly what we've done. The 2003-4 Docket is lightweight and stocked full of key information on 35 grassroots groups that need your support. Our theme this year is Building Base, Building Power, and each of the featured groups is building the active communities we need to achieve change: social change, electoral change, and change to the policies that promote violence and hate. Are you

interested in groups that focus on fair trade? Regional base-building? Peace Activism? Women's Organizing? Our Mapping the Movement index makes it easy to find the groups you want to support. Or, if you prefer to make a single gift and let us do the work of allocating among docket groups, you can make a gift to the Social Justice Fund and know that your dollars will go to underfunded docket organizations.

We need to raise \$250,000 by March 1<sup>st</sup> to successfully fund our docket groups: it's the fastest route to CHANGE, for your dollars. To Make a Gift Please Call 212-529-5300. Thank You for your support!

By Charlene Allen

## Free or Foul? Docket Groups Confront US Free Trade

On November 20, 2003, ministers responsible for Trade in the Americas gathered in Miami, Florida, for the 8th Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Ministerial Meeting. While the Trade Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to conclude a comprehensive and balanced agreement that will expand prosperity and foster economic growth, the on-the-ground experience of indigenous communities, small-scale farmers, artisans, service providers and low-income workers lacking access to credit and technical assistance has these so-called "free trade" policies painting quite a different picture. A bleak world picture where corporations threaten indigenous lands and culture in a "borderless" hemisphere in which the North American Free Trade Agreement has already wrought job insecurity, displacement of workers and long-term environmental degradation. The organized resistance from these constituencies surrounding this convening was met with aggressive police response.

Under this shadow of these events, community activists move on; challenged but galvanized in facing-down unfair trade practices both locally and across borders.

**Florida Fair Trade Coalition (FFTC)** [www.fffairtrade.org](http://www.fffairtrade.org) directed the attention of grassroots groups in the state and across the country to the Ministerial meeting; mounting serious opposition during the trade policy negotiations. Their mantra, "from campaign to coalition," reflects their strategic shift from a primary focus on educating and lobbying

lawmakers to coordinating and educating community groups; building infrastructure to bring diverse groups of workers, farmers and indigenous people together to issue a community-oriented response on free trade policies. They are building their base on "three legs:" media, legislative, and mobilizing workgroups, which work both in localities and state-wide. Looking back at the events in November, Eric Rubin of the Coalition notes: "...various factors contributed to not being as successful [in organizing and in challenging the press]...lack of time, money and resources hindered us...". Their office was targeted by police. "We were under constant surveillance, were harassed, held captive in our office for hours, our office was raided, and we were denied access to our office for a day and a half."

**You've Helped**

Other 2003-2004 docket organizations working on fair trade practice also need our continued support in order to carry-out their work. **Asociación de Trabajadores Fronterizos (ATF) - Association of Border Workers** [www.info@atfelpaso.org](http://www.info@atfelpaso.org) in El Paso, TX, combines popular education, mass mobilization, direct action, litigation and organizing of non-English speaking Mexican immigrant factory workers to challenge the "creative destruction" of corporate-driven policies such as those instituted by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). **Indigenous Tourism Rights International** [www.tourismrights.org](http://www.tourismrights.org) in St. Paul, Minnesota, is a network of more than 500 community-based organizations working to protect native territories, rights and cultures by challenging free market tourism and promoting indigenous controlled tourism. They are developing their own innovative standards for a whole new area of fair trade versus "free trade."

By Jerry Sneec



*The United States often points to our voting system as evidence of a democracy that values the participation of its citizens. And, voting is a basic right within a healthy democracy but we know that, in the US, far less than the total number of eligible voters actually vote. FEX is announcing a Fund aimed at encouraging greater citizen participation and specifically engaging more people in voting process. This fund is geared to work in communities of color, working class people and immigrants as well as other traditionally disenfranchised populations. This non-partisan fund will support efforts to register voters, educate them about a range of important issues and ultimately increase the number of people who go out to vote.* **Ellen Gurzinsky**

Dear Friend,

As we enter 2004, it has become clear that the stakes in the upcoming election could hardly be higher. As you are well aware, in the recent past, we have seen radical changes in our government's commitment to the constitution, priorities at home, accountability to its citizens, and attitude toward other nations, changes which affect all of us both as Americans and as citizens of the world. I believe that it is urgent that all Americans have a voice in determining what happens with our future.

