

## The Boston Foundation Hosts Roundtable on Disability Issues:

*DFN Invited to Provide National Perspective*

With the goal of starting a dialog that would lead to a greater understanding of issues and strengthening the relationship between the philanthropic and disability communities by opening new lines of communication, The Boston Foundation--a new member of DFN--hosted a roundtable discussion on disability issues in conjunction with the Boston Globe Foundation and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. Over 75 people participated in the four-hour session, including private and public funders and organizations that provide services to and advocate for people with disabilities.

The discussion began with a presentation entitled *Private Funding and the Disability Community* by a panel of representatives from The Boston Foundation, Disability Funders Network, Associated Grant Makers and The Boston Globe Foundation. Panelists reviewed funding trends, which suggest that there is a highly competitive environment for organizations that are interested in expanding current programs or developing new ones. In addition, they identified three funding challenges facing disability service providers, grassroots organizations and disability advocates: 1) public sup-

port offers little room for innovation and organizational capacity development; 2) private sector grants are often too small to cover equipment purchases, facilities improvements and capacity building; and, 3) the donor base of people with disabilities tends to be small.

Panelists outlined some of the ongoing challenges for foundations as they consider how best to serve the disability community. Some foundations are too small to make significant grants; others have such broad agendas that disability issues have to compete with myriad other community needs. Panelists encouraged grantseekers to use proposals

to educate funders about the needs and strengths of the disability community.

The roundtable discussions fostered a more in-depth exchange of ideas, which focused on two key questions: 1) what are the most pressing issues and challenges affecting the disability

community today, and 2) how can private funders more effectively respond to and support the disability community? The roundtable discussion highlighted some of the key areas in which people with disabilities are prevented from living full and active lives.

*Educating the Community About Disability Issues.* The wider community is often unaware of the specific challenges faced by the disability community, and this lack of awareness can lead to marginalizing and stigmatizing people with disabilities. Media images are often inadequate, inaccurate and/or derogatory. As a result, many people with disabilities choose not to identify themselves with the disability community. To counteract this, it is important to educate the media and the general public, not only about the disability community in general, but also on diversity within the community.

*Disability Roundtable continued on page 8*



The Boston Foundation  
CATALYST FOR COMMUNITY

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## The Disability Funders Network

The Disability Funders Network (DFN) was established in 1994 as a grantmakers' Affinity Group with the mission of facilitating communication and collaboration between the disability community and organized philanthropy. DFN also promotes the hiring of people with disabilities and their full inclusion in the programs of philanthropic organizations.

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## DFN Board Member Honored by the Michigan Women's Foundation

### An Interview with Kate Pew Wolters

By Sandra Cawley

**O**n April 24th, Kate Pew Wolters received the Women of Achievement and Courage award from the Michigan Women's Foundation, which promotes the economic self-sufficiency and personal well-being of women in the state.

Women of Achievement and Courage honorees are selected for their lifetime business and community achievements. The choice of Wolters as one of this year's awardees highlights the richness and diversity of her career. She is a person with a disability, an advocate for the disability community, has her own family foundation, and has other business and community

interests as well. She is currently chair and president of the Kate and Richard Wolters Foundation and chair of the

Board of Trustees at her alma mater, Aquinas College. She has served as executive director of the Steelcase Foundation and as a trustee on the board of the Grand Rapids Arts Museum. In the disability and advocacy arena, Wolters was executive director of the Grand Rapids Center for Independent Living (CIL), and she was appointed by President Clinton to serve as first vice-chair of the National Council on Disability (NCD), an independent federal agency whose purpose is to promote policies, programs, practices and procedures that guarantee equal opportunity and empower individuals with disabilities. NCD plays a major role in developing disability policy in America.

#### A Varied Career

Wolters' career has encompassed three major areas: disability rights and advocacy, corporate funding, and her family foundation. Before becoming a corporate funder, Wolters was the executive director of the Grand Rapids CIL. The transition from disability advocate to executive director of the Steelcase Foundation presented challenges—one of which was to integrate her advocacy work into a corporate setting. One of her

responses to this challenge was to become a subtler advocate.

