FROM THE DIRECTOR

This year the Center received a record number of proposals for our International Fellows Program – over 140 – yet another measure of the growing importance of philanthropy around the world. Applicants represented 52 countries on almost every continent.

They sought the three-month fellowships to study community foundations and diaspora giving. While community foundations are one of the fastest growing forms of institutional philanthropy worldwide, increasing attention has been devoted to diaspora giving as well, as a means of building endowments in often cash-scarce economies.

New York is an ideal laboratory for studying international diasporas, a vibrant universe of ethnic groups that have migrated here since the country’s inception. In response, several important new initiatives have been established here in recent years, including the American India Foundation and the Brazil Foundation.

The idea behind diaspora giving is a simple one, based on an extensive history. Immigrant groups have traditionally sent money – remittances – to their towns and relatives back home. These modest donations taken together have often reached immense proportions. One hundred and fifty years ago, during the 1850s, estimates placed the value of remittances sent by Irish immigrants – then a very impoverished group – in the millions of dollars.

Nor is this solely a US phenomenon. Significant diaspora communities now exist on every continent, and many of them control substantial wealth.

Diaspora philanthropy seeks to channel some of this money into long-term development and the creation of a sustainable third sector as a vital building block in the rise of civil society. This makes sense. Unlike the Irish refugees who fled to the United States during the potato famine of the 1840s, many immigrant groups today are relatively wealthy. For example, Indians in the US – many of whom work in the Information Technology industries – have a median household income of $60,093, which places them above national income averages.

This has particular relevance for community foundations, for two reasons. First, a small but growing number of community foundations in the US have begun to raise funds from immigrant groups in their areas, matching their gifts with nonprofit organizations in the donors’ home countries.

Second, diaspora groups provide an untapped resource for building endowments for newly created community foundations in areas with underdeveloped traditions of organized giving or limited amounts of surplus cash. While more traditional gifts might pave a street or repair a building in the donors’ home town, community foundations have the capacity to multiply these gifts in perpetuity. Thus, the wealth that emigrés create through their sacrifices and hard work in a foreign country can benefit their relatives and home communities not once, but for many, many years.

The challenge is not only to mobilize diaspora donors, but to find adequate ways to foster accountability and build trust among donors that their funds will be properly used. Identifying appropriate models for diaspora giving and ways to develop that trust will be a central focus of each of our Fellows’ community foundation studies this year.

— Kathleen D. McCarthy
NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Editor’s note: This column features the perspectives of former International Fellows from various regions of the world on the growth of civil society and philanthropy.

Gisela Tiongson-Velasco, Philippines, IFP 1996

Gisela Velasco is currently Regional Director for Southeast Asia at Synergos Institute. Three years after her fellowship at the Center, she was promoted from Manager of the Membership and Corporate Involvement Unit to Director of the Center for Corporate Citizenship (CCC) at Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), one of Asia’s leading corporate philanthropic institutions. Part of her portfolio included managing the Asia and Pacific Philanthropy Consortium’s Human Resource Development Program, which builds the collaborative capacities of grantmaking and grantseeking organizations. In this capacity, she coordinated meetings for nonprofit and corporate managers from Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Singapore, South Korea and Hong Kong. Gisela was also Senior Fellow in Synergos’ Foundation Building Program. As head of CCC, Gisela worked with PBSP’s member companies to build models of corporate citizenship practice. Gisela Velasco joined Synergos Institute in January 2001. She explains:

Synergos is an international NGO that promotes the capacity-building of local foundations by providing them with access to information, as well as the expertise of their peers in other parts of the world. Southeast Asia presents an interesting challenge. In most countries of the region, foundations are not commonly identified as a separate sector from the NGO community. Yet their role in providing long-term, sustainable and locally accessible funding to support civil society work is critical. We contend that if you have financially sustainable foundations in developing countries, more energy is available to mobilize local resources to form an agenda for development that is set by the people themselves.

