Advancing Racial Equity in Communities:
Lessons for Philanthropy
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Executive Summary

Community leaders and their funders want to increase opportunities for families and help create better neighborhoods, cities and regions. They are finding success in using the lens of structural racism to examine the causes of chronic gaps in income, wealth, education, housing, employment and criminal justice. With this analysis, leaders can address the fundamental conditions that lead to racially disparate outcomes. Structural racism "emphasizes the powerful impact of inter-institutional dynamics, institutional resource inequities, and historical legacies on racial inequality today. Because Americans often take individual people to be the main vehicles of racism, we fail to appreciate the work done by racially inequitable structures. But, in fact, all complex societies feature institutional arrangements that help to create and distribute the society's benefits, burdens and interests… In confronting racism we must similarly count for multiple, intersecting and often mutually reinforcing disadvantages, and develop corresponding response strategies." [1]

> The lessons for philanthropy offer roles for both national and local foundations:
>
> 1. Make a commitment for the long haul
> 2. Educate board and staff
> 3. Encourage multiple funding streams for projects
> 4. Use personal connections
> 5. Be willing to take some heat
> 6. Document best demonstrated practices
> 7. Share what has been learned
> 8. Bring the leaders together
> 9. Build and sustain the infrastructure of technical support, research and peer learning that supports the community-level work

All of the community leaders interviewed for this report are developing strategies that seek to change public policies and institutional practices by educating community members and leaders, examining the current conditions and the power dynamics in their communities, and building coalitions that advocate for specific solutions to identified racial inequities. Most of the community leaders interviewed for this report attended the Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society. This four day seminar provides participants with a deep understanding of structural racism and offers tools that help them identify the steps they need to take to bring change to their communities.

This field of structural racism would not exist without the support of philanthropy. The Ford Foundation, Annie E. Casey, Mott Foundation, Kellogg Foundation and others have funded the academic research that led to an understanding of structural racism and they continue to support the infrastructure that provides technical support, learning opportunities and encouragement to those working in the field. Community foundations have provided significant long term support to lead organizations within their communities so that these organizations can build their capacity to manage complex projects with many actors.

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[1] Andrew Grant-Thomas and john a. powell, _Toward a Structural Racism Framework_, Poverty & Race, November/December 2006

This report, which was commissioned by the Ford Foundation, looks at ongoing work to address structural racism in five communities. It explores key elements of effective programs, the infrastructure needed at a national level, and the role of philanthropy in supporting this work. The lessons for philanthropy offer roles for both national and local foundations:

- Make a commitment for the long haul because changes in public policy will take time and they must be monitored once they are implemented
- Look internally by educating board and staff and looking at institutional policies
- Encourage projects to seek multiple funding streams including a strong commitment from local partners for project implementation
- Use personal connections to bring the leaders in the community to the table
- Be willing to take some heat when talking about this sensitive subject in America
- Document and share best demonstrated practices so that more community leaders learn about strategies that work
- Bring the leaders together so that they can learn from each other and build supportive networks
- Build and sustain the infrastructure of technical assistance, research and peer learning that supports the community-level work

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to share the experiences from five communities as they have begun to address racial inequities and show how philanthropy can encourage and support community members and leaders in this process.

To gather a broad view, very different organizations were selected. These differences include geographical location, their organizational structure, their approach to addressing inequities, and the specific areas in which they have begun to make a difference. Two communities continue to benefit from the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change through its seminars and peer learning opportunities. An aim of this publication was to identify any commonalities related to process, approach and challenges across these diverse organizations.

Research Process

Telephone interviews focused on the history of the projects, including leadership, partners, funding and impacts to date. These interviews explored the barriers organizations have faced and what lessons they might share with other communities and with foundations. These brief notes introduce the interviews, while longer case studies may be found in Appendix A.

Lois Carson, Executive Director of **Community Action Partnership Riverside County, California**, has worked on civil rights and racial equity all her life. When she had a chance to bring a team from Riverside, California to an Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society she saw it as a logical next step in her work. Following the Seminar, the Riverside team has conducted community meetings to educate the public about structural racism and targeted inequities in access to quality child care.

Oscar Chavez is the Executive Director of **Community Action Partnership Sonoma County (California)**. His organization was motivated by its need to serve a changing clientele and a desire to benefit from diversity within this organization.

John Edwards is the Executive Director of **Northeast Florida Community Action Agency**. His organization is focused on black male joblessness. Mr. Edwards attended the Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society with other teams led by community action agencies around the country. The Community Foundation in Jacksonville, OneJax, the

> **Another valuable research study is** *Lessons Learned: How Communities Address Racial Inequities* by Maggie Potapchuk which gathers lessons from fifty-eight comprehensive community initiatives that address racism. Key findings from the survey that offer insights on how philanthropy can support these communities include:
> - *Institutional Supports in the Community.* One is local leaders (elected, institutional, and grassroots) who served as messengers and supporters of the effort (69%). The second is having local organizations or groups that played one of two roles—either addressing race in some capacity (via programs, research, or discussions) (62%); or convening diverse stakeholders (66%).
> - *Involvement of Key Sectors.* Nonprofits, faith groups, and government were consistently more involved in community initiatives in all three roles – leader, supporter, and participant – than any other sector. Government ranked as the top sector in leadership roles for communities whose population is 300,000 or less, while nonprofits ranked as the top sector in leadership roles for those with populations of 300,001 or more. Local foundations (66%) and corporations (46%) took the lead in the "supporter" role. At the same time, however, local foundations were ranked in the bottom three for their participation in program activities. Real estate businesses, housing organizations, criminal justice, and economic development organizations were typically less involved overall in CCIRs than any other sectors.
> - *Leadership Roles.* Over half of respondents (52%) said the leaders were nonprofit organizations and/or leaders and local elected leaders (e.g., mayors, county executives, city councils).
> - *Budgets and Funding.* Initiatives with foundations as the institutional entity had significantly larger budgets ($542,500) compared to other institutional entities' average budgets by institutional entity: government – $38,750, leadership group – $60,666, coalition – $176,116, and nonprofits – $201,549.
> - *Interest in Learning Networks.* 83% of the survey respondents would be interested in joining a learning network, and 12% *may* be interested.