For example, as the executive director of the Steelcase Foundation she was not the final decision-maker in selecting which proposals would be funded. As with most foundations, the board of directors made the ultimate funding decisions. Shareholders and other employees were also factors in the decision-making process. Committed as she was to furthering the disability movement, she knew it was only one of the many things she had to do in her new job. Her response was to try to integrate notions of independence for people with disabilities into Steelcase's

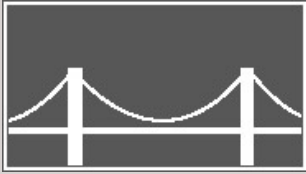
grantmaking priorities. "And," she said, "because I have a disability, those who came in contact with me became conscious of issues like accessibility—when, at times, accommodations had to be made for me." "This was," she added, "an example of subtly educating people."

Wolters' next career move was from corporate foundation to family foundation. This transition enabled her to merge both her experience as an advocate and her knowledge of corporate funding issues. "The difference," she said, "between corporate funding and a family foundation is that I can now make my own funding decisions." She prefers to fund grass-roots consumer based organizations in her community, and she likes to donate seed money for new ideas that have not been tried before. Her funding philosophy is "giving back, and," she states, "often, giving anonymously."

While continuing to run her family foundation, Wolters' is serving as first vice-chair of NCD, which has a government/policy focus and opens, yet again, new perspectives on disability issues. Wolters views her appointment to NCD as a bonus. She can synthesize both career paths—advocate and corporate funder—and expand her base of knowledge from a local to a national perspective. "At NCD," she said, "I had a lot to learn about the national landscape for disability issues,



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# Letter From The Chair

by **Deborah B. Lewis**  
**Chair, Disability Funders Network**

**A bridge between the disability community and organized philanthropy**

**O**n a rainy fall day in 1998, a group DFN Board members came together in Washington, DC to discuss how to begin the process of nurturing DFN into a self-sustaining affinity group. The Dole Foundation, where DFN was housed since its inception, was closing its doors, and consequently, DFN had no office and no staff. Knowing that there were no funds available to hire even one staff member, and recognizing the importance of continuing the role DFN had begun to play in facilitating communication and collaboration between the disability community and organized philanthropy, Jeanne Argoff offered to become the volunteer executive director of the fledgling organization until funds could be raised to pay staff.

Now a paid staff director, Jeanne works tirelessly at foundation meetings and conferences across the country to promote DFN as an organization that bridges the communications gap between grantmakers and the nonprofit organizations that represent and serve the disability community. Jeanne has also focused attention on grantmaking that has the potential to strongly impact the lives of people with disabilities—like new funding opportunities that are emerging under The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act. In addition, with a grant from The California Endowment, she directed a project that designed and disseminated a survey that assesses attitudes toward disability funding by the California philanthropic community.

None of this activity would have been possible without the unflagging support of the DFN Board of Directors. Most active among those supporters were Joanne Yamada of the Hawai'i Community Foundation, who rallied the Board as soon as she heard about

Dole's closing and set the standard for other funders with a challenge grant; Margaret Staton of the ELA Foundation, who provided grants and loans to support the interim staff; Rayna Aylward (Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation), who hosted the retreat precipitated by the removal of Dole support; Sylvia Clark (NEC Foundation), who designed and paid for our "new-look" brochures; and Jacqueline Elias (J.P. Morgan & Co.), who became our first chair after Jeanne resigned to become executive director.

Today, DFN is at a new crossroads, and we are very excited about the upcoming Board Planning Retreat taking place just prior to the Council on Foundations conference in Philadelphia. To continue

our mission in the foundation and non-profit communities and to provide programs and information on how to better serve people with disabilities, it is imperative that DFN continue to grow. To that end we will be working on a plan that will enable us to take this vital next step forward.

We hope that all of you who will be attending the Council on Foundations meeting will join

us for a reception on Tuesday evening as well as the business meeting on Monday morning, where the Board will report on the results of the retreat.

We look forward to seeing you then!

**Today, DFN is at  
a new crossroads.**

## DFN Welcomes New Board Member

**H**ope Burness Gleicher is DFN's newest board member, having been appointed to the board in October 2000. She is the executive director of Trellis Fund, a small private foundation in Washington DC, whose progressive grantmaking mission is to support systemic change in public and private institutions that will benefit the residents of the greater Washington metropolitan area.

Prior to joining Trellis Fund, Ms. Gleicher was the founding executive director of the Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers, a membership organization comprised of over 125 private, corporate, public and community foundations. Ms. Gleicher also

served as the founding executive director of Healthcare for the Homeless in Baltimore, MD from 1983 to 1989.



