

# 2005-2006 Report to Contributors

Grantmakers for Education believes philanthropy, done wisely, can contribute solutions to the problems that prevent too many students from learning and achieving. Last year, as part of developing a theory of change to guide the organization, we identified eight principles that lead to greater impact in education (if you haven't already, see Principles for Effective Education Grantmaking at [www.edfunders.org](http://www.edfunders.org)).

Even as we hope the principles challenge grantmakers throughout our field to reflect on how and why they pursue this work, we also have worked to infuse the principles into all that GFE does and to guide our programs and activities. At the end of 2006, you'll see the results of many efforts we've had underway:

- We'll broadly distribute new case studies that consider the issues, challenges and approaches of more effective education grantmaking.
- Beginning at our annual conference in November 2006—and continuing through next year—we'll create opportunities for grantmakers to meet with colleagues to discuss the case studies and the lessons they suggest for better philanthropy in education. We expect these discussions will represent exceptional professional learning opportunities.

- Our conference this year also features keynote speakers with unique perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of our field: Lisbeth Schorr, Angela Glover Blackwell and Sterling Speirn. Together with a slate of terrific sessions (also chosen with an eye to the content of our eight principles), these speakers will ask grantmakers to consider "new partners, new tools, new urgency" in their strategies.
- A new workbook for individual donors and small foundations seeks to capture and share the knowledge within GFE's network about effective education grantmaking.

Over the next year, you will continue to see GFE re-aligning the content and goals of its work to support our eight principles and to help grantmakers use them.

Thank you for contributing to the vitality and energy of the GFE network. We remain excited about our contributions to the field and your work.



Barbara Chow, GFE Chair  
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC  
SOCIETY EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION



William Porter,  
Executive Director  
GRANTMAKERS FOR  
EDUCATION

## Mission

Grantmakers for Education is philanthropy's knowledge source for achieving results in education. Our mission is to strengthen philanthropy's capacity to improve educational outcomes for all students, which we achieve by:

- Sharing successful grantmaking strategies, best practices and lessons learned that exemplify responsive and responsible grantmaking in education.
- Creating venues to collaborate on projects, share knowledge, develop leadership, advocate for change and debate strategies with other education grantmakers.
- Interpreting data, illustrating trends and conducting research to improve the effectiveness of education grantmaking and to highlight innovative educational approaches.

## Accomplishments & Activities

### KNOWLEDGE SERVICES:

- **Principles for Effective Education Grantmaking:** GFE promotes eight key practices for improving the impact of education funders; case studies examining each principle will be available beginning Fall 2006.
- **GFE Knowledge Center:** Unveiled in late 2005, this online tool provides both recommended resources for education grantmakers and online space for grantmakers to share information and collaborate.
- **Searchable online directory** of education grantmakers encourages networking and information-sharing.
- **GFE Notebook**—featuring essays and criticisms from education grantmakers—mailed

three times each year. Highlights include an interview with the Gates Foundation's Tom Vander Ark on lessons learned and a synopsis of demographer Harold Hodgkinson's illuminating remarks at the 2005 GFE conference.

- **Bi-monthly email newsletter** reports on timely research and news in the field.

### PROGRAMS:

#### MEMBER BRIEFINGS:

- **The Education of American Indians: Promoting Successful Programs and Strategies** (February 2006): In collaboration with Native Americans in Philanthropy and the American Indian College Fund, this *(continued on reverse)*

## 2005 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### INCOME

Membership contributions and grants (current year & prepaid)	\$477,046
Grants for special projects & programs (current year activities)	360,054
Grants for special projects & programs (future year activities)	225,708
Program revenue (annual conference)	206,605
Interest income and investment gains	9,576
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,278,989</b>

### EXPENSES

Salary, benefits, and payroll taxes	\$288,834
Consulting	171,188
Program - speaker travel	45,474
Program - facilities and catering	189,204
Office & meeting space	17,718
Supplies & equipment	17,516
Graphic design	16,230
Professional fees (legal, accounting, etc.)	14,214
Telephone and internet	15,521
Printing	28,891
Staff travel	30,369
Insurance	2,382
Depreciation	30,252
Miscellaneous expenses	7,891
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$875,684</b>

Each year, Grantmakers for Education's statements of financial position, activities and cash flow are reviewed by an independent accounting agency. Complete copies of GFE's 2005 reviewed financial statement are available on request.

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meeting assembled tribal leaders to advise funders on education and grantmaking strategies that can make a difference for one of the most overlooked student populations.

- In conjunction with a Philanthropy Roundtable program examining **Milwaukee's controversial school choice program**, GFE arranged an informal conversation with Milwaukee Public Schools superintendent William Andrekopoulos and Alan Borsuk, a *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reporter (March 2006).
- GFE invited members to drop into **Evaluating Grantmaking for Advocacy**, an online Knowledge Center discussion forum featuring evaluation expert Patti Patrizi (March 2006).
- **Making the Most of Our Investments: How PK-3 Alignment Can Close the Achievement Gap from the Start** (May 2006): This two-day briefing suggested grantmaking and program models for better aligning pre-kindergarten and early elementary school.

