Building A Pipeline for Justice:

Understanding Youth Organizing and the Leadership Pipeline

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BY SHAWN GINWRIGHT

SERIES PREFACE

As Occasional Paper Series #10 goes to press, and FCYO celebrates 10 years of supporting the field of Youth Organizing, we are situated historically in the second year of the tenure of our country's first African-American president, whose ties to community organizing and successful grassroots-style campaigning illuminated, yet again, the power of young people and base-building. Today poor communities of color are on the frontlines of battles surrounding deportation and border struggles, schools-not-jails campaigns, and access to clean water and green fields. Unfortunately, we are also situated in the worst financial meltdown since the Great Depression, and these communities are the hardest hit. It is in this era of both unprecedented opportunities and monumental challenges that we ask ourselves: how can we continue to build leadership from the most affected population, to guide us through, and into the coming decades of the millennium?

In Occasional Paper Series #10, Shawn Ginwright explores how youth organizing is an effective entry point for a more sustainable, long-term progressive, social justice movement. He examines how high school-aged youth organizing in poor communities of color builds transformative power and cultivates immense leadership. In looking closely at the power of youth organizing to drive a progressive, social justice movement, Ginwright also looks at what's missing. How is it that powerful youth organizers are disconnected from opportunities in the progressive, social justice movement as they age? Why, as one Executive Director asked, are our youth organizers on the cover of the newspaper for the victories they've achieved for our communities, but on the corner the next day without a job? What is the ecosystem understanding we need to ensure youth organizers see a clear pathway to post-secondary education, employment and other experiences that guarantees a strengthened progressive, social justice movement? Finally, Ginwright offers a recommendation for those of us who not only care about youth organizing and the future of youth organizers, but want to roll up our sleeves and begin building the systematic pipelines and pathways necessary to ensure a more socially just society.

The paper draws from a deep well of information gathered from youth organizing groups across the country. FCYO conducted a national web-based survey of 160 youth organizing groups and also participated in conversations with more than 80 such groups. These conversations resounded with the need to think about how we systematically reach those most affected by disparities and injustice at a young age, build their strength collectively and individually to address those injustices and ensure that their voices continue to grow as they age, to enrich and inform a broader democracy.

In contemplating President Obama's term, we believe that youth organizing as a means—and youth organizers as a force can ensure that a progressive swing will outlast the next two to six years, with more deliberate investments and attention. Demographers predict that by 2024 the majority of young people in this country will be of color, and by 2050, the majority of *all* people will be of color. It is strategic and important to look beyond President Obama's tenure and to engage and invest in building a pipeline that begins with today's youth organizers of color to ensure continued and sustained leadership from the base moving forward.

Supriya Pillai
Executive Director
Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing
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INTRODUCTION

Lester Garcia remembers boarding the number 52 bus with his mother when he was 12 years old to embark upon the one-hour ride from his Boyle Heights neighborhood in East Los Angeles to West Los Angeles, where she cleaned homes. Lester never liked watching his mother cleaning the floors, dishes and rooms in the large homes and always knew something wasn't quite right about the differences between Boyle Heights, and the neighborhoods in West L.A.. By the time their bus would reach West L.A., he knew that the liquor stores, vacant homes and check-cashing outlets of Boyle Heights would be replaced with the grocery stores, banks, and large homes with manicured lawns of Westwood. He always felt uneasy about these differences, and during his senior year of high school, he was given an opportunity to do something for his neighborhood.

On April 28th, 2000, Lester was on the way to drop off his employment application for a part-time position at McDonald's. His senior prom was coming up, and he needed the money for the special night. He stopped by his school before going to McDonald's and met Luis Sanchez, a seasoned organizer, who offered Lester a job with Inner City Struggle. Little did Lester know that this opportunity would prepare him for leadership in the broader movement for social justice. During his time with Inner City Struggle, he led several campaigns, developed trainings and curriculum, and as a spokesperson for the organization he gained media skills with which to interact with the broader public. After high school, he attended California State University-Long Beach where he majored in Chicano Studies. While in college, he led several key education campaigns in Los Angeles that opened up a world of possibilities for him. He went on to become Chief of Staff for Los Angeles School Board Director, Mónica García, and he now serves on the Board of Directors for Inner City Struggle, and is the Executive Director for the Boyle Heights Learning Collaborative.

Lester's organizing experience has taught him three important lessons that he will use wherever he chooses to work. First, those closest to the problem are best suited to address it. Second, all communities have a right and responsibility to work to improve their quality of life. Third, it is not enough to be right; organizers also need to be effec-

tive. These are important social justice lessons that are informed by Lester's rich organizing experiences and the opportunities he was given to build his leadership skills.

Youth organizing groups around the country are creating pathways and opportunities for social justice leadership development for young people during and after their high school years. Through rich youth organizing experiences ranging from running for local public office to creating new organizations, young people are gaining leadership skills and applying them in college, and in their careers.

It is no surprise that youth organizing is an effective entry point for leadership development with the social justice movement. Youth organizing groups aim to teach important leadership skills that are necessary to confront issues that matter most to low-income young people of color. These opportunities are among the few places where low-income youth of color can build leadership skills and foster a critical perspective about how to change the conditions in their schools and neighborhoods. Experiences such as organizing their peers to advocate for new books rather than metal detectors at their school are transformative and foster a social justice worldview that guides future decision making.

However, youth organizing stakeholders have recognized that there are simply too few leadership development opportunities for young people to build on after their high school years, and that more attention must be paid to creating intentional social justice leadership experiences. In response to this growing concern, some organizations are deploying innovative strategies to connect young people to meaningful post-secondary experiences. "Leadership pipelines" are one such strategy to prepare young people for leadership opportunities after high school. Leadership pipelines provide opportunities such as college preparation, employment in the burgeoning green economy, or training in technical schools. These pipelines are critically important to sustain community-organizing efforts and to develop a skilled and knowledgeable cadre of youth leaders.

Investing in youth organizing pipelines is one important step in addressing the leadership crisis within the social justice movement. While we can point to modest investments in leadership pipelines, these resources are largely directed toward campus-based opportunities for college students. Refocusing efforts toward leadership pipeline opportunities for low-income youth of color at the high school age provides a rich opportunity to further develop leaders within the social justice movement. Additionally, by focusing on youth of color from low-income communities, we are engaging the leadership capacity of the most affected group of young people. These young people are often best suited to confront community and social issues when they are armed with important leadership skills.

WHAT EXACTLY IS YOUTH ORGANIZING ANYWAY? UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

The term "community organizer" has recently gained public attention because of President Obama's organizing background as the leader of the Developing Communities Project on the South Side of Chicago. For some, the term "organizer" conjured images of Obama inciting unruly youth and neighborhood residents to cause trouble at city hall. The term, however, simply refers to someone who brings people together to act toward a common vision. Organizers share the belief that solutions to neighborhood problems come from the power of people to hold institutions, politicians and corporations accountable to the community. Similarly, youth organizing provides a way for young people to participate in civil society in ways that hold schools, institutions and politicians accountable to their interests.

> Organizing not only contributes to broader democratic ideas of civic engagement, but it also builds a sense of control, agency and optimism among young people who often bear the brunt of toxic public policy.

Although all forms of community organizing develop the leadership capacity of individuals, youth organizing promotes a wider range of developmental outcomes. This value-added approach means that youth organizing can have an impact on at least three levels. First, at the individual level young people develop leadership skills, and a sense of agency, hope and optimism through rich forms of civic participation. Research shows that youth are also more engaged in school when they are exposed to ideas that raise their consciousness about social inequality and their capacity to change it. In their survey of three youth organizing groups, the Annenberg Institute found that youth organizing efforts increased students' leadership and organizing skills, desire to engage in their own educational goals, and intentions to remain committed to social justice activities (Mediratta, Shah et al., 2008). Similarly, researchers argue that activism and other forms of community engagement contribute to a greater sense of control and well-being in young people's lives

(Prilleltensky and Fox, 2007). For young people, organizing nurtures the internal capacity and resilience to engage in civic and social justice efforts.