**Trellis**  
FUND

## DFN Board Member Rayna Aylward Appointed to FCC Commission

**R**ayna Aylward, executive director of the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, has been appointed by Federal Communications Commission Chairman William E. Kennard to the FCC's Consumer/Disability Telecommunications Advisory Committee (CDTAC).

The 9-member CDTAC includes delegates from groups representing African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and people

with disabilities, as well as educational institutions and industry. The committee will look at access services, such as telecommunications relay services, video description, captioning, and low-power FM. The committee also will address the availability to unserved and underserved populations of high-speed Internet access (broadband), digital TV, and advances in cable, satellite and broadcast.

## Venture Philanthropy: Does It Hold Promise for Disability Funders and Non-Profits?

*Mark Breimborst, executive director of Rinconada Ventures Foundation and a member of DFN, and Doug Kenshol, president and CEO of the Urban Enterprise Fund (UEF), are both advocates and practitioners of Venture Philanthropy. In a conversation with DFN executive director Jeanne Argoff, they provide expert insight on what this new form of philanthropy is and its applicability to the disability community.*

Jeanne: Why did UEF adopt a venture philanthropy approach?

Doug: The Urban Enterprise Fund has a mission to create employment opportunities for hard-to-hire workers. To achieve the scale necessary, the Fund has chosen to support viable revenue generating enterprises that have the potential to expand. To stretch philanthropic dollars as far as possible, the Fund has chosen to make loans rather than grants. Repaid loans will be reinvested in future ventures.

Mark: I founded Rinconada Ventures Foundation because I was not comfortable with traditional philanthropy. Therefore, Rinconada is different in many operational aspects that betray a larger shift in philanthropy that attracts different donors and new types of "social entrepreneurs."

Jeanne: How would you define venture philanthropy?

Mark: There are a lot of foundations these days that claim to be doing venture philanthropy, yet what the term means varies substantially. I am describing a fusion of traditional philanthropy and the venture capital model that differs from traditional philanthropy in five major ways.

First, rather than require lengthy grant applications, Rinconada has a series of informal interviews with potential portfolio ventures--this sets the groundwork for a future partnership.

Secondly, while foundations traditionally support programs, Rinconada helps to build an organization's capacity so it can ultimately reach a point of self-sustainability.

In order to foster these types of intimate and long-term relationships--and this is the third point-- Rinconada can only maintain a

small portfolio rather than the large portfolios and distant relationships that traditional foundations often maintain.

Also, Rinconada partners with ventures in order to help them reach sustainability, whereas traditional grantors rarely have these goals.

Finally, as Doug mentioned above, Rinconada makes loans rather than grants, and we aim for full repayment. We believe that loans stress the partnership aspect and de-emphasize the power dynamic inherent in philanthropy.

Doug: I'd like to add that true venture philanthropy must embrace a risk-taking philosophy.

Just as venture capitalists seek to maximize financial returns by backing risky companies, venture philanthropists provide seed capital for new ideas that have the potential to solve significant social problems.

Jeanne: Why should disability funders be interested?

Doug: 14 million working-age Americans with disabilities are unemployed. This is an enormous problem that requires bold solutions--launching companies with the potential to generate thousands of jobs; creating incentives and support for existing companies; and providing training and support for millions of individuals with disabilities. The size of the problem requires that we back initiatives that have the potential to make the most impact.

Mark: I adopted the venture philanthropy approach specifically as a result of my experiences as a person with a disability. Personally, I have often been the victim of well-intentioned but unwanted philanthropy. I find a partnership approach more empowering to the entrepreneur, and, likewise, I feel that lending venture money indicates that the beneficiary has value to add and they will be able to repay the benefactor. In my personal experiences, I have not often been afforded this value and respect.

*Readers: Please let us know if you are interested in reading more about Venture Philanthropy and disability. Mark Breimborst and Doug Kenshol have volunteered to write further articles for DFN News that respond to your stated concerns or questions.*





## Kaiser Permanente Settles Lawsuit, Agrees to 'Sweeping Reforms' to Improve Access for Disabled Patients

In a move that could “dramatically change the way hospitals and clinics” treat people with disabilities, Kaiser Permanente yesterday announced plans to revamp its California facilities to make them more accessible, as part of an agreement to settle a class action lawsuit filed on behalf of three patients who use wheelchairs, the Los Angeles Times reports.

