



# **WISCONSIN** COMMUNITY FUND

Annual Report  
July 2007 - June 2008

**CHANGE, NOT CHARITY**

# hopeful for more change

**If you are one of those people who always wanted to live in interesting times**, you've gotten your wish in 2008 – both politically and economically. Who would have thought back in January that we would have seen all that has transpired this year?

Ground-breaking political candidacies . . . record-breaking political giving, especially from smaller donors . . . community organizing demeaned from the podium of a political party convention . . . massive voter registration efforts to empower new voters . . . unheard of government intervention in the financial sector . . . and, of course, an African-American President-elect!

How does all that transpired in 2008 affect the small, new and controversial grassroots organizations around the state that are the primary focus here at Wisconsin Community Fund?

At least two thoughts spring to mind:

- the work of the groups on the frontline of social injustice is more **urgent** than ever, and
- the groups doing that work are more **vulnerable** than ever.

Whether an organization's work involves pushing back against the prejudices that fuel racism or holding local officials accountable for safe underground water supplies, Wisconsin

Community Fund's grantees face a daunting array of opportunities—and threats—on a daily basis. Whether their work entails defending workers who have been unjustly treated on the job or advocating for equal treatment for the LGBT community, the challenges our grantees face—particularly economically—can be all-consuming at times.

That's why, to borrow a phrase, **“it takes a movement.”** It takes community activists, like the volunteer members of our Grant Allocation Committee, to make the difficult, but well-informed decisions about which groups to fund. It takes volunteer leaders in the form of board members to govern the Fund for maximum impact of our grantmaking program. And it takes committed and



concerned donors willing to pool their gifts—both large and small—to address the root causes of social injustice.

This would be a great time for you personally to recommit to the cause of social change in your own backyard. A great time, in fact, to ensure that the true change makers and backyard heroes receive the support they need to make change from the ground up.

President-elect Barack Obama is calling for continued grassroots support of his administration and our country. In addition to all you do for the social justice movement, I urge you to please show your support for the work of the grassroots in Wisconsin by giving to Wisconsin Community Fund.

—Bruce Moffat, Executive Director



THE GRANTS ALLOCATION COMMITTEE:

## a community of grantmakers

**In my 17 years with Wisconsin Community Fund, I've often been asked, "What distinguishes Wisconsin Community Fund and its grantmaking from other Foundations?"** I love it when I'm asked this question, because the Fund's grantmaking methods are so very different than those of other foundations.

I'm very proud of our grantmaking program here at Wisconsin Community Fund!

Unlike the majority of the grantmaking organizations out there, funding decisions here at the Fund are made by on-the-ground grassroots activists. The Grants Allocation Committee—a truly dedicated and devoted group of women, men, people of color, white people, rural and urban dwellers, LGBT and straight—does the difficult work of determining who does and does not receive funding.

The current Grants Committee consists of 10 people who are very active in social change and social justice movements in

Wisconsin and around the US. They have organized community members, marched, written fliers, and worked around their kitchen tables to address problems in American society. Many of them have also written proposals to foundations and know how hard it can be to be a grant seeker these days.

A key to the success of the Fund's grantmaking is our On Site Visit process. Members of the Grants Allocation Committee, the Board of Directors and the staff visit the potential grantees' places of business, whether it be an office, a board member's home or a community space.

At these site visits, the groups are asked about their successes and failures. They're asked to identify the institution(s) they challenge in order to make this country more responsive to marginalized groups. The On Site Visit teams also take the time to give advice and encouragement about various aspects of organizing and fundraising, hopefully making the experience a rich and rewarding one for the potential grantees.

We at Wisconsin Community Fund do what we can to help our grantees grow and make the changes they want to see for their members and their communities. The commitment of the Grant Allocation Committee, the Board of Directors and the staff to our grantees guarantees our commitment to change.

—Betsy Lawrence, Program Services



## WISCONSIN COMMUNITY FUND'S 33rd funding cycle

**Between July 2007 and June 2008, Wisconsin Community Fund awarded \$56,000 to 11 Wisconsin-based grassroots groups engaged in social justice advocacy. This brings the total granted by the Fund to more than \$1.7 million since its founding in 1982.**

*The organizations selected this funding cycle are:*

### **African American Children's Theatre**

Milwaukee, \$5,000

AACT provides African-American children with opportunities to express their creativity, to nurture their individuality, and to guide them in learning and acquiring leadership and performing skills while producing quality art. At the same time, these children also learn self esteem and skills to function in a racist society. The grant is for scholarships for disadvantaged children, ages 8-18, who audition to participate in after-school theater-based instruction.

