

**CHANGEMAKING: LESSONS FROM FOUNDATION PRACTICE**

**6/30/2011**

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## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Philanthropy has a long history of support for efforts to revitalize distressed communities and improve the lives of the children and families who live there. This history has produced a wealth of knowledge about effective revitalization models, promising program strategies and lessons learned (Kubisch et al., 2010). At the same time, foundations have increasingly recognized that *how* they go about this work is as important as *what* they support (Brown and Fiester, 2007). Here “best practice” is less well defined.

Clearly, no single role, style or set of practices makes sense for every foundation in every community change effort. Good practice reflects a dynamic match between the opportunities and needs in a community and the foundation’s own history, goals, operating preferences and capacities, as well as those of its partners. However, as Patrizi and Thompson (2011) suggest, foundations typically spend more time developing their program strategies than clarifying the roles they will play and how they will function as strategy is executed: “*For foundations to go beyond the rhetoric of being more than a ‘banker,’ they need to be clearer about what specifically they do that adds value to their strategies and how they can improve and build that capacity.*” This challenge coincides with another trend in philanthropy that urges foundations to utilize their full range of assets—knowledge, networks, credibility and political capital, as well as their financial resources—to advance their missions (Auspos et al., 2009; Ballard, 2007; Crutchfield et al., 2011).

Effective place-based funders, especially embedded foundations working in their own “hometowns” (Karlström et al., 2009), typically establish rich and trusting networks of relationships that position them to add value through taking on roles besides grantmaker: they draw attention to pressing community needs, convene, collaborate, leverage, problem-solve, mobilize, advocate, and/or build and share knowledge. Few other civic actors have the independence, the patient and flexible resources, and the intellectual and political capital to assume these changemaking roles for the public good. Consistently adding real value, however, can be extraordinarily complex, requiring a daunting mix of strategic skills, entrepreneurial stance and staying power.

This article examines the Skillman Foundation’s efforts to add value to its work through what it calls “changemaking.” Changemaking refers here to roles and practices beyond grantmaking through which a foundation tries to advance its goals. Skillman staff view grantmaking and changemaking as intimately connected: grant resources are “*what give us our standing*” and allow us to “*access a portfolio of changemaking tools beyond money for advancing our agenda.*” Indeed, part of managing a grants program is thinking about “*how changemaking practices might increase or extend the impact of the grants.*” Changemaking is the “*connective tissue that helps create more powerful outcomes from heretofore unconnected and unleveraged strategies.*” Finally, the Foundation thinks about changemaking as a tool—like grantmaking, knowledge management and strategic communications—through which to exert influence, leverage resources and partnerships, and work toward scale in achieving its goals.

A foundation aiming to deploy changemaking strategies to add value to its community change work faces at least two tasks. The first is simply reaching clarity—internally and with partners—

about how the foundation will do the work and what roles it will play. By specifying the strategic rationale for these roles in the change effort, the foundation in effect defines itself as a player in the larger theory of change or framework guiding the effort. Like other players, it can then define goals for its work and establish benchmarks for measuring progress toward these goals.

Once a foundation has determined how it will operate in the community change effort, the second task is identifying the skills, expertise, and organizational will it has or will need to develop internally to effectively implement and be accountable for its chosen roles. This is what Patrizi and Thompson (2011) call a foundation's *strategic competence* to deliver value to the work. Foundations committed to long-term community change efforts need to find a good match between their intended roles and their organizational capacity to execute these roles at any point in time, and they need to be able to adjust these roles and practices in response to changing circumstances and opportunities. In other words, a key element of strategic competence is the ability to learn from experience and improve practice along the way.

The Skillman Foundation's recent work in Detroit affords a timely opportunity to examine changemaking practice. The case's value is enhanced by two factors, the Foundation's intentionality and transparency. Since the mid-2000s, Skillman has by design transitioned from being a fairly traditional grantmaker to one that aims to add value to its grantmaking by taking on changemaking roles and practices deemed instrumental to increasing impact. By setting concrete goals for its own performance and including assessment of this performance in the overall evaluation of its work, the Foundation has also signaled a welcome transparency from which it and others can learn.

This article aims to capture some of the Foundation's initial lessons about changemaking practice, some drawn from success and some from mistakes. It is not an exhaustive inventory of its changemaking activities or an evaluation of its outcomes. Nor does it delve in depth into the larger philosophical/strategic debate about what changemaking roles are appropriate ones for philanthropy, a debate about which people both inside and outside philanthropy can have quite different views. Rather, by examining the changemaking practice of one foundation in real time, we hope to learn more about the nature of this practice and begin to draw some lessons for other foundations with similar social change goals. This is not a story about Skillman's success but, instead, a portrait of how a foundation with a genuine desire to expand the range and scope of its own practice engaged in the iterative process of learning and doing to advance its agenda.

The findings reported here are based on confidential interviews with Foundation staff, leadership, partners, and philanthropic colleagues (see Attachment A for a list of respondents), as well as the author's observations as an evaluation consultant to the Foundation over the last several years.<sup>1</sup> After providing a brief background on Skillman's work and its decision to play a more intentional changemaking role, the article describes the ways in which the Foundation went about building its own strategic competence as a changemaker and the practice challenges it confronted in the process. This is followed by a discussion of key practice lessons that Foundation staff and others draw from their own experience. The article ends with some

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<sup>1</sup> Quotations from the interviews appear in italics but are not attributed to individual respondents in order to encourage candid reflection and ensure confidentiality.

observations about how philanthropy can draw upon both grantmaking and changemaking strategies to add value to its social change work.

**Background.** Established in 1960, The Skillman Foundation’s mission is to improve the lives of children in Detroit.<sup>2</sup> After many years of operating as a largely responsive grantmaker investing in education and child and family programs and strategies in metropolitan Detroit, the Foundation’s leadership decided to restructure its work in two fundamental ways in order to increase its impact.

- First, it would target its resources in six neighborhoods where, collectively, about 30 percent of Detroit’s children live. Launched in 2006, Good Neighborhoods/Good Schools/Good Opportunities constitutes a ten-year \$100 million commitment involving neighborhood and youth development, school improvement and system change strategies that aim to ensure that children living in the six targeted neighborhoods are safe, healthy, well educated and prepared for adulthood.
- Second, the Foundation would make more concerted use of the non-grantmaking resources at its disposal in order to become a more powerful voice for children. By drawing upon and leveraging these resources—its staff and board networks, deep local knowledge, civic reputation, professional expertise, access to national resources, and political capital—it would be better armed to address the urgent challenges facing children and families in Detroit.