Filed in July by Disability Rights Advocates, an Oakland-based not-for-profit law center, the suit said patients faced “pervasive barriers” at Kaiser facilities (Glionna, Los Angeles Times, 4/13). According to the New York Times, the complaint listed numerous problems at Kaiser facilities, including “too small examination rooms, doors too heavy to open from a wheelchair, ... inaccessible restrooms and a lack of nearby parking” (Lewin, New York Times, 4/13).

Under the settlement, Kaiser will implement a “12-point program” to address the problems at its facilities throughout California. While declining to speculate on costs, Kaiser officials said the plans include hiring consultants to oversee access and health care surveys, removing “architectural barriers” and installing “critical diagnostic”

equipment. In addition, Kaiser staff members, including doctors and nurses, will receive sensitivity training to help them better assist people with disabilities. The reform plan also will establish a complaint system, and the disabled community will provide Kaiser with continuing advice. Kaiser facilities in Riverside and San Francisco will operate as “living laboratories” to implement the changes, which will eventually occur at all of the company’s clinics and facilities over the next two to five years.

Sid Wolinsky, director of litigation for the advocacy group, said that within a week of filing the suit, Kaiser officials met with the organization to “hammer out” details to improve the facilities.

Wolinsky said, “Never in 40 years of litigation have I seen a company of this size react so swiftly and constructively to problems once they were pointed out. We had dialogue instead of depositions.”

—Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report, April 13, 2001  
<http://www.kaisernetwork.org/>



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## Senate Includes Funding for Family Opportunity Act in Budget

Senate Finance Chair Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) and Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) have secured a \$7.9 billion, 10-year reserve fund for the Family Opportunity Act (S 321) within the fiscal 2002 budget resolution, bringing the measure one “step closer to passage,” CongressDaily reports (Fulton, CongressDaily, 4/10). The act would allow parents earning up to 300% of the federal poverty level, about \$51,150 for a family of four, to purchase Medicaid coverage for disabled children up to age 18. In addition, the bill would provide states with “greater flexibility” to offer health services to disabled children at home and would establish “family-to-family information centers” in each state to help parents with disabled children (Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report, 3/30).

The April 19 edition of the Washington Post Metro section profiled Melissa Arnold, a mother of two living in Ellicott City, Md., who refuses pay raises in an attempt to stay “poor” so that her younger, disabled son can retain Medicaid coverage. According to the Post, Arnold’s situation is shared by many working families who “struggle financially and sometimes even send their seriously disabled children away to qualify for Medicaid,” which offers services often

denied by private insurers. Sixty-four percent of families with “severely disabled children ... are turning down jobs, raises and overtime pay and not saving money so that their children can stay eligible for Medicaid under its strict income limits,” according to a recent study from Brandeis University and the disability advocacy group Family Voices.

Senator Grassley said, “It’s ludicrous to have a health care policy that wants people to be non-taxpaying citizens in order to qualify for the (Medicaid) program. It’s not common sense to make families impoverished.”



—Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report, April 10 and California Healthline, 4/19

To see the Washington Post story, go to <http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A59508-2000Oct23.html>

# The Supreme Court and the ADA

**T**he Supreme Court has agreed to hear appeals of two cases to determine whether the Americans with Disabilities Act covers individuals with repetitive stress injuries and whether the rights of workers with disabilities to be accommodated by employers should trump a “valid seniority system.” The first case, *Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky v. Williams*, centers on Ella Williams, who began working on the Toyota assembly line in 1990 (Greenhouse, New York Times, 4/17). Williams developed carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis “within months” of starting her job, and the company transferred her to a quality control position, but her ailments returned. She then refused a second job switch, and was fired by Toyota. Williams sued under the ADA, arguing that the company “failed to make a reasonable accommodation for her condition” (Greenberger, Wall Street Journal, 4/17).

A federal district court rejected her claim, ruling that “Williams was not disabled because, while she could not perform certain tasks, she was still able to hold many jobs at the plant.” The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the district court’s decision, concluding that Williams was “significantly limited in her ability to perform manual tasks and ... was therefore disabled under the 1990 law” (Baltimore Sun, 4/17).

