

CONNECTS

CASEY

WINTER 2002
A REPORT FROM THE
ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

IN THIS ISSUE: Conference Offers Practical Help for Those Working with Immigrants and Refugees; A Note of Recognition; Casey Foundation Headquarters Expands, Two CFS moves Under Way

FOUNDATION GROUP LOOKS TO BOLSTER FAMILIES' BOTTOM LINE



Poster on a building in Louisville advertises free tax preparation services used as an entry point to help people claim tax credits and begin saving.

What if you were trained for a job that didn't exist, or one with no potential to earn more than minimum wage?

What if you suddenly became ineligible for child care assistance, health insurance, and other services your family needed?

What if you had no reliable transportation and all the good jobs were outside the city where you live?

What if you had to pay exorbitant fees to cash your paycheck, pay bills, or send money to family members?

What if your credit history prevented you from opening up a checking account even if you had a regular paycheck?

What if you did manage to get ahead but lived in a neighborhood with no possibility of owning a home?

Millions of working families face these challenges every day.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Neighborhood Transformation/Family Development agenda is predicated on the notion that families and neighborhoods need to be strong in order for children to achieve their potential. Expanding the network of supportive social contacts, human services, civic activities, and leadership opportunities available to isolated families are critical. But bottom line, families need a secure financial base for their children to thrive.

Since October, a work group of Foundation staff has been meeting under the leadership of senior program associate Bob Giloth to devise strategies to step up our focus on family economic success. Part of this work involves helping people find good jobs. But it also means finding ways to help low-income working families combine their wages with subsidies, tax credits,

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REDUCING JUVENILE LOCK-UPS REAPS RESULTS

A decade of work on juvenile detention reform by the Casey Foundation and its grantees has demonstrated conclusively that communities can lock up fewer juvenile suspects without compromising public safety.

The three model sites in the Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)—Multnomah County, Oregon; Cook County, Illinois; and Santa Cruz County, California—have reduced their reliance on secure detention by improving screening, streamlining case processing, and expanding community-based alternatives. At the same time, juvenile crime rates in their jurisdictions have dropped.

In addition, Multnomah County has apparently become the first jurisdiction in the country to eliminate disparities in the rates at which minority juveniles are detained, which is a problem nationwide. Across the United States, minority youth represent 64 percent of detained youth, but only 34 percent of the youth population.

Some 500 juvenile justice practitioners and elected officials from 40 states gathered in Portland, Oregon, in late January to hear about the Initiative's success at the second National Training Conference on Juvenile Detention Reform. Over three days, juvenile justice experts from around the country

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CONFERENCE OFFERS SOLACE, PRACTICAL HELP FOR THOSE WORKING WITH IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



FRED GREAVES

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The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private charitable organization dedicated to helping build better futures for disadvantaged children in the United States. The primary mission of the Foundation is to foster public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. In pursuit of this goal, the Foundation makes grants that help states, cities, and neighborhoods fashion more innovative, cost-effective responses to these needs.

Making Connections participants from Boston at a recent conference exploring ways to connect immigrant and refugee families to economic opportunity.

Vince Guest wiped tears from his eyes as he watched a Mexican family agonize over an impossible choice: Which of their six children will go to the United States and which will be left behind? The Flores family has already endured separation from their father for 13 years—separated by poverty, necessity, and immigration laws.

Though this family's struggle was captured in a documentary film, Guest may as well have been back in his New Jersey office at the Camden Center for Law and Social Justice. The Flores family could have been any one of his clients.

The film aired at a recent conference in San Diego where Guest was able to share his challenges with others who provide services to immigrants and refugees or are grassroots community leaders.

The December 7–9 conference, *Strengthening Immigrant and Refugee Families and Communities: Making the Connections to Economic Opportunity*, was cosponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Making Connections* initiative and the Sebastopol, Calif.-based Grantmakers Concerned with

Immigrants and Refugees. Its goal was to bring together the 22 *Making Connections* sites and other communities, policymakers, and international representatives to share experiences and gain practical tools to help immigrants and refugees improve their economic condition. Some 250 people attended.

"*Making Connections* sites were clearly thirsty for information and tools and resources to help the families they work with gain an economic foothold in their new homeland," said Daranee Petsod, director of Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees.

