In this Issue of Road Map...

To solve the myriad of problems affecting individuals in today's society, nonprofit, for-profit, and governmental agencies cannot work alone. This issue of Road Map is dedicated to exploring innovative partnerships between nonprofit and governmental agencies to bring about systemic change - from lobbying on the state and federal levels to using existing federal programs.

On October 22, 1999, the President and First Lady, with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), convened the first-ever “White House Conference on Philanthropy: Gifts to the Future.” Margaret Talburt, the executive director of MWF, traveled to Washington, D.C. to represent the Michigan Women’s Foundation and more broadly, philanthropy targeting issues concerning women and girls, at this White House conference.

Over a year later, the White House sponsored a second conference, this time on partnerships in philanthropy spanning from Federal agency partnerships with non-profits and effective practices for government partnerships to innovative private sector partnerships and the future of collaboration. These panel discussions both provided valuable information for foundations and non-profit agencies, but also laid the groundwork for better utilization of existing federal programs.

In this issue of Road Map, we share with you what we have learned from those conferences. There is some overlap in strategies between the articles, and we chose not to edit the overlap because those strategies really do work! —Kate Van Til, Editor

Becoming a Policy Advocate for your organization:

- **Collaborate** - By partnering with other organizations and individuals, you increase your resource base and expertise, and create a larger and more visible presence in your community and among legislators.

- **Do your research** - Don't underestimate your own expertise - few institutions are closer to the real problems of people than non-profits and community groups. However, policy makers want a broader perspective as well. It is important to become well informed about the issues you discuss with policy makers.

- **Get to know your legislators** - Call legislators and make appointments to meet with them. Invite legislators and their staff to your programming (they may not attend, but they will be aware of what you are doing).

- **Get to know your legislators’ staff** - Legislators are often busy, but a staff person familiar with you and your issues can bring your concerns to the legislators' attention.

- **Create a position statement** - If there is a policy of concern, create a position statement that clearly articulates the basis for your belief using data, statistics, and research whenever possible. Make sure that your statement is clear, concise and free of jargon.

- **Hold forums for community members** - Hold forums on issues of concern to your non-profit. Be sure to bring in experts on the topic of interest and invite legislators to attend.

- **Use all available media** - Send press releases to media and make follow-up calls to reporters, meet with the editorial boards of the papers in your area to let them know your position. Organize “a letter to the editor” campaign by drafting a letter that can be copied and sent by your members to the papers in their area. Design a web page that describes your organization and its goals.

Becoming an advocate for your organization and the issues that are important to you is the (Policy Advocate, Continued on page 2)

USDA Kit to Help End Hunger and Poverty

The following article is excerpted in part from the booklet: Community Food Security Resource Kit

Recently, the United States Department of Agriculture published the Community Food Security Resource Kit: how to find money, technical assistance, and other help to fight hunger and strengthen local food systems as part of its USDA Community Food Security Initiative.

This initiative seeks to cut hunger in America in half by the year 2015. To reach this goal, the USDA is joining with states, municipalities, nonprofit groups and the private sector to strengthen local food systems by replicating best practices of existing efforts and by catalyzing new community commitments to fight hunger. For far too long, many government programs worked in isolation from communities; likewise, community led efforts frequently were disconnected from government resources that can help improve their programs.

Seven key action areas of the initiative are outlined in the resource kit’s seven chapters including: local infrastructure; economic and job security; federal nutrition assistance safety; food recovery and donations; community food production and marketing; education and awareness; research, monitoring and evaluation.

This kit helps people who work at the grassroots level to obtain the resources they need to end hunger and food insecurity. This guide will help you find funds, technical assistance, and other help for community food security-related activities from a wide variety of sources. It is one concrete way USDA is aiming to strengthen comprehensive community-based solutions, as well as improve the utilization and effectiveness of key Federal nutrition programs like the Food Stamp Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

The USDA community resource kit is designed to provide State, local, and tribal governments, as well as local nonprofit organizations, with the information needed to initiate, strengthen, or expand many programs currently focused at achieving community food security and ending poverty.

