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Regents' Lecture

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Movement Matters: Potentials for Transformative Change

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I want to thank the faculty and staff of the Community Studies Department for nominating me for this Regents' Lectureship. It's a wonderful opportunity for me and a real honor to be here in this capacity. I thank you for giving me this privilege to think more deeply about movement building.

I titled my talk, *Movement Matters: Potentials for Transformative Change*, because I want to do two things with it: first, to look at effective strategies for movement building, and second to offer a critique of the social justice movement and explore potential opportunities. My talk is focused on one central question: what do we mean by transformative change and how can we get there?

I think there are two fundamental principles to achieving transformative change. First, those closest to the problems in their communities are best equipped to create solutions and second, linking issues and building constituencies across issues, sectors and movements recognizes that our lives are affected by a range of issues and experiences and that each of us has much to offer and contribute, whether we are activists, philanthropists, academics, researchers, artists or media makers.

My work over the last 20 years has been focused on addressing the root causes of problems we face in our communities and in our broader culture and society. To that end, I'll explore a range of themes that center on how we engage people, how we use language, the use of multiple strategies, supporting multi-issue work, telling the stories of people who are at the center of the work through various media forms and technologies, looking at the role of philanthropy, addressing power dynamics within movements, organizations and across sectors and looking for leadership from people and communities who are experiencing problems and, by necessity, coming up with solutions on a daily basis.

Say What?

Last month I had lunch with a woman named Eveline Shen. Eveline is the executive director of Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice (ACRJ), an organization that has done important work on articulating a multi-issue approach for the reproductive health, rights and justice movement.

Reproductive justice is a framework that has emerged over the last five years that looks at the range of issues surrounding reproductive freedom and expands the conversation from one that has been focused on choice and the right to an abortion to including family supporting jobs and supporting women to have and parent healthy babies.

Eveline told me ACRJ is making shifts in the way they talk about their work. She and the staff find that they spend a lot of time explaining the concept of reproductive justice

and that people have a hard time grasping it. Rather than explaining the framework, they would rather be moving the work forward by building coalitions, identifying policy advocacy opportunities and engaging people.

Reproductive justice as defined by ACRJ in their paper, *A New Vision: Advancing Our Movement for Reproductive Health, Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Justice*. It is "the complete physical, mental, spiritual, political, economic and social well-being of women and girls, and will be achieved when women and girls have the economic, social and political power and resources to make healthy decisions about our bodies, sexuality and reproduction for ourselves, our families and our communities in all areas of our lives."

While ACRJ's definition is comprehensive, it's also a mouthful. And what does it really mean? Eveline told me that ACRJ spends much of their time explaining this definition, but she said, "When I talk about healthy and strong families, people immediately relate to what I am saying."

We went through a similar process at the Women's Foundation of California a few years ago. We found ourselves trying to explain our work in reproductive justice, environmental health and justice, economic justice and youth leadership. In speaking to people about our work, I had the experience of people's eyes glazing over by the third time the word justice came out of my mouth. Either people didn't know what I was talking about or they were simply not interested. One donor asked me what I meant my justice. She

thought it had to do with the judicial system. Her comment was a good reminder that the language we use is critical—especially as we think about ways to engage and involve more people in our efforts.

I come from a large family. I'm the youngest of six kids. My siblings have very little interest in the kind of social change work that I do. They don't get it, and I think it actually bores them. So I use them as a testing ground of sorts. If they can understand what I am saying, it's likely to resonate with more people. When I tell my sisters that my work supports communities to be healthy, safe and economically prosperous, they are interested and engaged. After all, who doesn't want to be healthy, safe and economically prosperous?

This doesn't mean we have abandoned issues to do with reproductive justice, environmental justice, economic justice, gender justice, and racial and social justice. A justice framework is very much at the heart of our work, but we don't assume that people know those frameworks, and we try and describe our work in a way that resonates with a range of people on the political and economic spectrums while staying true to our values and principles.

Follow the Leader

In the book, *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*, the authors, Jim Collins and Jerry Porras, write, "The one universal requirement of effective leadership is to catalyze a clear and shared picture of the organization and to secure commitment to and vigorous pursuit of that vision."