With the latest census data indicating that one in five U.S. residents are either foreign-born or first generation, the demand for services continues to increase. Conference workshops offered guidance on practical, successful programs, from case management models for working with immigrants and refugees to intensive English as a Second Language programs.

The conference inspired participants to bring new projects to their own communities. Guest is creating a series of local workshops that will inform immigrants and refugees of their legal rights and responsibilities. "The conference was about making connections to economic opportunity," he said. "If you don't have the legal status, you can't make that first step to getting a job."

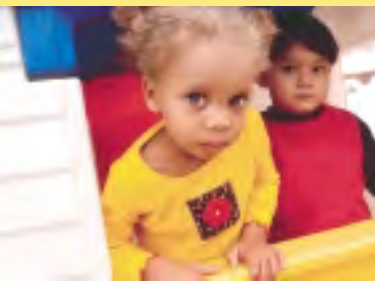
Legal challenges have only worsened since September 11. "As the climate becomes more restrictive, the undocumented are going further underground," said Gloria Mwase, Boston's *Making Connections* site liaison. It has become even more difficult to put them on the path of legalization and get them access to services.

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NEW FAMILIES COUNT HONOREES NAMED

Two days after the September 11 terrorist attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City, a community organization called Alianza Dominicana shifted into high gear to provide 24-hour-a-day crisis intervention, day care services, and emotional support to families in the Washington Heights and Inwood neighborhoods. The personal touches are what families will remember most, like throwing a birthday party for a child who lost his father.

Alianza Dominicana's rapid response and ability to quickly draw on neighbors, local businesses, and government agencies to help families help themselves typify the work of eight organizations recognized recently as part of the Casey Foundation's FAMILIES COUNT: THE NATIONAL HONORS PROGRAM. The Casey Foundation launched FAMILIES COUNT three years ago to celebrate organizations that improve the odds for vulnerable children by strengthening their families and communities. Besides winning \$500,000 each, the honorees will have opportunities to exchange ideas and become resources and role models for policymakers and practitioners.



SUSIE FITZHUGH



CAROL HIGHSMITH

Above, left and center, photos from Children of the Rainbow in San Diego and Bethel New Life in Chicago. Right, Grant Jones Jr., former Casey Fellow and former Casey/United Way Fellow Dolph Pulliam with Madelyn M. Levitt. Next page: John Barros, executive director of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative.

This year's group also includes Bethel New Life of Chicago; Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center; Children of the Rainbow of San Diego; Fatima Family Center of Cleveland; Latin American Youth Center of Washington, D.C.; Mar Vista Family Center of Culver City, Calif.; and Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker Project of Nashville.

The awards were announced during National Family Week, which falls during the week of Thanksgiving. For more information, visit our website, www.aecf.org.

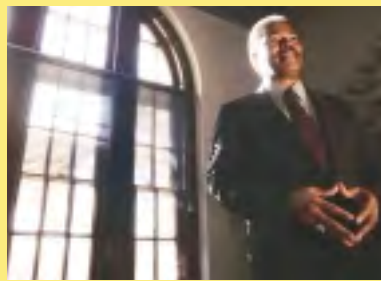
GRANT JONES JR. HONORED

Grant Jones Jr., a Casey Fellow, has won a Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award. The honor, bestowed by the Colorado Civil Rights Commission and the Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Committee, recognizes people "whose passion for people or causes they serve pushes them to regularly go above and beyond their job duties."

Jones was in the 2000 class of the Casey Foundation's Children and Family Fellowship, a year-long program designed to increase the pool of leaders with the vision, skills, and tools to spearhead major reforms in children and family services. Jones once worked as an air traffic controller but was forced to take a new path when President Reagan fired striking controllers in 1981. He began volunteering in a program for at-risk kids and ended up becoming its director.

Jones worked for 13 years at the Piton Foundation in Denver, where he developed a community service initiative to develop the leadership skills of residents in poor neighborhoods and mobilize black churches to do community-building work.

While completing his Casey Fellowship, Jones helped launch the Metro Black Church Initiative as an independent community nonprofit that makes grants to provide mentoring, counseling, and other programs for young people involved in the juvenile justice and social services systems. He later left Piton to become executive director of the Metro Black Church Initiative.



