

2006-2007 Report to Contributors

One of Grantmakers for Education's most important assets is the implicit experience, wisdom and knowledge of all the members of our diverse, national network. We're working to better capture and more broadly share this knowledge. Last year we saw the culmination of two GFE projects of which we are especially proud and that we think are making real contributions to improving education philanthropy.

First, we released *Improving Public Education: A Guide for Donors to Make a Difference*, a toolkit that collects the best insights and advice from GFE about getting started in education philanthropy. It offers new donors—or grantmakers wishing to revisit their current strategies—information about the performance and needs of the K-12 public education system, guidelines for choosing a focus and developing a strategy, and ideas on linking a funder's resources to results. The guide, co-produced with the Association of Small Foundations and Social Venture Partners, has quickly become our most-requested product.

Second, to complement GFE's Principles for Effective Education Grantmaking—eight practices that we think lead to greater impact in education—we commissioned a series of case studies that present rich, thought-provoking examples of how funders can use these principles in their education grantmaking. The cases draw on the lessons and experiences of individual GFE members who have made an impact

with their grantmaking. Recognizing that much of the power of case study teaching comes from opportunities to debate what happens in the case with colleagues, GFE also has created discussion seminars at our national conference and at local programs co-sponsored by regional associations of grantmakers. A new set of case studies will be completed by late 2007.

It's significant that 80% of GFE members filling out our annual membership survey say they are familiar with these principles of effective grantmaking. Further, 50% said they have read one or more of the case studies, and 20% have participated in one of our seminars to discuss a case. We're excited to see so much intellectual energy and reflection committed to improving the results of education grantmaking.

We believe philanthropy, done wisely, can contribute solutions to the problems that prevent too many students from learning and achieving—and GFE continues to work hard to deliver services and products that can help you make a difference in your communities. 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.



Lata Reddy,
GFE Chair
PRUDENTIAL 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.

Theory of Action



In 2005, GFE's Board of Directors adopted a theory of action to improve on GFE's results and to help ensure that the organization—in addition to offering well-received programs—was actually improving education grantmaking practices. The theory of action makes explicit how GFE accomplishes its mission, guiding GFE's programs and activities and giving us benchmarks to measure whether the organization is truly helping improve the impact of our field.

GFE intends for its theory of action to tightly connect the work GFE does (professional development activities, networking, programs, etc.) with its mission ("to strengthen philanthropy's capacity to improve educational outcomes for all students"). At its most basic level, the theory of action makes explicit the assumptions GFE board and staff already have about how the organization functions and achieves its mission. By making our assumptions explicit, we can better judge where GFE should place its resources and we can better evaluate our results.

2006 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

Membership contributions & grants (current year & prepaid)	\$514,219
Grants for special projects & programs (current & future year activities)	238,700
Program revenue (primarily annual conference)	163,169
Interest income and investment gains	27,652
Total	\$943,740

EXPENSES

Salary, benefits, and payroll taxes	\$360,046
Consulting	290,245
Program – speaker travel	17,368
Annual conference – on-site expenses	131,496
Other programs – on-site expenses	17,099
Supplies & equipment	19,004
Office rent	25,481
Graphic design	27,033
Professional fees (legal, accounting, etc.)	10,090
Telephone and internet	21,083
Printing	86,229
Staff and consultant travel	39,002
Insurance	2,703
Depreciation	24,588
Miscellaneous expenses	5,216
Total	\$1,076,683

Beginning in 2006, Grantmakers for Education's statements of financial position, activities and cash flow are audited annually by an independent accounting agency. Complete copies of GFE's 2006 audited financial statements are available on request.

720 SW Washington Street
Suite 605
Portland, OR 97205
tel 503.595.2100
fax 503.595.2102
www.edfunders.org

Accomplishments & Activities

KNOWLEDGE SERVICES:

- **Principles for Effective Education Grantmaking:** To promote key practices for improving the impact of education funders, GFE widely distributed five case studies in late 2006; three more will be distributed in 2007.
- **GFE Knowledge Center:** Unveiled in late 2005, this online tool provided 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 and education researchers—mailed three times each year. Highlights included an essay on funder collaboration from the Hewlett Foundation’s Paul Brest, insights into policy change as a grantmaking strategy and advice on grantmaking to advance teaching quality.
- **Bi-monthly email newsletter** reported on timely research and news in the field.

TOOLS:

- **Improving Public Education: A Guide for Donors to Make a Difference:** In collaboration with the Association of Small Foundations and Social Venture Partners, GFE produced this special toolkit to help donors—especially individuals and small foundations—become more strategic.