Second, community-level outcomes are those directed at improving schools, neighborhoods, or access to decision making. Community-level impact focuses on collective power, and control over local public policy. For example, students in Sistas and Brothas United, a youth organizing group in the northwest Bronx, campaigned with adults to improve the widespread overcrowding in local high schools. Their efforts produced tangible policy changes that resulted in greater equity in the development of district priorities to reduce overcrowding. This policy secured 14,000 new seats through wide-ranging program areas, including education reform, criminal and juvenile justice, environmental justice, civil and human rights and youth services and development.

These activities may involve a variety of organizing tactics such as planning a neighborhood block party, or attending a public hearing about a school closure. In these kinds of activities young people build relationships, networks—and optimism about their capacity to lead social change.

Lastly, social-level outcomes are those that facilitate greater civic participation, democratic engagement, and commitment to social change. Organizing supports the development of a healthy and robust democracy because young people are engaged in the democratic process and various forms of collective action. Robust and healthy democratic life requires debate, contestation and participation, all of which signal social well-being.

YOUTH ORGANIZING IS AN EFFECTIVE ENTRY POINT INTO A PIPELINE OF SUSTAINED LEADERSHIP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

There are both barriers to, and opportunities for the expansion and deepening of youth organizing leadership development. Increasingly, philanthropic attention is being directed toward encouraging civic participation among college students by building infrastructure (networks, information, gatherings to motivate greater numbers of college students to vote. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning (CIRCLE) shows that many of these college students are white and are twice as likely to participate in a variety of civic activities than their counterparts of color (Foster-Bey, 2008; Hyman and Levine, 2008). These investments, while important, have done little for the vibrant neighborhood organizing activities of high-school-aged people of color. Given the concerns about declining civic engagement among youth of color, youth organizing is an important strategy to engage those who are most affected by educational, community and social issues. Focusing on low-income youth of color is also crucial given the changing demographics in America. Demographers predict that by 2050, the United States will be a majority-minority country. For the first time, the majority of America's youth will come from communities of color (Passel and Cohn, 2008).

These demographic shifts will have a significant impact on types of civic and political activities in which young people participate. It is likely that many of these civic activities will be directed toward issues that address racial inequality. For example, research suggests that racial group identity, and experiences of racial discrimination can shape the form and content of civic behavior among youth of color. Researchers have found that young people who experience racial prejudice and discrimination were more likely than their white counterparts to advocate for their own ethnic group (Flanagan, Syversten et al., 2009). Evidence emerging over the last decade also indicates that significant numbers of African American and Latino youth from urban communities have participated in undertheorized forms of civic action, such as supporting Hurricane Katrina victims, organizing school walk-outs to protest immigration legislation, or participating in activities related to the election of

President Obama. Civic and political engagement for youth of color is often mediated through experiences of racial inequality (Ginwright et al., 2006; Fine and Weiss 1998; Martinez 1998; Munoz 2000).

Often, youth organizing groups provide the opportunity for low-income youth of color to develop a sociopolitical consciousness and a vehicle to address the issues they face (Ginwright and Cammarota, 2007; Ginwright, Cammarota et al., 2005; Ginwright and James, 2002; Watts and Guessous, 2006). These demographic trends suggest that we need greater support for youth organizing in order to provide youth of color ways to address problems in their schools and communities. It is often presumed that in conventional forms of civic behavior such as volunteering or voting young people "serve the poor rather than work with them" (Countryman and Sullivan, 1993). In some cases for example, service-learning and volunteering opportunities to help "disadvantaged" communities sometimes places marginalized youth in a paradox. That is, they are members of the very communities they intend to help.

As a result, low-income youth of color have less faith in conventional forms of civic engagement (voting, volunteering, service learning) and may instead participate in civic life in ways that are important to their day-to-day quality of life. These forms of participation may include activities such as addressing police harassment when traveling to and from school (Fine, Freudenberg et al., 2003), encouraging their school to purchase new heaters for their classrooms during cold winters, or advocating for free bus passes for transportation to and from school for students who receive public assistance (Gold, Simon et al., 2002; Mediratta and Fruchter, 2001). Moreover, research suggests that experiences of racial discrimination often compel youth of color to participate in civic and community activities that address forms of racial inequality (Flanagan, Syversten et al., 2009; Sanchez-Jankowski, 2002). Civic engagement for urban youth of color is more likely to involve organizing or unconventional forms such as financial assistance for family survival or artistic expression through music, art, and poetry (Cammarota and Fine, 2008; Ginwright, Noguera et al., 2006).

Over the past decade, there has been considerable attention given to the ways in which young people participate in civil society. Sparked by Robert Putnam's (2000) claim that American youth are increasingly disconnected from community life, researchers have marshaled considerable evidence about the decline in civic participation among young people. This decline is more pronounced among youth of color in urban neighborhoods.

Researchers have found that community conditions such as poverty, unemployment, and violence inhibit civic engagement, particularly among youth of color. Emerging research has suggested that social settings and structural disadvantage impede youth of color from participating in traditional forms of civic knowledge and

service-learning activities (Hart and Atkins, 2002). The conclusions from this body of research indicate that civic engagement for youth in urban communities is shaped by a broad array of economic, political and social factors. Systemic discrimination in courts, negative daily experiences of racial profiling by the police, and negative media portrayals of youth in low-income communities have directed civic action inward toward ethnic and racial solidarity.

For youth in urban communities, the barriers to civic engagement and healthy youth development can be life threatening. In 1995, injuries from gun violence for African American and Latino youth in California were nearly 80% higher than for whites (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). Alienation from participation in civic affairs may have staggering educational, social, and emotional consequences for African American and Latino youth in urban communities. Structural policies and barriers to meaningful civic opportunities not only create disproportionate dropout rates, but also facilitate higher levels of stress and hopelessness (Hart, Atkins et al., 1998; Prilleltensky and Fox, 2007; Prilleltensky, Nelson et al., 2001). Youth organizing provides young people with tools to work in coalitions with communities to address neighborhood problems. Often, organizing efforts for young people begins with identifying neighborhood issues and progresses to tackling root causes of these problems. Organizing opportunities represent one of the few civic opportunities for marginalized youth. Countryman and Sullivan (1993) remind us that, "Many poor youth from communities besieged by persistent poverty are drawn to the service movement, but they know from experience that what ails their community requires a fundamental transformation of programs, institutions, and leaders. Failure to substantively address poverty and its concomitant social ills infuriates young people who are seeking ways of responding to the specific crises that plague their communities—the stench of urine in housing project elevators, a dysfunctional recreation center with no athletic equipment or safe playing field, the violent murders of their peers" (p. 4).

> Research shows that when youth take action to solve neighborhood problems, the process fosters hope, develops optimism and builds a sense of self-efficacy. These factors contribute to increased academic performance, high levels of civic engagement and overall well-being among young people from low-income communities. [1]

[1] Wilson, Dasho et al., 2007; Wilson, Minkler et al., 2008; Wilson, Syme et al., 2005

Youth organizing provides a vehicle for young people to address these important issues. As a result, youth organizing is expanding the meaning of civic engagement to consider how social justice and power inform civic and community life.

For these reasons, young people of color are key stakeholders in broader movement-building efforts. Young people are working in intergenerational alliances on important issues ranging from immigrant rights, school reform, to environmental justice, and neighborhood improvement. These issues provide a pathway for young people to respond to the issues that shape the quality of their daily lives. Similar to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) contribution to the Civil Rights movement, young people today are vital to social change on these issues.