The resource that Synergos provides is often difficult for others to comprehend. We do not bring money to the table. We help foundations increase their ability to raise money themselves. This presupposes willingness, on the part of foundations, to learn and take action through their own process of learning—specifically peer learning. For instance, we have a group of Senior Fellows who are leaders of different foundations around the world, willing to commit two weeks of their time each year to work with another institution on a topic of mutual interest. The Fellows are practitioners themselves who have gone through the thinking process in resolving a particular dilemma or issue an institution faces. During the process of peer learning, it is not the Fellow who will solve the problem of the institution. Rather, the Fellow is there as a co-learner and a facilitator of the learning process of the others.

My dream at this point is to help build more community foundations in Southeast Asia. Mindful of the risks involved in merely transplanting a model that has worked elsewhere, we are consciously working with local partners in determining what elements of a community foundation makes sense in their context, before we embark on capacity-building or piloting activities with them. So far, the idea of creating a mechanism like a community foundation, where the agenda is driven by the members of the community who possess entrepreneurial and creative spirits and allows everyone to contribute part of their assets, is gaining adherents.

In Thailand, where government resources are channeled directly to village groups without adequate management support, a community foundation could facilitate the rational and sustainable use of such resources.

In Indonesia, the decentralization process in governance and the dynamic growth of civil society have created a space for local citizens to play a role in determining their future. A community foundation can become an effective vehicle for managing local development.

In the Philippines, community foundations are seen as effective vehicles for local resource mobilization to support a local development agenda. The issue of sustainability is driving many civil society actors to look for solutions that build on existing (and internal) assets and resources, rather than solutions provided externally.

The community foundation idea is slowly gaining ground. Discussions are now occurring within core groups in each country, and there is an increasing desire for more information and experience from elsewhere. As we embark on testing the concept further in selected areas, we will have an opportunity to listen to people’s aspirations and their dreams of the future, especially for their communities. For me, that is the most fundamental element of community foundations: they remind people of the power of their DREAMS.
Marwa El-Daly, Egypt, IFP 2001

Marwa El-Daly’s fellowship research on institutionalized Islamic philanthropy in the US and around the world met with interest from her colleagues and different organizations and foundations upon her return home (including publication by the Maecenata Institute in Germany). After her fellowship, she did a short-term consultancy with the Food and Agriculture Organization, a UN agency, then joined an organization working in the field of development, the Center for Development Services (CDS), an affiliate of the Near East Foundation. She is currently Senior Program Specialist working on program design, resource mobilization, and networking.

Upon finishing my fellowship at the Center for the Study of Philanthropy, I returned to Egypt with many dreams. My aim was to understand and revive indigenous philanthropy mechanisms and modernize them to serve the development process. I joined the Center for Development Services, an affiliate of the Near East Foundation in Cairo, and worked there as a Senior Program Specialist, coordinating a program that enhances access to knowledge and communication among civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Arab world. (For more about this program, please visit: www.neareast.org/cds/ppd.) This task was extremely interesting, especially after studying diaspora Islamic CSOs in the US, because it allowed me to look at similar organizations in the Arab world and work with them on South-South dialogue. It broadened my view towards indigenous philanthropic mechanisms and opened my eyes to similarities and differences in civic structures, resulting from diverse cultural, political, and social circumstances in Arab societies.

During a workshop in Jordan on participatory development communication and documentation, I had the chance to learn how to utilize participatory communication tools with people on the grassroots level. I met activists and representatives of CSOs from fifteen countries across the region, with whom I had only had electronic communication. I also had the opportunity to learn how to document these experiences and present them to reveal challenges involved. This exposure and engagement fueled my passion for indigenous philanthropy, and led me to explore how to optimize benefits from traditional and also modern structures. It also prepared me to write two papers for the International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR) annual conference held in Cape Town in July 2002. In the first paper, “Transnational Civil Society and its Effect on Advocating Change: An Arab Perspective,” I demonstrate that civil society organizations, as sustainable and autonomous institutions in the Arab world, can be traced back to the 11th century, and that indigenous giving mechanisms help establish very active and independent civil society formations in spite of current – and inappropriate – attempts to westernize these structures. Here I made reference to the project I coordinated at the CDS, and attempts made to empower transnational networks in this part of the world.

