

# The NMAG Journal

*A newsletter for the members of the  
New Mexico Association of Grantmakers*

Summer 2009

Volume VII, No. 2



NEW MEXICO  
ASSOCIATION OF  
GRANTMAKERS

[www.nmag.org](http://www.nmag.org)

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## Executive Director's Report

### Taking a breath, Saying Hello

"Introduce yourself as the new Executive Director to the members of NMAG with a few paragraphs about yourself and your background," they said over the phone. Feeling fortunate that no one could see that "deer in the headlights" look, such general requests always elicit in me, I took a deep breath and said, "Ok".

There's something about simply breathing. We all do it and in that way at least, we're all connected. You each, no different than me, alerted the world to our birth with that first screech. Except, I breathed my first in Columbus, Georgia and you - everywhere else. And when we breathe our last, some of you, like me may have lived in seven states (mine were: GA, NJ, WI, CA, OH, MI & MD) and seen much of this vast country; others will have seen way too much while remaining in one place; and others still, will have roamed the planet. Either way, we breathe the same atmosphere and circulate through our systems those same molecules breathed by the great teachers, conquerors and peacemakers, past and present. In this too, we are together, in this moment and this space.

## Guest Column

### Goodbye from Terry

I am writing this farewell message as the movers pack my household items. Traveling between two jobs over the last five months has been an adventure and challenge. As always, Susan has held things together at NMAG. My heartfelt thanks go her for being such a wonderful colleague over the last two and a half years, and especially during this transitional period. The Board, another group of terrific people, made an excellent choice in hiring Ron White as your new Executive Director. Please welcome him to the Land of Enchantment. He is already making the rounds, so you are sure to meet him soon. I have told him how great the NMAG membership is and how much I will miss you, this job, and New Mexico.

With some audacity, this final column focuses on my advice to New Mexico funders concerning best grantmaking practices, especially in hard times. It is not exactly the same as the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy's Criteria for Philanthropy at Its Best, but having served on their board for a decade, might

I guess I'd say, that to date I've tried to expend my breaths in service to the common good. It won't surprise you that for the last twenty-six years, much of that service has been at various levels in the field of philanthropy. My start was with an invitation to serve on a local grants committee in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This led me to become a program officer at the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, an active board member of the National Network of Grantmakers (yes, while Terry Odendahl was director), and on to positions of senior program officer and grant director, at Tides, Share our Strength and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundations. After founding, Building Utopia Consulting, I took positions as interim executive director at Southern Partners Fund in Atlanta, the Gulf Coast Funders for Equity in New Orleans, and the Inter-religious Organizing Initiative (a collaborative of religious grantmakers and denominations supportive of congregation-based community organizing as a social change strategy). I'm also a trustee on two foundation boards, Bert and Mary Meyer Foundation and Peppercorn. Some of you may know their founders, Barbara Meyer and Alan and Andrea Rabinowitz. Out of breath, yet?

What might all of my heavy breathing on behalf these philanthropic entities say about me? I'm deeply dissatisfied with the "world as it is", and am passionate about helping the marginalized and their allies bring it a little closer to the way our ideals say it "should be". Oh, and I think philanthropy can play a significant role.

From what I've heard from the NMAG board, and read in your reports and newsletters, this is probably something we can conspire together in. "Conspire" (com + spirare), literally to breathe together.

Whatever gets you panting for more of NMAG, whether as a member, your needs are to get better at your craft, or find funding collaborators, or find others to laugh together or commiserate with, I hope to help you make NMAG the space of choice for all of that.

And maybe some of you, find yourself still trying to fulfill that ideal expressed by Emma Lazarus, "Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free." To you especially, I say, "Let's conspire."

As funders, we know that leadership transitions are the best time to show support for the organization by paying your dues, giving a little extra for NMAG general operating grants for special NMAG programs or

overlap in places and be viewed as an abbreviated version.

- Fund based on your values.
- Establish your mission and follow it, but be flexible in emergencies.
- Discover where the best work is being done.
- Give the groups doing that work general support.
- Fund advocacy to enhance your mission.
- Look for the interconnections. Try not to fund in silos.
- Make multi-year grants.
- Trust your grantees, which means do not interfere.
- Be bold. Change will not happen if we keep doing the same thing.
- Increase foundation payout when it is most needed, such as now.

Thank you for your friendship and good work.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Odendahl

## Welcome New NMAG Member

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has just become a member of the New Mexico Association of Grantmakers. Please join us in welcoming Anne Mosle and the rest of the New Mexico team to our membership.

