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.

**Building True Partnerships**

**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.

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**

**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.

**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.
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.
Please let us know how we can better support you. Thank you for your support in 2010.