LINDA MCCONNELL/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, 2002



CASEY GRADISCHNIG/DRAKE UNIVERSITY

Jones draws a parallel between getting this award and his experience in the Casey Fellowship. "What both did for me

was to inspire me to do more, do it better, and bring what gifts and talents I do have to making a difference in community."

UNITED WAY/CASEY FELLOW WINS AWARD

Dolph Pulliam, director of community outreach and development at Drake University in Des Moines, recently received the Madelyn M. Levitt Distinguished Community Service Award.

Pulliam is a participant in the United Way/Casey Family Strengthening Fellowship Program, a leadership program based at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government that has worked with 44 United Way senior staff and volunteers to help them assume leadership roles in community efforts to strengthen families and neighborhoods.

Pulliam is a 1969 Drake graduate who has worked for three decades to help inner-city young people. He has been involved in *Making Connections* in Des Moines and recently helped run a community action summit that involved 180 residents from diverse backgrounds in discussions about barriers and strategies to achieve results for families.

The United Way/Casey Fellowship and *Making Connections* "lit a fire under me," he said. "I just know that if we can help strengthen families we are making our cities better and making children's lives better."

INDEPENDENT SECTOR LAUDS DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), a community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to revitalizing and strengthening one of the poorest neighborhoods in Boston, has received a \$10,000 leadership award from Independent Sector.



DSNI is the lead organization in the Casey Foundation's Rebuilding Communities Initiative in Boston. Independent Sector is a coalition of nonprofits, foundations, and corporate givers working to strengthen philanthropy and citizen action.

The "Leadership IS Award" was established in 1999 to recognize organizations investing in people as they work to build community.

More than 2,700 residents, businesses, nonprofits, and religious institutions in Boston's Roxbury/North Dorchester area work together through DSNI to improve the Dudley neighborhood, an area that was devastated by arson and neglect in the 1960s and 1970s. Since its formation in 1984, DSNI has helped clean up 600 vacant lots, build 600 new homes and housing units, establish parks and gardens, and generate new businesses.

"The Dudley Street Initiative epitomizes the true spirit of leadership in the nonprofit sector," said Sarah E. Melendez, president and chief executive officer of Independent Sector.

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and income supplements so they can support their children. The group's hypothesis is that low-income families can be helped to build brighter futures through a combination of workforce development, economic support, and community investment. To make a real difference, these strategies need to be coordinated, results-oriented, and sustainable over time.

The Foundation can look to its own experience with the Jobs Initiative, welfare reform, and a new series of efforts tied to the expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit and creation of savings mechanisms for the working poor for valuable insight on what works and what doesn't. But in what has become a Casey tradition, we're casting our net much wider to garner the best advice and guidance from the field.

In recent months, the Family Economic Success Work Group has held consultative sessions with financial experts, community development leaders, other foundations, and community lawyers. A key question we've been posing is how to weave together workforce development, economic support strategies, and community investments tailored to families in the nation's most isolated and vulnerable neighborhoods. These meetings have affirmed that this approach is the right one, but underscored the challenges.

The advice we've received reinforces that family economic success is truly a balancing act—tapping into regional employment opportunities while building on neighborhood assets; balancing investments that help people succeed—and maybe move on—with those that make neighborhoods worth staying in; and providing immediate economic relief to families while working for policies to help improve tax benefits and combat predatory lending.

In our INSITES section this month, we profile a series of strategies gathering steam in several cities to help families claim tax credits and begin to build savings.

CASEY FOUNDATION HEADQUARTERS EXPANDS INTO SECOND BUILDING, TWO CFS MOVES UNDER WAY

After seven years at its St. Paul Street address, the Casey Foundation has dramatically enlarged its home operating space to include a second building on Charles Street in Baltimore.

Located within easy walking distance of each other, the Casey buildings have a similar interior design and feel.

The decision to augment its headquarters came two years ago as additional staffing needs arose with the progress of the *Making Connections* and Neighborhood Transformation/Family Development work.

“It became clear that we were outgrowing our existing building and would have to find additional space,” said Douglas W. Nelson, president of the Foundation. “This will be a sister building in every sense.”