Jacksonville Human Rights Commission, and the Northeast Florida Community Action Agency are all participating in the city-wide Project Breakthrough that aims to change the story of race in Jacksonville.

Elaine Gross is President of **ERASE Racism**. The Long Island Community Foundation served as an incubator for three years and in 2004 ERASE Racism was formed, focusing on fair housing, public school education and health care. Their first big win was getting two new laws passed related to fair housing. Monitoring of the impact of this work continues as ERASE Racism also focuses on public school education and health care.

Julie Nelson, Director of Seattle's Office for Civil Rights, leads the **Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)** in Seattle's City Government. The initial focus has been on increasing city employees' knowledge, skills and commitment to a government free of institutionalized racism and to transforming the city's business practices to align with race and social justice goals. The Initiative has recently expanded to include the goal of eliminating race-based disparities in the community, in partnership with other institutions and the community.

- Racial equity must be a central goal of the work because people of color are so disproportionately harmed by racialized public policies, institutional practices and cultural representations.
- Capacity building among change agents must be emphasized because these organizations need to reach sufficient scale to make a significant dent in socioeconomic or racial inequity.
- Key public policies and institutional practices that need reform must be identified and the alliances that have the power to change them must be developed.
- Popular assumptions that work to reproduce the status quo must be countered so that racial hierarchy is not sustained.

Nina Waters is President of **The Community Foundation in Jacksonville**. The Community Foundation's focus has been to educate community leaders about structural racism and build an organization that could be the convener for Jacksonville's leaders as they design and implement initiatives to end racial inequities.

Other Research

In addition to a more in-depth look at these communities, a scan of the wider field was conducted. This brief scan identified over 50 organizations that are working to help end structural racism. These organizations tended to focus on one or more of the following areas: education and child care, health care, housing, employment and business development, criminal justice system, and public policy, to help promote racial equity. Defining structural racism and associated terms, and explaining why structural racism is detrimental, was very important to all the organizations to help build a common background and work toward consensus and understanding. These organizations found that discussions and intentional thinking about the issues were two of the most relevant factors in beginning the work of addressing racial inequities.

Particularly important for this report were two papers from Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change. *Community Change Processes and Progress in Addressing Racial*

Inequities, written by Maggie Potapchuk in October 2007, provided rich background for two of the interview sites and presented valuable conclusions about the field. Cross-cutting themes and ideas on what we still need to know from Potapchuk's research will be referenced in this paper. *Structural Racism and Community Building,* published by Aspen Institute in June 2004, makes the case for why race needs to be factored into the analysis of the causes of problems social change agents are addressing. The concluding section of this document explains what race-consciousness means for those who aim to make enduring changes in their communities and these have been reinforced by the interviews:

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Structural Racism Work in the Five Communities

Distinctions of Working on Structural or Institutional Racism

The five communities the author interviewed for this report are seeking enduring changes in their community. These community leaders recognized that racially disparate outcomes were harming all community members and they sought to understand and change the causes of these persistent inequities. Addressing this institutional and structural racism meant focusing on the levers of change, not addressing every incident of racism. This is quite different than diversity training or human/civil rights advocacy. The interviews and research point to several distinctions about structural racism work.

- Understanding, educating others and addressing structural or institutional racism needs to be led by a significant community institution or government.   On the other hand, a community member or small community organization could take the lead on diversity training or advocacy focused on a more narrow issue.

- Effective work to address structural or institutional racism requires multiple partners – or levels of government – to make headway.

- A project addressing structural or institutional racism requires a convener that has the reputation and clout in the community to bring people to the table.

- Partners need to be educated in structural/institutional racism, not just diversity training. In fact, people who have spent a lot of time talking about diversity may complain that they are weary of the subject and discouraged by the lack of progress. They come to the structural racism work already frustrated and exhausted from earlier projects.

- The convening organization should not feel responsible to respond publicly to every racial incident that occurs in the community. ERASE Racism, for example, is careful not to answer media requests for statements like this, because it would waste its own political capital and possibly its institutional allies. Race and Social Justice Initiative in Seattle did not publicly respond to an initiative that city voters passed ending affirmative action in employment and contracting. Instead its members asked themselves what internal policies had disproportionate impacts based on race and worked to change the specific policies. They worked to address the underlying causes of racially inequitable contracting and employment.

> Participants at the Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society are introduced to a Racial Equity Theory of Change. This tool isolates three critical elements for special attention – policies and institutions, cultural representations, and self-sustaining power dynamics - and helps community leaders narrow their focus to outcomes that they can impact, and then identify the individual/institutional supports and obstacles they must address. With this list in hand, project leaders have a good sense of who must be at the table if they are to be successful.

Engaging Partners

All sites agree that engaging partners is critical, but they took different routes to accomplish this.

Jacksonville wanted to get the top leaders in its community trained about structural racism and committed to a citywide project. They were building on decades of studies about racial disparities in Jacksonville. So The Community Foundation in Jacksonville hosted an Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society that 27 leaders attended. Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change is still an active partner in Jacksonville as it works with these leaders to identify and implement a range of projects, each of which addresses one aspect of racial inequity.

On the other end, Community Action Partnership Sonoma County began internally and focused on the issues that would improve its ability to serve an increasing Latino community. As it became clear that the challenges were larger than the organization could address, it engaged with civic leaders, the local hospital and various industry leaders to improve health and health care access for the Latino community. As these leaders moved into a longer range strategic plan, they asked Moody's to do research on the economic impact of a series of changes they might make to strengthen the community as a whole. When the results came back they showed that improving education outcomes for Latino youth would have the greatest effect on the community economy. This had the best return on investment. Without the earlier work, this strategy might not have even been on the list of interventions.

