

# At The

# CROSSROADS

volume 5 number 2 Spring 2010

## YOUTH FUND FOR SOCIAL CHANGE MAKES THIRD ROUND OF GRANTS!

After several high-profile incidents of violence last year, Crossroads Fund decided to respond by prioritizing youth and community violence in our 2010 Youth Fund for Social Change grantmaking cycle. Our Youth Fund grantmaking committee learned youth activists are responding to multiple forms of violence – from street violence in their communities to violence perpetrated against youth by institutions like the police, schools or our broken immigration system.

We assembled a Youth Fund grantmaking team composed of young organizers who work directly with youth. This committee brought their expertise and experience into our site visits, where we learned Chicago's youth activists are addressing overlapping issues, and are not working in isolation. Many are already collaborating across communities to build broader movements for social change. Much of this work is happening inside schools – to prevent militarization (Did you know that almost 50% of Chicago High Schools have Junior ROTC programs? Or that at least 10% of Chicago Public High School students, who are overwhelmingly non-white and low-income, wear a military uniform at least once a week?); institute less punitive disciplinary policies and disrupt the "school to prison pipeline;" and organize for greater accountability in school closures that disrupt communities and contribute to violence.

Many youth are connecting across communities at citywide gatherings – Chicago Youth Initiating Change's annual Social Justice Expo brings school-based social justice clubs and educators together to build campaigns and exchange ideas; Telpochcalli Community Education Project's Little Village Youth Forum, now in its third year, is forging relationships between community institutions and service providers to end community violence; and Affinity Community



*Sullivan High School students participate in a spring break program that offers an alternative to military-related activities.*



*Third annual Little Village Youth Forum.*

Service's "Unify Minds" youth summit provides Affinity's cohort of young African American lesbians the opportunity to build leadership skills through cross-issue organizing. Many Youth Fund grantees will be traveling to the U.S. Social Forum in Detroit in June, to further their learning, share strategies and build movements in a national context.

Crossroads Fund is proud to provide \$37,000 in grants to support the work of youth activists who are addressing violence and at the forefront of social movement-building.

## CROSSROAD FUND PARTNERS TO PRESENT MOVEMENT BUILDING DAY

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday January 18th, Crossroads Fund partnered with Project NIA, Mikva Challenge and the Chicago Freedom School to announce the availability of almost \$75,000 in grant funds for youth activists.

Over 200 youth from across the city gathered to dialogue about violence, promote equal distribution of resources and to learn about grant opportunities available through the four sponsoring organizations.

We appreciated the opportunity to partner with like-minded organizations who share our commitment to youth-led social change.



*Chicago youth gather to discuss support for anti-violence initiatives.*

# THANKS TO DEPARTING, WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS...

## ABOUT CROSSROADS FUND

Crossroads Fund supports community organizations working on issues of social and economic justice in the Chicago area. A public foundation, Crossroads Fund pools the resources of individuals, foundations and businesses, building a broad base of support for grassroots organizations working for social change.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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CROSSROADS FUND is a member of the Funding Exchange (FEX), a national network of locally-based community foundations committed to supporting grassroots groups that address critical issues in their regions. [www.fex.org](http://www.fex.org).

Crossroads Fund would like to thank Martha Wright for her five years of service on the Crossroads Fund Board of Directors, which concluded in November of 2009.

We would also like to welcome the 2010 class of board members, who began to serve a three year term in January:

**Jennifer Rakstad** is the Career Development Attorney at Mayer Brown LLP and a former commercial litigator at the firm. She coaches attorneys on career planning and goal setting and presents on a variety of professional development topics. Jennifer received her law degree from New York University School of Law and was Law Clerk to the Honorable Jaime Pieras, Jr., Senior District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico. Jennifer served on the board of Sarah's Circle for five years and acted as Board President for two. Jennifer currently serves on her firm's Women's Initiatives Committee and is a delegate to the Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law Firms.

**Layla Suleiman Gonzalez, Ph.D., Esq.**, has provided training, policy, research, and evaluation consultation to numerous non-profit, private and public entities at the local, state, and national level for over 20 years. Her practice focuses on human rights and civil rights approaches to capacity building in the human services, particularly child welfare, family support, youth development, juvenile justice and community building. She currently serves as the Director of Research, Evaluation and Innovation for the State of Illinois Department of Human Services. She is also a visiting professor at both DePaul University and Loyola University Chicago. Dr. Suleiman Gonzalez received her degree in Applied Developmental Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago and her J.D. from DePaul University with a concentration on International Law and Human Rights.