In sum, the Foundation believed that by limiting its primary focus to six target neighborhoods but complementing its grantmaking with more intentional changemaking strategies, it could demonstrate improved outcomes for children and reach for scale in its impact over time.

### **BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND CREDIBILITY AS A CHANGEMAKER**

In the early 2000s Skillman ventured into a partnership with another entity to work on a hotly contested charter school issue. Although the Foundation had a long and distinguished record of grantmaking in Detroit, this initial attempt to institute a more proactive schools agenda was unsuccessful. An analysis by staff concluded that: *“we lost badly and publicly...Eight years ago we had a track record of good grants for youth but we had not communicated what we knew and how we knew it, we had not developed authentic relationships that could be leveraged for our goals, and we had not built a constituency of people who trusted us.”*

This analysis led Foundation leadership to conclude that to be an effective changemaker, it needed at least two critical assets: 1) strong partnerships on the ground and 2) the ability to engage those who have money, influence and power. Knowing that working with and through other individuals and organizations would produce more impact than it could ever achieve alone, the Foundation set out to deepen its existing relationships and build new ones characterized by mutual understanding and trust.

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<sup>2</sup> For more information about the Foundation’s history and current work, see [www.skillman.org](http://www.skillman.org).

What follows is a discussion of how the Foundation went about this task, both with neighborhood residents and stakeholders and with those outside the neighborhood it hoped to learn from and engage in the work. **These relationships are, in fact, at the core of how the Foundation adds value as a changemaker. They are not unique to the Skillman Foundation but consistently established in multiple venues over time, they generate the basis for much of the Foundation’s power to achieve scale beyond the limits of its financial resources.**

### **Building Partnerships with Neighborhood Residents and Stakeholders**

The Foundation began its work in the six target neighborhoods with the belief that staff would need to get to know and be known by residents and stakeholders. It did not want to take a “hands-off” stance and operate solely through an intermediary, but it knew that it needed assistance to work in this labor-intensive way on the ground. So it engaged two intermediaries—the National Community Development Institute and the University of Michigan School of Social Work Technical Assistance Center—as planning, capacity-building and implementation partners.

Like other foundations trying to work in partnership with low-income communities, Skillman faced the challenge of building trust across class and, sometimes, racial/ethnic lines. A close observer describes the Foundation’s approach:

*The best thing they did at the beginning was to show up with full force at all the community planning meetings in each neighborhood. They got there early, left late. They allowed themselves to become a part of the community. They were not afraid of residents known to be “difficult” or residents who were always complaining—how come you’re doing it this way or why can’t you...? They weren’t afraid of the hard questions. [Foundation leadership] would say: We acknowledge that we have the money and therefore we have the power. But there’s something called the abuse of power that we don’t want to practice. Whenever you feel that we abuse our power, I want you to call me, and here’s my number. Essentially, the Foundation gave permission to the community to bring its true self into the space that Skillman also occupied without having to communicate in a certain way because that’s what the foundation wants or that’s the way the Foundation wants to hear it. So they brought their true selves to the work at the time. Residents didn’t feel as though they were going to get more money or get defunded because of something they said or the way they said it. That’s different... For example, a resident from one neighborhood wrote a letter to the Foundation’s trustees expressing unhappiness about something the Foundation had done. While a natural response might have been to dismiss the resident’s views as unrepresentative or refuse to engage given how the resident had acted, Foundation staff responded directly to the resident, communicating respect while continuing to articulate a different point of view.*

A program officer cited a similar interaction, noting that Foundation leadership consistently modeled and demonstrated “a deep respect for people’s experience on the ground. The residents live, work, play and worship there. This makes their opinions valid whether or not we agree with them.”

Foundation staff knew that a successful neighborhood effort would require not only the participation and investment of residents but also of other stakeholders—nonprofits and schools serving the neighborhood, local church and business leaders, and other key players in the neighborhood. But it didn't want these stakeholders to speak for residents. At least two stakeholder meetings were held prior to the launch of the first community meeting in each neighborhood. At these meetings, Foundation staff said to stakeholders that *“we need you but your voice can't be the loudest voice. We don't want you to be in this space as the expert because residents will defer to you as professionals. Be quiet and listen and allow resident voice to lead. We all have to learn to trust the community, how to hand off the mike to the community.”* This was a big leap for some of the nonprofit leaders but, over time, had important implications for how they came to think about and value resident ownership. It also protected the Foundation from depending too heavily on one or two nonprofits that claim to speak for a neighborhood.

Along with the Foundation's investment in the planning process came significant support for a full-time liaison in each neighborhood and the intermediaries' well-structured community planning methodology and other forms of technical assistance. Much of the initial work was focused on identifying goals, selecting priorities and strategies, developing and implementing action plans, and then, over time, creating a formal resident-stakeholder organization for decision-making, management and accountability. **It was during this several-year planning and readiness phase that Foundation staff and residents/stakeholders increasingly developed an understanding of each others' interests and capacities, and the opportunities and constraints affecting their work together.**

Although Foundation and intermediary staff worked most closely with a core group of resident leaders in each neighborhood, many more residents were engaged in other Foundation-supported activities, most significantly 1) a small grants program through which a resident committee made small grants to neighborhood projects and 2) various skill-building workshops and a Leadership Academy provided by the Foundation's intermediary partners. Further, Foundation staff looked for opportunities to invite or recommend individual residents to citywide venues such as Leadership Detroit (in which several program officers had or were participating) or various citywide task forces or boards.

Although foundations typically voice the value of resident engagement, it often gets operationalized in fairly narrow terms, for example through limited participation in a town hall event or a community planning meeting or through token input via one or more lead nonprofits in the community. Skillman's approach described above, however, reveals some of the elements of what it took for the Foundation to establish trust in its six neighborhoods:

- Being visible in each neighborhood on a regular basis (Foundation leadership and staff)
- Listening to people directly, not through spokespeople
- Constantly articulating the desire for a new way of working
- Working on concrete tasks with residents and stakeholders over a sustained period of years, not months
- Using multiple vehicles to engage residents with different interests, perspectives, and availabilities
- Responding to challenges or differences in a consistent, respectful fashion

- Consistently “practicing” and modeling its values (Liederman and Studdiford, 2010)
- Creating concrete vehicles for ongoing resident initiative and control

The Foundation’s consistent commitment to engage residents/stakeholders and develop a deep and sophisticated knowledge of neighborhood context has built its credibility and earned the respect of many philanthropic colleagues. One funder noted that foundations in Detroit have *“very few ‘listening’ venues so we tend to fall back on deciding what neighborhood folks need rather than listening to what they are looking for and then talking about how all of us as members of the donor community can respond. We’re trying to change that attitude, and Skillman’s work has helped because they have demonstrated the listening role to a level that most of us haven’t seen here before. If you listen long enough, people really talk to you and then you learn a lot and can work more easily together. But it’s easier said than done.”*

Skillman’s deep investment in resident engagement also helped build its own partnership skills and weather various challenges as illustrated in the following example.