A vision can be many things and good ones often include:

1. A compelling image of the future;
2. A credible and attractive view of what's possible;
3. An organizing and unifying guide to what an organization or leader wants to become; and
4. An inspirational focal point for those working towards that vision.

To achieve our vision, a California in which all communities are healthy, safe, and economically prosperous, we've developed a unique model for driving systemic change focused on four key areas: strategic grantmaking, movement building, strengthening organizations and policy advocacy. We believe where these areas intersect, *change happens and it happens faster*.

I live in a low-income neighborhood in Long Beach, in southern California. People in my neighborhood work two or three jobs while their kids attend substandard public schools. In recent months, people have been murdered by gangs in our neighborhood. The pollution from the trucks going in and out of the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, the largest ports in the country and among the largest in the world, contribute to the air pollution that causes children in my neighborhood to be plagued with asthma.

Our vision for California speaks to my neighbors. I'm sure any one of my neighbors would agree with me that we want to be remain healthy despite the pollution from the ports, safe from gang violence, and economically prosperous so

that families are not crammed into a small, one-bedroom apartment or, worse yet, a garage, as I know many in my neighborhood are.

Strategies for Change

We use multiple and often overlapping strategies for change. Our first strategy is **strategic grantmaking**. We make grants to organizations that are working towards systemic change or to change the systems that are causing problems in people's lives, like conditions of poverty, or the inability to access quality health care or have access to clean water. We fund multiple strategies including community organizing, policy advocacy, research, civic participation, leadership development, public education and communications efforts. We partner with larger foundations and donors to make about \$2 million a year in grants. We consider this a modest amount, which means we are strategic with every dollar we spend.

We were founded on the principle that activists and donors need to be in partnership with each other. We are now expanding this vision to include academics, artists, media makers, business leaders and others who are interested in partnering with us. We are interested in finding ways to bring different sectors together to support lasting and meaningful change that supports our vision.

There are numerous opportunities for collaboration with academia. In the brief time that I have been at UC Santa Cruz as part of this Regents' fellowship, I have encountered multiple possibilities for collaborations. This week, I was fortunate to view a number of projects by

students from the Social Documentation Program, and I spoke to and with students from the Community Studies Department who are getting ready for their field placements. There are a number of opportunities in both these programs to bolster and connect with activist organizations and I am eager to participate in making those connections.

Our second strategy is **strengthening organizations**. In working with the organizations we fund, we want to make sure that they are sustainable for the long term. We work with them to build capacity in the areas of board development, fundraising, financial management as well as how to build effective alliances and strengthen community organizing skills.

Our third strategy is **policy advocacy**. We operate the Women's Policy Institute that trains community-based leaders, grassroots organizers as well as donors and academics about the public policy process in California. We have five main goals with the Women's Policy Institute. We want to:

- Increase the number of policies in California that reflect the needs and realities of low-income women and families;
- Increase and support the leadership, advocacy and public policy knowledge of Women's Policy Institute fellows that can be applied to local, state and national issues;
- Strengthen links between grassroots leaders and organizations with those who influence and make policy;

- Encourage lasting relationships between grassroots women leaders across California; and
- Increase the number of community-based women involved in the policy making process who understand and work for issues concerning women and girls.

The Women's Policy Institute is a year-long program in which Institute fellows work in self-selected teams to develop and implement specific policy advocacy projects of their choosing. We hire mentors for each of the teams, we provide them with trainings on messaging, on how to conduct research, on how to work with the opposition and the basics about how a bill becomes a law.

We're about to go into our eighth year and in that time we have had 11 bills passed into law. Six have made it to the Governor's desk where they have been vetoed. But, optimists that we are, we see those as successes too since they made it through both houses and the fellows learned the policy process.

There are many successes to share from the Institute, but I'll share just one:

In 2004, Women's Policy Institute fellows were successful in passing SB 1639 Education Works!, which was signed into law on September 22, 2004. This bill improves access to education to community college for CalWORKs students whose primary language is not English and increases access to higher education for foster care youth by requiring that they receive information about educational opportunities. The bill

also establishes the intent of the Legislature to enable residents to reach self-sufficiency, to develop a Student Parent Scholar grant program to assist low-income parents with postsecondary education, increase access to higher education for foster care youth and ensure that programs operated with federal TANF funds promote education and training for jobs that offer self-sufficient wages.

