

Making the Dollars Matter: Young Philanthropists Take Up the Business of Change

This print publication contains the core narrative and several appendices from a recent WKCD story posted online at www.whatkidscando.org. For additional materials related to the story, please go to our website.

Appendices included here:

- Online youth philanthropy resources
- In depth interview with a seasoned youth philanthropist
- Grants lists for the California Fund for Youth Organizing and the Youth Leadership Institute

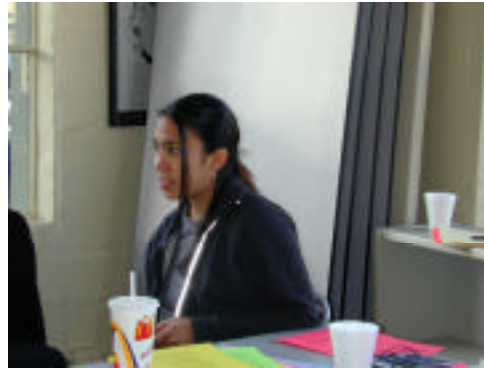


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Making the Dollars Matter: Young Philanthropists Take Up the Business of Change

“Funding is the first step. Without that they have no power and push.” —Abner, 18

SAN FRANCISCO—After school on this autumn afternoon, half a dozen students are gathered for their weekly meeting over Tostitos and popcorn in the converted industrial space that houses the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI). Traffic noise splits the air below, but their concentration is intense. Members of YLI’s Youth Initiated Projects board, they are carefully reviewing requests from grant seekers looking to change their neighborhoods and schools.



“The main thing we look at is does it have a big impact,” says Alejandra, 14. “What are the after-effects? Are those serious changes that they’re doing?” Even with a well-planned and fun project, she explains, “ if it doesn’t have a positive impact, we can’t really fund. One group wanted to have a festival to raise money for their group, but the money was for the festival, not to do education.”

Across the Bay Bridge later that week, a group of young activists busily explores the other side of the funding challenge: how they can frame their plans for change to win approval from grant-making boards like Alejandra’s.

“If you want to take action on something, one of the first things you run into is you need money,” says Dante, 15, who wants to start after-school programs at his Oakland school. “It can be discouraging to go out and do fundraising even before you get started on the change you want to make. This gives you the energy by paying for the real work to get started.”

In the complicated dance of philanthropy, where both grant-maker and grant-seeker speak of making every dollar matter, these two groups embody a new twist. Everyone involved is young. Supporting youth action and leadership infuse the process of proposing and awarding alike. And each participant knows well how unusual it is for teenagers to

control this kind of money. YLI's various youth philanthropy grant-making programs gave out over \$250,000 in four Bay Area regions last year, and it will disburse a similar amount in 2002-2003. Across Northern California, the amount of grants awarded by youth boards exceeds \$600,000 annually. "It's interesting to have that power over a resource that we all need, and to be able to put that in the right place," says Yamini, 16, a board member.

Nationwide, most efforts to foster youth philanthropy take a more traditional approach. Some foundations set aside a small fund for young people to give out to adult-led organizations, whether or not they serve youth directly. Others have youth advisory committees that review grant requests and make non-binding recommendations to adult-led boards. The goals differ as well: Some aim to fund youth community service, others to develop philanthropic leaders for the future or to bring youth to the table at major institutions.

With support from San Francisco's James Irvine Foundation, however, YLI and the California Fund for Youth Organizing, another new face in California youth philanthropy, are creating fresh capital. Through their efforts, a new generation of activist grant-makers is seeking out youth proposals, weighing their merits, and making tough decisions about how funds can catalyze lasting change. And as a new generation gains access to those crucial funds, young grant-seekers are also gaining the know-how to become important players in their own communities.

Learning to Craft Proposals

Grant-makers well know that their effectiveness depends on the quality of proposals they review, and so groups like the Youth Leadership Institute spend considerable energy teaching young activists the ropes before they ask for money. Gathered for a training session in an Oakland conference room, two dozen high school students using a case-study approach argue passionately about what strategy will work best to bring ethnic studies into the curriculum of their Bay Area schools.

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Should they go for whole-school assemblies, the tactic that poses the least work for the faculty? It's more realistic, they agree, but may not be enough to achieve real dialogue and understanding.

Should they push the district for a multicultural course? Their own eyes light up at the prospect, but they can't decide how to muster school support for such an ambitious, long-term change.

Drusilla, 14, opposes a required course. "People are more likely to learn something they *choose* to learn," she says. "If there's already a lot of hate going around, making them take this course is just going to make it worse."