2010 FCYO SURVEY OF YOUTH ORGANIZING ISSUE AREAS

These issues, however, are not the only reasons young people are attracted to youth
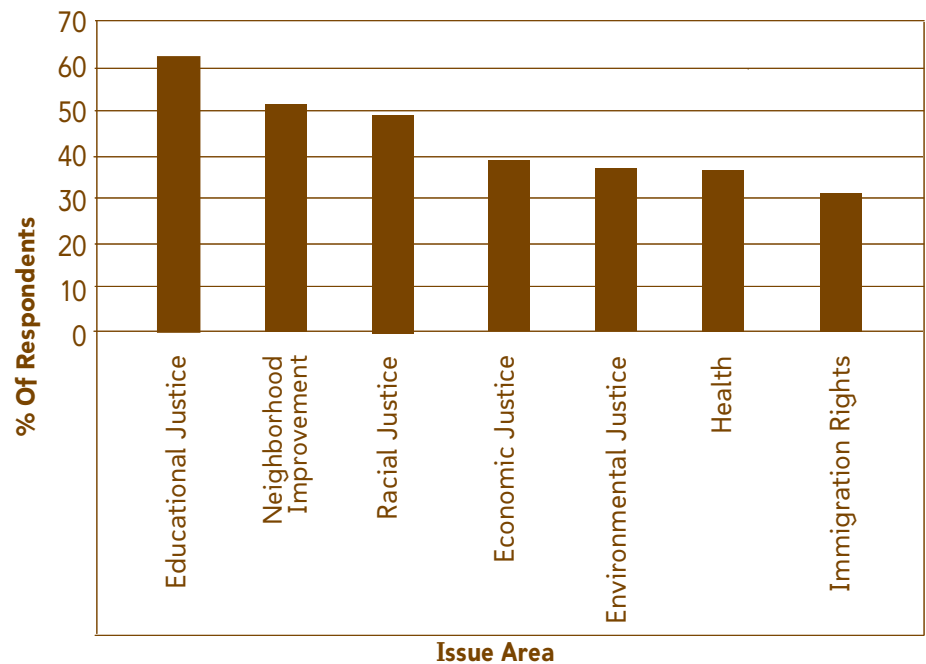
organizing. In a 2010 survey of 160 youth organizing groups from around the country, the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing found that young people become involved with youth organizing for a variety of reasons. Some young people seek safe spaces where their interests in addressing community problems can be nurtured. They develop a sense of purpose in their lives, and see themselves as part of something meaningful and bigger than themselves. Youth also develop a sense of belonging to a family or community of people they trust. Young people are also attracted by financial incentives such as stipends, or part-time job opportunities. These monetary incentives are significant for some young people whose families are struggling financially. Other young people become involved with youth organizing because they are members of identity based groups or organizations such as Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), formerly incarcerated youth, or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) communities. Youth organizing offers young people multiple entry points and an array of opportunities and support uniquely situated to address the needs and issues facing marginalized youth.

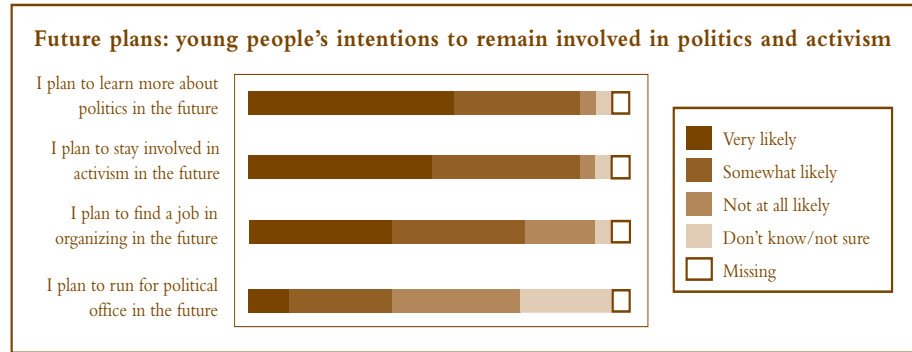# OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FIELD: MAKING THE CASE FOR YOUTH ORGANIZING

Youth organizing involves a rich range of activities, skills, concepts and experiences that weave together a vibrant tapestry of civic life. Activities ranging from campaigns for clean bathrooms in high schools, to free bus passes to get to school, continue to serve as an important pathway to broader democratic participation for young people who are often left out of decision-making processes in their schools and neighborhoods.

Youth organizing engages youth of color in the democratic process because it often provides a pathway for young people to address issues that are most relevant to their lives. In the report Organized Communities, Stronger Schools published by the Annenberg Institute at Brown University (Mediratta, Shah et al., 2008), the authors found that organizing contributed to the capacity of urban schools to provide a successful learning environment through new resources, policies and school improvements. For example, in Los Angeles, youth were key members of a coalition that won a new district policy mandating access to college prep curricula for all students. The study examined organizing efforts in seven cities and documented the impact on school climate, educational outcomes, parent involvement, and other important measures (Mediratta, Shah et al., 2008). In a survey of 124 youth members involved with the three youth organizing groups in the study, young people responded that organizing had increased their knowledge of education issues facing their schools and school systems, and that they intended to sustain their political and civic engagement over the long term. Moreover, more than 50% of the youth reported that they planned to stay involved with activism in the future and nearly 40% reported that they wanted to find a job in organizing in the future (Mediratta, Shah et al., 2008)

This study provides compelling evidence that youth organizing is an important path-way to engage youth who are typically alienated from traditional civic activities.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTENTIONS TO REMAIN INVOLVED WITH POLITICS AND ACTIVISM

Future plans: young people's intentions to remain involved in politics and activism

I plan to learn more about politics in the future

I plan to stay involved in activism in the future

I plan to find a job in organizing in the future

I plan to run for political office in the future

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Not at all likely
- Don't know/not sure
- Missing

CHALLENGES FOR YOUTH ORGANIZING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

There are several challenges, however, to sustained leadership development for youth organizing groups. Youth organizing groups are grappling with questions about how to achieve the delicate balance between providing youth organizing skills and supporting young people's holistic development. Similarly, youth leaders are developing new ideas about what role organizing plays in the long-term development of young people. More specifically, groups are raising questions about how a social justice worldview may inform career choices. For example, how might a former youth organizer enact a social justice worldview as a plumber, a real estate agent or a stockbroker? These issues represent an opportunity on the part of youth organizing stakeholders to consider innovative ways to address the following challenges.

CHALLENGE #1: FEW PATHWAYS TO POST-SECONDARY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Despite the fact that youth organizing is one promising path to both civic engagement and youth development among youth from low-wealth communities, there are significant barriers to leadership development for youth after high school. The rich civic and leadership development opportunities in high school acquired through organizing are seldom connected to post-secondary leadership development opportunities. Organizations are grappling with questions such as, "What does it mean for young people to transition successfully from organizing after high school to college, trade school or employment?" ; "In what ways can young people build upon their organizing skills and experiences after high school?"; "How can our organization better prepare young people to utilize their social justice worldview and organizing experiences in college, or employment?" The fact of the matter is that many organizations need to be connected to a more coordinated infrastructure of pathways that lead to meaningful post-secondary leadership development. Some community leaders have responded to this issue by creating internal leadership development structures such as promoting former youth participants to more formal roles as interns, youth leaders and coordinators. While this strategy builds organic and

indigenous leadership, these experiences are varied. Some young people transition to college, while others remain as interns or program coordinators, or age out altogether. Few strategies are connected to more formal and intentional pathways and opportunities to build young people's leadership skills.