We have more than 200 graduates who have gone through our Women's Policy Institute, and they remain actively engaged in the policy process and connected to each other, supporting each other's ongoing policy efforts.

Lastly, our **movement building strategy** brings together community leaders across issues and sectors. In the last two years we have brought together leaders from the reproductive justice and environmental justice movements to explore areas where they might disagree on strategy or approach, as well as opportunities for collaboration.

Show Me the Money

The Women's Foundation began in 1979 as a response to inequities in philanthropy:

- At that time only one percent of all philanthropic dollars were going specifically to women and girls.
- Today about eight percent of giving is going to women and girls. While we've certainly made progress, women's issues are still largely marginalized and women's funds are under-resourced.

I am interested in exploring our place in the larger philanthropic field, which in many ways, is increasingly using a social justice framework. This is good and yet it causes me some concern. Larger foundations, though they may increasingly be using a social justice framework, are not able to reach smaller or emerging organizations—many of which are led by people of color—which underscores the necessity of continued partnerships between public and private, as well as larger and smaller foundations, as a way to build a movement that is reflective of the constituencies that are most affected by the problems in their communities.

As a statewide organization, we are working in a state that has its challenges.

- California is the eighth largest economy in the world;
- By 2030, the population of California will increase from 37 million to 50 million, fueled primarily by Latina/os and Asian Pacific Islanders;
- Thirty-seven percent of single mothers and 25 percent of children live in poverty;
- One in six women are uninsured, and 71 percent of the uninsured are women of color;
- Women are concentrated in low-wage jobs where the average annual salary is only \$14,040; and
- California has the largest female prison population in the world.

Our theory of change rests on a key belief and value that by focusing our work on marginalized communities, especially low-income communities and communities of color,

we will increase the well-being of all communities. Because low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately impacted by health and economic disparities, the Foundation has always prioritized supporting organizations in these communities, understanding that those most impacted by problems also hold solutions to those issues because of their proximity to and experience with the problem.

We shifted our work many years ago from direct services to multiple, integrated strategies and long-term institutional and systemic change as a way to solve the root causes of problems. Services are important and often life-saving for people, providing food, shelter and counseling in a time of great need. But unless we address the root causes of problems those same people and others will seek the same services year after year.

For many years we saw that women's issues were mainly being addressed through direct services. We noticed that there was a lack of representation of women in decision-making and public policy arenas and that there was a major disconnect between women's realities and the way systems worked.

In response, we adopted an intersectional approach realizing the links among gender, race, class and sexuality, and started to move toward connecting issues. Our use of a gender analysis is now positioned within a broader intersectional and social justice framework which asks the following questions:

- Are we advocating for enduring and lasting change?
- Are those who are most affected by problems in their communities developing solutions?
- Are we investing in institutions and leaders who will work for social justice change over the long-term?
- Are we addressing the root causes of social injustice?

California in Crisis

As we all know, California is in crisis. We are in the worst recession we have seen since the Great Depression, and this economic crisis is creating significant challenges on the nonprofit sector and social change efforts.

In his revisions to the state budget earlier this month, Governor Schwarzenegger proposed eliminating CalWORKS, California's welfare-to-work program, along with all childcare assistance.

In partnership with the California Budget Project, earlier this month we released a gender analysis of the California budget. The report is titled, *How the Other Half Fared: The Impact of the Great Recession on Women*, and it finds that from 2006–2009 the unemployment rate for California's women doubled from five percent to 10 percent—its highest level in a generation.

California's single mothers joined the ranks of the unemployed in high numbers, their unemployment rate rising to 15 percent. In addition, job losses among men meant that married women, whose incomes were often supplementary and

less than their partners, increasingly became the sole wage-earners for their families.

While the recession has cast millions into prolonged unemployment, the social services and cash assistance that provided critical lifelines to those who have lost their salaries and health insurance have been steadily cut. Many of these families have no where to turn.

Women make up more than three out of five adults enrolled in the major safety net programs—CalWORKs, the Supplemental Security Income—State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)—that help low-income women support their families, find jobs and care for those who are elderly or have disabilities. Cuts to these programs are putting people in desperate situations.

