

# At The

# CROSSROADS

volume 4 number 2 Spring 2009

## CROSSROADS FUND AND OUR GRANTEES EXPLORE THE “NEW ECONOMY”

We are all affected by the economic downturn, and Crossroads Fund grantees are no exception. We have been hosting a series of workshops with the goal of providing our grantees with tools to help them confront the crisis head-on and sustain their important work.

On February 21, 2009, Crossroads Fund hosted a gathering with our grantees to discuss changes to this year’s funding cycle and share strategies for confronting the crisis. We talked about how the downturn affects the resources available through Crossroads Fund as well as more mainstream foundations, especially related to reductions in investment earnings, and that the full impact of the current crisis will continue to be felt over the coming years.

The session included time for grantees to brainstorm strategies for sustaining their work, including creative fundraisers and ideas for collaboration. Groups also shared information about conversations they have had with their program officers, and strategies for communicating with foundations. We heard that there’s more need than ever for community organizing, and potentially more opportunities for success under the new administration. Several grantees noted they’ve already operated without a great deal of foundation support, and so are better situated to weather the storm than many larger, more foundation-dependent organizations.

On March 19, 2009, we collaborated with Cricket Island Foundation to host a convening specifically targeted towards groups doing youth organizing in Chicago. Crossroads Fund Finance Committee member and member of the Chicago Political Economy Group, Bill Barclay, led an interactive presentation designed to help participants better understand the policies and practices that contributed to our current economic crisis.

This program addressed complex topics like the repeal of the Glass Steagall Act, the mortgage crisis and growing economic inequality in an accessible format, critical information to help our grantees organize for economic justice. Participants then had an opportunity to hear from Program Officers Consuella Brown from Woods Fund and Julie Walther from Brinson Family Foundation about how their foundations are responding to the crisis, and what to expect during the coming years.

These sessions supplemented our ongoing technical assistance programming, which in recent years we have expanded



*Crossroads Fund Finance Committee member, Bill Barclay, helps lead a workshop on the “Roots of the New Economy”*

with the generous support of the Polk Bros Foundation. Our technical assistance workshops have addressed fundraising and fiscal management, and facilitators have situated these topics within current economic realities. During the coming year, we look forward to hosting additional workshops and gatherings that directly assist our grantees in weathering the current economic storm.

### FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN ILLINOIS

On February 3, 2009, Crossroads Fund presented “Twenty Ways to Stop Corruption in Illinois,” a public panel discussion presented in collaboration with the Woods Fund of Chicago. Nearly 100 people joined us at the Chicago Temple First United Methodist Church to hear our panelists’ tangible suggestions to eliminate political corruption in our city and state.

The panel included Cindi Canary of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform; Patrick Collins, attorney and Chair of the Illinois Reform Commission; Chicago City Clerk Miguel del Valle; and Dick Simpson, Professor of Political Science at UIC and former Chicago Alderman. CLTV’s Political Reporter Carlos Hernandez Gomez moderated the discussion. For more information about ending government corruption in Illinois, visit the Reform Illinois website at [www.reformillinoisnow.org](http://www.reformillinoisnow.org)

# CROSSROADS FUND WELCOMES 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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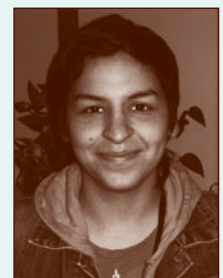
**Robert (Bob) Horton** worked in the finance and investment management business for over 25 years and currently volunteers for various organizations including the Lincoln Park Zoo and the Center on Halsted. Bob received his Chartered Financial Analyst designation in 1994, his Masters of Management degree from Northwestern University and his undergraduate degree in economics and political science from Stanford University. He has served on the Crossroads Fund Finance Committee for the last year.

**Christine Kim-Tai Plautz** has an extensive background in philanthropy. She was a staff member at Girl's Best Friend Foundation from 2002 until they closed their doors in 2008. She is a member of the steering committee of the Chicago Chapter of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, and is one of the co-chairs of the Asian Giving Circle at the Chicago Community Trust. She served on the board of the Asian Health Coalition of Illinois and as a co-coordinator of the annual Breakin' It Down conference, an event targeted to people of color, with a mission to demystify the philanthropic sector and the process of applying for funding. Prior to moving to Chicago in 2002, Christine lived in Wisconsin and worked for Clean Wisconsin.

**Jackie Zevin** is an artist and art educator currently teaching for the Chicago Department of Senior Services. During her career, she has focused on developing and teaching art classes and special programs in college, school and community settings. Jackie is also a member of the Lisa Fittko Internship Committee.

## ...AND OUR LISA FITTKO INTERN, LISA AVILA

Crossroads Fund welcomed our new Lisa Fittko Intern at the end of September, 2008. Lisa Avila is in the middle of a ten month internship in honor of the international activist Lisa Fittko. Lisa has a Bachelor's degree in Spanish and Latin American Latino Studies from DePaul University with M.A. course work in American Culture Studies from Bowling Green State University. In her free time, Lisa teaches bike mechanics and safety to adults at The Recyclery in Evanston and supports local events and shops in her stomping grounds of Pilsen. Lisa has been hard at work in the program department, helping to put together a series of technical assistance workshops on the topic of fundraising. She will also be an active participant in our spring grantmaking process. Thanks for your work, Lisa!



**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).

# ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL *SEEDS OF CHANGE!*



Kelley Moseley, Leslie Simmer, Gordon Quinn, Justine Nagan, Dinesh Sabu and Susan Gzesh of Kartemquin Films, Ron Sable Award for Activism winner



Guests Lisa Marie Pickens, Naima McRoberts, Shelley Davis, Heather Parish, Jacqueline Goldsby and Rima Malhotra

Around 425 supporters, grantees and friends of Crossroads Fund gathered at the Chicago Cultural Center on March 13, 2009 for our annual benefit, *Seeds of Change*. Not only was the event a lively celebration of the year's progress towards social and economic justice, it was also a big success! *Seeds of Change* raised nearly \$90,000 to benefit our efforts to seed and nurture grassroots organizations in and around Chicago.

The evening's festivities included presentation of the Ron Sable Award for Activism to the Chicago Workers' Collaborative and Kartemquin Films and the Donald F. Erickson Synapses Award to the Electronic Intifada and its

local co-founder Ali Abunimah. We were honored to recognize these three groups, whose important work has successfully brought forward the voices of marginalized groups in today's society.



Guests Kristine Valaitis and Barbara Ransby



Guests Peter Ascoli and Susan Motley



Soledad Castillo, Jorge Baeza, Edmundo Lopez, Constantino Guzman, Ines Miguel, Agosto Aquino, and Salvador Salas from the Chicago Workers' Collaborative accept the Ron Sable Award for Activism



Maureen Murphy, Benjamin Doherty and Ali Abunimah of the Electronic Intifada receive the Donald F. Erickson Synapses Award

## 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)

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



## 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

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newsletter via e-mail instead  
of online? Drop us a note to  
[info@crossroadsfund.org](mailto:info@crossroadsfund.org)  
and tell us, so that we can  
switch you over to virtual  
communications!

**CROSSROADS FUND**  
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