CHALLENGE #2: THIN ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY T0 CREATE PIPELINES TO LEADERSHIP

Over the past ten years, there has been a significant shift among youth organizing stakeholders toward considering the ways in which organizing contributes to young people's holistic development. Rather than the singular focus on winning campaigns, there has been greater attention paid among youth organizing groups to the multiple needs young people bring to them. Issues ranging from employment, drugs, depression and housing have compelled community groups to reconfigure their programming in ways that contribute to young people's developmental needs. For example, there is a growing concern among community groups about the mental health issues among young people. In fact, 47% of youth organizing groups reported having formal organizational supports through referrals, or contracted mental health services. Similarly, 63% of youth organizing groups reported having developed formal college preparation opportunities.[2]

Addressing these complex youth development issues however, has stretched the capacity of youth organizing organizations. The tensions of supporting young people's developmental needs, developing important leadership skills, and providing meaningful social justice experiences has threatened the capacity of these organizations to consider how to develop and sustain pipeline opportunities. Youth organizing groups are trying to figure out how to best support young people while at the same time build young people's organizing skills and leadership capacity. These tensions are difficult for both youth and the organizations to which they belong. For example, some groups make efforts to connect with social service agencies only to find that these agencies don't understand their youth and may treat them in ways that foster distrust and resentment. As one young adult commented during a focus group, "The truth is our youth come from the ghetto. The way they dress, they have tattoos, the way they talk and the language they use make it more difficult for them to find and keep their jobs." Building capacity for organizations to imagine new partnerships, and establish innovative institutional relationships will contribute to more robust post-secondary leadership-development opportunities.

[2] In December, 2009, the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing conducted a survey of 160 youth organizing groups. The survey compiled demographic profiles of a variety of youth organizing groups across the country.

CHALLENGE #3: SHALLOW POOL OF YOUTH LEADERS TO FILL FUTURE TRANSITIONS

How are youth organizing groups producing leaders to sustain the social justice movement? How are these groups preparing young people for social justice careers and "post youth" educational and career opportunities? During the 1990's, The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) recognized that there were few opportunities for young people of color to network and learn from each others' social justice work. The CDF created the Black Student Leadership Network (BSLN), which was a national network of young leaders who convened regularly for training in organizing techniques, program development, leadership development and exposure to social justice ideas and mentors through a network created by CDF. Many of the leaders of today's national organizations, city councils, school boards, and community organizations served as interns, and coordinators for the CDF's national Freedom Schools trainings, and BSLN. Similarly, Listen Inc., a Washington D.C.- based leadership development agency of urban youth of color, hosted the annual Building Leadership Organizing Communities (BLOC) conference which is a national network of young people working in communities of color to build alliances and fundamentally transform society. The BLOC conference provided networking and leadership training to organizers around the country. Unfortunately, both networks eventually unraveled but the need for long-term leadership development remains.

In order to build progressive power in this country, investments must be made in the infrastructure that intentionally transitions low-income youth organizers and youth organizers of color at the high school age to meaningful employment and educational opportunities as they get older.

Directors of youth organizing groups who are transitioning express concern that while young people have the vision and passion for social justice, they may not have acquired the skills to manage and lead an organization. Similarly, those young adults who may be equipped to lead an organization may not understand youth organizing and the nuanced leadership required in an organization guided by social justice principles. Without pipeline opportunities, "real life" issues, such as the need to contribute financially to the family, shape young people's choices. Without intentional pathways to post-secondary opportunities to be leaders in their schools and communities, talented young people will continue to grasp for whichever opportunities are made most available. There are a number of examples of how youth groups are responding to this challenge.

For example, the Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP) in New Mexico has created opportunities for young people to build leadership skills through year round intern-

ships. At age 23, Mónica Cordova had grown disillusioned with her ability to create sustained changes in her neighborhood. It wasn't until her mentor and friend suggested that she apply for a job with the Southwest Organizing Project that she knew what she wanted to do with her life. "It was an aha moment for me! When I went to a community event there were so many different people of all ages all working together. From that moment on, I knew I had to be a part of this organization." At SWOP she developed her leadership at both the local and national level through a local youth rights campaign and in planning the first United States Social Forum.

Mónica learned early on that the youth at SWOP needed a more holistic approach to youth organizing that included academic support, counseling, and employment. In 2005, she helped to structure a summer internship program primarily for high school students. The program offers year round internships and academic support to students. In 2009, SWOP was chosen to participate in a national pilot program of the New World Foundation called the Civic Opportunity Initiative Network, or COIN. Building on the success of their summer internship program, the COIN program places as many as twenty high school students with SWOP as interns over the course of two years. The young people undertake an intensive summer internship, and receive academic mentoring and support during the school year. A subset of these students will be chosen to continue on through college, with full scholarships, through a consortium of participating institutions of higher education. During their college years, SWOP coordinates 20 summer internships through its networks. For example, SWOP has partnered with the POSSE Foundation, a college access and youth leadership development program that identifies, recruits and selects student leaders from public high schools and sends them in groups to top colleges and universities in the country. Once in college, these students will return to SWOP as paid interns during the summer to serve as mentors and receive further leadership and organizing training.

SWOP is preparing youth for college with a social justice worldview and important organizing skills. Recently, the organization hired an academic coordinator who works closely with students to assure academic readiness for college. By implementing homework nights, where students receive tutoring and support with their academic needs, the organization has expanded the definition of what constitutes effective youth organizing. Considering the complex issues young people bring to their organization, SWOP developed greater academic support opportunities and created pathways to college by partnering with other college preparation programs. These pipelines are critically important to build post-secondary leadership opportunities for young people, as well as create strategic linkages to other institutions that contribute to a progressive leadership development infrastructure.

THE ECOLOGY OF A PIPELINE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERS

How then do we build sustainable social justice opportunities for young people? What are the most promising strategies to build leadership capacity for the broader social justice movement? In what ways can we transition young people from high school to ongoing skill development and knowledge related to social justice efforts?

A leadership pipeline is one key strategy that addresses the above questions. It is a pathway connecting institutions and opportunities such that it intentionally draws young people into the progressive, social justice movement, particularly those most affected by inequities, and, through deliberate agreements and "stepping stones" provides a clear road map for people to continue leadership development and expression as they age, thereby retaining their leadership and bolstering and sustaining the movement. A leadership pipeline spans the lifetime of an individual and ultimately, as the pipeline is deliberately assembled, has a large scale impact of creating a more socially just society, a vibrant, active and highly-inclusive democracy. There are multiple entry points and stages to a leadership pipeline. This paper concentrates on the first stages of the leadership pipeline for progressive, social justice with youth organizing as a highly-effective entry point particularly for attracting and developing leadership and political awareness of the most marginalized youth. The early stages of the pipeline provide a pathway for young people to build upon their skills, knowledge and experience after they transition from high school. Connecting young people to social justice opportunities increases the number of youth who enter progressive social justice work.

For example, as a senior in one of Milwaukee's suburban catholic high schools, Jeanette Martin always felt a bit out of place. The strict rules and regulations, adult-centered culture and lack of students of color made her feel isolated and frustrated. Her Spanish teacher took an interest in Jeanette and encouraged her to attend an informational meeting about the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, a federally sponsored bill that would provide permanent residency for undocumented minors. During this event, several members of Students United for Immigrant Rights (SUFRIR), a youth arm of Milwaukee-based Voces de la Frontera, approached her to start a SUFRIR chapter at her high school to educate students about immigrant rights.

During her senior year, she led students at her high school in informational

meetings, marches and dialogue sessions about immigrant rights. These activities contributed to her leadership skill development. She regularly wrote and disseminated press releases about SUFRIR's activities, organized fundraising for retreats, and conducted meetings. Working with other students, she organized a school walkout to raise awareness about immigrant rights issues. This involved close analysis of the DREAM Act as well as advocacy where she worked with her peers to encourage the local congressional representative to support the proposed bill. After graduation she was hired by Voces de la Frontera to conduct voter registration during the summer in Milwaukee. After the summer, she continued her involvement with immigrant rights work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She joined the University of Wisconsin chapter of Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), and worked with other immigrant rights coalitions in the city. During her first year at the University of Wisconsin, she was hired by the United Council of the University of Wisconsin to lead a voter registration drive for the 2008 election. Currently, Jeannette is majoring in art and plans to open a community arts center on Milwaukee's south side. She intends to use art as a vehicle for political education for community residents.