ERASE Racism found that its natural partners on fair housing were not working to change racial inequities because its focus was on advocacy related to individual grievances. ERASE Racism conducted thorough research about fair housing enforcement at federal, state, county and municipal levels on Long Island and, out of this, identified specific policy changes that were needed. It succeeded in building a coalition of groups to press for these changes. ERASE Racism also has a large constituency of citizens that has been very critical to getting policy changes enacted. ERASE Racism provides ongoing training to its many allies through *Unraveling Racism Training,*

Community Action Partnership Riverside County, CA holds public meetings to educate community members in several counties about white privilege and racial equity.   The Code of Conduct for these "Big View" Meetings includes:
1. Let us treat everyone with respect
2. Let us keep an open mind
3. Let us search for consensus
4. Let us not interrupt others
5. Let us strive for honesty
6. Let us refrain from personal attacks
7. Let us share personal stories for enlightenment
8. Let us search for new ways to discuss race intellectually
9. Let us recruit groups to host Big View meetings

developed and sponsored by ERASE Racism and Cultural Bridges to Justice, and specific *Race and Racism Dialogues* that ERASE Racism staff and partners develop[2].

The City of Seattle built a network within city government that started with the mayor at the top and includes representatives from all of the city's 25 departments. The Initiative was designed to focus on city government and its business practices first before moving into communities. Plans for 2009 - 2010 include reaching out to interested community groups and community foundations that want to better understand institutional racism in their own organizations.

Finally, each site needed to look at who was at the table in terms of age, sex and ethnicity as well as role in the community.   Sites looked around the room and often saw a predominance of middle aged white women.

Peggy McIntosh offers a list of the Daily Effects of White Privilege in her article, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.* She emphasizes that "As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage." Recognizing the advantages brought about by skin color helps us move our understanding of racism beyond individual behavior or good intentions to the social systems that create this environment.

Ongoing Training and Education

Addressing structural racism requires partners who have a common understanding of terms, history and community conditions disaggregated by race. The organizations that were interviewed either found or developed training that met their goals and continue to train their expanding pool of partners.   One interviewee said that you want to be sure your partners are not going to stab you in the back when the issues get tough. She sees education as the way to have her partners understand the deep-rooted issues and be ready to take the heat as they try to change entrenched policies and practices.

A recurring challenge is that people can get caught up in training and do not move on to action. Some people prefer to spend time learning and are hesitant or fearful to take action. Also, training programs do not always include a clear path that leads people beyond their discussions toward an assessment of what steps to take to advance racial equity and how to get them done. Each of these sites modified their training to be sure that it would lead to action.

Training must include concrete examples of the impact of structural racism on people of color, of white privilege, and of the opportunities for change. If all three are not there, people may miss the systemic element, may not see their place in this system, and may feel guilty and discouraged rather than eager to work toward change.

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[2] The Unraveling Racism Training is a two-day program focused on understanding racism and other forms of oppression. These seminars allow people to get a much deeper understanding of what racism is and how it manifests itself. It is a very interactive program, and the feedback ERASE Racism gets is extremely positive. The Race and Racism dialogues address issues for specific groups and organizations and focus on links between policy changes and racial equity issues.

White Privilege

All the organizations talk about white privilege in their training, but they know they are walking a careful line. There must be enough clarity that people see the need for action without pushing people to be defensive. Following a meeting where people from different races were sharing their experiences, two white men were heard saying that they would just scream if they heard one more African American woman talk about slavery or one more Jewish man talk about the Holocaust. Before we rush to judgment about this attitude, we need to remember that these men came to the Study Circle[3] meetings hosted by the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission willingly and probably want to see conditions change. They just do not want to feel guilty about things they cannot change.

In Seattle, institutional racism is defined as programs and policies work to the benefit of whites and the detriment of people of color. They do not talk about individual racial incidents in the capacity building training. In parallel, however, they have key change agents throughout city government to work with city employees to explore the individual internalized messages they have heard and believe.

In 2005, a team from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation attended the Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society. The Foundation wanted to find ways to build bridges across a very segregated city with a leadership that did not reflect its demographics and could not get business done effectively without more connections across race. Following the Seminar, the Foundation began the Mosaic Partnerships Program. In its fourth year, the Milwaukee Mosaic Partnerships Program pairs leaders of the community across race and/or ethnicity and guides them through a nine-month process of relationship, understanding, and trust building. According to Doug Jannson, President and CEO of Greater Milwaukee Foundation, evaluation data is very positive and alumni are looking for further opportunities to maintain their relationships. One example of the impact of this program is that the Foundation now requires its grantees to have boards that are representative of the communities they serve. Before participating in the Mosaic Program most Foundation Board members did not think there were people of color who could fill these board seats. Now they know this is not true and they help applicants connect with potential Board members.

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[3] Study circles are voluntary, self-organizing adult education groups of 5-20 people who meet three to six times to explore a subject, often a critical social issue. Each meeting commonly lasts 2-3 hours and is directed by a moderator whose role is to aid a lively but focused dialogue. Between meetings participants read materials they were given at the end of the last meeting. These materials are used as springboards for dialogue, not as authoritative conclusions. The materials are usually compiled by the sponsor or organizer of the particular study circle; but groups who want to form a study circle on a particular topic can create their own materials or get ready-to-use packs from organizations like Everyday Democracy.

By encouraging people to formulate their own ideas about issues and to share them with others, the study circle process helps overcome people's lack of information and feelings of inadequacy in the face of complex problems. Community study circle programs with many circles on, for example, race relations often conclude with a large open-space-like gathering in which community members connect up with each other around common interest and planned activities for later.

Study circles, being small, democratic and non-expert, can be adapted to virtually any use. Civic organizations, activists, businesses, unions, churches, discussion groups and governments can all sponsor (and have sponsored) study circles to educate and activate people about social issues. Millions of citizens use study circles.
From The Co-Intelligence Institute

Leadership

Every site saw the need for a significant investment in a convening organization. The role might vary a bit, but it always includes:
- A clear vision and plan for change
- Keeping the various pieces moving toward a longer term vision
- Being the hub for the many partnerships
- Assessing, developing and running training programs
- Identifying and convening the leaders who can make change happen
- Celebrating success

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The convening organization also has to create an urgency for the work, while understanding that it is long term work. Achieving results is very important if you want to maintain commitment from partners and the wider community.

Leadership Skills

The individuals leading these projects have a challenging task. To stay on track, they want support through the hard times and they want to learn from each other. Seven Community Action Agency project teams gather twice a year to support each other and offer ideas to address roadblocks. All participants in the Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society are part of Aspen's online Peer Learning Forum and Aspen is continuing to explore other ways to connect these pioneers addressing structural racism.