For more information or to obtain a copy of the kit, contact: Coordinator of Community Food Security, USDA, Room 536-A, 14th and Independence Aves. SW, Washington, DC 20250. Phone (202) 205-0241, Fax (202) 690-1131, email: cfs.initiative@usda.gov, web address: www.reusda.gov/food_security/foodshp.htm.
Strategies for Informing State Policy Makers

The following is excerpted from Informing State Policy: Five Communication Strategies for Community Advocates and Leaders published by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

State policy makers need experiences from community projects that you - as a leader or active participant of a community project or cause - can best provide. According to the State Policy Makers Survey; Sources of Information and Term Limit Impacts’, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, state policy makers consider their two most important sources of information to be community organizations and their own staff.

The following strategies are based on survey results and intended to serve as general guidelines. You will need to adapt them to your specific project, community, policy makers, state and region. Survey results indicate differences in the use of information sources from state to state and region to region, as well as from one group of policy makers to another.

Strategy One: Work in partnership with other organizations. Working in partnership with other community groups may help you to inform state policy. The reason is that policy makers consider community groups to be important sources of credible information. Ethnic associations, such as The Urban League and the National Council of La Raza, are a prime example.

In rating information sources, policy makers of color indicate that ethnic associations are slightly more important sources than their own staff. They also consider local branches of national organizations to be critical sources for information. In light of these findings, the survey recommends that community project leaders partner with local offices of national ethnic associations to inform policy makers of color.

Strategy Two: Know the key characteristics of state policy makers and their districts that may influence their use of information sources.

The survey found that certain characteristics of state policy makers and their districts tend to influence their choice of information sources.

To make your information readily accessible for policy makers of color, consider communicating through the Internet. Explore the possibilities of working with ethnic associations, local branches of national organizations and state policy makers' staff to develop Internet capacity.

Knowing the key characteristics of policy makers and their districts can help you determine the information sources they're most likely to consult.

Strategy Three: Provide information and support for policy makers' staff.

Staff are an important information source for all policy makers surveyed. The survey team recommends that you provide staff with information, and also invite them to workshops or educational policy briefings, to fully explore community goals and experiences.

Of special note: While policy makers of color rate only two information sources - community organizations and ethnic associations - above their staff, few of their staff are of color. Community advocates should consider working with ethnic associations at the state and national levels to provide professional development and training opportunities for staff of color.

Strategy Four: Link your information to policy makers’ key issues.

Each policy maker has issues of special concern. Relating information to their key issues can help to ensure that policy makers notice it. For example, policy makers from rural areas tend to seek information about economic issues. Therefore, to draw attention to project achievements in rural districts, it would be strategic to present the information related to rural economic development.

Strategy Five: Since Michigan has a term limited legislature, focus on informing policy makers likely to become leaders in areas important to your work.

This portion of the survey included policy makers in six states, three of which had passed term limits at the time of the survey (California, Louisiana, and Michigan) paired with three that had not (Illinois, Mississippi and New York).

Respondents expect term limits to make experience and expertise even stronger predictors of leadership. Therefore, it is strategic to build relationships with policy makers with expertise in areas that relate to your community project.

In doing so, it is important to recognize that at the time of the survey:

- Most policy makers do not expect term limits to affect any group's access to them.
- Most policy makers do not expect to spend more time

(Continued on page 3)
A total of 507 state policy makers were surveyed. Eleven respondents did not indicate race. The 12 states surveyed: California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, Texas and Washington.

For a complete State Policy Makers’ Survey report, download a copy from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation website: http://www.wkkf.org or contact: Kathy Reincke, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Fax (616) 969-2187, email: kathy.reincke@wkkf.org

5 Categories of Non-Lobbying Activities:

- making available the results of nonpartisan analysis, study or research
- providing technical advice to a governmental body or subdivision thereof in response to a written request by that organization
- appearances before, or communications to, any legislative body with respect to a decision affecting the existence, duties, powers, status, etc., of the organization
- communications between the organization and bona fide members of the organization with respect to legislative matters
- communications with governmental officials or employees on non-legislative matters (implicit herein are administrative or executive matters such as rule-making)

Lobbying 101: What is lobbying?