The second case, *US Airways v. Barnett*, involves a former cargo handler at the airline who suffered a back injury and requested a permanent reassignment to the mailroom. The airline denied Barnett’s request, saying that “more senior workers” were in line for the job. Barnett sued under the ADA. A federal judge rejected his claim, but the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that

decision and sent the case to a jury trial (Los Angeles Times, 4/17). The airline then appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing that the circuit court’s decision “converts a statute that bars discrimination against disabled employees into one that requires discrimination against non-disabled employees.”

The Times reports that the Williams case is of particular interest to employers and worker advocates since the question in that case is “how to interpret the language of the statute,” which defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities,” such as performing manual tasks, walking and working. Two years ago, the Court “sided with business” interests and ruled that the ADA does not “cover prospective workers who were rejected because of treatable diseases or bad eyesight,” finding that these “ordinary impediments” did not “rise to the level of a true disability” (Los Angeles Times, 4/17).

The Garrett decision, decided earlier this year, held that “the Constitution’s guarantee of sovereign immunity bars state employees from suing the states for damages under the ADA.

The two new cases the court has agreed to consider involve private sector firms and their employees (Washington Post, 4/16/01).

—From *California Healthline*, 4/17/01 and *The Washington Post*, 4/16/01

*California Healthline* is a news service of the California Healthcare Foundation <http://www.californiahealthline.org>

**Two years ago, the Court “sided with business interests”**

## Advocates Voice Concerns Over Cuts In Several Programs In FY2002 Budget

**T**he American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), a national membership organization promoting the political and economic empowerment of children and adults with disabilities in the U.S., issued a press release expressing concerns about the Bush Administration’s proposed \$1.6 trillion tax cut and its likely impact on funding for disability community priorities. “We are concerned that President Bush’s proposed tax cut, if enacted, would severely limit the ability of President Bush and future Presidents to address the priorities of the more than 56 million children and adults with disabilities in the U.S.,” said AAPD President Andrew J. Imparato. Imparato continued, “we need stronger federal enforcement of ADA and other civil rights laws...We need greater investments in home and community-based long term services and supports, particularly as our population ages. We need to expand access to affordable housing, transportation, technology, education and health care. All of these things require federal financial support and leadership. Passing an oversize tax cut will not only lessen the possibility of progress on these important issues, but it also poses the real threat that federal support for Americans with disabilities will shrink in the coming years.”

Other advocacy groups have also expressed concerns over several funding decisions in the Bush administration’s fiscal 2002 budget proposal. The National Mental Health Association bemoans what it calls “substantial cuts” in mental-health funding and pinpoints three areas of “grave concern”: 1) a \$16 million reduction within the Center for Mental Health Services, 2) a 25 % cut in the obligations of the Justice Department’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, which could seriously reduce preventative measures for juveniles in the Justice system with mental-health disorders not addressed in correctional facilities, 3) cuts in housing programs for persons with mental illness. The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill shares some of the same concerns and addresses other important areas, including inadequate funding increase for the National Institute of Mental Health.

—From AAPD press release ([www.aapd-dc.org](http://www.aapd-dc.org) or 202-457-0046) and *Disability Funding News*, April 24, 2001 ([www.cdpublications.com](http://www.cdpublications.com) or 301-588-6380)

# Annual Conference

## Philadelphia Marriott, Philadelphia

Continuing the tradition of the past few years, DFN will have a high profile at the Council on Foundations 2001 annual conference. DFN was instrumental in designing three sessions and is co-sponsoring two others. In addition, the Board of Directors will hold a strategic planning retreat on the Saturday before the conference begins and will report on the results at the DFN business meeting on Monday, April 30. And of course, everyone is invited to our reception on Tuesday, May 1.

### Conference Highlights

Saturday, April 28, 2001

#### **Strategic Planning Retreat. DFN Board**

Monday, April 30, 2001

#### **DFN Business Meeting**

#### **Not Just for Show: Diversity Practices in Philanthropy, Joint Affinity Group Session**

Foundation leaders who have tried to diversify their boards and staff will explore what really happens when diverse board and staff members make grantmaking decisions. Audience members will be invited to participate in a discussion about best practices based on recent findings from the first extensive research project on board and staff diversity encompassing disability, ethnicity, gender, race and sexual orientation.