"But the point is to get *everyone* talking together," objects Charron, 17. "Requiring the course is the only way to get people who wouldn't otherwise be listening to each other."

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Reynaldo, 17, proposes a student-led class after school instead. "It would be simple and long term, and we could do it on our own without district support," he reasons. "It wouldn't come from someone who learned the stuff, but from someone who *lived* it."

After their long day of training, these young people speak with new pragmatism as well as passion. With seasoned professionals as their guides, they are shaping their dreams of improving school and community into viable action strategies.

In the next month, Charron will turn her idea for a student-produced video about racial and gender discrimination into a grant proposal for up to \$5,000. Cole wants to apply for funds to help transform his San Francisco high school's antiquated language lab. Hoping to end homophobia and racism at her school, Drusilla dreams of staging a student production of "Romeo and Julio."

"Goals are big things out there, like 'students and teachers get along better,'" explains their coach, Matt Rosen, who oversees the planning and development of youth philanthropy initiatives at the Youth Leadership Institute. "To do that you have to take an action, like a project—for example, get them talking together somehow. You might not accomplish the goal with that one action, but you're coming closer."

Rosen introduces another case study, about school bathrooms in unacceptable condition, to steer the group into using research methods like surveys, interviews, group discussions, and documentary evidence. After a practice run with the adults in the room acting as subjects, the young grant-seekers evaluate each technique for its usefulness.

“From the survey, you might find out the bathroom is dirty,” says Cole, 14. “But in order to find out why, and what to do about it, discussion groups might be better.”

“In a survey, you’re making up the questions yourself and you might not be getting the right point,” Jennifer, 19, offers. “But on the other hand, with a survey you can reach all different kinds of people, not just a few.”

Evaluating Proposals from Peers



The members of YLI’s Youth Initiated Projects Review Board understand firsthand the struggles of planning and “what it really takes to put something together,” comments Matt Rosen. Like two others on the board, for example, Sabrina, who facilitates this week’s meeting, received funds last year for her own action project, a community center in her Latino neighborhood.

“Because they’re young and understand where the grant-seekers are coming from,” Rosen says, “they’re in a particularly strong position to bring forward and connect with youth grant-seekers.”

But learning to think like a grant-maker takes serious coaching, Rosen adds. For example, before it finally gets together to make funding decisions, the board must first conduct outreach to engage other youth in seeking money, organize youth-friendly presentations to set youth groups at ease, lead a two-hour grant-seeker workshop, and follow up proposals with questions and suggestions.

And at their weekly training session, board members also practice their facilitation skills and develop their capacity to critically assess the proposals other youth submit.

Above all, they have to put aside their sympathies and use clear-headed judgment. “There’s no right or wrong,” declares Abner, 18. “We have certain criteria.”

“Sometimes you have to call groups back and ask questions about certain things,” says Alejandra. “You really have to think deep into that project.”

YLI uses dilemma case studies to train Alejandra and her peers in just this kind of critical analysis. In one example, board members must choose the most effective way to fight sexual harassment: doing a 30-minute school assembly for 500 students or training five youth in how to organize to get teachers to enforce existing policies. Such exercises help board members “go beyond their opinion about what’s good or bad about a project,” Rosen notes, “and ask what makes sense, what’s feasible, what fits with established criteria, what’s most important among conflicting priorities.”

Without such training and support, Rosen adds, the board might just “perpetuate the status quo, funding projects they really like, without talking in a thoughtful way about what to fund and why. They will defer to the loudest voice, and all their issues of marginalized youth will not get brought up.”

But ultimately, these young grant-makers keep a close eye on the bottom line—they want to see what effects their funds have. “The young kids are starting to change,” says Abner. “When I was growing up kids either went to school and moved away, or joined a gang. Now I’m hearing ‘I want to be a firefighter.’ You wouldn’t have heard that from a young Latino growing up before. I think that’s because of groups that provide more of a sense of community.” He pauses. “Funding is the first step. Without, that they have no power or push.”

Linking Youth Philanthropy to Youth Organizing

Last March, a slightly older group of youth philanthropists, mostly in their twenties and early thirties, gathered at a different funding table to hammer out plans for the newly created California Fund for Youth Organizing (CFYO). Launched three months earlier by a \$300,000 grant to the Tides Foundation from the James Irvine Foundation, CFYO aims to grow this seed money into a fund to support youth organizing across the state.

