

Grass Roots

Publication of: The Monroe Foundation, 2026 West 95th Street, Chicago, IL 60643 773.315.9720,

May 2010

www.themonroefoundation.org



MONROE FOUNDATION PARTNERS DIALOGUE ON FUNDING NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES WITH LAURA WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT, WOODS FUND OF CHICAGO AND NOTED JOURNALIST, IN ENGLEWOOD



THE MONROE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Arvis Averette, Ph.D
Chairman of the Board

Otis C. Monroe, III
President, Executive Director

Virginia Hardriet
Executive Vice President
Secretary/Treasurer

Peter T. Silvern, Attorney-at-Law
Law Office of Peter T. Silvern
General Counsel

R. Tod Edwards
CEO, Internal Income, Inc.

Rev. Lewis Flowers
CEO, Westside Ministers Coalition

Shanaveon Pious, Ph.D
Entrepreneurs University Foundation

Jurellene Rigby
Executive Director
The CHLD Initiative

In Memoriam
Otis E. Allen, Founding Director

STAFF/CONSULTANTS

Athena Williams
Membership Services

Mark Allen, Organizer
Black Development Leadership Institute

Nina A. Hall
Marketing/Communications
NYNContractors

In Memoriam
Wanda White-Gills, Advisor

CORPORATE ADVISORS/SUPPORTERS

Helen Hammond-Redding
State Director
Citigroup Illinois

Darryl Hendricks
President
Citi, Illinois

Paul McCarthy
Chairman
Marquette Bank

Dennis D. Muhammad
CEO
Muhammad Development Corporation

Aurie Pennick
Executive Director
Field Foundation of Illinois

Laura Washington, President
Jeff Pinzino, Program Officer
Woods Fund of Chicago

George Wright
Midwest Director
Community Relations, Citi

The Monroe Foundation's P.A.C.T. Project (Partnership Assisting Community Transformation) facilitated a community dialogue with recently installed president of the Woods Fund of Chicago and noted Chicago Sun-Times journalist Laura Washington, on Wednesday, May 12th at the Marquette Bank.

The dialogue provided an opportunity for grassroots community groups engaged in community organizing and public policy efforts to talk open and honestly about the disparities in funding "real" community organizing and policy initiatives in the African-American community that is addressing the "racial divide" in the distribution of private and public resources and funding to African American led organizations, while many witnessing an increased support to similar efforts that are led by Hispanic led groups in Chicago.



Ms. Washington encouraged leaders participating in the dialogue to provide the Woods Fund of Chicago with input and recommendations as to how the Fund can begin to build on the dialogue in a manner that engages other foundations and donors to respond to emerging and often unaddressed issues that do not to sustain racial divide in the distribution of private and public resources and grant-making.

Mark Allen, executive director of the Black Leadership Development Institute (BLDI) addressed the longstanding perception and perceived "double



standards" that ask African-American-led organizations to become more inclusive of other ethnic and racial groups in their African-American-led organizing and policy

advocacy, while not requiring the same of Hispanic or Asian-American-led groups to be more inclusive of the African-American community in their organizing and public policy advocacy work on issues that are specific to them.

Mr. Allen stated, "There is a double-standard in how foundations respond to organizing on issues that are solely issues in the African-American community, asking us, as a condition of being considered for funding, to focus more on social service delivery than focusing on changing the conditions that results in the call for more social services that do not empower, engage or agitate change, or ask us to bring other ethnic groups into our mobilization. This is not right or fair to the struggles that are specific to the African American community".

Leaders participating in the dialogue and offering input, included: Donnie Brown, executive director, Genesis Housing Development Corporation; Dennis Ware, executive director, Englewood Food Network; Jean Carter-Hill, executive director, Imagine Englewood If.. (IEi); Phillip Jackson, executive director, the Black Star Project; John Paul Jones, lead organizer, Developing Communities Project



(DCP); and Ron Carter, Publisher, South Street Journal Newspaper/Convenor, Black Wall Street Project.

Some of the key recommendations made by the Monroe Foundation P.A.C.T. Project partners included: - The Woods Fund of Chicago should convene a dialogue on the racial divide in the distribution of funding to African-American-led organizations, but the dialogue should not involve the "usual suspect" organizations and institutions that are always at the table. The convening should only consist of the groups that are never invited to dialogue with funder and whose indigenous leadership is never involved offering recommendations on issues that affect them moving away from "professional organizers" and researcher-types at the table; - Fund an initiative that increases the capacity of African-American-led organizations that can build the capacity of other African-American-led groups to effectively communicate its' messaging and media needs of the work that is being engaged on social change and public policy-from their voice and perspective.



Later in June, the foundation will facilitate a second dialogue with the Woods Fund of Chicago with Program Director Consuella Brown that will focus on the Woods Fund July 31st Letter of Inquiry



(LOI)submittal opportunities for end-of-year funding in community organizing and leadership development. These dialogues are open for participation by partners of the

Monroe Foundation's P.A.C.T. Project capacity building program.

For information on joining P.A.C.T, contact Otis Monroe, CEO, at (773) 315-9720 or Athena Williams, Executive Assistant, (773)914-1534.