Several characteristics and skills of effective leaders were identified in the interviews:
- Systemic and analytic vision
- Knowledge of the fundamentals of structural racism and ability to share them
- Ability to build a deep and wide foundation without slowing down so there is no action
- Ability to articulate structural and institutional racism to the greater public in ways that achieve the public's acceptance, understanding and action to eliminate structural racism
- Knowledge of how to educate the media
- Ability to keep a low profile and not respond to every incident
- Patience to stay the course

Building Organizational Capacity

Incubating a new organization or developing capacity in an existing organization required significant investments. The Community Foundation in Jacksonville is providing three years of support to OneJax so that they can build the infrastructure to continue this work for the long haul. The City of Seattle developed action teams that included the leaders as well as representatives from all government agencies.

Project Design

Projects need to be both top down and bottom up. They need to include the community leaders who can make the changes as well as a broad coalition of people who will "advocate up" for the changes. These projects all emphasized the need for organizational and community leaders to be visibly supportive and active in implementation as well as program design.

Research forms the baseline for program design and helps to build a coalition that is ready to make change. ERASE Racism conducted research on fair housing. Sonoma County worked with Moody's to study the impact of addressing educational disparities. Seattle assessed how city services benefited and affected different racial groups. Jacksonville has done numerous studies about racial disparities in the community.

Projects must be designed to have some successes in the first couple of years. Without this, people lose steam.

Projects need to identify the issues that people want to work on and get those people behind big policy changes. Everything cannot be tackled at once, even with the understanding that the issues are interlocking. But, it is important to have more than one ball in the air. There are areas where you can move and areas where you may be stymied and these cannot be clearly identified before you start the work.

Once policy is changed, the implementation must be tracked. This may be less interesting to citizens and funders, but it is the only way to be sure that the changes really happen.

Institutional changes need to go deep and be thorough. Seattle uses a racial equity lens to review all budget items. Some program directors could not see the link between their work and issues of racial equity at first, but the link to the budget encouraged them to look deeper. The Race and Social Justice Initiative provided criteria for best practices so that departments had a guide as they gained experience with the Budget and Policy Filter. These criteria included expanding opportunity and access as well as promoting collaboration and civic engagement. Linking racial equity and budgeting has made an enormous statement about how important race and social justice are to the city.

Media

When fighting people with power it is critical to have the media on your side or you will be marginalized. Media need to know what the terms you use mean and then they can help build an understanding of racial equity. Providing materials that offer clear definitions and examples makes the reporter's job much easier.

Media help make the root causes of racial disparities visible to the public through the telling of personalized stories so that the larger community can see the importance of transforming the structures. Media also help educate the public, advocate for social change, and share progress made.

Funding

For two of these sites, the project would never have happened without funding, resources, connections and commitment from the board and staff of the community foundation. These community foundations have stayed the course for years and are seeing results.

Racial Equity and Economic Security (REES) is a two year project supported by a $300,000 grant from the Ford Foundation. Seven REES sites, led by Community Action Agencies and coordinated by the Community Action Partnership, are implementing multi-year projects. Ford Foundation funding has been leveraged with over $600,000 raised from Community Action Agencies and their partners, including government, universities, community foundations and social service organizations. In addition, three sites are using a total of $1,400,000 in 2009 Recovery Bill funds to explore models and implement programs.

Another site benefited from Ford Foundation funding to get the project started and provide ongoing technical support, but continues its project work through local support. Lois Carson, Executive Director of Community Action Partnership of Riverside County, credits Ford Foundation and the Aspen Institute with introducing her to the concept of structural racism. In her presentations to other Community Action Agencies, she emphasizes how much can be done with very little money, once you have the knowledge to talk about structural racism confidently. Her agency co-hosts meetings around its county with various religious, government and social service organizations. These meetings need a small budget for promotion and for snacks, but the promotion is usually through organizational newsletters and the local newspaper and the snacks are inexpensive. Carson wants people to look at what they can do with a little bit of money. She has seen that these meetings build the partnerships that provide funding and in-kind support for research and project implementation.

For Seattle, its Initiative has been fully funded by the city and this support is continuing through the current recession. As the Initiative moves beyond city government, projects in neighborhoods will require philanthropic support.

Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County's work on internal diversity continues to be funded internally. The Agency does not see this work as a separate project, but rather part of its cost of doing business. County-wide projects benefit from data gathering from County Departments and support from external consultants.

Lessons for Philanthropy

1. Make a commitment for the long haul

The experience of all these communities is that it takes years to build the basis for a successful project. Educating leaders and community members is key. Research is needed to identify and support needed policy changes and these changes must be monitored to determine how successful implementation is. At each stage, outcomes should be measured and successes celebrated, but community impact takes years.

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In response to a presentation on racial inequity and institutional racism, the Long Island Community Foundation determined that it was appropriate for them to be a catalyst in exploring and addressing this issue and incubated ERASE Racism for three years. ERASE Racism has been very successful on the fair housing issue and has educated and engaged hundreds of citizens in advocacy for these changes. Even so, fundraising for this work is definitely challenging. Part of this is a result of the economic times, part of it may be their suburban location, but it also may say something about how hard it is to maintain excitement, and thus funding, for a long term community change project.

2. Look internally

> Philanthropic institutions must think intentionally about racism – looking at all programs with a focus on racial equity. Institutions must also help their grantors analyze their own work from that perspective. People need to be given the opportunity to discuss and share their stories and see where these individual experiences lead them and their organizations and communities.

If philanthropic institutions are serious about racial equity, they will need to train their board and staff. This is not simply diversity training, but the hard work of understanding structural racism and the impact of the institution's policies and procedures on people of color. In short, they must address any structural or institutional racism within their own organization before having the confidence and credibility to support such work at others.

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Elaine Gross has been hired as a consultant to the Long Island Community Foundation as a voice at board meetings to help board members recognize issues that have structural racism implications. It takes real commitment to have someone who is "in your business" in this way.

