

For Immediate Release

Report Shows that Foundation Giving in 4 Southern States

Generated \$4.7 Billion in Results for Impoverished Communities

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National watchdog group praises region's nonprofit organizations

For advocacy and organizing despite limited resources.

Washington, D.C. (5/10/2011) **Advocacy by nonprofit organizations over a five-year period has brought more than \$4.7 billion in benefits to low-wage workers and families and other neglected populations, according to a new study commissioned by the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, released today.**

The report titled “Strengthening Democracy, Increasing Opportunities: Impacts of Advocacy, Organizing and Civic Engagement in the Gulf/Midsouth Region” describes and monetizes [\[y1\]](#) the impact of 20 advocacy and community organizing groups from Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi between 2005-2009.

For every dollar invested in the policy and civic engagement activities of the 20 nonprofits, there was a return of \$114 in benefits to local communities, the report calculates. These benefits were in the form of higher wages, new affordable housing and other accomplishments benefitting poor families, people with disabilities and other underserved communities.

“This report shows the tremendous benefit that these organizations bring to communities in the Gulf/Midsouth region,” said Aaron Dorfman, executive director of NCRP. “These organizations, along with their allies and supporters, have made a real difference in people’s lives.”

The nonprofit organizations featured in the report are:

Alabama:

- Center for Fair Housing (Mobile)

- Equal Justice Initiative (Montgomery)
- Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (Montgomery)
- Greene/Sumpter Enterprise Community, Inc. (Livingston)
- Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (Birmingham)

Arkansas:

- Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families (Little Rock)
- Arkansas for Public Policy Panel (Little Rock)
- Center for Artistic Revolution (Little Rock)
- Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center (Springdale)
- Rural Community Alliance (Fox)

Louisiana

- Family & Youth Counseling Agency (Lake Charles)
- Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (New Orleans)
- Louisiana Bucket Brigade (New Orleans)
- Southern Mutual Help Association (New Iberia)
- Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association of New Orleans (New Orleans)

Mississippi

- Children's Defense Fund (Jackson)
- Concerned Citizens for a Better Tunica County (Tunica)

- Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities (Jackson)
- Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative (Jackson)
- Southern Echo (Jackson)

The report was written for NCRP by Frontline Solutions, a national social change consulting group based in Philadelphia, Pa.

The data show that the total amount spent on advocacy and organizing across the 20 groups over five years was \$41.9 million. Foundations provided more than 75 percent of funding for these efforts.

Citizens in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi also benefited from policy changes that cannot be translated into dollars, including minority and immigrant rights and policies protecting communities from environmental harm.

Poverty levels in all four states are higher than the national average and a majority of their populations lives in rural areas. Many nonprofits work on a shoestring budget. Yet, these groups

used innovative strategies such as developing partnerships and coalitions, training diverse community leaders and combining advocacy with providing direct services to get results.

“The nonprofits were resourceful and effective in the face of serious challenges,” said Marcus Littles, founder of Frontline Solutions. “They demonstrated a striking depth of civic engagement that has helped the region’s citizens fight poverty, inequality and injustice.”

Philanthropic assets in the region are among the lowest in the country. And many out-of-state funders don’t think of the Gulf/Midsouth as a good place to invest their grant dollars.

“These nonprofits are doing amazing work with so few resources to make positive change in their communities. This report is a wakeup call to funders that investing in civic engagement leads to substantial community change,” said Sherece West, president and CEO of the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation in Little Rock. “Imagine what they can accomplish if we can give them more to work with.”

Frontline Solutions and NCRP offer four recommendations for foundations interested in effective grantmaking in the region: build the region’s advocacy and organizing infrastructure; invest in organizations working in rural communities; invest in the organizing potential of a strong constituency, such as immigrants or the disabled; and support organizations with people of color in executive and board leadership positions.

“Strengthening Democracy, Increasing Opportunities: Impacts of Advocacy, Organizing, and Community Engagement in Pennsylvania” is available on NCRP’s website at <http://www.ncrp.org/campaigns-research-policy/communities/gcip/gulf-midsouth>

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The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy in Washington, D.C., is a national watchdog, research and advocacy organization that promotes philanthropy that serves the public good, is responsive to people and communities with the least wealth and opportunity, and is held accountable to the highest standards of integrity and openness.

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NATIONAL FUNDERS

Abelard Foundation - East

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

ASC Foundation (suspended grantmaking)

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

Belvedere Fund of the Rockefeller

Family Fund

Ben and Jerry's Foundation

Bernard van Leer Foundation

(international, based in The Hague)

Birth to Five Police Alliance

Catholic Campaign for Human

Development

Charles Stuart Mott Foundation

Colin Higgins Foundation (suspended

grantmaking)

The David and Lucile Packard

Foundation

Edward W. Hazen Foundation

Environmental Support Center

Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr., Fund

The F. B. Heron Foundation

Ford Foundation

French American Charitable Trust

Funders Collaborative on Youth

Organizing

Funding Exchange

Great American Insurance Group

The Hearst Foundations

Hill-Snowdon Foundation

JEHT Foundation (no longer exists)

Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation

The John D. and Catherine T.

MacArthur Foundation

The Kresge Foundation

Liberty Hill Queer Youth Fund

Marguerite Casey Foundation

Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger

The McKay Foundation

Ms. Foundation for Women

The Needmor Fund

Norman Foundation

Open Meadows Foundation

Open Society Foundations

The Patagonia Foundation

Peace Development Fund

Peppercorn Foundation

The Pew Charitable Trusts

(Pre-K Now)

Pfizer Health Solutions/

Pfizer Foundation

Public Welfare Foundation

RESIST

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Stoneman Family Foundation

Surdna Foundation

Tides Foundation

Twenty-First Century Foundation

Unitarian Universalist Service

Committee

United Church of Christ

W. K. Kellogg Foundation

The Walton Family Foundation

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REGIONAL FUNDERS

(fund in at least two of the four states)

Foundation for the Mid South

Greensboro Justice Fund

Gulf Coast Funders for Equity

Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation

The McKnight Foundation

Southern Partners Fund

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Alabama Funders

Black Belt Community Foundation

United Way of Central Alabama

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Arkansas Funders

Arkansas Community Foundation

Arkansas Black Hall of Fame

Foundation

Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier

Arkansas

Fred Darragh Foundation

The Harvey and Bernice Jones

Charitable Trust

Munro Foundation

Nathan Dalton Whetstone

Endowment

Riggs Benevolent Fund

Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation

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Louisiana Funders

Greater New Orleans Foundation

Louisiana Disaster Recovery

Foundation

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Mississippi Funders

Magnolia Health Plan

Women's Fund of Mississippi

[\[y1\]](#) “attaches a dollar value” is a mouthful and a bit awkward.

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<https://www.ncrp.org/1766-strengthening-democracy-increasing-opportunities>