Jeanette's experiences with organizing highlight two key points about a social justice leadership pipeline. First, youth organizing provides young people of color meaningful civic pathways by addressing issues that impact their lives. Her interest in supporting immigrant rights was fostered by SUFRIR, who provided the opportunity and the support Jeanette needed to lead her high school chapter. Second, the youth organizing experience provides opportunities for developing skills such as strategic thinking, and public relations. Just as important, youth organizing provides a critical perspective and social worldview that serve as the foundation for future leadership opportunities.

A leadership pipeline, perhaps, can be more accurately understood within a broader ecology of social justice and organizing activities. I gained a useful analogy for leadership pipelines when I was compelled to install a sprinkler system in my backyard recently. I had read the soil, watering and sun requirements for each of the plants and carefully prepared the ground, and placed each plant in just the right location in the yard. I watered the plants by hand, but my inconsistent and haphazard watering pattern delivered too much water to some plants, and not enough to others. Unless I installed a more consistent, and intentional watering system, my attempts to beautify my backyard would all be in vain.I didn't know how to install a sprinkler system so I visited the local nursery, which turned out to be very useful. The nursery manager explained to me that, "a sprinkler system is nothing more than a network of pipelines that deliver water to certain plants at certain times." He explained to me the basics of building this pipeline in my backyard. He instructed, "there are two components to any pipeline, first is the hardscape, which consists of pipes, tubes, valves, and trenches needed to secure the system and deliver the water, second, is the softscape, which consists of the ground cover, and bark, which holds the moisture and soil together to make it all work." His explanation provides an excellent parallel to under-

standing precisely what constitutes a leadership pipeline for young people.

A leadership pipeline for youth organizers at the high school age must consist of a system of coordinated pathways for leadership development after high school. These pathways consist of agreements with institutions such as colleges and universities, connecting young people to educational opportunities, employment opportunities, or entrepreneurial skill development. Rather than conceptualizing a leadership pipeline as a singular linkage between two organizations, it can be thought of as a network of skill and knowledge-building opportunities after high school. The pipeline is comprised of multiple institutions, community organizations, schools and employment opportunities. Recognizing that young people need further support and opportunities to enact their social justice training, a leadership pipeline creates strategic linkages with organizations to build upon young people's skills.

There are two key components of a leadership pipeline. First is the hardscape- the community organizations, educational institutions and businesses that train, educate and employ young people for productive citizenry. The hardscape components of the leadership pipeline comprise the infrastructure, which establishes linkages and organizational connections that introduce young people to a network of post high school leadership development opportunities. The hardscape components of the pipeline require capacity to build, and sustain these linkages, and connections. For example, in 1964 the Johnson administration enacted the Economic Opportunity Act, which created Upward Bound, a program that provides academic support services to underrepresented and low-income students. While Upward Bound does not focus on organizing, its programs serve as a bridge between high school and college, and provide college preparation as well as admissions to universities within the program's network.

The softscape components of the pipeline are made up of relationships between people within organizations. These relationships are critically important because they cultivate trust among both individuals and organizations, establish expectations and foster a sense of common purpose that moves individuals beyond the confines of their daily organizational practices. Softscape aspects of the pipeline can be more accurately described as the social capital required to link young people to meaningful leadership opportunities. These include features of the pipeline such as trust, collective responsibility, expectations and relationships built from a collective social justice consciousness (Putnam, 1993, 36). Similar to hardscape components, softscape aspects of the pipeline require opportunities to build and develop relationships, expectations and trust. Convenings, retreats, and virtual networks can be key opportunities to foster softscape aspects of a leadership pipeline. These softscape components build a collective consciousness about social issues and provide young people with a sense of possibility, hope and commitment to work together to confront pressing social problems.

Educational and leadership development networks need to consider three questions in building and sustaining pipeline opportunities: (1) How to recruit students?, (2) How to prepare students for post secondary opportunities?, (3) How to transition young people to post-secondary opportunities?

PHASES AND OUTCOMES OF A SOCIAL JUSTICE PIPELINE

In response to the above questions, the first part of the leadership pipeline can be understood in three developmental phases. First is the Entry phase, which is the key entry point into the pipeline during their high school years. During the entry phase of the pipeline, young people are recruited into programs and activities that introduce them to leadership development. During the entry phase, summer programs, after school programs and middle schools may serve as feeders to community organizations. The entry phase provides a pool of young people to enter into youth organizing. Second is the Development phase that provides both political consciousness, as well as the important skills necessary to mobilize peers and facilitate action to bring about the changes they desire during their high school years. These skills might include researching a school district policy on the immigration status of students, facilitating a meeting with peers and adults, or examining complex budgets to learn where city dollars are being spent. The development phase is critical because it is the first opportunity for youth of color to participate in civic action. Additionally, youth gain a sense of self-efficacy and group-efficacy, which build upon traditional youth development outcomes. The third and final phase is the Transition phase, which represents post-secondary leadership development opportunities where young people continue to build important skills as they find ways to enact their social justice perspective through (a) formal educational opportunities, (b) training and skilled development leading to employment, or (c) apprenticeships and formal mentoring for youth to build their capacity to enact social justice values. The transition phase builds upon the development phase by providing options for young people after high school and allowing them to think critically about how their social justice training and awareness can be enacted in different settings. The transition phase also considers how post-secondary educational, employment pathways and social justice values contribute to broader movement building. During the transition phase, young people are guided by a "moral compass," where social justice values permeate every aspect of their lives. Therefore, while it is important to focus on post-secondary leadership development opportunities for young people, it is simply not enough.

The leadership pipeline must consider ways to connect leadership development opportunities to broader movement building structures. The transition phase expands the social justice movement environment and connects transition phase activities (education, employment and social justice values) to networks of adult organizations, causes and campaigns. The transition phase makes progressive movement building an explicit, rather than, implicit outcome of the pipeline.

Pipeline phase	Entry phase	Development phase	Transition phase
Age	Middle School & Pre-Adolescence	High School & Adolescence	Post-Secondary & Early adulthood
Pipeline activities	• Recruitment • Social networking • Informal recruitment by word of mouth • Creating a safe space and a sense of belonging for young people	• Skill development • Political consciousness • Awareness of civic and social issues • Knowledge development • Interest and passion for social justice	• Fellowships • Interships • Summer schools • Employment training • Leadership training opportunities • Social justice mentoring
Pipeline components	• Middle schools • Community-based organizations • Faith-based institutions	• High schools • Community-based organizations • Faith-based institutions	• Community colleges • Universities • Local job-training organizations • Trade schools and specialized study institutes • Community organizations

Pipeline outcomes	• Increased numbers of young people joining youth organizing organizations	• Greater capacity to create pipeline linkages
		• Greater access to post-secondary leadership development
		• Individual outcomes
		• Community outcomes
		• Social outcomes
			• Stronger movement infrastructure
			• Larger cadre of social justice leaders
			  - Education
			  - Employment
			  - Social justice values
			• Increased educational employment and entrepreneurial opportunities

SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT ENVIRONMENT

PROMISING MODELS OF POST-SECONDARY LEADERSHIP PIPELINES

Case Study 1: Fabulous Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment (FIERCE)

Krystal Portalatin has been organizing since she was sixteen. She had grown frustrated by the events surrounding the Amadou Diallo Shooting in 1999 and the racial profiling perpetrated by New York City's police department. Despite the fact that there were organizations and efforts to address police harassment in New York for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer youth of color, there were few places to respond to increasing racial profiling. Krystal co-founded Fabulous Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment (FIERCE) in order to provide a safe place for LGBTQ youth to direct their own local and social-change agenda. With a focus on political power to change issues that face LGBTQ youth, FIERCE provides young people with leadership development opportunities and a safe space to imagine and organize in order to create the types of communities in which they want to live. The organization is explicit about building the leadership capacity of young people to serve the broader social justice movement.