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What sets this group apart is not just its youth: none of the members of this 12-person advisory committee has ever given away funds before. But with many coming from immigrant communities, all are seasoned youth organizers. Among other issues, they have worked on campaigns to establish ethnic studies curriculum in schools, to allow undocumented immigrants to attend community colleges, or against the incarceration of non-violent teen offenders.

“Philanthropy, traditionally has been a closed, privileged world,” notes Amanda Berger, one of the fund’s founders. “But the CFYO allows for younger people to learn the ropes of grant-making, to interact more closely with a group of funders, and to apply their expertise about youth organizing directly to giving away funds.”

Alex Tom, who at 26 is one of the youngest members of CFYO’s board, endorses the novel approach. “We need to be on the streets and in the community *and* in the boardroom making funding decisions,” he says. “What makes more sense? A board that is already doing the work to make the decisions or a board that vaguely understands the work?” [See full text of interview below.]

At this March meeting, the third in as many months, committee members study regional maps of youth organizing groups and the levels of foundation support available to them. Created over the past two sessions, the maps have shaped CFYO’s strategy: to support youth organizing in under-developed and under-resourced areas of the state—notably Los Angeles, San Diego, and the Central Valley—through grants and technical assistance. Committee members also report on progress made towards enlisting other funders to join CFYO, honing grant-making criteria, and sorting through details of a technical assistance program that aims to link more established groups in the Bay Area and elsewhere with emerging efforts in the target regions.

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“What stands out in CFYO is zeal,” notes Amanda Berger. “Because they’re not program officers and because they’re youth organizers, they get things done very quickly. There’s a lot of accountability. There’s a perspective of respect and support for what youth really need.”

CFYO invited 28 groups to apply for grants in early May, made site visits to each in July, and in August awarded \$240,000 to twelve projects in Los Angeles, San Diego,

and the Central Valley. One aimed to build a broad youth movement in Southeast Los Angeles to reduce industrial pollution and improve community health by organizing a yearly environmental justice youth conference. Another will support a San Diego campaign to introduce ethnic studies classes at three low-performing high schools and to create educational priority zones for failing schools. A third will help young people in Sacramento develop a youth agenda related to quality education, after-school programs, and public transportation. [See complete list of grants below.]

A Lever for Youth Development



The work of both the Youth Leadership Institute and the California Fund for Youth Organizing pushes to use youth philanthropy and youth activism as a direct means of positive youth development. On both the grant-making and the grant-seeking side, those involved say that it pays off.

“Youth organizing involves leadership training, but it also means getting people to *use* their education and their leadership skills to promote change in their communities,” says Alex Tom, of the California Fund for Youth

Organizing. “And more than just getting them from day to day as social services do, it’s creating an incubator— leading them to understand that there are other opportunities, like going to college if that’s what they want to do.”

Brought up in the Bay Area by parents who emigrated from China and Taiwan, Tom himself began his activist career in high school when he attended a youth leadership camp. Now he helps organize Asian immigrant youth on workers’ issues in Oakland, helping them see connections between a mother exhausted by a 12-hour work day and the systemic forces that make that happen.

“Once you do this work, once you understand the root of the problems in the community, you realize it’s not your neighbor or your teacher that creates an unjust environment, it’s the way resources are allocated,” Tom says. “You stay in it because it’s about your family and your community.”

If they do leave an organization of youth leaders, he says, young people go on to create their own. “And as they become older they train new young people. Young

people are becoming organizers, coordinators, and directors. Eventually they'll be in positions where they'll be the youngest board members of a foundation.”

When that does happen, groups like these will have played a potent role in the achievement, Tom and others like him believe. “As long as philanthropy exists, it’s going to be cultivated like a garden,” he declares. “It’s about bringing the power and muscle of money through youth to youth.”

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The following appendices include:

- Online youth philanthropy resources
- Complete text of the Alex Tom interview
- Grants List for the Youth Leadership Institute
- Grants List for the California Fund for Youth Organizing

The following are available at www.whatkidscando.org/featurestories/philanthropy.html

- Youth Leadership Institute Workbook for Student Grantseekers (in PDF format)
- History, grant application, and proposal review form from the California Fund for Youth Organizing (in PDF format)

Youth Philanthropy Online Resources

Changing the Face of Giving: An Assessment of Youth Philanthropy

http://www.irvine.org/news/newsletter/children_1.htm

Commissioned by the James Irvine Foundation and written by the Youth Leadership Institute, this excellent study examines youth philanthropy as it is currently practiced and recommends future directions for the field. Youth philanthropy programs can be powerful tools for both youth development and community building, the report observes. With most youth philanthropists still drawn from traditional groups (59% white, 55% with family incomes over \$60,000/year), the study also urges funders to reach out to new populations of young people and offers strategies for doing so.

Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing

<http://www.fcyo.org>

Established in 2000, the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO) is a collective of national, regional, and local foundations and youth organizing practitioners dedicated to advancing youth organizing as a strategy for youth development and social change. Its goals include increasing the level of funding for youth organizing groups, helping these groups become stable and sustainable organizations, and increasing the awareness and understanding of youth organizing among funders and community organizations.

Council on Michigan Foundations: *Learning to Give*

<http://www.learningtogive.org/>

How do we engage children in civic life? How do we harness youthful idealism and combat growing cynicism? How do we teach caring about others, particularly those less fortunate? What is missing from our courses in government, history, economics, sociology, psychology, and philosophy that results in young adults without understanding or passion for the noble ideas of their society? With these questions as starting points, *Learning to Give* has evolved into a comprehensive K-12 program for transmitting the philanthropic tradition to the next generation.

Minnesota Toolkit for Giving

<http://www.minnesotagiving.org/resources/youth.htm>

Included here is a compendium of publications, tools, and organizational links covering four areas: teaching philanthropy in schools, youth volunteering and community service, youth as funders, and youth philanthropy publications.

The Baltimore Giving Project

www.baltimoregivingproject.org/info-url2355/info-url_list.htm?section=Youth%20in%20Philanthropy

The Baltimore Giving Project promotes philanthropic giving in the greater Baltimore area, with a special eye to creating new programs and charitable resources. The “Youth in Philanthropy” section of its website includes research on youth involvement in giving and service; lessons, activities, and resources for teaching youth philanthropy, and information on Baltimore’s “Youth as Resources” program.

From the Streets to the Boardroom:

A Young Philanthropist Talks About Youth Organizing and Leadership



At 26, Alex T. Tom is one of the youngest members of the advisory board of the California Fund for Youth Organizing, which supports youth organizing around that state. Brought up in San Francisco and Fremont, California by parents who emigrated from China and Taiwan, he graduated in 1999 from the University of California at San Diego, where he helped to organize immigrant youth on social justice issues with Youth Organizing Communities. Currently he works in the Bay Area with Asian Immigrant Workers Advocates and other non-profits working in immigrant communities. He spoke to What Kids Can Do in October 2002.

When I was in college in San Diego, I started organizing at a very conservative time in California—the end of affirmative action in the UC system. At first most of our organizing was with college students; by the end of the campaign, we realized we needed to go beyond the ivory towers—college students already had opportunities and ‘social capital’ to enter the university. But there were few resources, if any, in San Diego for organizing and empowering high school students to make changes in their community and go to college. So we held “outreach” conferences to bring youth of color to the university.

But it’s easy to romanticize youth outreach. In college I tended to think that poor youth of color automatically pumped their fist and wanted to make changes in their community. It’s easy to think that you can inspire youth to go to college just by having an event. Youth of color would come and have a great time going to workshops, learning about political issues, and meeting other youth. But then they would go back to their schools, and they still didn’t have the resources, weren’t taking the correct classes, and were being racially tracked away from higher education. What really does help is providing a long-term, sustained outlet and space for youth. And that’s the reason youth philanthropy exists.

This is not to say that youth organizing can’t happen without funding—in San Diego we organized youth without real funding for three years, and I know there are still many

youth groups across the state and nation that do the same. Rather it's that with financial support, our organizations can become more stable and long-term.

Many of the youth that do make it to college are the ones who get involved with outreach programs, leadership training, and youth organizing projects, the ones who receive mentorship and guidance to take on these things. Although my family immigrated to the United States with little money, as I grew up our family was doing better, and I was privileged enough to go to high school in Fremont, a Bay Area suburb. Not only was I living in a middle-class neighborhood, I also participated in all these opportunities at school—student government, clubs, yearbook, sports. When I say resources, I don't just mean textbooks, supplies, and facilities at school. I'm also talking about general resources in the community, like jobs that provide living wages, libraries, affordable housing, youth centers, public parks, health care, a clean environment away from toxic waste.