Clear expectations are a key ingredient of effective relationships, especially those between parties who have different access to resources and power. Skillman staff aimed to be as clear as possible about the Foundation’s overall goal (i.e., to improve outcomes for children and youth) and the way it envisioned translating this goal into its neighborhood work. At every step of the way through a variety of methods Foundation staff and their two intermediary partners communicated this goal within a broad theory of change framework.

Over a multi-year planning and readiness period, however, the framework necessarily became more specified: the Foundation determined that the initiative’s long-term outcomes would be operationalized as youth who are **safe, healthy, well-educated, and prepared for adulthood (SHEP)**. These were the outcomes for which the Foundation wanted to be accountable; more specific goals for 2016, the formal end of the initiative, were developed subsequently. The Foundation made these decisions but was *“frustrated that we hadn’t let people know earlier; now the neighborhood groups had to fold our goals into their ongoing planning process.”*

This is a juncture at which trust between the Foundation and residents/stakeholders could have been severely undermined, as has been the case—irredeemably so—elsewhere (Brown and Fiester, 2007; FSG, 2011). Residents might have felt “double-crossed” by a powerful institution that professed empowerment but insisted on heretofore-unspecified priorities. But the resilience of the relationship—the substantial goodwill and mutual understanding that had been built between the neighborhood groups and the Foundation and its intermediary partner—enabled them to work together to integrate SHEP in a way that worked for all involved.

The success of this effort is a testament to both the credibility that the Foundation had built over time with residents/stakeholders and the skill of its intermediary partners. **Misunderstandings,**

**competing priorities, or even conflict, inevitably arise in long-term foundation partnerships with communities. The ability to resolve differences and add value depends a great deal on honest communication, a mutual understanding of each other's goals and constraints, and the accrual of trust and respect that is built over time.** Genuine respect forms the core of the Foundation's approach:

*"We go out to the community and say **this is what we think and why** and then we listen. If people don't agree with our approach, we challenge and problem solve and deliberate with them. Sometimes our approach changes as a result, sometimes not. **It's not a consensus-building strategy but a respect strategy.** I am not trying to build community support for what we are doing, I am trying to build community understanding and maintain mutual respect and transparency. They may want to join us but that's not the primary goal."*

As it was building its credibility in the target neighborhoods, the Foundation also worked to develop its connections to people and institutions outside of the neighborhood that have resources, influence and power.

### **Building Networks and Collaborations**

Improving outcomes for youth at a significant level of scale, like other major social change goals, requires the participation and assets of multiple actors. This is not work that can be done alone. The question is not whether multiple players are needed but, first, how to engage them and, secondly, how to build the structures and processes through which they can be sufficiently aligned to "move the needle" over time (Kubisch et al, 2010; Kania and Kramer, 2011). To play a credible changemaking role for Detroit's youth, Skillman had to strengthen the platform from which it could engage others and help align their interests in ways that would benefit youth.

Foundation leadership understood that money, alone, could not define that platform or establish a foundation's credibility as a civic player. As another funder noted, "*you have to walk into the room with non-financial credibility. If you don't have that you are constantly marginalized as just a funder.*" Skillman's reputation would be a key lever of change, constituting the "soft power" (Stannard-Stockton, 2010) it could bring to the table along with its financial resources.

Although Skillman had long been embedded in citywide public/private/nonprofit networks, Foundation leadership knew it would need to deepen these relationships and expand their scope to address its ambitious goals. The Foundation's staff would need both to learn from and to bring value to these networks. Toward that end, experts in various areas were invited to learning sessions at the Foundation where staff examined lessons and best practices from past initiatives and debated new ideas. Management also encouraged staff to participate in professional associations, attend conferences, join collaborations and think strategically about what other venues would provide opportunities for learning and relationship-building related to the Foundation's goals.

An inventory of staff participation in such venues reveals formal, often leadership, roles in a rich and diverse array of local and national organizations and task forces: affinity groups of funders, cross-sector issue groups, nonprofit boards and advisory groups, government-appointed task

forces, and learning groups. Foundation staff report participating in over 150 conferences, workshops and other professional development activities in 2010. Despite limited travel budgets and time constraints, staff visibility—as key speakers, panelists and planning committee members—at both local and national conferences and meetings grew in scale and prominence. Foundation staff increasingly conducted briefings for the mayor and council members and met frequently with city and state officials to provide counsel regarding key issues on the Foundation’s agenda. The Foundation also hosted meetings of national organizations like the Philanthropy Roundtable and Grassroots Grantmakers.

Over time, staff played significant leadership roles in a range of local collaborative enterprises, each of which contributes directly to the Foundation’s goals by drawing attention to key issues, engaging multiple parties from different sectors, and coordinating efforts for maximum impact. Collaborations like the two described below draw upon and expand the Foundation’s networks and reputation, further strengthening the platforms from which it can advance its agenda for youth. Sometimes grants helped leverage others’ participation, sometimes no financial resources were involved at all.

**Detroit Youth Employment Consortium (DYEC)**—after piloting a summer youth employment program in its six targeted neighborhoods, Skillman staff formed the Consortium with a host of public, private and nonprofit players to build a sustainable system for youth employment in Detroit. Champions like the mayor, a private sector CEO, the president of the NAACP, and the Foundation’s president serve as the public face of the Consortium, which coordinates summer youth employment services at the same time that it works to develop a more effective year-long employment system for youth.

**African-American and Hispanic Boys Initiative**—having documented the challenges facing these groups, the Foundation convened interested local funders and educational institutions working in the area to share information and build a community mandate and a sense of urgency to address these challenges. The group sponsored its first symposium, attracting over 400 parents, teachers, youth, practitioners, researchers and funders, and has launched a series of Community Conversations—guided by committees co-chaired by funders and nonprofit leaders—focusing on employment, education and violence prevention.

