

THE LAFF SOCIETY

For the men and women engaged in Life After the Ford Foundation
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Katrina-Rita: Special Issue

This a special issue of the LAFF Newsletter prompted by the prominent roles being played by five LAFF members — **Emmett Carson, Mike Rubinger, Ghebre Selassie Mehretab, Lynn Huntley and Eamon Kelley** – in the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Katrina-Rita: Emmett Carson

Emmett Carson, past president of the LAFF Society, has taken a leave from the Minneapolis Foundation to serve as interim CEO of the new Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation created by Louisiana Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco.

The foundation was established in the week following Hurricane Katrina to accept and distribute donations to meet the needs of the thousands of Louisiana citizens whose lives have been devastated. Norman Francis, long-time president of Xavier University in New Orleans is chairman of the board.

LDRF will work closely with established community grants-making foundations and nonprofit agencies in Louisiana, such as United Way, to efficiently and effectively reach organizations working with those most in need. It will focus on long-term family restoration and recovery through grants in education, housing, health care, legal assistance and jobs.

In announcing LDRF's board and officers, Governor Blanco said, "We have asked national foundation leaders and some of Louisiana's most respected private citizens to serve as leaders of the foundation. The task of assisting with family restoration is a monumental one and will require the combined knowledge and reach of this special group of leaders who have either a proven knowledge of Louisiana or a national history of community service."

The governor acknowledged Emmett's leadership in the community-foundation field as the president of the Minneapolis Foundation and as the head of the Ford Foundation's Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector program. She also cited his authorship of more than 75 publications on philanthropy and social-justice issues.

"Dr. Carson," she continued, "is well known and respected for assisting foundations around the world in developing grant-making programs that improve and strengthen local communities. He will also bring unique expertise and oversight from his position as chair of the Council of Foundations, the nation's most recognized gathering of foundation leaders."

Katrina-Rita: Mike Rubinger

America's corporations and foundations have committed more than a half-billion dollars to assist the victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Most of this has been directed to immediate relief and rehabilitation efforts. In contrast, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), under **Mike Rubinger**, is focusing on long-term community redevelopment in hurricane-impacted communities in the Gulf area.

With support from the Rockefeller Foundation, LISC has joined the Enterprise Foundation in establishing the Community Recover Fund (CRF) to bring to bear on longer-term community needs each organization's expertise, relationships and access to capital.

The CRF program has three components:

- a special equity fund, involving both raising investment dollars and working on the policy level to generate federal housing credits;
- technical assistance to local partners in rebuilding their neighborhoods and relocating evacuees; and
- grants and loans to local partners for such community efforts as housing, community facilities and economic development.

"As we and others focus on the immediate concerns of disaster relief," Rubinger, LISC president, and Bart Harvey, Enterprise chairman, said in a prepared statement, "we are also marshaling our resources to make sure displaced residents have homes and businesses to come back to. For the better part of three decades, LISC and Enterprise have been focused on helping low-income residents improve their quality of life. Given the magnitude of this disaster, it makes sense that we combine our efforts so we have the scale we need to have a lasting impact."

LISC began as an initiative at the Ford Foundation in 1980 under the leadership of Michael Sviridoff, then national affairs vice president with Rubinger on his staff. Now an independent agency, LISC has raised more than \$6 billion from 3,100 investors, lenders and donors. In over 300 urban and rural communities, it has helped 2,400 community development corporations (CDS) build or rehab more than 158,000 affordable homes and almost 22 million square feet of retail, community and educational space – a total investment of almost \$13 billion.

The Enterprise Foundation began in the early 1970s as the brainchild of a real estate developer, James Rouse; his wife, Patty, and the Church of the Savior in Washington, D.C. Since then Enterprise has worked with 2,500 community organizations to help low-income families acquire decent homes, access to steady employment, quality childcare, and safer streets. It has leveraged close to \$6 billion in investments and donations to help some 175,000 affordable homes.