We've heard from our partners throughout the state of a rise in homelessness, increased situations where more than one family lives in an apartment, women who report that they do not eat so that their children have food and about the many families that defer dental and medical care because they can't afford it.

The irony is that that eliminating CalWORKS and state-supported childcare doesn't save the state any money. In fact you could say that it costs the state money. The state saves \$1.6 billion, but loses \$2.8 billion in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families money in 2010 and then loses the \$3.7 billion federal block grant funding every year thereafter.

Cuts to these vital services will only increase the number of people without health insurance, diminish our workforce's capacity for years to come and further strain local governments and service providers.

As advocates of budget and governance reform, we believe that the budget needs to include reductions in spending, but it should also include additional revenues through continuing temporary tax increases, delaying corporate tax breaks and increasing taxes on oil drilling. The state should also prioritize maximizing federal dollars.

The nonprofit community in California and across the country can also coalesce as an economic force. In California, we make up 10 percent of the workforce but we don't have any kind of association or mechanism to organize ourselves in order to advocate in a unified way on the kinds of governance reform that California needs.

Work It

Past programs and policies have not done enough to help low-income women move out of poverty. To avoid repeating those mistakes, the current national focus on job creation, training and education should include a discussion about how to develop new and different opportunities.

The Women's Foundation of California is collaborating with three other women's funds across the country in the Women's Economic Security Campaign (WESC). We are working with colleagues from Chicago, Memphis and Washington, DC in collaboration with the Women's Funding Network to improve economic security for women and girls. Earlier this month, WESC released the second in a series of policy reports,

Aiming Higher: Removing Barriers to Education, Training and Jobs for Low-Income Women, which focuses on job creation, training and support for low-income women.

With both Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Workforce Investment Act due for reauthorization, Congress has an opportunity to strengthen two of the nation's largest programs for low-income women and their families. Specifically, the emphasis of these programs should be on supporting women to improve their skills and education rather than being pushed into any available job—especially low-paying jobs or those lacking in career potential. Additionally, federal efforts should support programs that combine on-the-job experience with services that help low-income women overcome barriers to employment, including the need for childcare, lack of transportation and tenuous housing.

Philanthropic and private entities have key roles to play. Through our work with women's foundations in our communities, we know what strategies work best locally and could be replicated nationally.

For example, one of our grant partners works with low-income women to navigate the obstacles to higher education. LIFETIME, a San Leandro-based community organization, provides counseling and advocacy to women who want to obtain college degrees and who are receiving public assistance through CalWORKS.

LIFETIME's peer counselors work one-on-one to help their clients qualify to stay in school despite resistance from caseworkers who typically press them to take any job,

regardless of pay and growth potential. Under the law, however, women can also qualify to fulfill their welfare-to-work requirements through education and training—a fact most caseworkers know little about.

LIFETIME's peer counselors become advocates for their clients, calling or meeting with caseworkers who are threatening to take away their benefits. LIFETIME also trains women how to advocate for themselves and understand their legal rights.

When Renita Pitts first came to LIFETIME more than 12 years ago, she was facing just such a problem. Her caseworker told her she couldn't go to school, and Renita felt powerless to challenge her since the case worker was the one responsible for making sure she got her check which allowed her to pay her bills. At the time, Renita was a single mother of five children and was attending Laney Community College in Oakland.

The staff at LIFETIME assured Renita that she had every right to attend school while on public assistance. With LIFETIME's guidance, Renita went on to receive a bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley. Today, the 49-year-old grandmother works for Laney as a math coordinator, training students in the school's electronic textbook system.

LIFETIME has seen hundreds of similar success stories. Ninety percent of the mothers who go through the program graduate from college and land jobs in their field of study,

earning between \$18 and \$55 per hour. At least five have earned master's degrees, including one mom who won the prestigious Truman Fellowship. Four more will start master's degree programs in the fall. One LIFETIME client earned a PhD and is now a professor, and two others are currently in PhD programs.

For most of these women the path to post-secondary education and a stable career took many years of juggling part-time jobs, school work and families, while barely making ends meet. Renita took 10 years to complete her education at Laney and Berkeley. Without significant support services, few low-income women would graduate from post-secondary programs.