The second paper, “The Role of Islamic and Arab Civil Society Organizations in World Peace,” focuses on elements of peace in Islamic doctrine, and how these elements encourage the establishment of civic formations and transnational structures across the globe. Also at the conference, I participated in the Africa Network Group, where we discussed the potential for cooperation among CSOs in the region.

During my tenure at CDS, I also discussed with The Ford Foundation’s office in Cairo and the American University in Cairo (AUC) project proposals that would allow us to explore further indigenous philanthropy in Egypt and catalyze practical interventions to mobilize people and resources. Very recently, there was a preliminary agreement to engage in a comparative study on philanthropy in Muslim communities worldwide.

I have faced many obstacles since returning from New York, but choose to look at them as challenges rather than problems. Most are associated with the field of development, as there is so much that needs to be done, especially in a country like Egypt. It is frustrating to see a country of great history and plenty of potential, but with so many constraints on how to engage people and mobilize resources. Most CSOs have been engaged in work on the grassroots level, fixing the effects of disease rather than addressing the cause. There is much to be done on the policy level, and much to be changed through vision and advocacy.

I think it is essential to participate, before we preach participation, or practice democracy, before we ask others to be democratic. I face this dilemma not only in the Egyptian context, but also in the international sphere, and it is frustrating to many people. However, development practitioners should never forget that this job is not easy, and that as long as they stay in the field, effort must be given constantly despite hopeless moments or disappointments. They should never lose hope in a better world.
RESOURCES

Center for the Study of Philanthropy Publications


The volume draws on the experience of faith-based and secular nonprofits to suggest ways to increase organizational capacity; effectively integrate volunteers; and advance leadership training. It examines the concept of philanthropy and charity in major world religions, as well as recent trends in volunteering. It also addresses the practical issues of outreach, preparedness, grant-seeking, and community-needs assessment. While the volume focuses primarily on religious nonprofits, the information contained within is appropriate and relevant to all nonprofit organizations, regardless of mission or focus.


In addition to the provision of services, community nonprofits play a vital role in strengthening the source of democracy: civic responsibility. The idea to create volunteer guides was born with special focus on the promotion of the practice of volunteerism, especially among youth of color. In 1998 and 1999 CSP published a set of three ethnic volunteer guides, the predecessors of this new series. The guides are designed to provide easy access to the information that the potential volunteer is seeking. Their aim is to assist and encourage the building of stronger African American, Latino, and Asian American communities across the city.

Publications available upon request by e-mailing csp@gc.cuny.edu.

Publications by CSP Staff


Publications by International Fellows Program Alumni

“Diaspora: The New Philanthropy?” by Esther Lethlean (International Fellow 2001, Center for the Study of Philanthropy; Associate Consultant, Catherine Brown & Associates) will be published by the Centre of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies, Queensland University of Technology as one of their working papers series.

“Transnational Civil Society and its Effect on Advocating Change: An Arab Perspective” by Marwa El-Daly (International Fellow 2001, Center for the Study of Philanthropy; Senior Program Specialist, Center for Development Services), presented at the ISTR 2002 Annual Conference. The abstract of this paper can be found on ISTR’s website at: www.jhu.edu/~istr/conferences/capetown/abstracts/index.html#E.

Tercer Sector (Third Sector), co-directed by Andrés Thompson (International Fellow 1989, Center for the Study of Philanthropy; Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, W.K. Kellogg Foundation [see Note from the Foundation World]). Tercer Sector is a bi-monthly magazine focused on nonprofit organizations and based in Argentina. For information on Tercer Sector and to subscribe, please visit www.tercersector.org.ar.


Profile 500, edited by Priya Anand (International Fellow 2003, Center for the Study of Philanthropy; Chief of Research, Murray Culshaw Advisory Services), is a directory of 500-odd voluntary organizations in India. Published by the Center for Advancement of Philanthropy, Mumbai, Noshir Dadrawala (IFP 1990), Executive Secretary.