Skillman sometimes played the lead role in developing and coordinating these and other efforts and sometimes followed others’ lead. As one program officer commented, *“You have to know when to be at the front of the parade and when, for reasons of history, board politics, expertise, or some other idiosyncratic factor, it’s best for someone else to lead.”* Another underscored the need to support others in key roles, such as making sure that non-Skillman partners chair committees, drafting key memorandum for another leader’s signature to move things along, or persuading an existing group to expand its membership to include some nontraditional partners.

And sometimes Foundation staff characterize their work in developmental terms: *“first, we have to do the unsexy work helping to get the neighborhood ready for investment—organizing*

*residents, making sure everyone gets a seat at the table, helping leaders resolve old conflicts, building organizational capacity. Then other funders can come in and fund specific programs or organizations that fit well with their missions.”* Organized communities attract resources because outside investors have some confidence that their resources will be put to good use. All the Foundation’s “pre-partnership” organizing work, both grantmaking and changemaking, helps lay the groundwork for these investors.

Taking on this critical but “silent” partner developmental role requires the Foundation to forego the public credit that traditionally comes later with the projects and initiatives that new investors develop as a result. This is why one program officer noted, *“I have to make sure the board understands the important role we are playing even if it is not visible.”* The Foundation’s intentional investment in board-staff alignment and communication, discussed later, makes it easier for all parties to stay focused on what is being accomplished rather than who receives the public credit.

### **Connecting with National Resources**

Foundation leadership has been particularly intentional about building relationships with various federal officials and agencies such as the Office of Domestic Policy, the White House Office of Social Innovation, the White House Automotive Council, and the Departments of Education, Labor, Justice, and Housing and Urban Development. This entailed attending conferences and special meetings, working with key supporters who could facilitate or advance these relationships, following up on referrals, and serving as the local host for visits to Detroit by various federal officials and the First Lady Michele Obama.

Its investment in educating federal officials and the foundation community about work underway in Detroit alongside its efforts to coordinate and support local efforts to attract national resources to the city increasingly positioned the Foundation as an effective broker for many efforts involving national partners, both public and private. Illustratively, Detroit has become a site for a number of national demonstrations and investments, such as the New Economy Initiative, The Integration Initiative (Living Cities), and Promise Neighborhoods, all of which are working in one or more of the Foundation’s target neighborhoods.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes Skillman assumed the lead role and other times it was a partner in collaborations lead by others with a particular eye toward ensuring that funds were invested in neighborhoods and with low-wealth families.

Two other examples, described next, illustrate other ways in which the Foundation has served as an intermediary between state and federal resources and its target neighborhoods.

**Safe Routes to Schools**—this federal program aims to make it safe for children to bike and walk to school. Administered in Michigan by the Governor’s Council for Physical Fitness, the program was not well suited for urban neighborhoods where children faced crumbling sidewalks, abandoned buildings, empty lots, and other safety issues. Skillman staff spent many hours working with the Council over several years to help it find a way to make grants in Detroit and find key partners

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<sup>3</sup> Detroit is not among the 21 communities receiving federal Promise Neighborhood planning grants but it is among 17 high-scoring applicant communities that, along with the 21, are part of a technical assistance network and are eligible to apply for an implementation grant.

with the capacity to implement the program. Planning teams of school officials, parents, and others in all six of the Foundation’s targeted neighborhoods attended workshops on the application for funds, received grants, participated in a “Walk to School Day” and engaged in a wide range activities to increase awareness about and promote safe routes to schools.

**Youth Violence Prevention**—The US Department of Justice selected Detroit and five other cities to develop comprehensive plans to prevent youth and gang violence. While public safety is a high priority for the mayor, the city was not well positioned to lead and manage a year-long process of convening community leaders, youth, nonprofits, advocacy groups representatives from the juvenile justice system and city agencies to develop strategies and principles for working together. City officials, knowing about the Skillman Foundation’s work with youth, asked for help with the planning process. Foundation staff drew upon its relationships with the different constituencies, brought in consulting assistance, navigated potential political dynamics, and served on a Steering Committee that generated what is perceived citywide as a high-quality plan consisting of a pilot in two of the Foundation’s target neighborhoods and a complementary systemic reform strategy.

**The Foundation’s strategic deployment of its networks in the service of connecting local opportunities and national resources is an important component of its changemaking strategy.** This intermediary role reflects the Foundation’s conception of its changemaking niche: *“The Foundation has national sophistication and embeddedness—we have a national footprint as a local foundation. We can help other foundations (and the feds) interested in Detroit with their entry into Detroit and reduce the risk of their initial investments.”* Once again, the success of this strategy depends to a great extent on the Foundation’s reputation and the scope, depth and strength of its working networks/relationships.

## **BUILDING INTERNAL CAPACITY AND ALIGNMENT AS A CHANGEMAKER**

At the same time as it was deepening its connections in the target neighborhoods, citywide, and nationally, Foundation leadership recognized the need for internal changes to support the new roles and practices that staff were being challenged to play. Job descriptions were restructured to reduce program silos, flexible work schedules were instituted to accommodate the evening and weekend work required for community engagement, and annual staff reviews included more attention to professional development plans related to the Foundation’s new agenda. The Foundation’s Grants Management system was revised to reflect and reinforce the Foundation’s new focus and its communications capacity was expanded. Two new staff positions were added: a Knowledge Management Officer to oversee evaluation and learning and a Special Projects Officer to focus on changemaking (Brown, Colombo and Hughes, 2009). Although all staff was expected to be able to draw upon both grantmaking and changemaking strategies, this program officer would have primary responsibility for coordinating strategies and overseeing special projects.

A parallel evolution took place at the board level. Over time, new trustees were invited to join the board with priority given to extending the Foundation's reach into new communities and key centers of power within the community, as well as bringing on new expertise regarding its goals. Trustees engaged in an ongoing series of learning opportunities, visiting other community change efforts around the country, holding meetings in the target neighborhoods, and participating in special meetings and annual retreats.

The staff and board worked hard to align their goals and expectations and to create a culture of candid exchange and debate. As they learned together, discussion at board meetings often included hard questions about *"how could we do it better."* Trustees engaged each other, as well as staff, in active risk analysis and debate about strategy: at a recent board meeting dealing with an important decision about whether to go forward with a potentially risky venture, trustees (rather than staff) presented the various sides of the debate and after thorough discussion, voted to proceed (rather than the usual consensus decision-making) to ensure that everyone felt comfortable with and invested in the direction.