### Latest Giving Circles Report on Donor Impact Now Available

Giving circles have emerged over the last decade as a growing and significant philanthropic trend among donors of all wealth levels and backgrounds. Past studies have shown that the number of giving circles has exploded across the country and that they are an established philanthropic force. A new report finds that donors in giving circles give more, give more strategically, and are more engaged in their local communities. They also are having more of an impact on donors and their communities during these challenging economic times.

Read a [snapshot](#) of the report or the [full report](#) to learn more about the key findings of this report and recommendations on how to use these findings to

our office needs, and most of all by coming to our events and getting involved.

Thanks to the outstanding leadership of Terry Odendahl, Susan Cantor, the board, and membership, NMAG has gained an exceptional national reputation. We need to continue to work together so NMAG continues to lead and inspire the field.

Ronald M. White  
5/22/09

## NMAG Member Programs

- **JUNE 3 - Making the Case for Global Funding** Why do so few New Mexico funders give globally? Are we behind the times? Is it really that difficult to make an international grant? Why should we be funding globally? How do you overcome objections from your donor or board? **11:30 - 2:30 p.m., Lannan Foundation Conference Center, 313 Read St.**
- **SEPTEMBER 2009** - Issues on Immigration. More information to follow.
- **NOVEMBER 4-6 - SAVE THE DATES**  
**NMAG Members Conference: *Philanthropy in New Mexico: Navigating the Shifting Landscape.* La Fonda Hotel, Santa Fe**

### PAST PROGRAMS

- **APRIL 23 - Legislative Update and Essential Skills for Grantmakers.** Co-sponsored with the Conference of Southwest Foundations. Thanks to them for joining us.
- **MAY 14 - Raising Thriving Youth: the Importance of Connecting Families, Schools, and Communities in Common Purpose.** Presenter: Peter Benson, The Search Institute. Thanks to Messengers of Healing Winds for underwriting the program.

## Members and Foundations in the News

**Please join us in saying** a fond farewell to Dianne Rivera who left her position as Con Alma Health Foundation's Program Officer, effective Friday, May 1, 2009. Our thanks to Dianne for all her good work and our best wishes for her continued success.

Dianne's new position is Project Manager with the New Mexico Medical Review Medical Review Association (NMMRA) for their recently awarded Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant, "Aligning Forces 4 Quality."

**Dolores Roybal, Con Alma Health Foundation, and Randy Royster, Albuquerque Community Foundation, have been named to sit on the Governor's committee on the economic stimulus package in New Mexico.**

**An interview with Terry Odendahl** appears in the current issue of the Chronicle of Philanthropy, noting her new position with Global Greengrants, and offering her usual wisdom on the role of philanthropy.

**Adam Rubel, formerly** with Terry Odendahl at the Institute for Collaborative Change and instrumental in building and redesigning the NMAG website, has been named as Executive Director to the Natem Foundation, in Santa Fe.

### Economic Xchange - Share with & Learn How Colleagues are Navigating the Economic Crisis

During this economic recession, when financial markets continue to be volatile, foundations and the non-profits they serve are significantly affected. Take this opportunity to share with colleagues and learn what's happening in the field by visiting [Economic Xchange](#) - an online platform dedicated to gathering and publishing tools, information, resources, and ideas about philanthropy and the economic crisis.

## Articles of Interest

### Reducing the Charitable Gift Tax Deduction

better educate and engage donors.

We count on you to keep us informed of any news regarding your organization.

*Letters to the Editor are welcome and encouraged.*

Send to [rwhite@nmag.org](mailto:rwhite@nmag.org)

The NMAG Journal,  
Summer, 2009

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NMAG*

*Terry Odendahl, NMAG and  
Global Greengrants*

Read the [press release](#) or [white paper](#).

## **Fundraising Climate Worst Since 1998, Fundraisers Say**

Read more in the [press release](#).

## **Million Dollar and Up Gifts from Individuals Declined**

[Read the full press release here](#)

## **Trusting Nonprofits: Are Nonprofits Trustworthy?**

## **[Change the Way you Change the World: A Model for Wide-Scale Social Change](#)**

The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy's recently released **Criteria for Philanthropy at Its Best** has generated considerable controversy amongst leaders in the field.

Read the [report](#) and a Wall Street Journal [article](#) critical of the criteria that came out shortly after the release.

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