Jennifer Rakstad



Layla Suleiman Gonzalez

## AND WELCOME TO OUR NEW LISA FITTKO INTERN!



Alexia Rice-Henry

**Alexia Rice-Henry** is an Ohio native and a 2008 graduate of North Park University with a BA in Sociology. She is currently enrolled in North Park's graduate program in Non-Profit Administration. A former AmeriCorps VISTA member, Alexia spent last year serving with DePaul's University Ministry. In addition to serving as the Lisa Fittko Intern at Crossroads Fund, Alexia is an Affinity Youth Leadership Institute Scholar. The Affinity Youth Leadership program provides a cohort of LGBTQ identified young people the opportunity for leadership development, training in community organizing, and independent research on a topic of interest. In addition to these impressive accomplishments, Alexia is busy raising and exploring the city with her 11-year-old sister. Welcome Alexia!

# WE HOPE YOU JOINED THE CELEBRATION AT SEEDS OF CHANGE!



Ron Sable Award for Activism winner Deborah Harrington and Executive Director Jeanne Kracher.



Seeds of Change Host Committee member Kaberi Banerjee Murthy, Program Director Jane Kimondo, Fundraising and Communications Committee Chair Linda Harlan and Board Co-Chair Barbara Kemmis.

Around 450 supporters, grantees and friends of Crossroads Fund gathered at the Chicago Cultural Center on April 16, 2010 for our annual benefit, Seeds of Change. The event provided us with an important opportunity to celebrate our collective work towards racial, social and economic justice, and also raises money to support grantmaking at Crossroads Fund. We are pleased to report that we raised nearly \$83,000 for social justice.

The evening's festivities included presentation of the Ron Sable Award for Activism to outgoing President of the Woods Fund of Chicago, Deborah Harrington and to the Long Term Prisoner Policy Project. We were proud to honor the WE-ACTx Peace Journey with the Donald F. Erickson Synapses Award. We are so grateful to these two groups and very special individual for all they have contributed to social justice in our city and globally.



Donald F. Erickson Synapses Award winners from the WE-ACTx Youth Exchange.



## THANK YOU CROSSROADS FUND VISIONARIES

These dedicated individuals have included Crossroads Fund in their will or estate plan, ensuring the long-term strength and stability of the fund and leaving a legacy of their values and vision.

Anonymous (4)  
Bill Barclay & Peg Strobel  
Henry T. Chandler, Jr.  
Ferd Eggan \*  
Neena Hemmady  
Barbara Kemmis  
Bob Weissbourd  
Iris Young \*

For more information, please contact Jeanne Kracher, Executive Director, at 773.227.7676 or [jeanne@crossroadsfund.org](mailto:jeanne@crossroadsfund.org)

\* in memory

## BECOME A PARTNER IN CREATING SOCIAL CHANGE

When you give to Crossroads Fund, your gift is pooled with others and becomes a significant resource to foster social change in Chicago and beyond. Here are some ways you can give to Crossroads Fund:

- 👤 **ATTEND OUR ANNUAL BENEFIT** – and bring friends!
- 👤 **WRITE A CHECK** and return it in the enclosed remittance envelope. Find out if your employer matches contributions – that is an easy way to make your gift go much further.
- 👤 **BECOME A SUSTAINER** and have your contribution deducted from your credit card monthly or quarterly. As a sustainer, you can take pride in knowing that you are one of our most reliable sources of support.
- 👤 **CONTRIBUTE ONLINE** via our secure service. It's quick, convenient and safe – just log on to [www.crossroadsfund.org](http://www.crossroadsfund.org)

- 👤 **HONOR OR REMEMBER SOMEONE SPECIAL** with a gift in their name.
- 👤 **CO-HOST A HOUSE PARTY** and help us spread the word about the good work of Crossroads Fund to your colleagues, friends and family.
- 👤 **REMEMBER CROSSROADS FUND IN YOUR WILL, INSURANCE OR RETIREMENT PLAN** all three are easy ways to have a lasting impact for social justice.
- 👤 **OPEN A DONOR ADVISED FUND** and partner with us to have an impact on social justice issues.
- 👤 **ESTABLISH A CHARITABLE TRUST** to benefit Crossroads Fund, and reduce your tax burden.

**For more information, please contact Sheila O'Donnell, Development Director, at 773.227.7676 or [sheila@crossroadsfund.org](mailto:sheila@crossroadsfund.org).**



## SOCIAL JUSTICE IS OUR PRIORITY —NO FOOLING!

JOIN US ON

**April 1, 2011**

at the

**Chicago Cultural Center  
77 E. Washington**

for our annual event,  
**SEEDS OF CHANGE!**

A light-hearted evening to celebrate our very serious efforts to support racial, social and economic justice in Chicago.

**Hope to see you in 2011!**

**CROSSROADS FUND** | change, not charity

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