We would particularly welcome hearing from former Fellows about publications and papers they have presented since their participation in the IFP.
Conferences

The Impact of Global Issues on Women and Children
McMaster University, Ontario, Canada;
Burapha University, Thailand
February 16 – 21, 2003
Bangkok, Thailand
www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/slrue

EFC Spring Symposium: The Role of a Foundation’s Chief Executive
European Foundation Centre;
Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Roma
March 6 – 7, 2003
Rome, Italy

Independent Sector 2003 Spring Research Forum:
The Role of Faith-Based Organizations in the Social Welfare System
Independent Sector
Hyatt Regency Bethesda, Washington, DC, Metro Area
March 6-7, 2003

Strengthening community development: sharing experience across Wales, England, Northern Ireland and Scotland
Standing Conference for Community Development
(SCCD); Community Development Cymru; Federation of Community Work Training Groups
March 11, 2003
North Wales Conference Centre, Llandudno
www.sccd.org.uk

Philanthropy Australia Conference
Philanthropy: Venture Capital for the Common Good
Philanthropy Australia
March 17 - 19, 2003
Sydney, Australia

40th International Conference on Fundraising
Association of Fundraising Professionals
March 23 - 26, 2003
Toronto, Canada
www.afpnet.org

International Sustainable Development Research Conference
ERP Environment
March 24 - 25, 2003
Nottingham, UK
www.erpenvironment.org

13th Annual International Conference on Corporate Citizenship
Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College
March 30 - April 1, 2003
San Antonio, Texas
www.bc.edu/ccc/conference

Second International Workshop on Public and Non Profit Marketing
The University of Zaragoza (Spain)
April 3 - 4, 2003
Zaragoza, Spain
empresa.unizar.es/jornadasMPNL

Council on Foundations 2003 Annual Conference
"Working Together for the Common Good"
Council on Foundations
April 28 - 30, 2003
Dallas, Texas
www.cof.org

11th Annual IAP2 Conference: Information to Empowerment: A Global Perspective
International Association for Public Participation
May 17 - 22, 2003
Ottawa, Canada
www.iap2.org/conference/index.htm

14th Annual General Assembly (AGA) and Conference:
‘Foundations for Europe: The Citizen Facing Challenges of Globalisation’
European Foundation Centre
June 1 - 3, 2003
Lisbon, Portugal

Conference on Borderless Giving
Global Philanthropy Forum
June 2003
Stanford, California
www.philanthropyforum.org

Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Conference 2003
ERP Environment
June 30 - July 1, 2003
University of Leeds, UK
www.erpenvironment.org

47th Annual Conference of the International Society for the Systems Sciences (ISSS)
Conscious Evolution of Humanity: Using Systems Thinking To Construct Agoras of the Global Village
July 6-11, 2003
Heraklion, Crete, Greece
www.isss-conference.org
www.globalagoras.org
**Calls for Papers**

9th Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference  
National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)  
September 2 - 3, 2003

NCVO is now inviting paper proposals on all topics; for example, user involvement and empowerment; the voluntary and community sector in a changing political climate; the role of the sector in building social capital; community capacity building; managing resources; organisational values and culture; research methodological issues; social marketing/fundraising; European/International working; and changing the shape of the sector, including traditionally excluded groups in research.

Deadline for abstracts of 400-600 words: February 17, 2003
Deadline for papers of 2,000-2,500 words for all oral presentations: May 19, 2003

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

Third ISTR Asia and Pacific Regional Conference  
Hosted by the Research Center for Volunteering and Welfare, Peking University  
October 24-26, 2003  
Beijing

In the recent past, two important issues have been in the forefront of discussion among governments, donor agencies, corporate world, and private citizens. (1) Third Sector, (transnational) resistance groups vis-à-vis state; (2) Third Sector in the face of terrorism. The Conference would like to acknowledge the importance of these issues by inviting papers reporting on research on aspects of these two issues and stimulating and sustaining a strong Third Sector, and secure and fair societies.

