

Beyond Dollars for Big Change

In these lean times, our ability to collaborate has never been more important. Through the recent recession, we have worked to help our members go *Beyond Dollars* to achieve **BIG Change**: building true **partnerships**; capitalizing on timing and **momentum**; finding ways to **leverage** dollars and knowledge; and being a strong **voice**. Below are highlights from our year to date.



Tamara Copeland

Building True Partnerships

It is better to fund in collaboration than in isolation. Working with our colleagues and across sectors is what makes "BIG change" possible.

Strategies for Change: Maximizing Impact in a Down Economy

- To kick off the year, Washington Grantmakers (WG) partnered with Arabella Advisors to bring together grantmakers, grantees, and local public officials to talk about how to make **public-private partnerships** productive.



Katherine Bradley, CityBridge Foundation; **Justin Cohen**, formerly with DC Public Schools; **Tamara Lucas Copeland**, Washington Grantmakers

WG: The Glue between Nonprofits and Local Governments

- Washington Grantmakers' Public Education Working Group was perfectly positioned to facilitate 2010's **Investing in Innovation Fund grants** process. By working with a local school system to clarify goals, assisting grantees in evaluating capacity *before* spending weeks on paperwork, and offering technical assistance with applications, WG is helping the region leverage federal dollars.

Convening Unlikely Allies—and Likely Ones – Leaders from local governments' departments of aging had not met regularly before 2010. Members of WG's newest convening group, the **Working Group on Aging**, are convening government and nonprofit leaders from around the region to talk about how to focus and align their efforts in anticipation of the demographic wave that will break in the coming decades.

Seizing the Moment

Why swim upstream? By building on the work of colleagues and adapting to changing circumstances, WG helps our network maximize its resources.

Breaking through Boundaries: Region Forward – How many strategic frameworks does one region need? Ideally, only one. Washington Grantmakers has thrown its support behind the new Greater Washington 2050 Coalition *Region Forward* visioning framework. WG members helped create it, the WG Board officially endorsed it in April, and WG's staff will work with **8 Neighbors** (eight local leadership and membership groups) to spread the word. In promoting *Region Forward* as the connective tissue between philanthropic, business, and government initiatives, WG is collaborating across sectors to achieve lasting progress in the areas you fund.

Recession Lessons - Washington Grantmakers saw the economic downturn as an opportunity to rethink how we work and to challenge the status quo. WG convened funders throughout the year to discuss the "new normal" and ways to adapt. Members exchanged best practices at May's **"Philanthropy and the Economy"** event.



Sarah Oldmixon, Community Foundation; **Christa Velasquez**, Casey Foundation; **Ed Lazere**, DCFPI; **Rubie Coles**, Moriah Fund

2010 Census – As an official 2010 Census partner, WG helped alert the local community to the enormous cost of a potential **Census undercount**. Several WG members made grants to local organizations to improve outreach and awareness.

Leveraging Key Resources

Our network's resources are many—and still they are not enough. WG helps local grantmakers put outside tools and expert knowledge to use.

Grantmaker Effectiveness - With resources down and unlikely to rebound quickly, WG began 2010 with a focus on grantmaker effectiveness, inviting GEO's Kathleen Enright to discuss how grantmakers typically help and hinder nonprofits. The wide-ranging conversation continues to bear fruit. One outcome: WG is leading an effort to apply the lessons of **Project Streamline** to grantmaking in the region; by re-examining grant requirements, WG can help grantees save time and money.

Philanthropy Insights - By leveraging and applying our national partners' resources, we can make better collective use of *our* region's resources. In 2010, WG is working closely with the Foundation Center to provide you with **better, more-timely data** to help guide your grantmaking. Visit WashingtonGrantmakers.org for access to a new data visualization tool.



Better Grantmaking -The spring's "Advanced Grant Portfolio Management" course, an intensive two-day workshop presented in partnership with the Grantmaking School, showed grantmakers how to evaluate a grant portfolio within a strategic framework. "It helped me define a comprehensive approach to grantmaking with an eye toward impact," said one WG member.

Mission Investing - In 2010, members are seeking out new paths towards progress. After a CEO Roundtable event where attendees expressed interest in mission investing, WG invited More for Mission's Lisa Hagerman to share her insights with member CEOs and Board trustees about using endowments to achieve organizational goals.

WG's Working Groups and Affinity Groups hosted experts to advance learning agendas. In the wake of 2010's historic health reform legislation, the Health Working Group saw that implementation would be the true challenge, and brought in national expert Alan Weil to advise non-health funders on roles that need filling.

Trustee Networking - Of course, some of our best resources are within the network. WG offers over 100 opportunities to connect each year. Our newest offering, the "**Philanthropist to Philanthropist**" luncheon series, is a rare opportunity for family foundation trustees to learn from their peers.



George Vradenburg, Vradenburg Foundation, WG Board; Patty Alper, Alper Portfolio Group

The Voice of Philanthropy

WG speaks out to help grantmakers achieve BIG change, and broadcasts the purpose and achievements of organized philanthropy to the public.

Beyond Dollars - WG began 2010 where 2009 left off, showing numerous audiences that funders have more to offer than their dollars. In the *Washington Post*, *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, and more, Tamara Lucas Copeland explained how funders were finding new ways of achieving local impact, while making changes to keep critical funds flowing where needed.

Member Profiles - To mark International Corporate Philanthropy day, WG launched a new series to put a face on members' work and better illustrate philanthropy's role in the community.

Advocacy - WG's convening groups were tremendous advocates for their causes in the first half of 2010:

- The Washington AIDS Partnership's **Profiles Project**, about HIV/AIDS in DC's suburbs, received extensive media coverage. Local officials took issue with certain findings, but some came out in support of the report's recommendations.
- The Community Development Support Collaborative's letter to the DC Council, along with advocacy from CDSC's nonprofit partners, resulted in an additional \$3.7 million for various affordable housing initiatives.
- Local arts advocates cited WG's Arts and Humanities Working Group's WG Daily series ("Essential. Integral. Intrinsic") in their efforts to retain arts funding.

Communications - Finally, WG has begun convening communications staff from WG members focused on the DC region to find ways to reinforce each others work.

We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming Washington Grantmakers event. If you have a question, comment, or suggestion please let us know.

Thank you for your support in 2010.