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

#### **Stereotypes & Sound bytes: What Foundations Can Do to Encourage Accountability in Mass Media Portrayals of Diverse Groups**

There is growing awareness among grantmakers of the importance of working with our major institutions to help them reflect the increasing diversity of society. This session will look at the power

the media has to influence attitudes and values and its accountability to the society it both serves and shapes. It will also engage the audience in a discussion of how effective grantmaking that calls for accountability of the media to the public can be a powerful tool in helping society achieve genuine inclusiveness.

#### **DFN Reception-Does the Media Get the Message?**

DFN's annual reception will take the pulse of the media's coverage of the disability community and its issues. Experts on the relationship between media and advocacy will highlight the possibilities and pitfalls of working with the media, and attendees can browse our display on media coverage of disability and approaches to better coverage while getting to know representatives of Philadelphia's vibrant disability community.

Wednesday, May 2, 2001

#### **Ticket to Work Act: New Health Insurance Options to Increase Employment**

The recently passed Ticket to Work/Work Incentives Improvement Act allows states to offer Medicaid coverage to people with disabilities and chronic conditions (such as HIV/AIDS) who are employed in jobs that have competitive salaries. Attendees at this session will find out about opportunities created for individuals who historically have been barred from the workforce and learn about the roles foundations—small as well as large—can play in supporting economic development and health programs that will serve as the cornerstone for effectively implementing the act.

## DFN Board Member Honored by the Michigan Women's Foundation

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and members of the Council have influenced me substantially." Her appointment is also a bonus for her community. Having knowledge of national issues and how they can be applied locally, has helped her to educate organizations in her own community.

The Women of Achievement and Courage award focuses on a community leader who is not limited to a particular field or area of interest. It celebrates wholeness and diversity. Serving on the board of the Grand Rapids Arts Museum was a rich and rewarding experience, not only because she was able to be around a great deal of wonderful art, but also because she could celebrate the artistic culture in her own community. Her position as chair of Aquinas College broadened her horizons even further—by allowing her to

participate in an academic environment, which fosters education and knowledge. "The arts, education and general human rights issues mean a lot to me," she notes.

When asked what winning the Women of Achievement award meant to her, Wolters stated, "Over the past ten years, I have watched other women receive this award. They were all women that I respected, and it is incredible to be in their company. Although I received other awards when I was a corporate grantmaker, this award means more to me because it encompasses more than just one aspect of my life."

# The Boston Foundation Hosts Roundtable on Disability Issues:

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**Diversity and Unity.** While an appreciation of diversity can promote understanding, too narrow a focus on a single disability can obscure the common realities experienced by all people with disabilities. It is also important to promote unity within the disability community to benefit from the power of collective action and combined resource. This will strengthen the movement and, therefore, improve the lives of all people with disabilities.

**Accessibility.** Some of the most fundamental human activities and services are compromised by a lack of accessibility, which bars people with disabilities from full participation in their communities. However, providing universal accessibility takes extensive and thoughtful planning and resources and calls for a re-conceptualization of the ways in which resources are used.

**Housing.** Lack of housing accessibility and affordability continue to be crucial short-term and long-term issues for the disability community. Frequently, individuals who are quite capable of living independently are denied the opportunity because facilities are not properly equipped and home modification costs are prohibitive.

**Transportation.** Lack of accessible transportation leads to social and economic isolation. Without full access to public transportation and other transportation services, many people with disabilities are unable to meet their basic needs. Tasks like grocery shopping, medical appointments, getting to work, visiting friends and enjoying recreational activities are difficult. Better public transportation systems are required to give people with disabilities a more reliable link to essential community resources.

**Communications.** The ability to communicate is also an accessibility issue. Organizations without interpreter services and TTY lines are often completely inaccessible to some people with disabilities.

**Employment.** Many people with disabilities are not employed because they have not had the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities. Potential employers may discriminate based on assumptions about disability or because of a reluctance to modify the workplace.

**Recreation.** The lack of support for funding recreational activities often means that agencies providing recreational opportunities to the wider community are unable to offer these same opportunities to the disability community.

**Organizational Capacity.** Disability nonprofits need strong infrastructures that can support the operating costs to sustain their work, and their organizational capacity is enhanced if representatives of the disability community are in board or staff leadership positions.