In 2000, Krystal left FIERCE for college but returned to New York after only a year to support young people's organizing activities to address Manhattan's Pier 45 redevelopment efforts. The Christopher Street Pier had been a safe place for LGBTQ youth for years, and redevelopment efforts in New York had threatened the safe environment by restricting young people's use of the park and pier and by focusing on the interests of commercial stores and facilities. The Safe Space Saves Lives and Our S.P.O.T. (Safe Place to Organize Together) campaigns advocated for a 24-hour drop in center for LGBTQ youth, greater public access to the Hudson River Park, as well as greater involvement with decision-making about the redevelopment efforts in the area. These campaigns and experiences served as a foundation for Krystal's leadership development skills in a number of areas. She learned how to organize outreach efforts, prepare reports for public presentations, develop systems and protocols for the organization and think strategically.

In 2003, Krystal left New York again to complete her degree at the University of Hawaii. While in college, she quickly developed a network of social justice activities in the region. For example, not long after being in Hawaii, she went to work for the American Friends Service Committee to support local communities with demilitarization organizing efforts. She also connected with the American Friends Service Committee's LGBTQ coalition and began helping local schools develop Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) chapters. These organizing efforts led her to build a coalition of GSA organizations in Hawaii, and become a statewide coordinator for Hawaii's GSA chapters. In this capacity, she organized Hawaii's first queer prom, and led the events related to Hawaii's National Day of Silence, where thousands of students from around the country brought attention to anti-LGBTQ behavior in schools. She also helped organize the first teen dating conference in Oahu, to bring attention to dating violence.

> Youth organizing groups, of their own accord, create pipelines for leadership; part of the in-depth development young people receive can result in youth taking on roles as powerful lead organizers and even Executive Directors.

After leaving Hawaii, Krystal worked in several social service organizations in various case management positions, but felt disconnected to her organizing roots in New York. In 2008, Krystal returned to New York to work for FIERCE with deeper and more rich social justice organizing and social service experiences under her belt. Currently, as FIERCE's youth development and operations director, she uses her skills to develop curriculum that can address both the developmental needs and political education necessary for FIERCE's youth organizers. Having experience as an organizer and years of social service work in various organizations provides her with a rich knowledge base and skills set to continue to build FIERCE's impact.

Case Study 2: Community Learning Partnership

It was an awkward moment for Soyun when someone told her that being Korean didn't exclude her from being a member of the Mexican community in Denver. One community member told her, "You live in this community, you have taught our children, and eaten in our homes, you must push us the same way as if this was a Korean neighborhood." Soyun was cautious about imposing her own values and ideas about how to make educational demands from the school district. However the community's comments about being part of the neighborhood taught her that organizing was about much more than strategy and tactics; it was also about relationships and a

passion for justice. Soyun had always had a passion for social justice because her father talked to her about his own youth in North Korea. Not surprisingly Soyun became one of the founders of Colorado Progressive Coalition and created Students 4 Justice, which led a campaign to pass the only anti-racial profiling law in Colorado.

Soyun was introduced to Andrew Mott, Director of the Community Learning Partnership. He shared his ideas about connecting community-based organizations with local community colleges in order to provide certificates and Associates of Arts degrees in Community Change. She was inspired by the thought of taking youth organizing to scale by linking community-based organizations to educational institutions. Soyun was hired as the Associate Director to build partnerships between public institutions, community colleges and community organizations to build a new field of study in Community Change. Community Learning Partnership was created to address the dearth of highly skilled and knowledgeable leadership in communities of color. The organization is building a pipeline that connects high school students and adult organizers to community colleges to study Community Change. The Community Learning Partnership is a national network of community organizations and community colleges in six cities and views community colleges as a vital untapped resource, that when linked to progressive community organizations, provide vital leadership training and development to low-income communities of color.

The program's goals are to increase the number of skilled change agents and knowledgeable leaders within communities of color. These leaders receive Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Arts or Certificated programs in Community Change. These new educational pathways provide leaders access to affordable, and relevant post-secondary educational opportunities. Students in the pipeline learn how to build and manage organizations, develop strategic plans, implement theory of change models, as well as build their content knowledge on special topics such as gentrification or immigration law.

There are similar efforts to Community Learning Partnership project. For example, the University of Arizona has partnered with the Tucson Unified School District and the Social Justice Project, a local community organization, to train the next generation of teachers. Recognizing that a majority of the teaching faculty in the district are white and not from Tucson and that most of the students are Latino, Dr. Julio Cammarota a professor at the University of Arizona, designed a pipeline that trains high school students in participatory action research, community organizing and social justice history. Upon successful completion of high school, students are granted admission to the University and work closely with a faculty mentor in the department of Mexican American studies where they take courses that prepare them for a career in

teaching. Upon completion of a Bachelor degree and additional coursework in teacher education, the school district guarantees every student a teaching position in the district. These new teachers bring a rich social justice perspective to their classrooms, and see their teaching as a critical component of the broader social justice movement. There are multiple venues for organizers to utilize their organizing and social justice perspectives that are vital to broader movement building.

Despite the leadership development challenges facing youth organizing groups, there are a number of promising examples that are responding to this crisis. From projects ranging from university partnerships and coordinated training opportunities to paid internships with local business, youth organizing groups are learning the best ways to build post-high school leadership development opportunities. These opportunities to further hone and develop leadership skills harness young people's knowledge of important issues, sophisticated organizing and passion for social justice.

There are several key lessons from the case studies above. These case studies teach us about the type of innovation that is required to build effective pipeline opportunities for young people. Additionally, they provide us with insight into questions related to sustainability. First, pipelines are not built overnight. Strategic relationships between and among organizations and institutions require more than memorandums of understanding. These relationships require trust, and the cultivation of common purpose, both of which take time and energy. Ultimately, these relationships contribute to forms of social capital necessary to connect institutions and organizations in strategic and meaningful ways. Second, networks and partnerships sometimes emerge from unconventional allies. Building leadership pipelines will require that organizations cross sector boundaries. Education groups will need to work more closely with immigrant rights organizations, immigrant rights organizations may need to form close alliances with local employment development agencies. Third, pipelines have different scopes and different scales. This simply means that some pipelines are directed toward opportunities for a single organization, while other pipelines are larger and seek to impact the entire sector of youth organizing. Clarity on the scope and the scale of pipeline development will contribute to the formation of more strategic partnerships and the creation of more innovative solutions for leadership development for young people.

CONCLUSION

Supporting the development of leadership pipelines is an investment in building a healthy and robust democracy. Without such pathways for leadership development, we are missing an important opportunity to foster creative and innovative leaders who will tackle our most pressing social problems. The success of movements around the world is the result of skilled, knowledgeable and passionate individuals who have been prepared to assume the responsibility to lead. From global warming, to access to higher education, young people around the world are acting on a range of issues to improve the quality of life for their communities. In the U.S. context, Latino youth are involved in the mass protest to support immigrant rights. Similarly, we can point to African-American young people's involvement by various efforts to rebuild and reclaim a "black" New Orleans in the wake of the Katrina disaster. The burgeoning National Hip Hop Political Convention is yet another example of a way in which young people of color are elbowing their way into the democratic process. The National Hip Hop Political Convention is a bi-annual meeting where activists, organizers, artists, writers, journalists, scholars, and students from across the country gather to develop a political agenda for the post-civil rights generation.