### **Anathoth Community Farm**

Luck, \$5,000

Anathoth Community Farm promotes shifting away from a so-

cial and economic system based on consumption to one based on cooperation, sustainability and mutual respect. Through trainings in nonviolence, nonviolent direct action, organizing, strategizing and personal example, Anathoth Community Farm encourages action toward these necessary changes. Working and living in an intentional community is an essential context for creating lasting change and personal empowerment. The grant supports the work of organizing, networking, and training activists.

### **Dane Co Timebank**

Madison, \$5,000

The Dane County Timebank promotes self-sufficiency and community interdependence through time/dollar exchange. The grant will be used in salaries for the Timebank Director and Administrative Assistant.

### **Freedom, Inc**

Madison, \$7,000

Freedom, Inc. exists to create social justice through leadership development and community organizing that will bring about social, political, cultural, and economic change resulting in the end of violence against women and children in communities of color. Freedom, Inc. challenges the root causes of violence,

poverty, racism, and discrimination in low-income communities. The grant will be used to hire a part-time coordinator for the project Southeast Asian Family Unity.

### **Grassroots Leadership College**

Madison, \$5,000

Grassroots Leadership College develops grassroots leaders by building skills and relationships in a supportive and challenging environment. Classes are taught by volunteer faculty drawn from neighborhood, non-profit, governmental, educational and faith-based organizations, as well as the for-profit sector.

The grant funds El Programa de Liderazgo Comunitario, the Spanish language version of their leadership training program.

### **Intercultural Leadership Initiative**

Lac du Flambeau, 6,000

Intercultural Leadership Initiative serves students in the Lakeland Union High School district which covers 800 square miles and four feeder K-8 schools and one high school, serving 10 communities in 2 counties in northern WI. Of the four K-8 schools, one is predominantly Native American while the other three are all predominantly white. ILI works with students from 4th grade through 12th grade teaching tolerance and acceptance of other cultures. The grant funds General Operating Expenses.

### **JOSHUA**

Green Bay, \$5,000

JOSHUA (Justice Organization Sharing Hope and United for Action) is an interfaith congregation-based social justice organization located in Brown County, Wisconsin. There are eleven full-member congregations and another dozen congregations and organizations associated with JOSHUA. JOSHUA deepens relationships within and among congregations and empowers people to act together for justice. The grant will be used to train at least 5 Spanish-speaking members at the week-long National Leadership Training Institute of the Gamaliel Foundation.



### **South Side Parents Against Lead**

Milwaukee, \$9,000

Southside Parents Against Lead is a volunteer group of parents from the near south side of Milwaukee whose children have been poisoned by lead found in their homes and yards. They are dedicated to protecting all children from this hazard by helping families to acquire safe housing, promoting good nutrition habits through its community garden, and building healthier neighborhoods through the removal of lead. They fight for tenants' rights by working with absentee landlords in the removal of lead from their properties. The grant funds gardening supplies, a staff member and stipends for ten youth workers in the Growing Power Community Food Center.



### **Voces de la Frontera Action**

Milwaukee, \$6,000

The mission of Voces de la Frontera Action, a 501(c)(4) organization, is to educate low-wage and immigrant workers about their employment rights, develop youth leadership, and promote community organizing and legislative education and advocacy in order to achieve policy changes that benefit the immigrant community and the workforce at large. The grant is for operating expenses.

### **WI Rural Womens Initiative**

Elkhorn, \$2,000

Wisconsin Rural Women's Initiative empowers women through gathering circles. This unique and safe circle process promotes the development of personal skills and cultivates the total wellness of women. In particular, rural and farm women suffer severe isolation, including coping with domestic violence, due to the disparate geography of their communities. The grant covers a portion of the director's salary and travel expenses.

### **Midwest Social Forum**

Statewide, \$1,000

The Midwest Social Forum, formerly Radfest, brings together organizers and activists from the Upper Midwest. Together they

educate and support each other on the issues in their communities. The grant helped fund the 2008 Organizers Workshop held in March 2008.

### Tomorrow River Chautauqua

Amherst, \$1,000

Tomorrow River Chautauqua is attempting something special in the Amherst area. By focusing on problems that affect everyone and by coordinating the event with readings, music and follow up groups, a Chautauqua has the potential of being a real organizing tool in the area. The grant funds presenter/documentary fees and operating expenses.



## media justice fund grantees

**Between July 2007 and June 2008, Wisconsin Community Fund awarded \$27,450 to five groups. Eleven groups applied for funding. Each of the groups applied for between \$5,000 and \$7,000.** There are two categories of proposals for the Media Justice Fund:

- **MediaToolKit** A media justice toolkit is comprised of materials in print, audio, video, digital, web-based or PowerPoint formats that provide language and understanding around media policy and advocacy. A toolkit introduces social justice activists to the basic tools and resources necessary to change existing media policy and presents ways community groups can use media to promote their social justice issues.
- **Community Media Collaboration** Community Media Collaboration grants support structural changes to the media that guarantee a community's right to use and be fairly represented by the media. Specifically, the Collaboration Grant supports projects that work within communities to increase community access to media; promote corporate media accountability, and/or change the regulations that govern media.