**SIGNATURE EVENTS:**

- **Annual national conference** (October 2005): *Educating a New America: Changing Populations, Changing Demands, Changing World* identified philanthropic strategies for helping education systems effectively respond to issues such as globalization, immigration and technological innovation. With 349 attendees, the conference was GFE's largest.
- **Foundation Leaders Institute** (October 2005): For the third year, GFE offered a unique program for CEOs and trustees, which examined the importance of

“strategic clarity” in grantmaking and probed the appropriate leadership role of foundations in advancing social change.

**SPECIAL GRANTMAKERS-ONLY CONVENINGS AT MAJOR CONFERENCES:**

- **Council on Foundations** (May 2006): A GFE-organized session—*Leading Boldly*—explored how foundations can be more effective leaders in solving community problems. Maxwell King of the Heinz Endowments and Ralph Smith of the Annie E. Casey Foundation reflected on their lessons learned. GFE also convened funders to hear from new Pittsburgh Schools Superintendent Mark Roosevelt and to consider ways of strengthening opportunities for immigrant youth.
- **American Educational Research Association** (April 2006): GFE co-sponsored a track of sessions aimed at links between education philanthropy and evaluation.
- **Education Commission of the States** (July 2006): A special grantmakers-only track—*A Decade of Standards-Based Education: What Should Be Next?*—engaged funders and state leaders in considering the status and appropriate next steps of efforts to raise standards.

**NETWORKING AND MEMBERSHIP:**

- GFE members include 216 private and operating foundations, corporate giving programs, public charities and other grantmaking organizations at end of 2005.
- 27 new foundations joined GFE in 2005, while 12 chose not to renew.

## Looking forward: Strategic initiatives

In addition to our annual programs and activities, GFE also is engaged in several strategic initiatives to advance its mission.

**Improving education philanthropy**

To help funders reflect on specific practices that can ensure their grants lead to results, we've developed five new case studies that consider the issues, challenges and approaches of more effective education grantmaking. We believe these case studies are unique for philanthropy. GFE is broadly distributing them to the field in Fall 2006 and will be designing program opportunities for grantmakers to discuss the cases with colleagues throughout 2007.

**Funder collaboration**

Collaboration between funders increasingly is seen as a way to improve grantmaking effectiveness, and GFE is now engaged in a year-long business planning process to examine whether and how the organization might encourage greater collaboration and coordination among education funders. Currently,

GFE supports collaboration among its members in indirect ways: primarily by facilitating introductions between funders working on similar issues, providing structured networking activities, and encouraging communities of practice and study groups. Our planning effort will test the hypothesis that opportunities exist for GFE to offer more intentional support to its members in this area.

**Individual donors**

In response to the growth of individual donors and new foundations in our sector, GFE is creating a set of materials and courses that can help them become more effective education grantmakers. Our goal is to capture the knowledge about education and grantmaking embedded within the GFE network. Working in partnership with two other funder networks that already serve individual donors—Social Venture Partners International and the Association of Small Foundations—GFE has designed a special toolkit with lessons about creating change in education.

# Results

Grantmakers for Education continually evaluates its work. Surveys assessing GFE's impact and the usefulness of each program are used extensively. And the results are reviewed carefully, helping to shape future program design and services. Feedback to GFE in 2005-2006 on key issues included:

**Providing opportunities to improve education grantmaking:** (percentage of respondents rating GFE opportunities a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale)

56%	Learn about innovative work
64%	Learn what others are funding
69%	Network with other grantmakers
42%	Collaborate with other grantmakers
44%	Learn about craft of education grantmaking

**Overall quality of GFE's 2005 conference:**

47%	Excellent
53%	Good
9%	Fair
1%	Poor

**Examples of improved effectiveness as a result of participation in GFE:**

“I've adopted a ‘theory of change’ approach and been more strategic in my grantmaking. I'm more confident in designing projects because I can draw on examples from other foundations' work. I do a better job at evaluation.”

“GFE provides opportunities to learn about current and nascent education issues, and more specifically, how these issues affect my work.”

“GFE is a place to learn about other funders' work, and how we can work together to capitalize on each other's work.”

“GFE resources keep me from ‘reinventing the wheel’ as a single professional. I am connected to others across the country who are thinking about and developing responses to similar issues.”

**Value of annual membership contribution to GFE** (1 is not a good value and 5 is a very good value):

37.5%	5
28%	4
17.5%	3
3.8%	2
0%	1
13.3%	Don't know

**Number of GFE Members:**

2002	174
2003	185
2004	206
2005	216
2006 (through September)	221