The Foundation's board-staff alignment involves a high level of communication. Staff leadership typically contacts trustees monthly, more if necessary, to keep them current and make sure they are not surprised by something in the media or a call from a peer influential. For example, staff reported recently that: *"We took a big policy hit and we did not ultimately get what we wanted, but the trustees were not put in bad positions out in the community—they got weekly emails, they knew what was happening and were never caught by surprise. It was important for them to get accurate information from us so they could interpret whatever negative spin they heard elsewhere."* Both staff and trustees report a great deal of mutual trust, which is particularly important for effective changemaking because both the staff and trustees are active players, leveraging their own networks to advance the Foundation's agenda.

Building organizational alignment internally takes years, not months. One element, integrating place-based strategies across traditionally siloed programs, however, is notoriously challenging as illustrated in the following example.

Foundations typically structure their grantmaking programs around major substantive areas of work. Staff in each area has its own expertise, goals and strategies, budget and, sometimes, culture and operating style. This "siloing" of program areas, however, presents obvious challenges to cross-program collaboration and impact. As the Skillman Foundation focused its work on six target neighborhoods, its challenge became one of integrating a place-based approach (Good Neighborhoods) with an existing single program approach (Good Schools) that worked citywide. Both programs aimed to improve the lives of youth in the six target neighborhoods. Foundation staff knew that changing educational outcomes would require both systemic and place-based changes so they determined that Good Schools would continue to work on education citywide while adding a focus on the schools located in each of the six neighborhoods.

The challenges of integrating Good Neighborhoods and Good Schools came into stark relief at a 2008 meeting at the high school in one of the Foundation's six

neighborhoods. Over the previous year, Foundation staff had studied the abysmal performance of the two high schools that many of its neighborhood youth attended. As part of the reform agenda, the Foundation had worked with school district officials regarding school turnaround models, it had taken school board members to New York City to see examples of successful turnaround schools, and it had helped to establish the Venture Fund at the United Way to lead the work. What it had failed to do was to make sure the Good Schools and Good Neighborhoods program staff spent enough time talking to each other within the Foundation and communicating a shared agenda with residents and neighborhood stakeholders. As a result, just before the meeting, a flyer was distributed in the neighborhood encouraging people to “Stop the Skillman Foundation Takeover of the Cody High School.”

The goal of the 2008 meeting was to outline a proposal to address the high school’s poor performance by creating small schools within the larger high schools. Caught off guard without sound information, parents and teachers expected the worst. As Foundation staff observed, *“we didn’t practice our values here. In Good Neighborhoods we had learned to be respectful and transparent but this very difficult meeting signaled to us that we had to do a better job of applying these values to our Good Schools work.”*

Having owned its mistake publicly, the Foundation invited parents and stakeholders in each of the six neighborhoods to attend one of three neighborhood meetings in which the Foundation’s President and Vice-President, as well as program staff, talked about its schools strategy, and a panel of school representatives and students reflected on their experiences and perspectives on the school. These meetings helped generate a collective understanding about how the two high schools were failing young people and what teams of parents and stakeholders could do together and with the United Way’s turnaround consultants to divide the schools into smaller high-performing academies. Over the next year, this design process yielded a plan that was then implemented with a great deal of support from all quarters.

To build integration of the Good Neighborhoods and Good Schools work, the Foundation put in place both formal structures like senior program officer team meetings and informal processes for neighborhood and schools staff to share information and shape strategies across programs. A critical element of what is experienced as a *“huge shift”* inside the Foundation is a recurring informal lunch meeting where staff updates each other and build camaraderie across program silos. One staff person noted that *“it is clear to everyone in the field that the schools and neighborhood work must be inextricably linked; we’re just figuring out within the Foundation exactly how to make that work. We’re not 100% there but we’ve gone a very long way.”* Another reported, *“We have built a staff team that now knows that we have each other’s backs. That’s what you do for your colleagues inside the Foundation and what you do for your partners outside.”* The task of integrating schools and neighborhood work is very much a work in

progress; indeed, it is one of the next big challenges in the field nationally. But the Foundation recognized that to add value in this area, it had to build its own integrated platform internally.

In sum, the Foundation went about building its *strategic competence* for changemaking—its knowledge, reputation for adding value, credibility amongst residents and local actors as well as those outside of Detroit, and its internal capacity to support effective changemaking. In the next section, we describe how this new civic and organizational capital was deployed for leveraging purposes.

## **CHANGEMAKING: LEVERAGE**

One of the Foundation's primary goals is to get powerful people and institutions to invest, financially or otherwise, in youth in its neighborhoods. At the outset of the initiative, the Foundation set a goal for itself of leveraging \$5 for every \$1 it invested in Good Neighborhoods. It set up a bookkeeping system that tracked these funds and divided them into two groups: funds leveraged primarily through the Foundation's grants or those leveraged through its changemaking influence.

Over the four years from 2007-2010, the Foundation's investment of \$48 million in Good Neighborhoods leveraged a total of \$303 million for a return rate of \$6.3:1. About 60% of the funds were leveraged through grants, while the rest resulted from Foundation staff and board efforts to attract outside funds to the neighborhood in areas like physical development, basic assistance or child welfare in which the Foundation might have little or no financial investment.<sup>4</sup>

The actual work of leverage entailed a range of practices: sharing information; lending the Foundation's name; making strategic phone calls to get key people to the table to work together; hiring consultants or lending staff to help a state or city department or group of nonprofits navigate the federal application process; providing technical assistance; negotiating complex turf issues among competing organizations to increase their likelihood of attracting and effectively managing outside funds; and helping potential partners to see how investing in Detroit generally, and in Detroit's youth more specifically, could help them achieve their goals. The Foundation used both short-term leveraging strategies like one-time public information sessions and longer-term capacity-building strategies to build local readiness for investment.

The Foundation's effort to broker a relationship between DTE Energy, the largest utility in Michigan, and one of the Foundation's target neighborhoods reflects fairly typical practice:<sup>5</sup>

In 2006, DTE was looking for a Detroit neighborhood in which to explore the effectiveness of intensive energy conservation and weatherization efforts with

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<sup>4</sup> As the work moves into full-scale implementation, Foundation staff will collect and combine leverage data from both Good Neighborhoods and Good Schools, another indication of the more integrated way in which staff define the Foundation's core program work.