A study of students attending community colleges found that nearly 60 percent of respondents reported they could not have continued their educations without childcare services and 95 percent reported that childcare was crucial in making their decision to increase their college class load. In order to improve the economy we will need to make sure we are addressing the context of people's lives that allow them to advance economically, which ultimately will benefit the entire economy.

The Women's Economic Security Campaign offers the following strategies:

- **Connect people, and women in particular, to programs and services that make education or employment possible.** Supports in areas like childcare,

transportation, housing and health services are crucial for single, low-income mothers struggling to balance work, training or education and family responsibilities.

- **Provide women with more work and training opportunities.** Limited previous work experience and opportunities for on-the-job training pose a major barrier to low-income women hoping to improve their future employment options.
- **Increase opportunity by focusing on employer needs.** In order to increase economic security, we need to support programs that tie training and education to actual jobs.

It's not enough to create programs and services if we do not provide the guidance and support people need to access them. Funneling women off of public assistance and into low-paying, dead-end jobs with no hope for a better future doesn't make sense.

As we emerge from the worst economic crisis in generations, we have a chance to rethink the status quo and develop policies that will put us on a more promising path. Government leaders, as well as the philanthropic community and private entities, can help lead the way to fix these broken systems by supporting community-based leaders.

Recruit, Recruit, Recruit

As we engage people to join us in our quest to improve conditions for all communities, it's important to tell our

stories and the stories of others as a way to engage people. And so in that spirit, I offer you my own story.

I am very much a product of movement building. My family migrated from Pakistan to the US for political reasons in the early 70s. I describe them as liberal by Pakistani standards and conservative by American standards. My mother was active in the Republican Party in Connecticut where I grew up. She supported George Bush Sr. in the Republican primaries against Ronald Reagan in 1980, and even hosted a fundraiser for him at our home when we lived in Connecticut. When Ronald Reagan was elected she and my father traveled to Washington, DC to attend his inauguration.

When I was old enough to vote in a presidential election, I cast my ballot for George H. W. Bush. My family was Republican and I was comfortably following in their footsteps. At the time I was sheltered by my family's privileged status, and I was not particularly concerned with issues of poverty or racism. When I came out as a lesbian, I became more politicized and in my early twenties I changed my party affiliation and increasingly became involved in social justice efforts. I like to tell people that I voted for Bush in 1988 because it is just one example of how a person can change and be drawn in to social movements.

People are recruited into movements on either side of the political spectrum, and I think it is important for us to consider movement building efforts on the Right, evidenced by the anti-immigration law in Arizona and the growth of

the Tea Party movement. How we understand these movements and respond to them will be critical in developing effective strategies to recruit people into social justice movements.

As Chip Berlet, senior analyst at Political Research Associates (PRA) wrote in the February issue of the *Progressive Magazine*, "liberal pundits, Democratic Party strategists, and fundraisers describe the growing Tea Party movement as 'radical right,' 'crackpots,' or 'wing-nuts.'" In some ways it is easier for many of us to dismiss them as the 'lunatic fringe' of the Republican Party." This may be a good fundraising strategy for the Democratic Party but it only serves the Tea Party movement for us to dismiss them.

As Chip and my friends at PRA point out regularly, the anger that people are feeling is real and it's increasing among white, working people. If we dismiss them all, we not only slight the genuine grievances they have—we push them into the welcoming arms of actual and dangerous far rightists.

We need to recognize that the grievances people have are legitimate. People are losing their jobs. They see their wages decline. The safety net is being pulled out from underneath people as they lose critical supports. The Tea Party movement appeals to them, however misguided it may be. It's our job to expose the lies of the Tea Party movement and other rightist movements but we should do so in a way that distinguishes the leaders from the followers.

So, how can a social justice movement offer a vision that will compel people to join us? Movement building is about

people, about reaching them and recruiting them towards a vision of the kind of world we want to live in. Movement building, at its most fundamental level, is about moving *people*. We need to do everything we can to recruit people, which will take multiple strategies including partnerships across movements and multimedia platforms for engagement.

Join Forces

I believe that a multi-issue approach will get us to our goals faster. But I also remember that I became politicized around a single issue: my own sexuality. So while I am interested in a multi-issue approach, I recognize that we need to meet people where they are and over time move them to a multi-issue approach, understanding that they may be motivated by one issue or one problem.