For these reasons, I am working with Funding Exchange to launch a new grantmaking initiative, the 2004 Mobilize the Vote Fund. Our goal is to raise \$300,000 and begin making grants early this year to increase the effectiveness of the work on the ground. I am committing all of this year's funding and ask that you join me in creating this new fund.

With your contribution, this Fund will make strategic grants to organizations working to register, educate, and mobilize voters in communities that are traditionally disenfranchised and have limited access to information on many important issues. While the pollsters and pundits may single out "Soccer Moms" and "NASCAR Dads" as key, our Fund, in accordance with the latest nonpartisan research, will focus on organizations in key geographic areas that are reaching low-income communities, women, youth, immigrants, people of color and rural populations. We hope to raise enough money to have an impact on voting participation and procedures to ensure that the right to vote is fully accessible to all.

There are a few ways in which we plan to approach this issue. We intend to support organizations or coalitions that are rooted in the communities they plan to mobilize. Experience shows that groups with strong local connections and grassroots support can understand and organize their communities in ways that organizers from the outside cannot. We will look for such organizations that are coordinating their efforts with larger regional or national coalitions.

Finally, time is of the essence. We need to raise the funds now so that we can make grants between March and April, at least six months before the elections in November.

Your participation is critically important. Your gift is needed to launch this new fund to help disenfranchised communities gain a voice in the democratic process.

Sincerely, Wendy Chavkin

## Save the Date to Celebrate

**25** Years of  
"Change, Not Charity"

**Friday, June 11, 2004**  
**—San Francisco, CA—**

Join FEX friends and family for a party at San Francisco's beautiful Ghirardelli Square on Friday night, June 11. We're reaching the quarter-century mark this year and want to commemorate the occasion with YOU and all FEX donors, supporters, fellow travelers, grantees, current and former staff.

We'll enjoy

- ◆ live music, dancing, entertainment, and delicious refreshments
- ◆ opportunities to meet and talk with FEX network members from our sixteen funds throughout the U.S.
- ◆ film clips from new works by award-winning (and FEX-funded) filmmakers
- ◆ lots of surprises...special gifts and prizes...

Also, if enough folks indicate interest, we'd love to host a special "Moving the Money" mini-conference to remember and reflect on the experiences of FEX donor-activists over the years. What are the funding initiatives that were the most important to you? What have we learned? And where would we like to see FEX fund in the future? Let us know if you're available for a one-day or half-day session before the Friday night party.

**Make plans to join us  
in San Francisco now!**

Contact Marcia Gallo at 212.529.5356, ext. 315, or at [marcia.gallo@fex.org](mailto:marcia.gallo@fex.org) for more information and hotel arrangements.

## MJF is Ready to Launch its Grantmaking

By Anthony Riddle

In December we released the grant guidelines for the **Media Justice Fund** and sent out 94 direct invitations to apply. These invitations were made based on our own contacts as well as those suggested by Funding Exchange Members, Advisory Committee members, and staff. A number of organizations were invited after submitting summary letters. Ultimately, all who were suggested or who submitted summary letters were invited to apply.

We received 45 applications for the grants. Because the applications required collaboration, this represents a substantially higher number of organizations than applications. Interestingly, better than 85% of the applications were submitted primarily as email—a figure which probably reflects the technical acuity of the applicants and the changing nature of communications.

Staff is currently reading, analyzing and prepping the applications for the activist grants panel. The grants panel is being put together with a tentative convening date in the middle of March. Out of the many applications, we anticipate between 4-6 projects being selected at that time. There is a lot of work ahead, but we look forward to announcing some very meaningful and exciting projects in the near future.



## Criminal Justice Initiative Focuses Funding on Regional Coalition Building

By Trinh Duong

The **Criminal Justice Initiative** grantmaking panel convened in January to discuss our next and third round of grantmaking. The meeting was a chance for donors and organizers to come together to share their vision of criminal justice reform, advocacy and organizing and discuss strategies for how to fund this work. By the end of the meeting, the panel agreed to focus funding on regional or coalition organizing that develops and promotes a media/messaging component that brings new voices to the debate on criminal justice issues. Potential media issues that emerged include restorative justice, re-entry and integration with reform and analysis work, immigrant prisoners and detainees, sentencing reform and follow-up, women prisoners and gender-specific programming, economic dependence on prisons, and prisoner/felon disenfranchisement.