For me, one of my main transitions was at 15, when I went to an eight-week summer camp for youth leadership—it's very similar to the work I do right now. The camp was mostly for poor youth of color from all over the nation. We learned about society's inequities—racism, classism, sexism, homophobia—and what we as young people could actually do to change our communities. When I came back from that camp I started a multicultural festival and a Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X Unity Assembly at my high school. I wouldn't have done it without the leadership training and political education, because I wouldn't have had the confidence or skills to do so. But the young people I work with now would never even fathom going to a camp to learn these skills—the camp I attended cost up to \$2,000! Fortunately the camp targeted predominately poor youth of color and gave out scholarships. But only a few youth leadership camps have this type of mission and provide this kind of access.

Youth organizing involves leadership training, but it also requires education about the system's inequities. And it means getting people to *use* their education and their

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leadership skills to promote change in their communities. More than just helping them from day-to-day, as social services do, it's creating an incubator—leading them to understand society's inequities and that there are other opportunities, like going to college if that's what they want to do.

Our goal is to connect them with the resources that more privileged people have and to help them understand why they don't have the same access. When you're young, if you want to become a filmmaker or make changes in your community or do something like that you often hear, "You're too young, that's not for you. Why don't you do this instead?" Youth in general are not given the power to make decisions for their own lives. And when you put a layer of race, class, and sexism on top of that, it makes it even more difficult for youth of color who want to go to college or whatever. So though youth of color *have* the potential for power, they don't have the resources and opportunities to find their way past the gatekeepers.

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Some funders might say, "I don't understand why these young people are getting in trouble, why don't they just stay out of trouble?" But look at their surroundings: what kinds of things are around to keep them away from bad situations? Are there good jobs and affordable housing? Is there a youth center? Do the police constantly harass youth? We're training young people to realize that they're in those situations not because they *deserve* it but because of the systemic problems of how resources are allocated—and to understand that we need to make changes in our own communities.

Currently I work with Asian immigrant youth, predominantly the children of garment and other low-wage workers, and with them the issues are similar but different at the same time. Some youth might identify more with the economics of a tired mother at the end of a 12-hour workday than with the "prison industrial complex." But these issues are definitely linked.

Really, in the end, the goal of the education that we do in youth organizing is to help all young people understand the systemic problems by realizing that our oppression is connected and that we are pitted against each other by having to fight over few resources.

We don't want youth just to blame each other and say, "My neighbor was really messed up because he did this."

But even with all the education and leadership training for youth, the bottom line is that young people learn by doing. Once you give youth the space and power to participate, it's a challenge for them to use that power since in most cases they've never had it. Young people need to realize—with the help of organizers, but primarily on their own—how to use their power. For example, at first, you may ask them to facilitate a meeting and they might be laughing and fooling around. Then, at the end when the group evaluates what got done, they say, "We didn't get anything done, you all were just messing around! Why didn't you guys [the adults] say anything?!" We might say, "This is your organization; the teacher's not going to put you in check here. We're not like parents or teachers. If you want to do nothing, that's your take." As organizers we want them to realize the stakes are theirs.

Beyond just philanthropy, youth philanthropy is essential. One of the values of having the board of the California Fund for Youth Organizing (CFYO) being a younger group of organizers from immigrant communities is that we bring a different perspective to the table. We're not just saying who needs the money; we also understand the work that is happening in the community.

Personally, I've learned a lot about the funding world. Being on the CFYO advisory board puts organizers on the other side, as gatekeepers to the funding. Usually we are the ones trying to frame our organizing work into the narrow definitions and goals of funders. This is the contradiction of needing financial support from foundations but also wanting systemic social change. Regardless of the contradictions though, these boards, who are mostly rich white males, need to be more diversified in race, class, gender, and age. Only then will youth organizing be truly supported. Poor youth of color and immigrant youth need to be on the streets and in the community *and* also in the boardroom making funding

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We had one roundtable for all these major foundations and program directors who were interested in participating in the funding collaborative. We talked about youth organizing—and it was very different because we *were* the board. We talked about the grand expectations some program officers had—for example, decreasing the dropout rate or the pregnancy rate by 30 percent, or raising graduation rates. They have all these desires for concrete empirical results. Our response was to give the potential funders a “reality check,” a realistic understanding of what their \$15,000 really does. New youth organizing groups might not necessarily decrease dropout rates. But by the end of the year they might get a seed organization started with six to ten new youth leaders, to possibly empower other people to go to college and change their communities.

Jesus Ruiz, one of the graduates from our program, for example, was in and out of a lot of trouble before. He had a hard life; his mom is single with four kids, and he didn’t have a clear direction in what he wanted to do. He’s going to college right now and still active in the community—and I’m proud and happy about that. There was a statewide conference recently, and he brought his little sister and brother who are in elementary school and junior high. They may not completely know yet, but he really believes in this kind of work.