When leaders and organizations are successful in building broader coalitions—with labor, environmental health and justice groups, criminal justice groups and other movements that have historically not worked together—we are more likely to win. And when these efforts are led by those who are most affected by the problems they seek to solve, we are more strategic, more authentic and more relevant because we address a range of issue that are central to people's lives.

California provides us with a good example. We've had three parental notification initiatives in the last four years. The campaigns that defeated these measures included traditional advocates for reproductive health like Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California, NARAL, ACLU of Northern California, the California Chapter of the National

Organization for Women and members of the statewide coalition, the California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom.

The important work of these campaigns is well documented. What is less known is the work that women of color-led reproductive justice organizations did within the campaign and within their own communities to guarantee that their constituencies were informed by media messages, voter education efforts, and other electoral strategies.

California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ), Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice, the Dolores Huerta Foundation and Khmer Girls in Action shaped message development and voter education for their communities. Dolores Huerta was integral in bringing labor leaders to the campaign and securing the support of the California Federation of Labor, an unprecedented alliance. These endorsements, English- and Spanish-speaking advertisements and voter education strategies produced successful results.

In the 2008 election, the women of color-led groups like CLRJ and ACRJ took a visible position against Proposition 4, the parental notification initiative, and Proposition 6 which would have required teens to be sent to adult prisons for gang-related convictions, imposing harsher criminal penalties. Both propositions were successfully defeated. Meanwhile, in the same election, Proposition 8, the anti-same-sex marriage proposition, passed.

There were serious differences in the organizing strategies. The successful campaigns engaged constituencies

across issues and movements, had translation in multiple languages and they organized, door-to-door, person by person. The LGBT organizers opposing Proposition 8 did not adequately use these strategies, though their right wing opponents did.

We can learn from the failure of stopping Proposition 8 in California. The No on 8 campaign led a valiant effort and we have certainly made progress in gaining support for same-sex marriage and rights for LGBT people. As I have written in *Tying the Knot: How the Right Succeeded in Passing Proposition 8*, a closer look at the campaign reveals a single-issue strategy that did not prioritize communities of color nor raise other issues that are relevant to communities of color like poverty, access to health care, pollution and substandard schools.

These strategic and innovative organizing efforts, primarily by people of color-led efforts for base building and public education work is directly linked to policy wins, and yet organizations led by women and men of color receive disproportionately less funding than mainstream groups. And, too often, these mainstream groups have not thoughtfully included people of color groups or even individuals in the leadership of their organizations.

Looking Ahead

The current political and economic climate presents opportunities and challenges. Social change organizations and funders are poised to make meaningful changes to improve conditions for communities. There is significant opportunity for foundations to nurture community-based

change when we go beyond traditional grantmaking strategies by supporting organizations' infrastructures and facilitating the ability of their leaders and constituents to share ideas and resources and combine efforts. As we seriously consider our role in building coalitions and the capacity of community-based organizations, we see that we can act in a way that is both cost effective and conducive to long-term change.

Work positioned at the intersections of social justice sectors generates stronger movements and social change outcomes, for example, it:

- Generates a shared vision and framework that can lead to deeper change in policy, communications, messaging and public thought;
- Unifies and aligns segments of the social justice movement for greater impact;
- Connects constituents across movements and builds a broader base;
- Supports linkages across movements and builds leadership;
- Creates campaigns and outcomes that better reflect communities lived experiences; and
- Allows for collaborative funding streams which are more agile and break out of single-issue agendas.

The Foundation's experience with the formation of a cohort of leaders across environmental justice and reproductive justice (EJ/RJ Collaborative) illustrates the strength of the cross-issue approach.

In facilitating cross-issue movement building, we've learned a few things.