As a result of this greater civic engagement, youth organizing has contributed to important policy changes, greater holistic support for young people, and greater networking and alliances than in the past. For example, the Community Coalition in Los Angeles was successful in organizing a broad base of community constituents to demand college preparation courses in all Los Angeles high schools. Policy changes such as these create healthier learning environments and broader educational opportunities for young people. Youth organizing groups also have become more sophisticated in their understanding of political change by integrating youth development practices into organizing activities. A survey of youth organizing groups conducted by the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing illustrates that a majority of their grantees provide college preparation and tutoring support for youth. The initial FCYO survey also suggests that 50% of the youth groups surveyed use an intergenerational approach

to their work. These intergenerational approaches, where adult allies work closely with young people, build social capital for both youth and adults because the model engages a cross section of community stakeholders. For example, these models contribute to greater networking and alliance-building with other organizations. In fact, 91% of the organizations indicated that they were involved in a local, statewide, national or regional coalition and/or network. This trend suggests that there are more opportunities for young people to connect with other social justice organizations, which in turn contributes to stronger movement building.

One promising example of connecting young people to intergenerational social justice opportunities is the Alliance for Educational Justice (AEJ), a national alliance of youth organizing and intergenerational groups working for educational justice. AEJ brings grassroots groups together to advocate for changes in federal education policy, and build the capacity of local organizations and youth leaders to sustain and grow the progressive movement. The groups that form the alliance work to improve college access, school governance, and develop alternatives to punitive school discipline practices. One of AEJ's goals is to create more meaningful relationships between students and teachers, and developing opportunities for youth to effectively assert their voices in education policy debates and decisions.

Youth organizing is one important pathway to vibrant civic life among youth of color. Pipelines that build on the leadership skills developed from youth organizing, will expand young people's leadership skills and knowledge base. Ultimately, these pipelines will contribute to more vibrant civic life and opportunities to nurture social justice in all communities. There are several key strategies that can contribute to building and sustaining social justice leadership pipelines. These strategies are important for philanthropists who support progressive, social justice strategies as well as practitioners working to improve the quality of life for their communities.

1.) Create intentional pathways to social justice work through organizing.

Creating intentional pathways requires investments in partnerships and collaborations between schools and community based organizations, universities and employment training institutes that build upon young people's social justice leadership skills and experiences. Southwest Organizing Project's partnership with the Posse Foundation provides a promising example of how community organizations can build post-secondary pathways for young people that continues their leadership development for social justice.

2.) Increase the number of young people entering progressive, social justice work.

While creating pathways for post-secondary social justice leadership development is important, it is also critical to continue to provide multiple points of entry into organizing for young people in high school and middle school. Youth organizing groups and community organizations will need more strategic investments in civic opportunities in schools. For example, organizations may identify and connect with social justice teachers in schools and develop projects where students are encouraged to work on local campaigns that matter to them. Youth organizing groups may consider expanding middle school arts and popular education programs that can expose students to foundational concepts and ideas to organizing.

3.) Build the capacity of organizations to enrich transformative opportunities for young people to engage in social justice work at the high school age.

Youth organizing provides high school youth with more than skills and knowledge about how to change things. More importantly, it builds hope, optimism and courage necessary for effective social change. These dimensions of social change are often overlooked, yet remain perhaps one of the most important outcomes of youth organizing. Youth organizing offers a worldview and a consciousness about how to improve the quality of life for their families and neighborhoods. This requires what Janelle Dance (2002) refers to as "the power of humane investments," which are the investments in young people's lives that require that we see them as key stakeholders in the democratic process. Investments in building organizational capacity to serve more high schools students will be significant. For example, increasingly states are requiring high school students to complete community service or other forms of service learning prior to graduation. Investments in capacity building among youth organizing groups to work in schools provides an important opportunity to connect students to deeply meaningful civic experiences through organizing. Building organizational capacity also means investing in critical youth development support to enable holistic approaches to youth organizing.

4.) Help organizations and individuals transition post-high school and maintain a commitment to social justice work.

Creating social justice leadership pipelines require investments in a progressive infrastructure where partnerships, collaborations and networks are formed to build upon young people's leadership skills after high school. These pipelines transition young people from high school to social justice activities such as coordinating a campaign for city council, serving as an executive director of a social justice organization, or creating a new organization that addresses other unmet needs of our society. This will require investments of time, resources, as well as vision to devise new networks, and coalitions with schools, community colleges and universities. The Community Learning Partnership provides an innovative example of how to build powerful social justice opportunities for youth after high school.

5.) Increase and build social justice networks and networking opportunities.

One of the most significant factors that contribute to greater overall capacity is the ability to network, and share information and practices across issue areas. Youth organizing groups have few opportunities to convene and build collective consciousness beyond issue areas, or local problems. Building these opportunities will contribute to a more robust youth organizing field and increased forms of civic engagement for those young people who rarely have a voice at decision-making tables.

The very idea of democracy cannot be adequately understood without attention to how we are preparing and supporting civic, educational, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for young people in America. Questions regarding how leadership in communities of color is developed and sustained are the heart of democratic ideas. While there may be many ways to achieve social justice in our society, I agree with the comments of one youth organizer, who stated, "Social justice is achieved when our young people have choices, access and opportunities to create the type of world in which they want to live."

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ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

Action Communication and Education Reform
306 Main Street
Duck Hill, MS, 38925
(662) 565-7004
www.acerms.org

Albany Park Neighborhood Council
3334 W. Lawrence Ave., 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60625
(773) 583-1387
www.apncorganizing.org

Alternatives for Community and Environment/ Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project (REEP)
2181 Washington Street, Suite 301
Roxbury, MA 02119
(617) 442-3343
www.ace-ej.org/reep

Alliance for Educational Justice
C/O Movement Strategy Center
1611 Telegraph Ave #510
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 444-0640
www.allianceforeducationaljustice.org

Asian/ Pacific Islander Youth Promoting Advocacy & Leadership (AYPAL)
310 8th Street Suite 201
Oakland, CA
(510) 869-6007
www.aypal.org

Black Mesa Water Coalition
PO BOX 613
Flagstaff, AZ 86002
(928) 213-5909
www.blackmesawatercoalition.org

Boston-Area Youth Organizing Project
565 Boylson St. 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 262-1895
www.byop.org

The Brighton Park Neighborhood Council
4477 S. Archer Ave.
Chicago, Illinois, 60632
(773) 523- 7110
www.bpnc-chicago.org

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol
512 West 143rd Street
New York, NY 10013
(212) 283-7044
www.brotherhood-sistersol.org

CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities
2473 Valentine Ave
Bronx, NY 10458
(718) 220-7391
www.caaav.org

California Fund for Youth Organizing
(213) 385-5834

Californians for Justice
200 Pine Ave., #502
Long Beach, CA 90802
(562) 951-1015
www.caljustice.org

Chicago Freedom School
719 South State Street
Chicago, IL 60605-2540
(312) 435-1201
www.chicagofreedomschool.org

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles
2533 W. 3rd St., Suite 101
Los Angeles, CA 90057
(213) 353-1333
www.chirla.org

Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth (Youth Making A Change)
459 Vienna Street
San Francisco, CA 94112
Phone: (415) 239-0161
www.colemanadvocates.org

Community Coalition of South LA
8101 S. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90044
(323) 750-9087
www.cocosouthla.org

Communities for a Better Environment
5610 Pacific Blvd., Suite 203
Huntington Park, CA 90025
(323) 826 9771
 www.cbecal.org

Community Learning Partnership
1301 Connecticut Avenue NW
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 822-6006
www.communitylearningpartnership.org

Community Water Center
311 W. Murray Ave.
Visalia, CA 93291-4936
(559) 733-0219
www.communitywatercenter.org

Design Studio for Social
Intervention
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Boston, MA 02118
www.ds4si.org

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(DRUM)
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Jackson Heights, Queens 11372
(718) 205-3036
www.drumnation.org