Set in a busy retail and corporate section of downtown Baltimore, the newly renovated Charles Street building is a four-story, 30,000-square-foot structure that was built in 1911. Renovation of the rented building began in mid-2001, and personnel shifting to the new site relocated in January.

The building incorporates a number of technologies that will enhance meetings and conferences. The Foundation plans to make some meeting space available to local nonprofit groups.

Two other buildings are being renovated by the Casey Foundation for use by Casey Family Services, the direct-services arm of the Foundation.

The recently purchased 30,000-square-foot Sovereign Bank building in New Haven, Connecticut will become home to Casey Family Services administrative offices, currently located in Shelton. Renovations and build-out will begin in a few months and the relocation of CFS staff is expected to be complete by early 2003.

The four-story edifice, originally built in 1833, is one of New Haven’s oldest structures and was recently restored to its original design. It is located at 123 Church Street, on the Green facing Yale University.

“We are pleased that we have found a wonderful building, in a city with a wealth of civic assets and a genuine dedication to its residents,” Nelson said. “We look forward to adding to the strengths of the New Haven community.”

Construction is also under way for new Casey Family Services Rhode Island division offices in Providence. CFS will relocate from its current site in Warwick to the 30,000-square-foot structure at 1268 Eddy Street in Providence, which is a *Making Connections* city.

The new site, built in the 1920s and home to the Rhode Island Buckle Company most recently, will provide office space for about 35 people, including CFS Rhode Island staff and *Making Connections* team members. One floor will become a Family Resource Center planned with input from the community, and the refinished basement will serve as a meeting room for both Foundation staff and local residents. Construction began in March 2001, and the relocation is expected to be complete by June 1, 2002.

The new Casey building on Baltimore’s Charles Street is home to Policy Reform and Initiative Management staff, Casey Strategic Consulting Group, the Foundation Library, and some support personnel. The building includes a large conference room, reception room, lecture hall, and informal seating area with booths, tables, and computer connections.





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CONFERENCE

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Increased racial and ethnic prejudice and the sluggish economy have raised even more roadblocks for low-income immigrant and refugee families, who tend to hold low-wage jobs in such industries, like hospitality, hardest hit during economic recessions.

Rachel Grob of the Yonkers, N.Y., Early Childhood Initiative is working on two ideas gleaned from the conference: an outreach program to educate immigrants and refugees about the Earned Income Tax Credit and a white paper recommending best practices on

strengthening immigrant and refugee families for local and national policy-makers.

“We went from zero to 100 in terms of our excitement,” Grob said.

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talked about the benefits to communities of reducing the use of detention, including lower crime rates and better relations between police and communities.

The Washington-based Justice Policy Institute presented a study documenting Multnomah County’s success in reducing racial disparities. In 1994, minority juveniles in Multnomah were 31 percent more likely to be detained than white youths. With help from the Foundation, the county implemented a series of reforms. By 2000, the detention rate for all youth was down, and minority youth were no more likely to be detained than white youth.

“In the past, youth were jailed because we did not have anywhere else to address their problems,” said Elizabeth Welch, presiding judge of the Multnomah County Juvenile Court. “This county has successfully

reduced the barriers that kids of color once faced in getting treatment in their communities.”

“People were really energized by the fact that we now have a series of places that clearly have demonstrated the feasibility of reducing the reliance on detention safely,” said Bart Lubow, senior program associate for JDAI.

Besides being more humane, community-based alternatives are cheaper, a compelling benefit in an era of public budget tightening. By reducing its reliance on detention, Multnomah County was able to mothball three 16-bed detention units and divert roughly \$2 million a year to other needed services.

Blanca Alvarado, a supervisor for Santa Clara County, California, said her county would look to Multnomah County as a model in building “a fair juvenile justice system that doesn’t merely lock up our kids but that values our youth and supports them towards a better way of life.”

The initiative is currently assisting detention reform work in Ventura, Santa Clara, and San Francisco counties, California; Bernalillo County, New Mexico; Baltimore, Maryland; Ada County, Idaho; and Cuyahoga County, Ohio, and at a state level in Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and Maryland.



JDAI conference participants Tracy King, director of Safe Futures in Fort Belnap, Montana, and Clinton Lacy, associate director of Friends of the Island Academy in New York City. Both serve on the organizing council of the Community Justice Network for Youth.

CORA CHARY