If you look at the trajectory of young people’s involvement, you can see: They stay in this work. Many of my friends that I grew up with in college are organizing in various types of youth groups too. Once you do this work, once you understand the root of the problems in the community, you realize it’s not your neighbor that creates an unjust environment; it’s the way resources are allocated. You stay in it because it’s about the future of your family and your community.

If young people do leave a youth group, they go on to create

If you look at the trajectory of young people’s involvement in organizing, you see that they stay in this work. They stay because it’s about the future of their family and their community.

their own, and as they become older they train new young people. Young people are becoming organizers, coordinators, and directors. Eventually there will be more young people as board members of foundations.

Overall this work is on the cusp, it's exploding. It's been growing and changing so fast that funders are barely catching up. What I predict is that in the next five years it's going to diversify; new things are going to be coming out. Young people are always on the cutting edge of more innovative, expressive ways of being—now it might seem that everything is only about hip hop culture, but you have various youth immigrant cultures that are equally dynamic. I'm barely keeping up myself! And I'm definitely still learning a lot.

As long as philanthropy exists, youth organizing will be cultivated like a garden. It's about bringing the power and muscle of money through youth *to* youth. And it's about youth of color becoming leaders and organizers to better their own communities.

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Youth Leadership Institute

Youth Initiated Projects

2001-2002 Funded Projects

Articulate Creatures of the Elements: *ACE Workshops and Events*, a project to introduce Hip Hop to youth from all walks of life in a positive and nonviolent light. Sponsoring Organization: Richmond Village Beacon/RDNC

Candeo: *Tutoring Program*, a project to promote peer guidance and academic support to Roosevelt Middle School students. Sponsoring Organization: Maps Program

Conscious Roots: *Truth Amplified*, a project in which participants will become facilitators and proponents of culturally relevant education and will help foster critical thinking and revolutionary change among their peers. Sponsoring Organization: Homey /ICRI

District 11 Youth Council: *Youth Summit*, a one-day youth summit for youth in District 11, featuring youth-led workshops on education, culture/diversity, health, and violence prevention. Sponsoring Organization: Coleman Advocates

Girls in the Hall: *Keeping it Real*, a new 'zine featuring written works and visual arts pieces done by imprisoned young females. Sponsoring Organization: Bay Area Teen Voices

HEAL (Healthy Eating And Living) Group @ GMC: *HEAL Club*, a project seeking to establish healthy lifestyles, high self-esteem, and positive self-image among young people. Sponsoring Organization: Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center

Kaliyoni: "*A Day in Our Shoes*," a play about the real-life experiences of young women with racism, discrimination, incarceration, sexual harassment, poverty, and dysfunctional homes. Sponsoring Organization: Center for Young Women's Development

Next Level Movement: *Elements of Hip Hop*, a series of five events demonstrating the various forms of Hip Hop. Sponsoring Organization: All For One

Organic Entrepreneurs: *Tomorrow's Business Leaders*, a project to provide youth interns with the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners with business skills through hands-on experience with gardening. Sponsoring Organization: S.F. League of Urban Garden

San Francisco Public Library Teen Advisory Council (TAC): *DJ Workshop Series*, a project designed to promote the use of the library by teens by offering free DJ workshops. Sponsoring Organization: San Francisco Public Library

South of Market Teen Center: *DJ Training Workshop*, a project to create DJ workshops for youth to learn the skills for becoming a proficient DJ. Sponsoring Organization: S.O.M.A Teen Center

Turning Heads: *Entrepreneur Workshops*, a project to provide entrepreneurial skills to youth from continuation high schools and Log Cabin Ranch. Project members will hold numerous workshops for youth to aid the start of a business, such as materials, financing and legal aid. Sponsoring Organization: Youth for Service

USF Upward Bound Visual & Performing Arts Project: *Magazine Project*. Sponsoring Organization: USF Upward Bound

You Can Cook: *Cooking Show*, a project to create a television program viewed on public access channel that expands and improves the nutritional cooking skills of youth. Sponsoring Organization: OMI / Excelsior Beacon

Young Asian Women Against Violence: *Youth Empowerment Through Arts*, a performance event that will include skits, poetry, music, and other forms of art on the topics of racism, sexism, and respect. Sponsoring Organization: Community Youth Center