Deadline: March 31, 2003
Inquiries: Dr Sami Hasan, samiul.hasan@uts.edu.au
www.istr.org

**Requests for Proposals**

CIVICUS Civil Society Index  
CIVICUS is inviting applications for national partners to participate in its Civil Society Index 2003-04. The Index is an action-research project that assesses the state of civil society in countries around the world with a view to creating a knowledge base and an impetus for civil society strengthening initiatives. The Index was successfully piloted in 14 countries around the world and CIVICUS is now launching the first full implementation phase in approximately 25 countries. The Index will be implemented by civil society organizations at the country level, in close partnership with CIVICUS.

Deadline: January 31, 2003  
Email: index@civicus.org
www.civicus.org/cc/portal/index2.cfm?contentid=403&link_url=

Cambridge Foundation for Peace to Award Peace Prize for Paper on Diasporas  
CFP has announced a call for papers that explore the role of diasporas as transnational actors in preventing violence, crisis response, or post-conflict peace building.

Deadline: April 1, 2003  
www.cfp-web.org/peaceprize.htm

Starr Collaborative Research Grants Program  
The Starr Collaborative Research Grants Program was created by IREX and the Starr Foundation to highlight contemporary issues facing the communities of Eurasia, the Near East, and Asia. Grants will be awarded to projects focusing on the topics of media and the Internet. Eligible countries are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, China, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Maximum Award: US$20,000
Deadline: May 1, 2003
Email: collabgrants@irex.org
www.irex.org/programs/starr

MacArthur Foundation Accepting Applications for Russian Federation and Post-Soviet States Research and Writing Grants  
The MacArthur Foundation’s Initiative in the Russian Federation and Post-Soviet States represents one of a number of programs sponsored by the Foundation in a variety of areas aimed at strengthening civil society and improving the quality of life. Research and writing grants for individuals focus on the following issue areas: promoting human rights; supporting key aspects of environment and society; and fostering an expanded view of peace and security. Applicants may request support for project materials, equipment, research-related travel, and other costs.

Deadline: June 15, 2003
www.macfound.org/programs/gss/russian_fed.htm

**Announcements**

The Community Foundation Transatlantic Fellowship was created as a partnership of the King Baudouin Foundation of Belgium and the United States and The German Marshall Fund of the United States with the generous financial support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The three-week program enables senior staff of community foundations from the United States and Europe to collaborate and exchange ideas and experiences with their colleagues across the Atlantic, and to learn about the social, cultural, and economic conditions affecting community foundations outside their own country. Watch for news of this program in coming issues.
It is with a mix of nostalgia and happiness that I write this article. I was one of the first three Fellows who went to Manhattan to take part in the launching of the International Fellows Program. It was a tough time for the three of us since it was our first time in the United States. Although Kathy McCarthy and her staff were very friendly and helpful, we could not avoid feeling somewhat like Guinea pigs. Fortunately, we were. The program has been running now for more than a decade and its contributions to the understanding and promotion of philanthropy, civil society and the advancement of the nonprofit field all over the world are outstanding.

At that time (1989) I was involved in multiple activities with NGOs in Argentina – in particular researching, teaching, and consulting. The period spent in New York greatly helped me to gain a thorough understanding of the connections between nonprofit organizations and various fields. For example, management and funding issues are similarly relevant to nonprofits and the business sector. At the same time, there is a more direct relationship between nonprofits and the governmental sector due to regulations, legislation, partnerships, and dollars. Moreover, I learned about the role of nonprofits in the international context, and also their roots in American history.

Many of the lessons I learned during my time in the program through readings, conferences, and courses were later adapted, applied (and also changed) when I returned to Argentina. After a short period of doing “business as usual,” I joined the Kellogg Foundation, based in Battle Creek, Michigan, as a Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean. The jump from the NGO field to the grantmaking side was quite a challenge. I thought that you could do a lot working at a grantmaking foundation. That was a time when there were no apparent signs of local philanthropy in the region beyond religious charity and the traditional benevolent activities of the rich. Neither were there support systems (university programs, NGO coalitions, texts, training programs) to foster the development of local philanthropy.

Since then, through the Kellogg Foundation’s work, I have been involved in various kinds of projects, programs, and movements to foster the role of civil society organizations in the Latin American region, covering a wide range of topics such as developing leadership and management for nonprofit organizations; supporting the creation and growth of several coalitions and networks; training fundraisers and managers; and raising awareness of the potential of the third sector to build democracy and foster development. Through all these years I have had the privilege to see first hand the growth of leaders and institutions that are shaping the path of social change in the region.