The State of Michigan and the Michigan Lobby Registration Act-2000 define lobbying as: “any direct contact with a lobbyable public official, whether face to face, by telephone, letter, electronic media or any other means, the purpose of which is to influence the officials legislative or administrative actions.” Lobbying, communication referring to a specific piece of legislation and expressing a position on it, can take two forms: Direct lobbying, communication to any government employee who may aid in the production of such legislation, and Grassroots lobbying, communication to the general public or any segment of the general public encouraging them to engage in lobbying.

Is this Considered a Lobbying Activity? By Michigan By the IRS

Calling a state representative, encouraging them to vote for or against legislation. YES YES (direct lobbying)
General education to public officials on issues not legislation. NO NO
Emailing the Secretary of State, encouraging him/her to take a specific stance on a proposed administrative action. YES NO
Buying ad space in a local newspaper, voicing opposition to legislation and asking the public to contact their legislators in opposition to the bill. NO YES (grassroots lobbying)
Writing a letter to the editor, urging the public to contact legislators in favor of proposed legislation. NO YES (grassroots lobbying)
A nonprofit’s response to written requests from a legislative body for technical advice on pending legislation. YES NO
Speaking to legislators (but not to the general public) on matters that may affect the organization’s own existence, power, tax-exempt status, and similar matters. YES NO
Making available the results of “nonpartisan analysis, study or research” on a legislative issue that presents a sufficiently full and fair exposition of the pertinent facts to enable the audience to form an independent opinion. YES NO
A nonprofit’s discussion of broad, social economic and similar policy issues whose resolution would require legislation, even if specific legislation on the matter is pending. YES NO
A nonprofit’s communications to its members on legislation that does not encourage them to contact public officials. NO NO

Did you know? Facts to lobby about...


81% of Michigan counties do not have an abortion provider according to www.NARAL.com.

American Heart Association’s women specific website (http://women.americanheart.org) reports that cardiovascular disease is responsible for more deaths than the next 16 leading causes of death (including all forms of cancer) for women combined.

According to the Institute for Women’s Policy research, Michigan ranks 43rd on their Reproductive Rights Composite Index. Check out www.iwpr.org to find out why.

Michigan ranks 6th in Families Bearing the Cost of Education according to the Center for the Education of Women at the University of Michigan. Log onto www.umich.edu/~cew to see what you can do.

The HIV infection rate for women is increasing at four times the rate for men in the United States according to the Michigan Department of Community Health. Go to www.mdch.state.mi.us to see what the state is doing to stop the spread.

More Publications

Listed below are internet publications of interest to nonprofit professionals:

Contributions Magazine
www.contributionsmagazine.com

The Chronicle of Philanthropy
www.philanthropy.com

Philanthropy Journal Online
www.philanthropy-journal.org

Nonprofit World
http://danenet.wicip.org/snpo/newpage2.htm

Grantsmanship Center Magazine
www.tgic.com/publications/magazine.htm

The NonProfit Times
www.nptimes.com

The Michigan Nonprofit Association
www.mna.msu.edu

Independent Sector
www.IndependentSector.org

Grassroots lobbying and other creative ways to be a policy advocate - use marketing techniques to lobby:

Ads
Awards
Booklets
Brochures
Bus Shelter Posters
Cable Announcements
Direct Mail
Email
Fliers
Fundraiser
Lunch & Learn Newsletter
Op-ed Articles

Phone-a-thon
Postcards
Posters
Press Packets & Media Calls
Public Speaking
Engagements
Radio Announcements
Web Site

Funded by

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Michigan Women's Foundation - West 3952 P.O. 734-352-3946 Fax: 734-342-1177 N. Lurie Park Dr., Suite 433

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