3. Projects benefit from multiple funding streams

National and international foundations continue to provide key support for the infrastructure that undergirds community work. This includes ongoing research, tool development, communication strategies, technical assistance, and peer learning and networking. The experience of the Racial Equity and Economic Security (REES) project illustrates this well. The Ford Foundation provided funding and offered suggestions for speakers so that the Community Action Network as a whole could be introduced to structural racism. Through Ford Foundation funding, the REES sites were trained at the Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society. With this knowledge and training, the site teams have been able to raise the funds they need through local sources to conduct their projects.

> A community foundation can take the lead in bringing the lens of structural racism to discussions about social justice. It can identify and engage the key leaders as partners in a long journey toward racial equity. It can provide years of support so that the lead community organization builds sufficient capacity to be able to manage a complex project, train an expanding pool of partners, conduct research to support action, and advocate for policy change.

Community foundations are an excellent philanthropic channel for support of racial equity work in their own communities. A community foundation can take the lead in bringing the lens of structural racism to discussions about social justice. It can identify and engage the key leaders as partners in a long journey toward racial equity. It can provide years of support so that the lead community organization builds sufficient capacity to be able to manage a complex project, train an expanding pool of partners, conduct research to support action, and advocate for policy change.

> Board and staff members of community foundations can call leaders who may be hesitant to engage in the project and tell them why it is important to participate.

An important lesson from all the sites is that funding should come from many sources. While philanthropy is a very important one, the process of raising financial and in-kind support is a critical step in coalition building. The Community Foundation in Jacksonville has provided multi-year support to OneJax for capacity building, but the projects that are being designed and implemented under the broad umbrella of Project Breakthrough are supported by universities, social service organizations, various levels of government and individuals. The Community Foundation has put its dollars into effective city-wide coordination and the engagement and education of a wide spectrum of partners.

4. Use personal connections

Board and staff members of community foundations and other philanthropic institutions know the important leaders in their community. They can call leaders who may be hesitant to engage in the project and tell them why it is important to participate.

Philanthropic institutions can bring together a wide range of leaders to learn together. The Community Foundation in Jacksonville hosted an Aspen Seminar on Racial Equity and Society for 27 leaders in the community. The Mayor, Sheriff, Superintendent of Schools, elected officials from City Council and the School Board, college, nonprofit and business CEOs and other leaders devoted several days, without their PDAs and phones, to learning about structural racism. These leaders are now working in their separate fields, collaborating to implement projects that address specific racial inequities in the community.

5. Be willing to take some heat

Talking about race openly and honestly in America is going to spark controversy. This is the only way to get to a substantive discussion that allows people to air their doubts and concerns. In Seattle, the Race and Social Justice Initiative offers training to all employees. One tool that these trainings include is to use caucuses for each racial group during a training session. Within these groups, people react to what has been going on and prepare their message for the others. This allows people to express their feelings in a safe, familiar environment and work within their group to find ways to express themselves that can be heard and lead to change.

Specific areas where learning and tools should be shared are:
- Effective, inexpensive collection and analysis of data at the community level
- Engaging the media
- Targeting audiences and crafting appropriate messages
- Engaging partners
- Engaging community members in setting the goals and data collection itself
- Motivating community members to lobby for policy changes
- Multipronged strategies that have short term successes and work toward long term outcomes

6. Document best demonstrated practices

Community members and leaders hit a wall when they move from training on structural racism to implementation of a plan to reduce racial inequities. The tasks are large and the opposition can be daunting -- all the more reason to develop and disseminate effective tools and to offer web-based tools for support and collaboration.

Specific areas where learning and tools should be shared are:
- Effective, inexpensive collection and analysis of data at the community level
- Engaging the media
- Targeting audiences and crafting appropriate messages

- Engaging partners
- Engaging community members in setting the goals and data collection itself
- Motivating community members to lobby for policy changes
- Multipronged strategies that have short term successes and work toward long term outcomes

7. Sharing what has been learned

National foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, have been instrumental in developing the structural racism model so that it is well-supported with thorough policy analysis. This is a first step toward change. The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change and others are offering training and providing opportunities for learning among their alumni. The challenge is to get the learning out to community-based organizations.

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One approach is to develop toolkits or operations guides specific for certain types of organizations that can be disseminated through their national networks. These are the networks through which these organizations generally have access to new ideas. It is a mistake to think that a project can be replicated step by step in another community, but there are key questions, steps that must be taken, and hazards to avoid that can be documented. The Community Action Network is beginning to share best practices and tools through its monthly magazine, its website, and workshops at well-attended bi-annual Community Action Partnership conferences and conventions. In addition, various distance learning strategies might be employed, including synchronous online workshops, "webinars", interactive video conferencing via the internet, and others. Eventually, a portal at the Network may need to replace the current website.

8. Bring the leaders together

There is a relatively small group of leading institutions and community leaders in this field. Some are identified in this paper. They could expand their knowledge and move the field forward if they were able to gather and share their learning. Building a community of practice and/or holding a national convening could be powerful ways to strengthen the field.

On a smaller scale, national demonstration projects that offer peer learning and regular gatherings for site teams are already moving the field forward.

> Any effort to bring the insights of structural racism to significant national scale requires both community-based work and capacity building for the wider field.

9. Build and sustain the infrastructure of technical support, research and peer learning that supports the community-level work

Any effort to bring the insights of structural racism to significant national scale requires both community-based work and capacity building for the wider field. The focus of this paper is not on reaching this national scale, but to do so would require a critical mass of activity in communities around the country as well as connections across these sites. The organizations that form the infrastructure for this field are offering training, access to technical support, ongoing research and gathering of lessons learned, and links to reports, tools and processes that pave the way for communities as they begin their work. One of them, the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change is exploring new communication alleys with blogs, Facebook and Twitter that would enhance Seminar alumni's work and their learning.

Key Elements of Effective Projects

1. Be sure the project goes deep in the organization

Racial equity outcomes should be a central goal of the lead organization, not just one program among many. The lead organizations must continue to use structural racism as a lens to review its own policies and procedures. Governments and larger institutions also need to look at all their policies and programs and ask how they contribute to ending racial inequities. The City of Seattle brings this lens to all budget decisions and this is a strong reinforcement that the City's leadership cares about racial and social justice. The Long Island Community Foundation has reviewed and modified its hiring and grantmaking procedures and is planning *Unraveling Racism Training* for all its employees.