PROGRAMS:

MEMBER BRIEFINGS:

- **Advanced Grantmaking Program for Education Funders** (May 2007): GFE served as co-sponsor of this event organized by the Association of Small Foundations to help staff and trustees of smaller foundations learn about education needs and examine different grantmaking strategies.
- **Expanded Learning Time to Support Student Success** (June 2007): Recognizing the growing interest in redesigning and expanding the conventional public school day, this briefing used Massachusetts’ innovative eight-school “extended learning time” initiative as a case study for exploring how this policy change might work.

SIGNATURE EVENTS:

- **Annual national conference** (November 2006): *Grantmaking Strategies for Student Success: New Partners, New Tools, New Urgency* examined what philanthropy is learning about which education strategies are making a difference for students and youth in four areas: engaging new partners within and outside of philanthropy; better linking resources to results to achieve desired impact; encouraging the development and deployment of the very best teachers and leaders; and repairing cracks in the preK to higher education pipeline.

- **2007 Education Grantmakers Institute** (May 2007): Research suggests the quality of leadership in schools is a key factor for how well students are learning, and GFE’s 2007 institute—convened at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and led by its faculty—aimed to help grantmakers make a larger impact in this area.

SPECIAL GRANTMAKERS-ONLY CONVENINGS AT MAJOR CONFERENCES:

- **Council on Foundations** (April 2007): Our workshop was based on our new toolkit on education grantmaking strategies for new donors and small foundations.
- **American Educational Research Association** (April 2007): GFE co-sponsored a special track of sessions and networking activities aimed at links between education philanthropy and evaluation.
- **Education Commission of the States** (July 2007): To support funders working on policy issues, GFE hosted a special lunch discussion with former U.S. Senator William Brock, a member of the New Skills Commission, to discuss implications from its report, *Tough Choices or Tough Times*.

WEB SEMINARS:

- In late 2006, GFE initiated a new series of web- and telephone-enabled programs to enable more GFE members to access quality programming. Programs included:
- **Leading Boldly: Using Imaginative—and Sometimes Controversial—Leadership to Create Social Change** (October 2006): The program was a reprise of the standing-room-only conversation GFE sponsored at the Council on Foundation’s 2006 annual conference. Foundation leaders Maxwell King of the Heinz Endowments and Ralph Smith of the Annie E. Casey Foundation reflected on their experiences in “leading boldly.”
 - **2006-2016 Map of Future Forces Affecting Education** (February 2007): Co-hosted by the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, this program featured discussion about a unique forecasting tool the foundation developed—and what trends might mean for education grantmaking priorities and strategies.
 - **Roadmap to Results** (June-July 2007): This three-part series helped grantmakers and donors clarify their own goals, priorities and capacities for giving to public education and to suggest better ways of knowing whether their gifts accomplish the results intended.

NETWORKING AND MEMBERSHIP:

- GFE members include 226 private and operating foundations, corporate giving programs, public charities and other grant-making organizations at the end of 2006.
- 24 grantmakers newly joined GFE in 2006, while 15 chose not to renew.

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 2006-2007 on key issues included:

Quality of GFE experiences and communications: (percentage of respondents indicating they “agree” or “strongly agree” with these statements)

93%	GFE has helped me to expand my network in education philanthropy.
86%	GFE has significantly increased my understanding of education philanthropy issues.
79%	GFE is where I go to keep track of the field.
78%	GFE has improved my education grantmaking skills.

Overall quality of 2006 conference:

46%	Excellent
49%	Good
5%	Fair
0%	Poor

Overall program experience and usefulness of the 2006 Grantmakers Institute:

100%	Participants rating the program a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale
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Specific examples of how you've improved your effectiveness as a grantmaker as a result of your participation in GFE:

- “ The opportunity to network with others at the annual conference is priceless.”
- “ Our foundation has begun to refer explicitly to GFE’s Principles for Effective Grantmaking when reflecting on our work or making the case for particular projects.”
- “ GFE provided a forum for me to present some of the work we have been doing and this opportunity for others to look at the work, comment, join in and compare/contrast has been enormously beneficial. As a result of this opportunity to present to others, I have formed a new network of collaborators.”
- “ Knowledge of what has been effective and what has not in other places helps to shape my decision making on proposals and stimulates ideas for projects in my location.”

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

32%	5	2%	2
33%	4	0%	1
15%	3	18%	Don't know

Number of GFE Members:

2002	174
2003	185
2004	206
2005	216
2006	226
2007 (through September)	235