<sup>5</sup> See Karlström's 2009 research on embedded funders.

low-income households. The company approached Skillman for help ... and the Foundation introduced DTE representatives to a range of community actors...and invited them to community and church meetings where they gave away light bulbs and presented their pilot program. The Foundation also facilitated collaboration between DTE and a local nonprofit...to implement the pilot. [Besides providing substantial energy benefits to the neighborhood, the pilot helped] DTE convinced the state regulatory body to institute standardized fees to support more systemic conservation programs by Michigan energy companies. The Foundation's [former] board chair attributes much of the pilot program's success to Skillman's credibility and the community relationships it could mobilize in bridging the corporation and the neighborhood. *"I think that the opportunity for misunderstanding ... was substantially reduced by the fact that there was joint interaction in these meetings and at the churches. Had that not taken place, motives might have been suspect, solutions might have been ill-conceived and poorly executed."*

The Foundation's changemaking role—serving as a broker between a neighborhood and an outside resource—is a familiar practice for foundations embedded in their communities. But the example underscores **how important the Foundation's reputation as a trustworthy and respected partner is to its ability to add value: without its investment in building productive relationships both inside neighborhoods and citywide, it simply could not perform as an effective changemaker.** The example also demonstrates how the Foundation worked with its partner to scale up the results of the pilot to bring about more powerful systemic results.

Brokering relationships between its target neighborhoods and outside resources is not without its complexities. Issues of ownership and control seem almost inevitable—and very human. As one program officer noted, *"we need partners and champions. Not for our work but for our goals. That's a tension that we struggle with. It would be nice to have champions that do exactly what we tell them to do. But that's not how it works."* Another described a natural response to sharing leadership: *"When we spend so long getting something started, we're tempted to feel as if we own it. It's hard to let go even though we know that's exactly what we want—other funders who get invested."* And collaboration requires adjustments: *"Management is very happy if I leverage another funder's resources for our initiative but is less than enthusiastic about modifying our approach to be truly collaborative."*

Successful leveraging also brings its own challenges. One observer reported that *"The Foundation's positive reputation can sometimes make it difficult for collaborators to work side-by-side with Skillman because it has such brand recognition, people attribute all good things to them and don't take our role seriously."* Further, as the Foundation is increasingly viewed as a trusted community broker, staff *"worry about all the relationships we broker in the community and sharing accountability with so many partners. If our partners act irresponsibly, the community looks to us and says 'you brought them here.' It's especially hard with national foundations that are not going to be around for long. So we have to think hard about how to use our social capital wisely."* Trust that led to leveraged dollars can erode if the new resources do not result in well-implemented activities and, ultimately, desired outcomes.

These dynamics of credit and control, often fueled by a deep investment in the success of the work, only cause problems if they are not understood or go underground. Negotiating the dynamics of partnership and collaboration within an evolving ecology of actors and opportunities calls for potential partners to be very clear about their institutional interests, operating styles and preferences, and flexibilities and constraints. Articulating them clearly internally as well as to others goes a long way to helping potential partners identify shared interests and find ways to work together effectively. Put bluntly by one funder, *“you can get thrown under the bus if you can’t communicate your own self-interests, based on real internal agreement, and what you are willing and unwilling to do to get to your goals.”*

Leverage, of course, is not just about money. The Skillman Foundation engaged in a wide range of changemaking roles and activities to advance its agenda for youth. None of these roles is unique to Skillman or entirely new to philanthropy. Indeed, foundations have a long history of leveraging their resources and civic capital to promote their agendas. What is new for Skillman is the way changemaking became consistent practice, shifting the business, as one program officer put it, from *“grantmaking to doing whatever it takes”* to improve the lives of children in Detroit. **This shift both broadens the scope of the philanthropic enterprise and elevates the Foundation’s reputation and network of relationships as essential ingredients to its success.** Even the traditional creation of a new community resource requires various nuanced political and organizational changemaking skills, as illustrated in the example described below.

### **Data-Driven Detroit (D3)**

Good local area data and analyses are key to successful community development efforts. Using such data can promote a shared understanding of neighborhood context, improve planning, foster informed public discourse, and help decision-makers target resources effectively. As Skillman began planning its six-neighborhood initiative, it found several organizations in Detroit that could provide some data, but no organization that had the capacity to provide accessible high-quality neighborhood-level data from a range of sources across a range of fields for a range of audiences. As a result, Skillman—with the Kresge Foundation—engaged in a several-year process of building a new data resource for the entire community, Data-Driven Detroit (D3).

Minimally, Skillman needed youth outcome and demographic data for its six neighborhoods. But instead of making a grant to one organization for this limited, if high priority, data need, the Foundation reframed the task to be the creation of a new civic resource that could serve multiple sectors while also advancing the Foundation’s agenda. Skillman and Kresge:

- Navigated various organizational and leadership turf, personality and institutional interests that had challenged the creation of this community resource in the past.
- Brought national expertise to Detroit to advise in the start-up, convened local players, hired consultants, solicited advice from colleagues.
- Identified an appropriate incubator for the new organization, met monthly to help to negotiate a set of organizational agreements that resulted in three years of start-up support.
- Helped to broker D3’s effective engagement with community groups as, for example, when D3 conducted workshops for representatives from the six target neighborhoods about how

- they could use the data from a recently completed parcel survey.
- Encouraged D3’s participation in the National Neighborhood Indicators Project, a national network to further the development and use of neighborhood-level information systems in local policymaking and community building.
  - Used the Foundation’s political capital to get the Police Department to release data for D3 use, something researchers and community members had tried unsuccessfully to do for years.

While seemingly straightforward, the development of D3 illustrates the positive complementarities of grantmaking and changemaking strategies to create a civic resource that has provided in its short life useful data to numerous community, regional and state projects. D3 would not have happened without the two foundations bringing much more to the table than grant resources: the neutral convener/problem solver role, connections to national expertise and networks, the standing to help negotiate local organizational and political barriers to success, and the ability to think beyond their individual foundation programmatic boundaries.

## **CHANGEMAKING: LESSONS FROM PRACTICE**

Over the last five years, we have seen how the Skillman Foundation worked to achieve its long-term goals for youth in Detroit by investing heavily in building its relationship assets in target neighborhoods, in Detroit and nationally; developing its own strategic competence for changemaking; and carrying out a wide range of changemaking and grantmaking strategies. What has it learned so far about changemaking practice? Respondents both in and outside of the Foundation were asked what “tips” they had for other philanthropies aiming to work in this way. They identified the following lessons, many of which have been touched on in the previous discussion but are worth lifting up and highlighting here. Foundation staff is especially careful to underscore the iterative nature of its learning process borne of missteps as well as successes.