> A shared understanding of key terms and the history and root causes that have led to racial inequities is necessary for developing and prioritizing strategies.

2. Build the capacity of community-based organizations

There is not necessarily an existing organization that can fill the convening role. Finding the lead organization has not always been easy. The Long Island Community Foundation incubated ERASE Racism to lead the work in the two counties on Long Island. The Community Foundation in Jacksonville knew that it would not be able to create lasting change without a local partner to lead the work.

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To be effective, these local lead organizations will need to:

- understand and articulate what structural racism means and how it affects their community
- be able to present data about community conditions that are disaggregated by race
- frame their message effectively to a public that may not be initially receptive
- engage partners to work toward racial equity goals
- design and implement projects that have racial equity as the central goal
- document and share their successes and/or lessons learned from failure

3. Educate community leaders about structural racism

The exhibition **RACE: Are we so different?** brings together the everyday experience of living with race, its history as an idea, the role of science in that history, and the findings of contemporary science that are challenging its foundations.

Interactive exhibit components, historical artifacts, iconic objects, compelling photographs, multimedia presentations, and attractive graphic displays offer visitors to **RACE** an eye-opening look at its important subject matter.

Developed by the American Anthropological Association in collaboration with the Science Museum of Minnesota, **RACE** is the first nationally traveling exhibition to tell the stories of race from the biological, cultural, and historical points of view. Combining these perspectives offers an unprecedented look at race and racism in the United States. For more information, go to www.understandingrace.org.

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There are many, many training programs in this field. In 2002 the Aspen Institute published *Training for Racial Equity and Social Inclusion: A Guide to Selected Programs* which helps the reader better understand the differences of ten anti-racism programs and assess their potential utility for their own needs.

An important part of any training is to help participants learn to frame their message in ways that engage partners and encourage community members to work toward racial equity goals.

4. Develop solid research to inform strategies

Once community leaders understand structural racism and see its evidence at a national level, they are eager to get data on their community. Riverside County's Transportation Department is conducting research on the bus routes that workers take to get to their jobs. This data will help determine where quality child care sites are needed. Given the size of the County, there will need to be many child care sites and maintaining quality will be vital. Childcare experts are working on these key quality control elements.

The Policy Advisory Committee for the Riverside Racial Equity and Economic Security (REES) project wanted a survey of community members. The Project Director for the national REES project researched tools other communities had used and found a community survey that had been tested in another city which Riverside was able to adapt to its needs.

5. Frame the message to reach out to a wide audience

At its core, this message emphasizes that policies which explicitly address the needs of communities of color will help build a society that improves the well-being of us all.

Multiracial <u>and</u> multigenerational leadership is needed to bring this message forward. Issues of race in America look very different to the younger generations and they can help frame an agenda that speaks to the world they know. At its core, this message emphasizes that policies which explicitly address the needs of

communities of color will help build a society that improves the well-being of us all. The illustrations and examples that bring this message home will vary for different audiences.

6. Set goals for each stage of the project

Projects need to focus on a well-defined racial equity goal that could be years away. As the project is developed, each stage should have measurable goals that can be celebrated. Jacksonville emphasizes the number of city leaders who came to the initial seminar and are continuing on to develop projects. Through Jacksonville's Project Breakthrough, there are ways to share successes as these various projects move along. This gives people a sense of being part of a wider movement and lets them celebrate shorter term successes as well as major community change.

7. Engage local residents creatively

Art and culture bring people together and create a safe space for discussion and discovery, and to share mutually appreciated community assets. Philanthropic institutions can bring together cultural institutions and those doing racial equity work, and encourage creative thinking about projects that would engage and educate the public. The Queens Museum of Art exhibited *Red Lines: Housing Crisis Learning Center* which opened in May 2009. This exhibit has included a series of public events that inform people about the causes of the housing crisis and explore effective strategies to change policies and provide support to people facing barriers both physical and financial.

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Aiming for enduring change in a community by addressing the fundamental conditions that lead to racially disparate outcomes is ambitious. These lessons about engaging partners, building capacity, using research to inform strategies and setting goals for each stage of the project bring focus to the critical steps that all five communities identified. The following case studies provide further detail on each site and the progress they are making.

Jacksonville, Florida

The Community Foundation in Jacksonville is a community of donors and the charitable giving funds they have established to build a better community. Founded in 1964, it is the oldest community foundation in Florida, serving the citizens of Jacksonville and surrounding Northeast Florida. Today, the Community Foundation is home to over 350 individual funds, holds more than $125 million in assets and has made more than $140 million in grants.

The Community Foundation recognized that it would be necessary to address the achievement gap between African American and Anglo youth if its Quality Education for All public education reform initiative, launched in 2004, was to succeed. An understanding of structural racism was needed in order to identify programs that could bring change and, in 2005, the Community Foundation was one of eight community foundations that attended the Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society. Participants were excited by what they learned and wanted leaders in Jacksonville to participate in a locally-held Seminar so they would have a common understanding of the concepts. They also needed a local organization to partner with the Aspen Institute so that work would continue after the seminar in Jacksonville.

OneJax was incorporating at this time and it was a natural partner, because of its mission to promote respect and understanding among people of different religions, races, cultures and beliefs. With support from the Community Foundation, OneJax spent its first year planning and building its infrastructure. OneJax now has a full time staff person focused on Jacksonville's racial equity program, Project Breakthrough.

In November 2008, a seminar was held in Jacksonville. Board and management of the Community Foundation, the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission and OneJax invited community leaders, and followed up with personal phone calls. 27 leaders, including the Mayor, Sheriff, Superintendent of Schools, elected officials from City Council and the School Board, college, nonprofit and business CEOs, and others devoted several days to learning about structural racism. Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change provided the national framework and used studies that had been done in Jacksonville over four decades to present the local story. Participants continue to meet regularly and provide support to each other as they develop a series of projects that address racial inequities in Jacksonville.