Katrina-Rita: Gabe Mehretab

Like LISC, the NHP Foundation, headed by **Ghebre Selassie Mehretab**, is getting into the housing business for Katrina evacuees, but its focus is on evacuees who have elected to settle

outside the hurricane-impacted areas.

The NHPF program will provide 437 housing units for 1,350 Katrina evacuees. This includes 259 apartments in Texas (Dallas, Arlington, Fort Worth and Houston) and 178 units in Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania. In addition, it will restore 952 damaged housing units it already owns in and around New Orleans.

In addition to the housing, NHPF will also provide supporting services for children, families and senior citizens. Further, NHPF's affiliated Operation Pathways is supplying on an emergency basis personal hygiene packets, non-perishable food, clothing and essential household items, and is assisting in arranging school enrollments and finding employment opportunities.

The NHP Foundation was founded in 1989 to increase the quality and quantity of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families by building and operating its own housing properties. Mehretab helped conceive and plan the organization as a program officer in the Foundation's Rural Poverty program in the 1980s.

NHPF has preserved as affordable housing 44 properties totaling 9,000 units. Its current portfolio consists of 29 properties or approximately 5,600 housing units in 11 states, including the four Katrina-damaged properties in and around New Orleans..

Katrina-Rita: Lynn Huntley

The Southern Education Foundation, headed by **Lynn W. Huntley**, received a \$2.8 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to aid historically black colleges and universities that enroll students affected by Hurricane Katrina.

The money will be disbursed directly to SEF's Center to Serve Historically Black Colleges and Universities that accept student evacuees from the Gulf Coast area to help defray enrollment and living costs.

Founded in 1867, SEF works to ensure fairness and excellence in education for all through a variety of programs and strategies involving research, analysis, advocacy, technical assistance, and outreach. With offices in Atlanta, its major groups seek to increase the number of African-American teacher in public schools, advance equity in higher education, and strengthen the fund-raising capacities of historically black educational institutions.

Lynn joined the staff of SEF in 1995 and was named executive vice president in 2000 and president in 2003. She previously served as section chief in the Civil Rights Division of the U. S. Department of Justice and then directed the Rights and Social Justice Program at the Ford Foundation.

Katrina-Rita: Eamon Kelly

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans on August 29, **Eamon Kelly**, who has been at Tulane University since 1979, and his wife Margaret were at their vacation home at Rockway Point,

Long Island. They couldn't return to New Orleans, so they stayed put on Long Island, Eamon communicating with Tulane colleagues and students by internet using his desktop computer.

The following day Eamon learned that Tulane had closed down its New Orleans campus because of extensive physical damage and a lack of potable water, electric power and physical security. By September 1, the university had moved the core of its operations to Houston and other locations in Texas. So on September 24, Eamon proceeded with established plans for a business visit to West Africa, and at this writing, he's still in West Africa.

As old-timers may recall, Eamon first worked at the Foundation in the mail room from 1955 to 1960 while an undergraduate at Fordham. After receiving his Ph.D. in economics from Columbia, he taught at Penn State and worked for the Economic Development Administration in Washington. In 1969, he rejoined the Foundation as officer-in-charge of the Office of Social Development, and then was named director of Program Related Investments (PRIs).

Eamon went to Tulane in 1979 as executive vice president and was elected president the following year. He retired in 1998 to become founding member and senior staffer of a new Tulane entity, the Payson Center for International Development and Technology Transfer. With offices in New Orleans and Arlington, Virginia, Payson undertakes research, education and technical assistance on the potential impact of information technology on the developing world.

We reached Eamon at his Long Island place the day before he left for Africa. He had been informed, he reported, that his New Orleans home had taken on three feet of water and had suffered extensive roof damage from fallen trees. He had no idea of the extent of the interior damage, but sooner or later, he was confident, he would get home to undertake the needed repairs. Meanwhile, he was continuing his Tulane classes through the internet using his laptop.