Young Queens On the Rise: *Learning to Protect Ourselves*, a project to provide youth with awareness and prevention workshops about STDs, pregnancy, HIV, drugs and violence. Sponsoring Organization: Mission Neighborhood Center

Youth for Asian Theater: *Youth for Asian Theater Performance*, a project to produce and provide community performances on topics ranging from life skills to living with peer pressure. Sponsoring Organization: Sunset Residents Association

Island Fire Club: *Polynesian Club*, a new club at Thurgood Marshall High with goals to improve the academic standing of club members and to celebrate and learn about Polynesian culture. Sponsoring Organization: Thurgood Marshall Academic High School

Marin Youth Grants Board

2001-2002 Funded Projects

Beyond Recycling: *Beyond Recycling*, a convention for middle and high school students and adult environmentalists to raise environmental awareness and promote environmental responsibility beyond recycling in youth. Sponsoring Organization: Marin County Bicycle Coalition

Canal Youth Group: *Canal Sports and Leadership Group*, a project to involve 11-16 year olds in a year round program to develop and help coordinate new cheerleading and dance programs, a winter basketball league, and girls softball. Sponsoring Organization: Our Future Foundation

Drake High Peer Resource: *California Association of Peer Programmers Conference*, a three-day, statewide event for young people in peer resources programs to learn about topics like smoking and tobacco use, body image, suicide, eating disorders, depression, etc. Sponsoring Organization: Sir Francis Drake High School

Huckleberry Peer Health Educators: *Video Makers*, a team-building project to create a video to address issues such as: HIV, STD infection, pregnancy prevention, depression, LBGQT issues, eating disorders, and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Sponsoring Organization: Huckleberry Teen Health Programs

REACH Community Focus Group: *Street Theatre Team*, a new way to educate youth—outside the classroom and through drama—about HIV/AIDS and related issues. Sponsoring Organization: Marin AIDS Project

REACH Presentation Focus Group: *A Dance to Live For*, two dance events held in Marin City at the Manzanita Recreation Center to provide a safe place for young people to socialize while learning about HIV/AIDS and related issues. Sponsoring Organization: Marin AIDS Project

Redwood High School Interact Club: *Disability Awareness and Interaction Carnival*, a project to provide a safe, enjoyable environment in which persons with disabilities can

interact with youth of their community and to increase awareness, tolerance, and education about persons with disabilities at Redwood High School and in the greater community. Sponsoring Organization: Rotary of Marin, Sunrise

San Marin Peer Resource: *California Association of Peer Programmers Conference*, a three-day, statewide event for young people in peer resources programs to learn about topics like smoking and tobacco use, body image, suicide, eating disorders, depression, etc. Sponsoring Organization: San Marin High School

San Rafael High School Gay Straight Alliance: *Jump Start Projects*, various projects including a newsletter, t-shirts, student speaker training, and educational travel to increase the organizational capacity, leadership skills, and visibility of the newly formed Gay Straight Alliance at San Rafael High. Sponsoring Organization: San Rafael High School

San Rafael High School Latino Club: *Latino Cultural Heritage and Recognition Dance*, a project to raise awareness about the contributions made to America via Latin culture and prominent Latinos, including authors, scholars, and activists. Sponsoring Organization: San Rafael High School

Sister Circles: *Sister Circles*, an 8-week series of workshops hosted by older teen women to increase knowledge, self-confidence, and positive outlook in young women age 13-15. Sponsoring Organization: Community Alliance/Marin Youth Council

Youth For the Future: *Los Tres Reyes Magos (The Three Wise Men)*, a traditional Hispanic event based on the story of The Three Wise Men to provide disadvantaged children aged 4-11 with presents, to foster interaction between children and teenagers, and to keep the Los Tres Reyes Magos tradition alive in the younger generation.

Young Women's Empowerment Group: *Outreach Together*, a project in which YWEG members will make presentations at junior and senior high schools in Marin County about their experiences with issues like teen violence and crime, teen pregnancy, HIV and STD infection, teen pressure, substance abuse, personal responsibility, and life planning. Sponsoring Organization: Huckleberry Teen Health Program

Student Action Fund

Spring 2002 Funded Projects

Fremont High School - Polynesian Club: *Pacific Islander Studies Curriculum*, a class created by the Polynesian Club to renew cultural pride among students of Polynesian heritage and teach faculty and students in the Fremont High community about Polynesian culture.

Tennyson High School: *Student Voice Class*, a class called “Student Voice” which will teach students about community organizing and activism, and provide hands-on training on how to make social change.