Eight community action agencies sent teams to an Aspen Institute Seminar in October 2008 and one was **Northeast Florida Community Action Agency in Jacksonville**.   The Agency has helped thousands of low-income families through its programs. In addition to providing financial assistance to families in need, the Agency offers programs that teach people to earn and maintain an income, and ultimately achieve self-sufficiency, as well as sustain a healthy lifestyle and higher standards of living. Its mission is to defeat poverty and erase its devastating effects on Northeast Florida families by providing the education, empowerment and assistance that leads to self-sufficiency and a positive place within its community. The Agency has focused its racial equity work on reducing African American

male unemployment and has committed $35,000 to Project Breakthrough for its structural work.

The many strands of work in Jacksonville come together in Project Breakthrough. OneJax, in collaboration with the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission (JHRC) and The Community Foundation in Jacksonville, launched this effort to engage the community in creating sustainable change by discussing and taking action to eliminate racial and ethnic inequities in Jacksonville with Project Breakthrough: A Community Effort to Change the Story of Race. Project Breakthrough addresses race relations by changing individual attitudes, influencing public policy and advocating against institutional inequalities among racial and ethnic groups that appear in education, housing, health care, the justice system, employment, civic engagement and media. The Project Breakthrough initiative consists of two primary components. The first component includes Jacksonville Days in Dialogue (D.I.D.) to be held periodically throughout the year, along with ongoing Study Circles, both offered by the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission. The second component includes a range of projects developed by organizations that have attended Aspen Institute's seminars.

Jacksonville has taken a top down approach by engaging community leaders. This was identified as the strategy needed to make an impact and have some early successes. The fact that these leaders want to stay at the table and push forward is a great success for a city that has been talking about racial inequities and doing very little for decades.

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Funding from the Community Foundation has been absolutely critical for this project as a whole. OneJax is now reaching beyond the Foundation for funding and each of the partners in Project Breakthrough is finding support for its project primarily within its own budgets. It is hard to imagine how Project Breakthrough would exist without the multi-year commitment of both time and money from the Community Foundation.

The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change is another key partner. The Seminar spurred participants to action and Aspen staff continue to help them, specifically with the Racial Equity Theory of Change. This tool helps organizations develop goals and strategies to reduce racial inequities.

Local coordinators, such as OneJax and the Jacksonville Human Resource Commission, are crucial to the success of any complex community endeavor.

Long Island, New York

In 1978 The New York Community Trust, the Nation's largest community foundation, established a Long Island division to provide Nassau and Suffolk County residents with an economical alternative to a private foundation or a commercial gift fund.   In its work to help Long Islanders make a difference, the Long Island Community Foundation surveys its donors to find out what issues need to be addressed and where they want to learn more. The surveys identified social justice broadly and donors responded very positively when institutional racism was identified as an area where no one was focused.

African Americans were deliberately excluded in the post-World War II suburban development on Long Island and Long Island remains one of the most racially segregated regions of the country. This housing discrimination has perpetuated racial inequities in education, health service and health outcomes. To further racial equity on Long Island, the Community Foundation understood that a regional organization must be created to focus on addressing institutional and structural racism in government and civil society. After three years of incubating as an LICF initiative, **ERASE Racism** became an independent organization.

ERASE Racism promotes policies and programs to address institutional and structural racism and increase racial equity in public school education, housing, and healthcare. Public education is a core part of its mission. *Unraveling Racism Training* and *Race and Racism Dialogues* are offered regularly to anyone who wants to attend. Through these trainings and dialogues, ERASE Racism has engaged over 900 members in *Partnerships for Racial Equity* and other collaborations focused on the specific issues of housing, public education and healthcare.

ERASE Racism began with three interlinked focus areas – fair housing, public school education and health care. Fair housing was where it had its first success.   Working with partners and stakeholders, ERASE Racism prepared a report on fair housing on Long Island in 2005. This presented history and context and analyzed the practices and policies of both public and private institutions whose work affects fair housing.   The report included a series of specific policy and practice reforms for municipal, county, state and federal agencies. These included recommendations for improvements in fair housing enforcement, more racially equitable planning policies, data collection and strong deterrents for breaking the fair housing laws. As a result of this work, two fair housing laws were passed.   In 2009, ERASE Racism produced *Racial Equity Report Card: Fair Housing on Long Island.* It learned that there had been changes in policies as a result of the fair housing project, but the implementation and changes in practices were not complete.

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ERASE Racism will continue the work in the fair housing area, but leadership is needed from the organization if there is to be progress in the other focus areas.   ERASE Racism is now increasing its focus on public school education and healthcare.

ERASE Racism has been very successful in gaining media attention and has developed very productive working relationships with key political leaders on Long Island. Through this, ERASE Racism has been successful in getting policies changed and getting significant numbers of people to advocate for these changes.

Funding came from donors and board members with the Long Island Community Foundation for the first three years, but part of the spin-off agreement was to find other sources of funding. Finding the financial support to build core organizational capacity has been hard, even for an organization with a stellar record of successes. With only three staff members, ERASE Racism works in partnership with academic institutions and other nonprofit organizations to conduct research and host trainings and dialogues. For example, the health work is going forward through collaboration with a local university and faculty there has devised the survey instrument. Being resourceful and working through partnerships allows ERASE Racism to be very effective with a small staff.

Riverside County, California

The Community Action Partnership of Riverside County works with the community to end poverty, by offering opportunities for the poor through Education, Wealth Building, Advocacy and Community Organizing. Designated in July 1979, the Agency relies on partners, volunteers, and in-kind services to augment its 42 member staff that serves this vast county, which runs for 250 miles from Orange County to the Arizona border.

When offered the opportunity to attend an Aspen Institute Seminar on Racial Equity and Society in October 2008, the Agency made sure that the County government joined its team. This brought immediate recognition and resources to its project. This project had two main components.

> "I have been working for racial justice all my life. Structural racism is a lens that lets us understand and address the problems of the 21st century and leave a better world to our children and grandchildren."
> Lois Carson, Executive Director

The first is a series of Big View meetings around the County that introduce people to structural racism and give them an opportunity to discuss what can be done in Riverside County. As these meetings continue, there are more and more people in the County who can use the lens of structural racism to design projects in their sector. Participants are exploring possible projects to address racial inequities in housing and education.