There is a great deal that funders can do to promote solutions to these issues. Some suggestions were: 1) funders can raise awareness of these issues by requiring grant applicants to report on the accessibility of their facilities and programs and to disclose the number of people on their staffs who have a disability; 2) grantmakers can attract attention to successful programs for people with dis-

abilities by publicizing grants they make in this area; 3) funders can continue this kind of dialog with the disability community; 4) they can facilitate communication between their staffs and grantseekers by utilizing interpreters, TTY lines and email—and by hiring staff members with disabilities; and 5) they can establish grant guidelines sensitive to the disability community—recognizing that accommodations and accessibility often create higher costs for nonprofit organizations serving the disability community and that general operating support and multi-year grants can be especially helpful.

**Some of the most fundamental human activities and services are compromised by a lack of accessibility.**

The discussion ended with the recognition that while progress has been made over the last decade, it is still important to continue educating funders and strengthening organizations serving the disability community. Establishing strong communication links between funders and service providers should continue—leading to an ongoing process

of information sharing, mutual education and continued dialog.

—Adapted from *The Boston Foundation's report, "Community Matters Roundtable on Disability Issues, Fall 2000.*

For copies of the full report, contact Satoko Kishi Hesp, 617-723-7415 or [skh@ibf.org](mailto:skh@ibf.org).

## NEW MEMBERS!

**Morris Friedell**  
Livingston, MT

**The Boston Foundation**  
Boston, MA

**Community Technology Foundation of California**  
San Francisco, CA

**Sheila E. Daley Foundation**  
New York, NY

**Friends of Leonard Cheshire, Inc.**  
New York, NY

**The Fanny and Svante Knistrom Foundation**  
Woodland Hills, CA

**Pacific Bell/SBC Global network**  
San Francisco, CA



# ANNOUNCEMENTS



# AAPD

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PEOPLE  
WITH DISABILITIES

## 2001 Paul G. Hearne/American Association of People with Disabilities Leadership Awards

The Paul G. Hearne/AAPD Leadership Awards were established in 1999 by the Milbank Foundation for Rehabilitation to identify emerging leaders in the disability community. Until his death in 1998, Paul G. Hearne was a leading disability advocate who, like other disability community leaders, wanted to make sure that the next generation of leaders would come forward to continue the modern disability movement that his generation began.

This year, approximately ten people with disabilities will be recognized as emerging leaders in their fields and will each receive a \$10,000 award to help them continue their leadership activities.

On February 27, 2002, the winners will be invited to an awards ceremony in the nation's capital, where they will also meet with national disability leaders and have an opportunity to form mentoring relationships.

To be considered for the Paul G. Hearne/AAPD Leadership Award, candidates must complete an application and submit it with a statement of 700 words or less that addresses all of the selection criteria. U.S. residents with any type of disability are eligible. Applications may be submitted on paper or in an alternate format (email, audio cassette or video tape). For more information contact Jessa Steinbeck, AAPD, at 800-840-8844 or 202-457-0046 (V/ TTY), e-mail [AAPD@aol.com](mailto:AAPD@aol.com) or Tracey Murray, Leadership Awards Coordinator, at 770-232-9001 (voice only), email: [pghawards@mindspring.com](mailto:pghawards@mindspring.com). Applications can also be downloaded from the AAPD website, [www.aapd-dc.org](http://www.aapd-dc.org). Applications must be postmarked by July 26, 2001.

## GEO Conference 2002 Dates Announced

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations will hold their next biannual conference, March 6-8, 2002 at the JW Marriott Hotel, Washington, DC. The 2002 conference will explore nonprofit organizational effectiveness from both sides of the coin -- the role of funders in promoting organizational effectiveness among nonprofits and funder effectiveness. As conference planning

progresses, regular updates will be posted to GEO's Web site [www.geofunders.org](http://www.geofunders.org).



## Jewish Funders Network Seeks Executive Director

The Jewish Funders Network (JFN), an affinity group affiliated with the Council on Foundations, seeks an executive director.

JFN is an organization made up of 800 individual philanthropists and foundation professionals committed to the core Jewish principles of tzedakah (charity) and tikkun olam (repairing the world). The organization helps its members to be more effective and strategic with their philanthropy, sponsoring an annual conference, regional meetings, and a variety of other activities to

further its mission.

Information about applicant qualifications, organizational history and context can be found at <http://www.jfunders.org> or by contacting Nancy Sobel or Mary King at Isaacson, Miller, 617-262-6500 or [jfn2259@imsearch.com](mailto:jfn2259@imsearch.com).