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## Thank You For Celebrating Saguaro's 10th Anniversary

By Peter Diaz

Another small victory last year. A little over 3 years ago when I joined the FEX family I walked in to the middle of frenetic planning for the OUT Fund's 10th year anniversary party. A year later (on what I often refer to as the last good day in New York --- September 10th 2001) we celebrated the Paul Robeson Fund's tenth year of independent media grantmaking. In 2003, the Saguaro Fund officially turned 10. In our effort to mix things up and represent both the donors and grantees that make up the **Saguaro Fund**, we took the show on the road nationally and had dinners in the Bay Area, Boston and New York City.

Each dinner was different but shared a fundamental theme. The Saguaro Fund, *People of Color, Organizing in People of Color Communities*. I believe this is key to building a politically progressive power base in this country. If an un-coopted Social Justice Movement is to take root and usher us into a new era of social change, activist advised grantmaking must partner in that endeavor.

I'm grateful for all the people that helped make each dinner a success, including sponsors, co-sponsors, activists, donors and staff. I am hopeful that we can model future donor programming work on the Saguaro dinner model: "Let's talk, eat some food and learn together."

## Celebrating the holidays at FEX



From left: Katherine Acey, Executive Director, Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation; Pam McMichael; and Leslie Cagan, National Coordinator, United for Peace and Justice



FEX Staff members. From left: Adam Szlachetka, Office Manager; Ron Hanft, Associate Director; Fred Humphrey, Administrative Director; and Ellen Gurzinsky, the Executive Director



From left: Nancy Ng, grantee; Hugh Hogan, Executive Director, The North Star Fund; and Betty Yu, grantee

## Against the Wind

By Marcia Gallo

"I've always taken a contrarian approach to funding," says a long-time FEX supporter who chooses to be anonymous in her grantmaking. "Certain issues come into vogue, and money flows more easily to them. I seek to fund things that are out of fashion."

For two decades, she has been doing just that. "One example would be giving grants to organizations who are fighting the proliferation of nuclear power. That's an issue that was in the public eye at the time of Chernobyl, and Three Mile Island, but then attention to it diminished. I knew that nuclear power was something that would not go away. So I have continued to fund groups who fought the nuclear industry. Now nuclear power is coming back, new plants are being planned. The fact that organized opposition is still around and has been supported during the "down" time means that they can mobilize more efficiently.

A regular donor to FEX docket groups and the activist-advised funds, background as an activist is why she works with Funding Exchange.

"I grew up working-class and came from activist parents. I was a working person most of my adult life and then accidentally - and surprisingly - inherited money from an employer," she said during our recent talk.

Like most FEX donors, she noted that "I had been very active — anti-Vietnam War, for women's issues, civil rights, labor issues and felt that I had lived my life with great integrity. She remembers that "I didn't pay taxes and wanted nothing to do with the system. So it was quite horrifying to suddenly face dealing with "The Man."

"I did consider rejecting the gift, but saner people said 'are you nuts? Don't

reject an opportunity to use your money as a resource for change.'" She added, "It was a blessing that I had a very clear sense of my values and who I was. I wasn't defined by the resources that fell into my lap. I think everybody's got an obligation to give away one-half of their income - after they have enough to live on. If you have the resources, why hold on to more than you need?"

Her twenty years of experience have shaped a thoughtful personal grantmaking process whereby she

### FEX In Person

selects groups for three-year funding cycles, adding new ones when others cycle off. She authorizes FEX to inform the groups

that they can count on the funding - for general support - for those three years. "I haven't put my ego into my funding," she says. "I don't look for expensive reports or go on site visits." When asked to name a group she was most proud of having supported, she selected a women's group in Iowa, "a tiny group initially," she remembered. After a few years, "they said, 'we're doing well and asked if some other group could use the money.' I loved that. I hope that all the groups I support will become viable enough to get money from more established foundations."

Providing early money to tiny groups just getting started is what Funding Exchange has been about for the last 25 years. Whether anonymous or well-known, FEX donors like this one have consistently seen the value in funding the emergent organizations beginning to raise important issues ... usually before, and after, the issues "peak" for other funders. We will continue to do so for at least the next quarter-century as well.