- 1. Funders can support stronger movements through facilitating and convening leaders working across multiple issues.** In convening some of the leading activists and strategic thinkers in environmental and reproductive justice from around California, the Foundation facilitated a process in which key leaders from two movements were able to engage in deeper conversations, build relationships, broaden their network of allies, learn about conditions faced by communities in other parts of the state and have time for reflection, share resources and strategies, explore opportunities for collaborations and coalition building across movements and talk about frustrations and failures as well as successes and strategies.
- 2. Community-based solutions are necessary in policy advocacy efforts.** Policy priorities and frameworks that center on the experiences of disenfranchised communities are poised to identify systemic conditions and effective policy solutions. Without the engagement and leadership of these communities, advocates often propose policies that fail to address the priorities of the communities in greatest need or that lack the community involvement needed to ensure implementation.
- 3. Relationship building is worth the time.** Agendas were developed with ample time for relationship and trust building. When EJ/RJ Collaborative members were able

to learn more about each other's interests and strengths they were better able to build on those.

4. A focus on specific outcomes can be counterproductive.

An attachment to outcome is often what causes the most stress during collaboration. The EJ/RJ Collaborative has a strong sense of alignment of purpose and values, which allowed the Foundation and Collaborative members to consider innovative ideas for movement building.

5. The cross-issue collaborative model is replicable in other social justice movements.

Bringing reproductive and environmental advocates together for exploration and a series of conversations offered the Foundation an opportunity to understand how such a collaborative can serve as a model for bringing different social justice movements together to identify linkages and shared strategies that support social change and capacity building on a broad scale.

6. Invest in partnerships.

Funders should increase investments to organizations and funders that have deep relationships with organizations, expertise in convening and a track record in funding and supporting movement building. Public foundations, like state-based women's funds, statewide organizations and national networks have strong relationships with organizations in multiple regions and a deep understanding of the context of the work.

As we move toward possibilities for meaningful and lasting change, I offer the following concluding thoughts.

- ✓ We must focus on systemic change, on the long-term change we are trying to achieve, even if this change or outcome is not immediately measurable. Long-term change takes time, progress is incremental and we need to be focused on the long-term results and not immediate outcomes that are easily measurable. After all, what do we mean by transformative change? By great results? Or shifts in people's lives and conditions?

- ✓ As a social justice community, we will need to address and embrace power—power of inclusion and diversity, power of language, power of shared interests, power of coalition, power of collaboration, power of articulating shared values. Power is all around us, and we have to figure out how to access it. Our job is not to empower as if we are providing someone with power, but to work to make sure that all people can access their own power.

- ✓ We have to pay very careful attention that we are taking a values-based approach to our work and the organizational and leadership transitions before us. In these economic times, we are operating with a scarcity of resources. Some organizations and institutions are closing their doors and some community organizations and institutions may *need* to close their doors, but *how* we close those doors is equally important. Boards of directors and those in leadership positions need to carefully engage

stakeholders as we manage these transitions. We can manage from fear and scarcity or we can manage from hope, vision and purpose.

- ✓ We must cultivate leadership. We can take many approaches—we can make others do what we want. Or we can cultivate the ability to convince and inspire people to want things we want, based on shared values. We need to be working *with* people, not working *on* them.
- ✓ Philanthropy will have to meaningfully address the challenges before us. Too many Foundations continue to give project and program funding rather than general operating support. General operating support allows organizations the flexibility to do their work in the way that makes the most sense given the context in which they are operating. We should direct our resources to building effective organizations that are poised to be nimble, flexible and able to create transformative change.
- ✓ We should allocate resources to research institutions that can provide the analysis that social justice organizations need to make meaning of their local context and the conservative backlash we are facing. We can learn from right wing institutions and funders in the way that they have resourced their own research institutions and think tanks—investments that have led to significant shifts in policies that are anti-

immigrant and that have negatively affected working class people in this country.

Recently an executive director of an organization that I am on the board of told a story that has really stuck with me. The organization, like many others, is in a fragile financial state. Some of my fellow board members were at a loss about how to move forward, having been in crisis mode for a number of months, if not years. They began talking about shutting the organization down, and they did this without engaging the staff and other stakeholders of the organization. Their fatigue was causing them to handle the situation badly. They seemed to have lost sight of the larger vision and purpose as well as a process that engages people who care about the organization.

As we try and manage the fragility of this organization, the executive director offered us this inspiring anecdote which I offer to you in concluding my remarks. He said his father-in-law is a pilot and that when he wanted to learn to ride a motorcycle, his father-in-law gave him some advice. He said, "When you encounter a dangerous situation, it's important to look at the danger and to understand it. And then look where you want to go."

Thank you.