**1) Adapt changemaking practice to local context.** Changemaking is highly context specific. *“The same philanthropic behavior that might be welcomed as bold leadership in a community with a weak nonprofit and civic infrastructure might be seen as competitive and power hungry in another community.”* The Foundation, for example, has stepped up in a big way to address Detroit’s education challenges in the absence of civic leadership typical in other cities: a mayor who calls an education summit, a university that engages with the school system, political forces that clean up a corrupt school board, a corporate community that invests in reform. Until recently, Detroit’s economic, political and racial dynamics have discouraged these typical civic responses. Good practice requires deep knowledge of context and the flexibility to adapt changemaking roles and activities to that context as it changes over time.

**2) Communicate clearly and consistently about the foundation’s goals and strategies and invite feedback continuously.** Foundations are often viewed as being insular and insulated from normal feedback loops and market responses. Changemaking requires just the opposite: frequent communication about the foundation’s goals and strategies and an ongoing invitation for critique and constructive input. This is not passive transparency but a much more active checking in with multiple parties with diverse views and competing interests. While a foundation may go it alone

in the short run, its legitimacy as a changemaker erodes if it fails to understand how others view its work and to adjust its strategy accordingly. Checking in regularly, especially with people outside the philanthropic sector, can help protect the foundation from strategies that are unsound, unnecessarily risky, or uninformed by current thinking and political realities.

3) **Take the time to invest in relationships as a key part of the work.** Building, maintaining and replenishing changemaking relationships and networks requires substantial time and effort, everything—in the Skillman case—from having a regular presence in the neighborhoods and participating in various city and state forums to following up with federal officials met at a national meeting and sitting on local and national boards. While Foundation leadership wisely stresses “*relentless prioritization*” in order to meet its 2016 goals, it also knows that success will depend on a wide range of relationships through which the work will get done. The links between these relationships and the Foundation’s immediate goals may be indirect, unexpected and/or only materialize some time down the road. Relationships with people outside of typical philanthropic networks, for example, may become unexpectedly useful in providing the reconnaissance and support needed to take advantage of a new opportunity. Or being responsive to a foundation colleague’s need for a funding partner even though the work is not in an area of highest priority to the Foundation may be important to maintaining effective collegial relationships that, in turn, can be leveraged at a later time. One Foundation staff person referred to the challenging and “*totally unbounded*” nature of relationship-building work, while viewing these relationships as “*the very fuel of changemaking.*”

4) **Inform changemaking strategies with a sophisticated and nuanced understanding of potential partners’ interests and motivations.** Any community change effort—but especially one that challenges existing power relations—necessarily produces resistance, whether from a neighborhood resident who feels his gatekeeper status threatened, a school principal who has concerns about engaging parents in a partnership, a government official who would prefer to operate less transparently, or another funder who is comfortable in its siloed niche. Sometimes the resistance is expressed publicly, other times it comes in the form of paralysis or lack of response. Even when key players’ interests overlap, the timing may not be right, the necessary institutional capacity or leadership may not be in place, and/or public demand may be low. A foundation with an effective changemaking strategy focuses on its own goals at the same time that it develops a deep analysis of the interests that motivate other individuals, groups and organizations within the community. Staying exquisitely attuned to these dynamics helps the changemaker identify and act upon areas of mutual self-interest when they emerge.

5) **Recruit and train staff who have or can develop effective relationship skills.** Although substantive knowledge of the various fields involved in community change is clearly an asset, respondents placed special value on well-developed interpersonal and organizational skills. “*The temptation as a funder is to start dictating outcomes and terms and conditions. But if you’re wearing your civic leader hat, it’s all about finding common ground so you can move forward together. This is quite a different skill set.*” Changemaking is hard work psychologically and politically, as well as technically, and requires finely honed listening and assessment skills, a sense of timing and pace, ability to navigate group dynamics and organizational development, political acumen, and effective communication with all kinds of community stakeholders.

**6) Understand and manage the dynamics of credit and control.** Whether it's human nature or the fact that people who work in foundations tend to be smart and used to being in control, managing the dynamics of credit and control constitutes a universal challenge. When responsibilities and accountabilities are widely distributed, as they often are in community change efforts, it is difficult to establish “who leveraged whom”, with whom the local city newspaper reporter should talk for a lead story, or who is accountable when something goes wrong. Foundations are not used to broad partnerships (as opposed to very specific, bilateral grant-related agreements) or evaluations in which their own performance is assessed as part of the larger mix. One funder contended, *“Those who have learned to give away credit have moved the needle the most.”* Most importantly, each foundation has to shape its changemaking niche to be consonant with its own needs and capacities regarding credit and control.

**7) Keep mission/goals front and center while navigating political terrain.** The Skillman Foundation is a widely respected voice for children in Detroit. Although the Foundation has made public mistakes, and not everyone agrees with its strategies, few question the Foundation's commitment or motives. *“People in Detroit believe we do it for kids—they may not agree with our specific choices of how but they don't doubt our commitment.”* This is a very important perception in a city in which mayors and school superintendents and other government officials have come and gone, often under a cloud of suspicion or, minimally, misunderstanding. The Foundation has worked in some form with many of these officials—for example, a former mayor who developed his own neighborhood initiative, or a school superintendent with an investment in lifting up high quality data about the schools. Working on behalf of children at any meaningful scale means that government cannot be ignored (GrantCraft, 2010). However, the Foundation did not “go down” with the mayor when he was arrested or with the school superintendent when she was fired. Foundation leadership underscores the distinction between working to help Detroit's leaders do their jobs better and allegiance to individual officials. *“We always frame our relationship as ‘we're with you as long as you stand for children.’ We have no permanent allies or enemies. Our constituency is kids, not the school system or the mayor's office.”* This stance—and all the carefully crafted behavior required to operationalize it—has helped minimize the Foundation's vulnerability to being tarnished by negative political critiques.

**8) Think carefully about where authority and responsibility for changemaking is best lodged within the foundation.** A foundation's ability to do effective changemaking depends a great deal on its reputation, but doing it badly erodes this important asset. Foundation leadership has to have confidence that staff using changemaking strategies understand the ethos of the Foundation and the risks it is willing and unwilling to take, have the skills do to the work well, and coordinate with each other (Greeley and Greeley, 2011). Staff need to feel empowered to act and to be taken seriously in the community but also clear about when and how to bring decisions about changemaking strategy and activities to management for review and/or approval. If grantmaking and changemaking are both viewed as tools for the Foundation to draw upon to advance its goals, it makes sense that grantmaking staff integrate changemaking strategies into their work as warranted. But given the especially high consequences of doing changemaking poorly, it also makes sense to think carefully about organizational policies and practices to support the work. The Skillman Foundation's staffing model evolved alongside its experience with changemaking, moving from a centralized to a more distributed model where all program staff takes on changemaking roles that are coordinated and supported by a Senior Program

Officer for Changemaking. This staff person also supervises the Foundation's public policy fellows, another resource that enables the Foundation to be responsive to emerging opportunities and proactive regarding policy targets. The goal is to adapt its decision-making processes and structures to support timely, sound decisions about changemaking strategies and promote feedback loops and learning among all staff over time.