Berkeley High School: *Unity Project*, a Multicultural Assembly created by Leadership Class students, with representation from all of the school’s different clubs and activities, to promote greater interaction and understanding among different social groups.

Castlemont High School: *Youth Together Student Unity Center*, an effort in the short-term to designate a single building where the myriad student groups on campus could coordinate joint campaigns, and in the long-term to eliminate the uniform high school exit examination.

Alhambra High School: *Martinez Youth Challenge Program*, a mentorship program building relationships between upper class students and eighth graders planning to enter the school, to make the high school environment more safe and supportive.

Life Learning Academy: *Senior Project*, a senior trip and outdoor survival class, after which seniors will make a student body presentation highlighting their learnings from the trip.

California Fund for Youth Organizing (A project of the Tides Foundation)

Grantees – Summer 2002

In July 2002, the Advisory Committee of the California Fund for Youth Organizing, a project of the Tides Foundation, awarded \$240,000 in general support grants to 12 organizations in areas of California where youth organizing efforts are under-resourced—the Central Valley, San Diego, and Los Angeles. Grants were awarded as follows:

American Friends Service Committee/U.S. Mexico Border Program – \$15,000

San Diego

To hire a youth outreach worker for the “Know Your Rights” Campaign which will include trainings and forums on human rights abuses along the Mexican/U.S. border for youth of color.

Asian American Drug Abuse Program, Inc. – \$15,000

Los Angeles

To support two student run groups at Gardena and Carson High Schools to wage campaigns that address cultural conflicts in their schools through sensitivity trainings, establishment of a teen center, and by promotion of ethnic studies classes.

Communities for a Better Environment – \$15,000

Los Angeles

To build a broad youth movement in Southeast Los Angeles to reduce industrial pollution and improve community health by organizing a yearly environmental justice youth conference, a summer leadership institute, three chapters in local high schools, and toxic tours to see some of Los Angeles’ most contaminated sites.

Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment/South Central Youth Empowered Through Action (SCYEA) – \$15,000

Los Angeles

To support organizing of SCYEA chapters in six high schools in South Central Los Angeles to increase the number of students who graduate from high school and are prepared to go to college through a campaign to hold schools accountable for A-G course requirements and to run a eight week political education training over the summer.

Fresno Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) – \$20,000

Central Valley

To increase the number of GSA chapters from 15 to 25 in the Central Valley; to train gay and straight youth in organizing and advocacy; and, to continue to hold school districts accountable to the AB537 anti-discrimination policy, passed in 2000.

Khmer Girls in Action – \$20,000

Los Angeles

To restructure the organization, originally known as the Hope Project for Girls, to fully integrate girl members into all levels of decision-making; to provide ongoing leadership opportunities for members; and, to research campaigns to improve the lives of Khmer girls in Long Beach.

Q-Team – \$15,000

Los Angeles

To organize and train lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender young people to work on social justice issues; to provide ongoing leadership training to its members, to network with other LGBT youth of color groups nationally, and to convene a summit in Spring 2003.

Sacramento Area Congregations Together (SACT)/Youth Acting Together – \$20,000

Central Valley

To build on the success of SACT's campaign last year that reduced the cost of public transportation for youth; to continue training young people in local religious institutions on community organizing to implement a youth agenda in Sacramento for quality education and after school programs.

San Diego Youth Organizing Communities (SDYOC) – \$30,000

San Diego

To support youth members of SDYOC chapters at three low-performing high schools to spearhead a campaign to implement ethnic studies classes; to create educational priority zones for failing schools; and, to facilitate a summer leadership institute.

San Fernando Valley Partnership/San Fernando Valley Youth Organization – \$15,000

Los Angeles

To support two youth led groups at local high schools to organize culturally competent campaigns to reduce alcohol and tobacco use; to organize a yearly leadership summit for 500 teens; and, to increase youth involvement in the overall leadership of the organization.

Youth Justice Coalition (YJC) – \$30,000

Los Angeles

To mobilize at least 250 young people to address the race and class-based inequities in Los Angeles juvenile justice policies; to challenge the lack of due process and community input in the implementation of gang injunctions and the gang database; to improve conditions at LA County juvenile halls; and, to push the County to develop community-based, owned, and operated alternatives to arrest, detention, and incarceration.

Youth Organizing Communities – \$30,000

Los Angeles

To support YOC’s “strike school,” a four-month series of workshops at two East Los Angeles high schools on the fundamentals of community organizing; to host an annual media camp; and to coordinate the statewide Schools Not Jails Network.