Detroiters Working for
Environmental Justice
4750 Woodward Ave., Suite 406
Detroit, MI 48201
(313) 833-3935
www.dwej.org

Direct Action for Rights and Equality
340 Lockwood Street
Providence, RI 02907
(401) 351-6960
www.daretowin.org

FIERCE
147 West 24th Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10011
(646) 336-6789
www.fiercenyc.org

Future of Tomorrow (Cypress Hills
Development Corporation)
3214 Fulton Street
Brooklyn, NY 11208
(718) 647-8100
 www.cypresshills.org

Girls for Gender Equity
1360 Fulton Street, Suite 314
Brooklyn, NY 11216
(718) 857- 393
www.ggenyc.org

Global Action Project
4 West 37th Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10018
(212) 594–9577
www.global-action.org

Homies Organizing the Mission to
Empower Youth (HOMEY)
1337 Mission St., 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 861-1600
www.homeysf.org

Hyde Square Task Force
365 Centre St.,
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
(617) 524-8303
www.hydesquare.org

Inner City Struggle
2811 Whittier Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90023
(323) 780-7605
www.innercitystruggle.org

Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana
1600 Oretha C. Haley Boulevard
New Orleans, LA 70113
(504) 522-5437
www.jjpl.org

Kenwood Oakland Community
Organization (KOCO)
1005 E. 43rd Street
Chicago IL 60653
(773) 548-7500

Khmer Girls in Action
1355 Redondo Avenue, Suite 9
Long Beach, CA 90804
(562) 986-9415
www.kgalb.org/

Little Village Environmental
Justice Organization
2856 S. Millard Avenue
Chicago, IL 60623
(773) 762-6991
www.lvejo.org

Make the Road by Walking
301 Grove Street
Brooklyn, New York 11237
(718) 418-7690
 www.maketheroad.org

Movement Strategy Center (MSC)
1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 510
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 444-0640
www.movementstrategy.org

New York State Youth Leadership
Council
137-139 West 25th Street, 12th
Floor
New York, NY 10011
(212) 627-2227 ext 248
www.nysylc.org

Nollie Jenkins Family Center
109 Swinney Lane
Lexington, MS 39095
(662) 834-0080
www.nolliejenkinsfamilycenter.blog
spot.com/

OASIS Center, THE YOUTH
OPPORTUNITY CENTER
1704 Charlotte Ave., Suite 200
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 983-6858
www.oasiscenter.org

Padres y Jovenes Unidos
3025 W. 37th Ave. Suite 206
Denver, CO 80211
(303) 458-6545
www.padresunidos.org

Partnership for Immigrant
Leadership and Action (PILA)
2601 Mission Street, Suite 404
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 821-4808
www.pilaweb.org

Philadelphia Student Union
1315 Spruce St.
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 546-3290
www.home.phillystudentunion.org

People Organized in Defense of
Earth and her Resources (PODER)
P.O. Box 6237
Austin, TX 78762
(512) 472-9921
www.poder-texas.org

POWER U Center for Social
Change
164 NW 20th Street, #104
Miami, FL 33127
(305) 576-7449
www.poweru.org

Project HIP HOP
2181 Washington Street, Suite 315
Roxbury, MA 02119
(617) 427-7950
www.projecthiphop.org

Radio Rootz (People's Production
House)
666 Broadway, Suite 500
New York, NY 10012
(212) 334-7433
www.peoplesproductionhouse.org/
programs/radio-rootz

ReThink: Kids ReThink New
Orleans Schools
338 Baronne St., 3rd Floor
New Orleans, LA 70112
(504) 592-0520
www.therethinkers.com

School of Unity and Liberation
(S.O.U.L.)
287 17th Street, Suite 225
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 451-5466
www.schoolofunityandliberation.org

Sociedad Latina
1530 Tremont Street
Roxbury, MA 02120
(617) 442-4299
www.sociedadlatina.org

Southerners on New Ground
250 Georgia Avenue, Suite 201
Atlanta, GA 30312
(404) 549-8628
www.southernersonnewground.org

SouthWest Organizing Project
(SWOP)
211 10th Street SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
(505) 247-8832
www.swop.net

Southwest Organizing Project -
Chicago
2609 West 63rd Street
Chicago, IL 60629-1619
(773) 471-8208
www.swopchicago.org

Southwest Workers Union
1416 East Commerce Street
San Antonio, TX 78205-3322
(210) 299-2666
www.swunion.org

Southwest Youth Collaborative
6400 South Kedzie Avenue
Chicago, IL 60629-2830
(773) 476-3534
www.swyc.org

Sistas and Brothers United
(Northwest Bronx Community and
Clergy Coalition)
103 East 196th Street
Bronx, NY 10468
(718) 584-0515
www.northwestbronx.org

Southeast Asian Community
Alliance
970 N. Broadway, Suite 209
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 628-8667
 www.seaca-la.org

Southwest Network for
Environmental and Economic
Justice (SNEEJ)
PO Box 7399
Albuquerque, NM 87194
(505) 242-0416
www.sneej.org

Student Immigrant Movement
33 Harrison Ave., 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 830-1813
www.simforus.com

TARGET Area Development
Corporation
1542 West 79th Street
Chicago, IL 60620-4135
(773) 651-6470
www.targetarea.org

Tunica Teens in Action
PO Box 2249
Tunica, Mississippi 38676
(662) 363-1228
www.tunicateensinaction.org

UPROSE
166A 22nd St
Brooklyn, NY 11232-1106
(718) 492-9307
www.uprose.org

Urban Underground
4850 W. Fond Du Lac Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53216
(414) 444-8726
www.urbanunderground.org

Urban Youth Collaborative
Annenberg Institute for School
Reform:
Community Involvement Program
233 Broadway, Suite 720
New York, NY 10279
(212) 328-9290
 www.urbanyouthcollaborative.org

Vietnamese American Young
Leaders Association of New
Orleans
4646 Michoud Boulevard, #2
New Orleans, LA 70129
(504) 253-6000
www.vayla-no.org

Voces de la Frontera
1027 South 5th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53204-1734
(414) 643-1620
www.vdlf.org

Voices of Youth in Chicago
Education (VOYCE) Project
(773) 583-1387 ext. 208
www.voyceproject.org

Youth 4 Change Alliance
c/o Youth in Action
672 Broad Street,
Providence, RI 02907
(401) 751-4264 x 7

Youth in Action
672 Broad Street,
Providence, RI 02907
(401) 751-4264
www.youthinactionri.org

Youth on Board
58 Day Street
Somerville, MA 0214
(617) 741-1242
www.youthonboard.org

Youth Force
c/o Dorchester Bay
594 Columbia Rd.
Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.trintuition.com/youthforce

Youth Ministries for Peace and
Justice
1384 Stratford Avenue
Bronx, NY 10472
(718) 328-5622
www.ympj.org

Youth Together
449 15th Street #302
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 645-9209
www.youthtogether.net

Youth United for Community
Action
2135 Clarke Avenue,
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650) 322-9165
www.youthunited.net

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Shawn Ginwright is an Associate Professor of Education in the
Africana Studies Department and Senior Research Associate for the
Cesar Chavez Institute for Public Policy at San Francisco State
University. In 1989, Dr. Ginwright founded Leadership Excellence
Inc. an innovative youth development agency located in Oakland,
California. He is also the co-founder of the Institute for Radical
Healing, a newly formed institute dedicated to pioneering research
and wellness practices that build the capacity of African American
communities to sustain social change efforts. He is the author of
Black Youth Rising: Activism and Radical Healing in Urban America,
*Black in School: Afrocentric Reform, Black Youth and the Promise of
Hip-Hop Culture*, and co-editor of *Beyond Resistance! Youth
Resistance and Community Change: New Democratic Possibilities for
Practice and Policy for America's Youth*.