

COMMUNITY



ORGANIZING

TOOLBOX

Resources

RESOURCES

Throughout the *Toolbox*, books, articles, reports, films, and other materials have been cited that can be useful for funders interested in exploring various aspects of the CO field and in designing and implementing a CO grantmaking program. In addition, Web site addresses and other information about key organizations involved with CO — both funders and CO groups — accompany many of the case studies and other examples that are used to illustrate major points in the text.

In this brief section, we list and describe the contents of several publications that various NFG members have found particularly helpful to them in implementing a CO grantmaking program.

For additional references, please contact NFG's staff.

WEB SITES

Organizing Networks*

www.arc.org - The Applied Research Center is a public policy, educational and research institute which emphasizes issues of race and social change.

www.acorn.org - The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) Web site includes a Living Wage Resource Center, publications, and other campaign updates.

www.ctwo.org - The Center for Third World Organizing site has information on trainings and other resources to promote and sustain political analysis, policy development, and collective action in communities of color across the U.S.

www.gamaliel.org - The Gamaliel Foundation is a network of professional community organizers and key institutional leaders working to rebuild urban areas, with a predominant focus on faith-based community organizations.

*Some organizing networks do not have a Web site.

Other Web site resources

www.americanprospect.com - *American Prospect* is a monthly news magazine which frequently covers organizing campaigns.

www.citylimits.org - *City Limits* is a monthly New York city-based monthly publication covering organizing and other strategies for community groups.

www.commchange.org - The Center for Community Change helps poor people to improve their communities and change policies and institutions that affect their lives by developing their own strong organizations. Publishes *Organizing*, a periodic update on organizing campaigns across the country.

www.comm.org - COMM-ORG is hosted by the Urban Affairs Center and Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work at the University of Toledo and has an array of resources on CO.

www.ig.c.apc.org/jwj - Jobs with Justice is a national campaign for workers' rights that works through coalitions of labor, community, religious and constituency organizations.

www.lincproject.org - The Low Income Networking and Communications Project (LINC Project) is the electronic crossroad where the members, leaders and organizers of low-income organizations can connect, gather, and exchange information and have their organizing efforts represented. The site has a directory of low-income organizations working on welfare issues.

www.mindspring.com/~midwestacademy - The Midwest Academy is one of the nation's oldest and best known schools for community organizations, citizen organizations and individuals committed to progressive social change.

www.noacentral.org - The National Organizers Alliance holds annual gatherings, sponsors a Retirement Pension Program, and other activities on behalf of organizers.

www.nhi.org - *Shelterforce* Online features many articles on CO strategies.

www.socialpolicy.org - *Social Policy* is a quarterly publication which frequently covers CO campaigns and strategies.

www.unfenet.org - United for a Fair Economy provides extensive educational resources and supports grassroots groups and legislation to reduce income inequality.

www.unionweb.org - Union Web links to union web sites, including international unions and information about community/labor organizing efforts.

PERIODICALS

RCI News, Rebuilding Communities Initiative, a quarterly publication from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 701 St. Paul St., Baltimore, MD 21202, www.aecf.org.

Organizing, a periodic newsletter on organizing issues from the Center for Community Change, 1000 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20007, www.communitychange.org

BOOKS

Saul D. Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals*, New York, Random House, 1969.

The classic clarion call to organize the people to claim their rights and powers of citizenship in a free society. Many regard Alinsky as the “father” of modern CO. His views and methods continue to influence CO today, but the book is particularly useful for establishing a baseline and helping readers to understand how CO has evolved, and is evolving still, since Alinsky’s time. The book is written in hard-hitting, passionate and colorful language.

Gary Delgado, *Organizing the Movement: The Roots and Growth of ACORN*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1986.

ACORN was launched in 1970 and has grown to become one of the country’s most prominent and effective organizing networks. ACORN is a poor people’s organization first and foremost, and has confronted and overcome immense challenges in its evolution. This book is an analytic account of ACORN’s birth and development over the first decade and a half of its life. Delgado — who is the founding director of the Center for Third World Organizing and is now the Director of the Applied Research Center — spent much of this time working with ACORN and thus brings an informed inside view. Yet the book pulls no punches — the good decisions and the mistakes get balanced treatment. Readers wanting to learn how poor people can be organized to work for change and get important results will find this book a vitally important text.

Robert Fisher, *Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America*, Updated Edition, New York, Twayne Publishers, 1994.

Fisher’s book insightfully traces the history of CO in the U.S., probably with broader sweep and in greater detail than any other. The book has been regarded by many activists, funders and historians as an indispensable resource for those who want to understand CO.

Fisher's bibliographic essay that is appended to the narrative is in itself worth far more than the cover price of the book.

William Greider, *Who Will Tell the People: The Betrayal of American Democracy*, New York, Touchstone, 1993.

We are called to action by Greider to reclaim democracy from the special interests. In discussing his wide ranging views on what has gone wrong with democracy, Greider points to CO as a route to making government work for the people. He is one of the few popular American authors to recognize CO's critical value, and he does so based on his own investigation of CO groups in Texas affiliated with IAF.

Jacqueline B. Mondros and Scott M. Wilson, *Organizing for Power and Empowerment*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1994.

This book examines specific strategies for building a successful progressive CO organization. It treats in detail such subjects as recruiting members, developing leaders, building consensus, identifying issues, and developing and implementing practices. The authors incorporate the practice wisdom of over 80 local to national organizers and leaders, and give detailed advice on everything from planning and implementing strategy, to evaluating and publicizing organizational victories, to structuring and funding social action groups. By reading this book, funders interested in exploring a CO grant program will get an "on the ground" feel for the challenges confronting CO groups and how they deal with them and a thoughtful academic perspective on CO.

Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1995.

Payne's compelling book demonstrates the importance of CO efforts in the Mississippi civil rights movement. As Aldon Morris has commented, "It shows how ordinary Black people pushed their churches, ministries, organizations, and institutions to get involved in the fight to destroy racial segregation and inequality." This is history from the bottom-up, an authentic version validated by many participants that challenges popular views of what drove the movement and brought it profound results."

Mary Beth Rogers, *Cold Anger: A Story of Faith and Power Politics*, Denton, TX, University of North Texas Press, 1990.

Cold Anger is a story about politics by working poor people who incorporate their religious values into a struggle for power and visibility. It is the story of Ernesto Cortes and the Texas IAF network of organizations and how they have transformed politics in Texas.

What is NFG?

The Neighborhood Funders Group (NFG) is a national network of grantmakers working to expand support for organizations that help low-income people improve their communities. NFG began in 1980 as an informal network of funders with a deep interest in community-based grantmaking. Since then, our membership of grantmaking institutions has expanded to include hundreds of grantmaking professionals. NFG members share their expertise through the annual conference, regional meetings, Working Groups, special Council on Foundations' sessions, membership directories, and listservs.

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How to Join NFG

Call the NFG office at 202-833-4690 or go online to www.nfg.org for a Membership Application form.

NFG Board members and staff listed above can be reached at the NFG office.

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