Latin America has also witnessed an impressive growth of philanthropic activity during the last decade. This is reflected in the steady increase of mobilization of local financial resources to support the actions of NGOs. Although not at the level expected, the business sector has been at the forefront in establishing corporate philanthropic programs and, more widely, in incorporating BSR (business social responsibility) practices within their companies.

When compared with the US, however, there are two organizational forms that have not yet emerged clearly enough so as to call them trends: family and community foundations. (I wonder if they will ever emerge.) Perhaps with the exception of Mexico, and some small efforts in Brazil, the community foundation model does not seem to be appropriate for the Latin American region. There are no clear explanations for this phenomenon, but my hypothesis points to the lack of a tradition of democratic culture (the ability to reach consensus) that carries with it a mistrust of “others.” The lack of confidence in institutions – even more so when they deal with collecting and distributing money – may provide another reason. In addition, politicians at the local level usually do not see nor do they understand the potential for collaboration between the local government and civil society, further obstructing attempts to create community foundations. Nevertheless, community organizations are in every corner of the region. Although they are not foundations and do not apply foundations’ mechanisms of fundraising, they are still the main source of resource mobilization and social energy. Any attempt to develop community foundations will necessarily rely upon the commitment and knowledge of this institutional capital provided by the organizations of civil society.
ABOUT THE IFP

CSP is proud to announce the 2003 International Fellows, listed here with their countries, affiliations, funders, and topics. This year’s Fellows were selected from a pool of 143 applicants – the largest pool to date.

Priya Anand  
CSP Fellow – India  
Affiliation: Murray Culshaw Advisory Services  
Topic: Indian Hindu diaspora and religious philanthropy

Alejandra Cervantes  
Ford Foundation (Office for Mexico and Central America) Fellow – Mexico  
Affiliation: Migration and Development, Civil Association (MIDE)  
Topic: Startup of new community foundations with the participation of Mexican immigrant hometown associations

Sarah Chilvers  
CSP Fellow – Canada  
Affiliation: Vancouver Foundation  
Topic: Community foundation support for community art programs internationally

Tiziana Colasanti  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Fellow – Italy  
Affiliation: Cariplo Foundation  
Topic: Emerging community foundations in southern Italy: social utility, overseas partnering, and international models

Majda Ganibegovic  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Fellow – Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Affiliation: International Rescue Committee (NGO Development Program)  
Topic: Assessing community resources and developing a concept for community foundations within Bosnia and Herzegovina’s underdeveloped civil society sector

Snow (Hsueh-Yin) Lee  
Himalaya Foundation Fellow – Taiwan  
Affiliation: Himalaya Foundation  
Topic: Taiwanese-American diaspora philanthropy

Marlene Lewis  
Environmental Foundation of Jamaica Fellow – Jamaica  
Affiliation: Environmental Foundation of Jamaica  
Topic: Diaspora philanthropy and strategic linkages to organized philanthropy in Jamaica

Suzy (Qian) Li  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Fellow – People’s Republic of China  
Affiliation: Beijing Hui Ling Community Services for People with Disabilities  
Topic: Community foundations as a model for building a stronger and more sustainable development effort to support NPOs in China

Bhekinkosi Moyo  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Fellow – South Africa  
Affiliation: University of the Witwatersrand  
Topic: Understanding development through the lenses of community foundations and the social capital theory

Sujeevan Perera  
Ford Foundation (New Delhi, India Office) Fellow – Sri Lanka  
Affiliation: Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust  
Topic: The effective disbursement of program grants

We welcome submissions to “Notes from the Field” and “Note From the Foundation World.” We would also appreciate news on your publications, professional transitions, and any other details you would like to share. In addition, we would be grateful for information about conferences in your regions on civil society, philanthropy, voluntarism, and the Third Sector. Please e-mail us at csp@gc.cuny.edu, with “IFP Newsletter” in the subject line.

Thank you!