## New Department of Labor Disability Office Grants

Watch for the expected publication this Spring of several Solicitation of Grant Applications (SGAs) in the "Commerce Business Daily" from the Department of Labor's (DOL) new Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). ODEP was established in the FY 2001 appropriations bill passed last December and received \$13

million in new funding earmarked for innovative pilot programs and projects. The specific objectives for these new programs and projects are to bring youth with disabilities into mainstream DOL funded programs like the Job Corps and to increase access for people with significant disabilities to the One-Stop Career Centers.

# RESOURCES

## New Report on Adult Guardianship in Illinois Details Need for Reform

On March 23, the Illinois Guardianship Reform Project, an initiative of Equip for Equality, a nonprofit organization designated by the Governor to administer the federal Protection and Advocacy System for people with physical and mental disabilities, released a detailed report documenting the findings and recommendations of its Task Force for improving the adult guardianship system. The report also includes plans and proposed legislation for implementing key reforms.

Initial funding for the Project came from The Chicago Community Trust—which is represented on DFN's Board of Directors—the Polk Bros. Foundation, The Field Foundation of Illinois and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, a recent grant from the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities is enabling Equip for Equality to undertake a Public Awareness and

Coalition-Building Campaign for implementation of the project's recommendations.

By the year 2035, 25-percent of the population in this country will be elderly—with the potential for physical or mental impairments—and the number of non-elderly individuals with disabilities will continue to increase due to improved survival rates for infants born with disabilities.

The 150-page final report focuses on areas of concern expressed by elderly people, people with disabilities, family members, service providers and the general public in state-wide focus groups, public hearings and nation-wide research. The complete report is available on Equip for Equality's website at [www.equipforequality.org](http://www.equipforequality.org).

For more information on the Guardianship Reform Project, a brochure or a copy of the Executive Summary of the report, please contact Zena Naiditch, President and CEO of Equip for Equality, at (800) 537-2532.

## The Community Organizing Toolbox

Released by the Neighborhood Funders Group (NFG), this publication details the achievements of community organizing groups nationwide in creating jobs, combating crime and reforming schools. Spurred by philanthropic interest in the growing field, NFG spent two years developing The Toolbox. It is the first-ever comprehensive review of the community-organizing field for grantmakers and will help funders considering investing in community organizing to make informed decisions about their grantmaking.

Community organizing strategies are making a difference in neighborhoods that are often forgotten or ignored, and, according to the report, leaders are beginning to emerge who can help find

solutions to problems within their own communities. These efforts are successful primarily because neighborhood residents were the decision makers and leaders of community-based action.

The two dozen or more regional and national organizing networks that nurture and support over 6,000 local community organizing groups all look to grassroots people—not to government, business, academia, or media—to set their own priorities

The Neighborhood Funders Group is a national membership association of grantmakers working to increase support for community-based efforts that organize and improve the economic and social fabric of low-income urban neighborhoods and rural communities. The Toolbox is available online at [www.nfg.org](http://www.nfg.org) or by calling (202) 833-4690.



## Census Bureau Releases Disability Report

The Census Bureau has just released a new report linking the presence of severe disability to increased likelihood of receiving welfare benefits, having low levels of income and being more likely to live in poverty. Also, individuals with a severe disability are less likely to be covered by health insurance than those with no disability. Among people 25-to-64 years of age having a severe disability, only 48 percent had health coverage, compared with 80 percent for people with a nonsevere disability and 82 percent of those with no disability.

The report, *Americans with Disabilities, 1997*, utilizes data from the 1997 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) and should not be confused with results of Census 2000, which will be released over the next three years. Nevertheless, it does provide the

type of statistical information frequently requested by grantmakers and advocates alike. Among the report's highlights:

- Nearly 1 in 5 persons—53 million people—said they had some level of disability in 1997, while 1 in 8—33 million—reported they had a severe disability;
- The poverty rate among the population 25-to-64 years old with no disability was 8 percent, compared with 10 percent for people with a nonsevere disability and 28 percent for people with a severe disability;
- In 1997, 9.7 million people age 16 to 64 had a disability that prevented them from working and another 7.2 million were limited as to the kind or amount of work they could do.

*The full report can be obtained at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability.html>.*