**9) Align staff and board leadership.** Although a foundation's reputation depends on many factors, the deep esteem in which Skillman's leadership is held generates a huge supply of social and political capital that can be used for changemaking in Detroit. The talents of individual leaders, as well as their deep roots in the community, really matter. But beyond specific individuals, the alignment between the board and the staff creates a platform for changemaking that is unusually strong in the Skillman Foundation's case. The field can point to many examples of community change work that was undermined because staff and board expectations were not aligned regarding the pace of change or how its progress would be measured. Given predictable board and staff changes over the life of a long-term community change effort, this alignment needs regular attention, one dimension of which is determining how to use board expertise, access to key networks, and behind-the-scenes ability to get things done to best advantage at different stages of the work.

**10) Prioritize and select changemaking roles after a careful assessment of the existing or potential roles of other organizations and individuals in the community.** Because changemaking work has few boundaries—there are always more people to meet, task forces to join, campaigns to wage—foundations committed to doing “whatever it takes” to advance their agendas are necessarily faced with challenges involving pace and scope. Not surprisingly, Skillman staff express some concern about maintaining the quality of their work at the Foundation's current pace. While keeping their own priorities and capacities in mind, foundations need to address the following questions on an ongoing basis in order to stay effective (and sane) and in order to strengthen the entire community's civic capacity: When do we take the lead on a role or activity ourselves, when is another community actor better positioned to do so (even if it is not done exactly the way we would prefer), and when do we do it together? When do we invest in the long-term strategy of building others' capacities to do the work and what role, if any, do we play in the meantime? How long do we stay engaged in an enterprise we have started in order to maximize the likelihood of sustainability while avoiding perceptions by partners of either being abandoned if we disengage too quickly or being controlled if we disengage too slowly? These questions go to the heart of how to use limited foundation staff time and energy for maximum community impact.

## **CONCLUSION**

Patrizi and Thompson (2011) call for foundations to “wrestle with what their real value is and develop the adaptive capacities to hone their competence at delivering that value.” As part of its agenda to improve outcomes for youth in six neighborhoods in Detroit, the Skillman Foundation has worked hard to develop the competencies and internal structures needed to support effective changemaking practice. It is obvious that this catalytic, changemaking work does not happen well without visionary and adaptive leadership, dedicated focus, time, and learning along the way (Kramer, 2009).

The Foundation has broadened and deepened its repertoire of strategies available to advance its goals, and developed and leveraged a host of productive relationships and networks in the process, stimulating two related observations about the role of philanthropy in community change. The first involves the limitations of an “initiative” structure. Kubisch et al. (2010) argue that stand-alone foundation initiatives that are time-limited, externally catalyzed and involve a pre-determined infusion of foundation funds are not the best vehicles for addressing complex problems and promoting long-term change. Functioning as an embedded funder within a dynamic community ecology calls instead for a more adaptive and open-ended, strategic partner role. Different parts of the work proceed along different timelines, shifting political and economic conditions create new barriers and opportunities, and the foundation’s relationships in the community evolve outside of an initiative structure. Reframing the effort as a new way of doing business among all key actors does not have to undermine a sense of urgency or reduce the collective pressure to achieve specific results during specified time periods. Rather it can broaden the landscape in which to develop multiple well-anchored and legitimate community platforms for guiding change and achieving results.

A second observation about the Foundation’s deepening changemaking work relates to the notion of collective impact as described by Kania and Kramer (2010). As foundations broaden their strategies beyond grantmaking and move out of siloed programs, they inevitably become more tuned in with the interdependence of different change efforts and their collective potential for greater impact. The task becomes less one of picking and owning the “right” strategy than of finding ways to operate from strength in concert with other public and private players with common or overlapping goals. This means building new structures for accountability and responsibility, new vehicles and supports for aligning contributions, and new leadership with collaborative skills (Meehan and Reinelt, 2010). Fulton and her colleagues (2010) believe the most successful funders in the next decade will “combine long-standing instincts toward independent initiative and action with an emerging ‘network’ mindset and toolkit that helps them see their work as part of a larger, diverse, and more powerful effort overall.”

In sum, effective changemaking involves bringing foundations’ most creative and entrepreneurial assets to the civic problem-solving table and helping create the conditions under which significant social change can take place. Adding value is an ongoing process of learning and adaptation for which philanthropy—at least in theory—is ideally suited.

## **Attachment A: Interviewees**

### **The Skillman Foundation**

Tonya Allen, Vice President, Program  
Lillian Bauder, Trustee  
Marie Colombo, Senior Program Officer, Knowledge Management  
Ed Egnatios, Senior Program Officer, Good Neighborhoods  
Carol Goss, President & CEO  
Bill Hanson, Director of Communications and Technology  
Sharnita Johnson, Senior Program Officer, Changemaking  
Tammie Jones, Public Policy Fellow  
Kristen MacDonald, Senior Program Officer, Education  
Lisa Cylar Miller, Former Senior Program Officer, Changemaking

### **Good Neighborhoods/Good Schools Partners**

Kenyetta Campbell—Executive Director, Cody Rouge Community Action Alliance  
Kelley Gulley—Executive Director, National Community Development Institute  
Della Hughes—Senior Fellow, Center for Youth and Communities, Brandeis University  
Pat Miller—Program Manager, University of Michigan Technical Assistance Center  
Jane Morgan—President, JFM Consulting Group, Member of the Brandeis Evaluation Team

### **Funders in Metropolitan Detroit**

David Campbell—President, McGregor Fund  
Julie Fisher Cummings—Managing Trustee, Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation  
David Egner—President and CEO, Hudson-Webber Foundation and Executive Director, New Economy Initiative  
Mariam Noland—President, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan  
Rip Rapson—President and CEO of the Kresge Foundation  
Doug Stewart—Executive Director, Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation  
Mike Tenbusch—Vice President, United Way for Southeastern Michigan

### **Others**

Christopher Gates—Executive Director, Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement  
Anne Kubisch—Director, The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change  
William Potapchuk—President, Community Building Institute

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