



2010 Grantee Survey Executive Summary

Many of the findings were consistent with what we learned at the January 2010 “Strong Roots and New Branches: Long-Term Community-Wide Outcomes” capacity-building conference and from many conversations with grantees over the past 13 years.

The Charities’ grantees are overwhelmingly complementary of the support provided by the Charities--not simply the fiscal contributions through grantmaking but also the extensive partnership and mentorship provided by the Charities’ staff. The rigorous evaluation requirements for each grant have prepared grantees to better respond to the uncertainty brought on by the recent economic downturn and changing priorities of the funding community.

Grantee Profiles:

- 80% of grantees have less than a six-month cash reserve.
- Are small organizations with less than 20 full-time staff members.
- Continue to see annual increases in client volume.
- Use research to inform their practice and programs.
- Highest need is rated as being fundraising and operating funds the most needed.

Grantees collaborate with others in joint planning, staffing agreements and service collaboration and partner in programs and resources.

Funding Climate, Impact and Sustainability

The majority of grantees state that grantors have shifted their focus toward meeting basic needs because of economically depressed funds. Grantees cite stricter granting guidelines, more focus on program outcomes and a more competitive environment.

Specific to current donors, responses are roughly evenly split among those experiencing an increase, decrease and steady level of funding. Some grantees have worked toward and achieved an increase in individual donations over the past year. Some have experienced a decrease in funding.

Overall funding has either decreased or remained even, grantees have been able to maintain their core services. However, funding issues affect their ability to expand services to meet the increased client volume and need. Programs such as outreach, summer programs and education have been most affected by the decrease in funding.

Client and Agency Needs

Skilled primary and medical care are viewed as the most pressing client needs followed by issues of access to care. Financial assistance, transportation and extended operating hours are consistently cited concerns.

The grantees would like for the Charities to continue capacity building efforts which includes sharing best practices, convening and encouraging non profits to collaborate and helping with community development. Grantees ask for more feedback on grant applications to enhance the quality of their proposals. A few grantees request that the Charities further encourage agencies to partner with each other.

“A Steady Partner Over the Years”

The Charities is described as exemplifying the qualities of an effective grantmaking foundation, including outstanding communication leadership, willingness to collaborate, innovation and commitment. They believe the Charities also understands the current funding environment and the mission of each organization; they appreciate that the Charities requires a rigorous application and has high evaluation standards.

“The Most Helpful Grantor” Staff

The great majority of grantees state that the Charities’ staff was helpful during the application process. The Director of Grants and Evaluation is described as being extremely helpful and responsive.

“User Friendly...Comprehensive” Web Site

The grants evaluation section of the Charities’ Web site is consistently cited as being useful to the grantees. A few components, including the evaluation section and outcomes measures section are described as being more confusing.

Information from the CHIS is used by grantees to collect and prepare demographic information for grant proposals. Project Safety Net information is used to find healthcare and service providers in the grantees’ target neighborhoods. Some grantees did not find the information on the CHIS relevant to their particular organization and did not utilize it in grant proposals.

Grant Application and Reporting

Overall, the grantees feel that the application process was straight forward and relatively easy to navigate. Although the application process is described as “first-rate” and “user friendly,” grantees made a few suggestions, included shortening the application, eliminating repetitive questions.