Eamon's successor as Tulane president, Scott Cowen, hopes to resume classes on the New Orleans campus in January. Meanwhile, Eamon is in West Africa, concentrating on a new regional public-health project financed by US-AID and eventually to involve 15 countries. In cooperation with the West African Health Organization, the project is developing policies and methodologies to ensure the equitable and transparent distribution of anti-retroviral drugs.

Katrina-Rita: Ford Foundation

On September 30, the trustees of the Ford Foundation approved a \$10 million appropriation to assist local and community-based groups in the devastated region that are directly serving people affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. According to program officer Suzanne Siskel, most of the funds will be allocated with longer-term objectives in mind rather than for immediate relief and recovery.

Other News

LAFfing Parade

Gordon Conway, former Ford representative in India and then president of the Rockefeller

Foundation, is now Sir Gordon Conway, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. The honor, normally given to top ambassadors, was conferred by Queen Elizabeth for his years of service in the field of international economic development. Conway is now chief scientific adviser for the British Department of International Development. He recently visited Thailand, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India and Ethiopia, but is spending as much time as possible in a cottage that he and Susan recently bought in Sussex.

Gordon Perkin was awarded the first Advancing Global Health Award by the Seattle Biomedical Research Institute. The Institute is the largest independent, nonprofit research institute in the U.S. focused solely on the world's most devastating diseases, including malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Perkin joined the Foundation's Population Program in the late 1960s to work on the promotion of suitable contraceptive technologies for the developing world. In the late 1970s, he moved to Seattle as founding president of PATH, a nonprofit working on the development of appropriate technologies and strategies to improve global health. He is now a senior fellow at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Robert Shaw has retired as general manager of the Aga Khan Foundation but is still living in Geneva, Switzerland. He writes that he does "occasional consulting jobs on subjects of particular interest to me," and has worked several times on Burma for the United Nations, including some joint consulting with **Sheila McLean**. Shaw worked for the Foundation in Jakarta and served as representative in Pakistan.

LAFF's new chapter in India is now receiving visitors from LAFF - U.S. In September, **David Winder**, a veteran of Ford's International Division in the 1980s and 1990s, visited New Delhi on behalf of the Synergos Institute, which provides technical support to new and existing grant-making foundations in the developing world. Winder met for dinner with 13 members of the New Delhi chapter assembled by **F. C. Bhambry**. Winder discussed Synergos's efforts to interest private sector Indian companies in philanthropy for child nutrition, and the New Delhi members talked about how they were keeping busy after retiring from the Foundation.

In recognition of his contributions to agricultural development, Kansas State University recently bestowed on **Norman Collins** its Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award. Norm was with the Foundation for 31 years – as program officer for agriculture in Chile and India, director of the worldwide Rural Poverty and Resources Program, and representative for Mexico and Central America. "For more than 30 years," the citation read, "Dr. Collins has successfully applied his first class intellect, abundant energy, and ever expanding expertise to improving the well-being of the less advantaged in developing countries."

Civil Liberties Warnings

Threats to American civil liberties are on the upswing, **Anthony D. Romero**, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, told an audience of Ford Foundation alumni in September. Romero was director of the Human Rights and International Cooperation Program during his five years with the Foundation.

When he was running international human-rights programs at the Foundation, he continued, he thought that some of the abuses he saw abroad (e.g., Argentina, Chile) could not happen in this country. He said he now knows differently, citing these recent abuses of civil liberties:

- the arrest by the federal government of an American citizen on American soil and the denial to him of access to a lawyer for three years;
- the torture of prisoners by American soldiers, on which the ACLU has brought three suits. He criticized Attorney General Alberto Gonzales for calling the Geneva Conventions obsolete and later saying the United States observes human rights;
- the government's seizure of the library internet records of a Connecticut institution, whose identity could not be disclosed pursuant to a federal gag order under the U.S. Patriot Act. The ACLU is was fighting to lift the gag order; and
- the government's "rendition" of prisoners to countries that permit torture. "For true accountability," he said, "you have to look up the chain of command and not down."