The second component is focused on racial inequities in access to quality child care. Each component is led by an advisory committee, comprised of experts and political and community leaders. The Executive Director of the Agency and her staff provide visionary leadership and staff support so that the project keeps moving forward with enthusiasm and attention to detail.

The Big View meetings are hosted by community partners and the limited budget for promotion and snacks is covered by the Community Action Partnership of Riverside County and its fellow host organizations. Research is being conducted on transportation routes and available child care to identify where child care is needed. In addition, the County is looking at the roadblocks to the formation of quality child care facilities by minorities. Plans at this stage are to nurture relatively small child care businesses that are located in communities or along transportation routes. Since the County is so vast, a limited number of larger facilities would still not meet the needs of people who travel on buses to work.

The County has provided in-kind services and the Community Action Partnership of Riverside County has used 2009 Stimulus Funds to support the needed research. Research is the largest expense in the project budget and one component has been a survey of 3,000 community surveys.

Mayor Greg Nickels called for a Citywide Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) to change the underlying system that creates race-based disparities in Seattle and to achieve racial equity. During his campaign, Nickels heard a lot of complaints from people of color about the roadblocks and inequities they faced in working with city government. After the Mayor took office in January 2002, the Initiative began by focusing on the City's own programs and services, building on the work of the longstanding Office for Civil Rights and the Human Rights Department. Mayor Nickels leaves office at the end of 2009, but Mayor-elect McGinn has voiced strong support for the on-going work of the Initiative, and City Council has recently passed a resolution institutionalizing support for RSJI.

The Mayor and the RSJI Cabinet provide leadership for the project. In addition, each of the 25 city departments have Change Teams that assist with policy implementation.   The Initiative is housed in the Office for Civil Rights, including training programs, and has 2.5 staff dedicated to it. All funding comes from the City. This structure brings clear top level leadership along with active engagement in every department.

> "It is time for all of us to have an honest conversation about race, and to take steps to eliminate institutional racism."
> Mayor Greg Nickels

Policy changes to date include:
- Translation and interpretation policy to ensure broader access to city services for non-English speaking customers
- Outreach and public policy to improve civic participation and more inclusive outreach and public engagement
- Contracting equity policies that increase opportunities to compete; these have doubled the percentage of women and minority-owned businesses contracting for non-construction goods and services
- RSJI Budget and Policy Analysis to build awareness and ensure equitable policies; this tool is used to analyze the RSJI implications of all budget and policy proposals

A Budget and Policy Filter was distributed in March 2008 for use by all city departments. In order to help department managers put it to use, there are five criteria for best practices to use as a guide. These include:

1. Assess community conditions and the desired community impact
2. Expand opportunity and access for individuals
3. Affect systemic change
4. Promote racially inclusive collaboration and civic engagement
5. Educate on racial issues and raise racial consciousness

In addition to policy change, Race and Social Justice training is provided to all employees. This begins with work on definitions and includes skill building. Most critical has been getting clear on institutional racism, which means that programs and policies work to the benefit of whites and to the detriment of people of color. Change team members and department heads have specific training to explore their own internalized racial stereotypes.

The focus until 2008 has been solely to end racial disparities in the City's programs and services, specifically improving workforce equity, increasing City employees' knowledge and tools, and increasing contracting equity, as well as strengthening the way the City engages the community and provides services. This work continues and RSJI has added an important new goal - to eliminate race-based disparities in Seattle's communities.

Sonoma County, California

The mission of Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County, a community action agency, is to partner with low income families and individuals to help them achieve economic and social stability, to build community, and to advocate for social and economic justice. Designated by the County Board of Supervisors in 1968, the Agency provides Youth and Neighborhood Services, Head Start and Early Head Start, and a Children's Health Center. It also constructs and manages low income housing and offers housing and transitional housing services to people in need in the County.

Diversity Statement
Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County recognizes the richness that our differences bring to our communities. Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County expects employees to be accepting of differences. Further, Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County seeks to foster and celebrate diversity in our clients, our employees and our community. Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County seeks to institutionalize diversity and create an environment of welcome and appreciation for all clients and employees.

The agency's interest in racial equity began twelve years ago with a desire to serve limited English clients in their Head Start program. It knew it wanted to hire more people who spoke Spanish to meet the needs of its clients. This led to changes in its hiring policies and practices and encouraged the leaders to ask, more broadly, how they could integrate diversity across the agency. Board and management prepared a Diversity Statement which is as important to them as their mission statement. Training is provided to staff so that they can engage across different cultural groups, honoring both bi-cultural and bi-lingual staff. The agency can now say that staff members are able to speak to their clients in their primary language and toys and books used in the Head Start program are representative of all students and their families.

Leadership for the project comes from a Diversity Committee which is spearheaded by the Executive Director. Over a two year cycle, they hold monthly workshops to train diversity experts at the agency. They aim to have a Diversity Champion in each department. Oscar Chavez, Executive Director, says "People come and go so diversity training must be something alive and part of the organization, like Human Resources."

As a result of its commitment to championing diversity within the Agency, it is viewed as an advocate for racial equity in the community and has a reputation for its commitment to social justice. Health equity is now a big focus for the agency. They were at the table as the community used the documentary, *Unnatural Causes*, to focus on inequities in health care. Sonoma County now has a commitment to be the healthiest county in the US by 2020 and has focused on places for walking and growing food in every neighborhood. They aim to change the interaction between patients and the health care system through a patient-centered, home-based model.

The Agency participated in the County's long range planning process that identified strategies for economic growth, including a vibrant and skilled labor pool, streamlined business formation and reduced dependency on fossil fuels. The County hired Moody's to do projections on the impact of a range of strategies. The greatest impact on GDP came

from bridging the achievement gap between Anglos and Latinos. This has garnered significant community and political support for programs aimed at increasing the high school graduation rates of Latino youth.

Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County's work on internal diversity continues to be funded internally. The Agency does not see this work as a separate project, but rather part of its cost of doing business. County-wide projects benefit from data gathering from County Departments and support from external consultants.