The organizations selected this funding cycle are:

### **Progressive Media Project**

Madison, MediaToolKit, \$5,000

The Progressive Media Project is an affiliate of the Progressive magazine and has been presenting writing clinics since 1993 for social justice activists and nonprofit staff from around the country. The material presented is constantly updated and modified based on participant feedback. The grant funded two Advocacy Media Clinics that trained community-based nonprofit organizations and individual activists to effectively, creatively and regularly advance their issues and constituency interests in the media. Funded in previous Media Justice Fund cycle for \$5,185.

### **Workers Independent News Service**

Madison, Community Media Collaboration, \$6,500

WINS serves working people throughout the US by producing and distributing news stories that feature issues affecting working people. WINS seeks to remedy the inequality of mainstream media in representing labor issues by giving working people a voice through radio, the internet and podcasts. The grant funds supported a community-based organizer/producer.

### **Center for Democracy in Action**

Madison, Community Media Collaboration, \$5,000

The Center for Democracy in Action is an organization dedicated to increasing the spaces, places and events for inclusive dialogue and strategic grassroots action. They are committed to assuring that voices that are too often marginalized or unheard are not only heard, but are understood as important assets and contributors to the common good. The grant funded three Race and Media Forums that connect print and electronic media within communities of color and to educate the media representatives on issues vital to communities of color.

### **CityWIDE LPFM**

Madison, Community Media Collaboration, \$5,450

CityWIDE LPFM, a coalition of 7 social change groups and the Madison Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, shares a frequency with another station (SoulWIDE LPFM) as part of an FCC approved settlement of competing applications for the same frequency. CityWIDE operates from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM weekdays and all day Saturday. The grant monies helped purchase and install broadcast equipment, pay licensing fees and build a studio for youth at the Lussier Teen center.

### **Milwaukee Muslim Women Coalition**

Milwaukee, Community Media Collaboration, \$5,500

Milwaukee Muslim Women's Coalition, a volunteer driven organization for more than 13 years, is the only Muslim women's organization in the Milwaukee area. It provides support for Muslim women, both native and foreign born in the Milwaukee area. The grant funds went toward a one-day seminar on the role of the media and the current climate of Islamophobia (racism and bigotry towards Muslims). Funded in previous Media Justice Fund cycle for \$5185.

## special opportunity grantees

*July 2007- June 2008*

**Wisconsin Community Fund offers small grants of up to \$500 to help groups respond to current events and unexpected need.**

### **WI Women's Network**

Statewide/Madison, \$500

The Wisconsin Women's Network is a broad-based coalition of

women's organizations, labor unions, religious and educational groups, providers of human services and business associations working together to improve the status of women in Wisconsin. The grant funded teleconferencing that allowed low-income women who were not able to pay for travel expenses to participate in meetings.

### Wisconsin Books to Prisoners

Madison, \$500

WBTP is an all volunteer organization that sends books to prisoners in Wisconsin and throughout the US. This service helps improve the lives of incarcerated people and provides access to books that help them understand and analyze their lives and this society. The grant funded increased operating expenses in the face of increased demand for the program.

### Operation Welcome Home

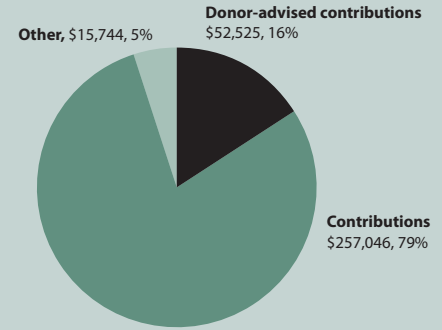
Madison, \$500

OWH is a community of mostly black, low-income and homeless people in Madison. They provide meals, places to stay, meeting space, and other necessities of life. The grant paid for unforeseen costs in providing meeting space to participants.

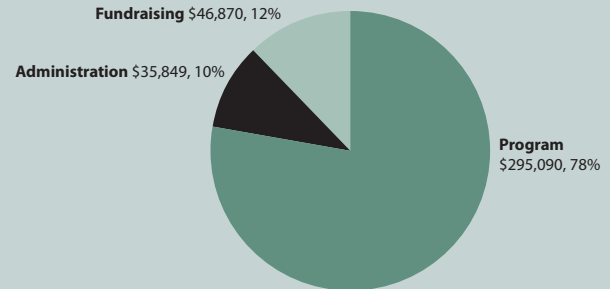
## Financials

July 2007 – June 2008

### FY08 Income \$325,315



### FY08 Expenses \$377,809





**WISCONSIN**  
**COMMUNITY FUND**

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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