Contrasting his new job with his Foundation experience, Romero drew laughter when he said, "It is humbling as hell to raise money." He added, "It is also gratifying when you can speak out directly and forthrightly on issues you care about. The Foundation does so indirectly through its grants. There were moments, though, when the Foundation staff would have been delighted to speak out more directly on issues they cared about."

Finally, speaking of his affection for the Foundation, he commented with a tinge of regret on the impasse between the Foundation and the ACLU over the anti-terrorist statements that grant recipients are now required to sign. The ACLU feels that such statements are too vague and could adversely affect the civil liberties of grantees. As such, the ACLU has declined to sign such a statement as part of its grant letter, thereby losing FF grant funds.

Romero said he initially recognized the grant letter requirement as a protection against right-wing attacks on foundations. But as other grant restrictions proliferated, his concerns about such restrictions have increased. Still, he is hopeful that the ACLU and the Foundation will find a solution.

A Savings Society by **Lisa Mensah**

When I look into the future, I see an America where people of all income levels can save, invest and own assets. This is not a new vision for me, but it takes on added poignancy in the light of Hurricane Katrina's revelation about the country's continuing poverty and class issues.

The vision began to take shape during the 13 years I spent working on two Ford Foundation programs: Rural Poverty and Resources and Asset Building and Community Development. Now I head my own program, the Initiative on Financial Security (IFS) at the Aspen Institute, and I am making that vision a reality for millions of Americans at the bottom of the income pyramid.

At the Foundation, I was instrumental in developing a plan to help low- and moderate-income people save for long-term assets by funding community organizations that offer Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). I became the country's top funder of IDAs and saw firsthand how lower-income Americans can be enabled to save for a home, education, business or retirement plan. While this work demonstrated that low-income Americans have the ability to save for long-term assets, I concluded that the larger challenge was to move from community-level experiments to a national system of matched savings accounts.

Three years ago, I left the Foundation and set out to meet this challenge. I knew that changing how America saves required input from the country's top business leaders. With a grant from the Foundation, I brought IFS to the Aspen Institute because of Aspen's commitment to bipartisanship and its prestige among both policy makers and private sector leaders. I was able to assemble an advisory board of chief executive officers and high-ranking managers at financial-service firms, banks and credit unions from across the nation.

I am now working with these leaders to influence policy-makers to create savings solutions that work for low- and moderate-income Americans. It's a win-win situation. Asking business leaders for their ideas on financial tools that reach the bottom of the pyramid will create better financial policy and better social policy for the country. While attracting some of the country's most sought-after business leaders to the advisory board was hard work, I have been encouraged by the sense of urgency and compassion that each member has brought to the table.

My greatest challenge is the magnitude of the mission and the time available to inspire policy change. The goal is to change the discussion and give policy makers a set of savings solutions — such as children's trust accounts and universal pensions — that are available to everyone.

LAFF's Future

Speaking to the LAFF audience assembled to hear Anthony Romero's talk in September (see separate article), **Peter Geithner**, new LAFF president, proposed four priorities for the organization's future growth:

- update and expand the membership;
- encourage the formation of groups similar to the one in New York in locations with a substantial alumni presence, such as Washington and Boston as well as overseas;
- measures to "make it easier for members to communicate electronically," by possibly forming a list serv or a web site on which would be posted the newsletter, announcement of events, job descriptions, an updated directory, and pleas for contacting potential members (the newsletter would continue to be available in hard copy); and
- recruitment of volunteers to take over from those who have had responsibility for the organization since the beginning.

In Memoriam

Robert Havener, an agricultural specialist in the International Division who went on to head five of the world's major international agricultural programs, died in California in August. A longer tribute to Havener's remarkable leadership record is planned for an upcoming issue.

David C. Anderson, director of communications at the Ford Foundation from 1999 to 2003, died in Manhattan in September. Before joining the Foundation, he was a member of the editorial board of the New York Times.

The LAFF Society

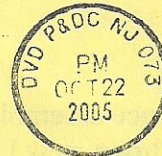
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