

GRANTMAKERS Mid-Year Update



By Joyce White, Executive Director

It's an understatement to say that much has happened so far in 2017, both locally and globally, that is testing all of us in the funding community. While there have been moments of despair, much of our work in 2016 enabled the GRANTMAKERS team to weather current and ongoing storms from a position of strength. Moving into a new office – our first independent space – gave us a sense of permanence that also enhanced our performance as a team. Adding new members, hosting our largest regional conference to date, and engaging 1,000 individuals (and 200 speakers) through our programs also strengthened our network and our purpose.

We could not have been in a better place as we entered 2017. The amazing network of funders throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington continues to collaborate and grow, underscoring the importance of GRANTMAKERS' mission and commitment to our five strategic directions.

Here is how we are building on this important work in the first half of this year, and a peek at what you can expect over the next six months and in 2018:

Programs, Programs, Programs!

We began our 2017 program calendar with the opening reception for [MRG Foundation](#)'s exhibit, *Giving Back: The Soul of Philanthropy Reframed and Exhibited*. The Winter Social was rescheduled for Ground Hog's Day and while another ice storm was predicted, our fearless members and GRANTMAKERS alumni showed up for an evening of socializing with colleagues. February highlighted a member briefing from [Women's Foundation of Oregon](#) and the unveiling of the research report, [Count her In](#). The report continues to receive high praise and has been used to influence the legislature's work in Salem – the first research report on women in Oregon in almost 20 years.

In March we hosted our peers from [Minnesota Council on Foundations](#) with a new curriculum we've licensed from them, Grantmaking for the 21st Century. Replacing Grantmaking 101, this curriculum focused on the new skills - especially soft skills - that grantmakers need in order to fulfill their missions and pursue deeper equity. We continue to enhance our programs for our diverse membership. In collaboration with the [Corporate Volunteer Council](#) and [The Oregon Community Foundation](#), the Corporate Funder's Learning Exchange held a well-attended program on volunteering in Oregon in April.

In March and May, family foundation members convened to view [National Center for Family Philanthropy](#) webinars on Equity & Inclusion and Transparency. Later in May, [Pride Foundation](#) presented on trends in LGBTQ funding. In early June we partnered with the [Community Foundation for Southwest Washington](#) on a forum focused on affordable housing, which resulted in a packed house. Given the reality of our times, our half-day program on nonprofit investigative journalism focused on the importance of funder support for media. And, I can't think of a better way to wind down the year than with a focus on equity in the Fall.

Our Program Committee is already planning for 2018 and our biennial conference, and events include a partnership with the [Association for Corporate Contributions Professionals](#), who are bringing their national conference to Portland March 18-21. We are also partnering with [Rural Development Initiatives](#) for their conference in Portland in June of 2018.

Please reach out if you would like to help plan programs or the biennial conference in 2018. We would love to have you!

Membership!

GRANTMAKERS is growing, and we are honored to welcome new and returning members this year:

[Hoover Family Foundation](#)

[Schlesinger Family Foundation](#)

[Intel Foundation](#)

[Agnew Family Foundation](#)

Komal Foundation

[CareOregon](#)

[First Tech Credit Union](#)

Baker Family Foundation

Welcome Ali Benson!

In May, we welcomed Ali Benson as our new Program and Membership Manager. Ali came to us from the Nonprofit Association of Oregon and has hit the ground running. Ali's skills and interests – including development, fundraising, events and program development – complement our existing portfolio of skills. Ali is going to add a lot to the team and to our efforts as we continue to grow the impact of our organization.

A Commitment to Equity and Inclusion

In service to our members and to the overall community, GRANTMAKERS has made equity and inclusion a priority for our work. A foundational piece of that work is our equity statement, and the GRANTMAKERS Board has been fine-tuning our statement – which is in essence our promise to the community and to each other. Stay tuned for more in late July. In addition to using an equity lens in all our programming, your Board of Directors begins each board meeting hearing what our members are learning as they engage in their own equity work. Learning from one another is what keeps our funding community strong.

Partnerships and Collaboration

An important part of this work – an element that both strengthens and sustains us as funders – is the partnerships that we continue to build with fellow travelers throughout our region. Several examples of this include the [Animal Grantmakers Conference October 15-18 in Portland](#). This is an opportunity for you to meet with funders from across the country interested in animal welfare grantmaking. We're also partnering with the [Nonprofit Association of Oregon](#) to bring the [Alliance for Justice](#) here in September for a half-day training on advocacy.

Executive Director Search

I have mixed feelings about this subject, because in a year punctuated with events and developments that have tested all of us both professionally and personally, I have found strength in our collective work and in each one of you. However, I hear

the voice of common sense and wisdom of our Search Committee chair Martha Richards in my ear and am happy to report that the committee has hired a search firm and is moving forward at a healthy clip. And in that spirit of full steam ahead, I am gratified to know that we have created a strong foundation for the incoming executive director, one brimming with possibilities and promise for the future.

Enjoy another beautiful summer in Oregon and southwest Washington. Check out [our website](#) for program opportunities, trainings and of course, the Summer Social. And don't ever hesitate to give us a call if we can be of help to you in your work.

Best - Joyce