

4 Foundations Recognized for Aiding the Needy and Minorities

By Caroline Preston

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Four grant makers—the Woods Fund of Chicago, the California Community Foundation, and the Novo and Levi Strauss foundations—today received the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy’s inaugural awards for creativity and leadership in giving.

The prizes, called the Impact Awards, are an attempt by the left-leaning watchdog group, typically a critic of foundations, to “lift up and celebrate grant makers who are leading by example and practicing the kind of philanthropy that really prioritizes and empowers those with the least wealth and opportunity,” said Aaron Dorfman, executive director.

Mr. Dorfman cited some of the reasons the winners were recognized:

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The California Community Foundation “really stands out” among community foundations for its support of groups that are led by, and work with, minorities.

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The Levi Strauss Foundation is “rare among corporate foundations” for its explicit support of social-justice groups. The foundation makes grants to fight HIV/AIDS, promote farmworker’s rights, and support causes that champion people who are sometimes marginalized.

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The Novo Foundation works to improve the lives of women and girls. Its financial support was a “contributing factor in the recent reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.”

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The Woods Fund of Chicago supports groups that advance immigration rights and fight poverty. Some of its grantees played a role in recent legislation in Illinois that allows undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers' licenses.

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