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Transforming... from protesting against to organizing for
The power of coming together and creating a vision for a just and joyful Oregon is at the heart of MRG’s work. In 1976, activists, people of means, and community members came together on the banks of the McKenzie River to build a new type of philanthropy. All around them people, myself included, were demanding peace, standing in solidarity, and continuing the battle for civil rights. MRG stepped up to fund this work, to bring people together, and to organize a movement for change. The founders of MRG came together because they saw a possibility, a vision for a just Oregon. They envisioned a transformation.

Forty years later we may still be protesting war and fighting against hatred and bigotry, but we are doing so in a new, modern, and sophisticated way. A new generation of youth is stepping up and building movements like Black Lives Matter. Organizers are working together to celebrate the intersectionality of our work, and we are leveraging technology in ways 40 years ago we could not even imagine.

MRG’s work has also continued to mature and grow, all while staying rooted in the values and vision of our founders. In this, our 40th year, we continue to transform Oregon by...

- **Listening** through our activist-led grantmaking model. By looking to those doing the work we are able to be innovative, agile, and fund meaningful work. In 2015-2016, we awarded over $1 million in grants.

- **Learning** from our grantees through the Capacity Building Initiative, a partnership with Meyer Memorial Trust. The opportunity for funders to work alongside grassroots groups assists us in gaining a deeper understanding of the needs of movement leaders and aligning our resources for greater impact.

- **Leading** among our philanthropy colleagues to elevate equity. By sharing our experiences and partnering with local, regional, and national foundations we are attracting more money for organizing and social justice work.

As we move forward into our next 40 years, we must continue to honor our past and build a strong future. In order to do this we need your support. MRG has always depended on the knowledge, expertise, and investment of our community and we need this now more than ever. **Join us in continuing to create the transformation our founders envisioned on the banks of the McKenzie 40 years ago.**

Sharon Gary-Smith
Executive Director
Forty years ago, MRG Foundation began as “a [gathering] on the McKenzie River east of Eugene... [and a] resolution to form a social change funding source for the Pacific Northwest was reached, and the original funding criteria were written by twenty Northwest Activists.”

These are words from MRG’s first annual report, describing our vision for building a movement. A movement seeking justice; a movement jump-starting and sustaining social-change organizing; a movement flipping the dynamic between donors, grantmakers, and social change groups by entrusting activists to make grant-making decisions utilizing a racial justice lens.

We were built by the movement for the movement.

From our grantees, to our donors, WE ARE MRG.
Building the future

Now more than ever, our community needs to come together to work for social change. Oregon needs us to share and elevate how we inspire leaders, build community, seek liberation, and maintain integrity.

As we move into our next 40 years we ask you to work with us to rethink and reimagine gathering. Coming together has been, and will continue to be, the heart of MRG. Gathering is an intentional act of building community to inform, to share, and to make collaborative decisions for change. Gatherings are where the seeds for social justice begin and where we build community, fundraise, and make grantmaking decisions. We invite you to join us as we gather at events across Oregon; collaborate and share ideas through social media; and find new ways to engage in our community, which is more connected than ever. By sharing ideas and bridging issue areas, we are gathering for justice, peace, community, and family.

MRG grant funding provided critical support during Sisters of the Road Cafe’s first months of operation in 1979. The Cafe still provides nourishing meals in a safe, dignified space.
Shaun and Erica Franks at MRG’s Southern Oregon Celebration gather to revel in the important organizing work being done in their region.

“I became an MRG donor because I realized philanthropy is not just about the amount we give but what we do in order to ensure the success of the organizations we believe in.”

Shaun and Erica Franks at MRG’s Southern Oregon Celebration gather to revel in the important organizing work being done in their region.
In 2009, my wife and I were expecting our first son, and we made the important decision to move to southern Oregon to live with family. Our lives were rapidly changing. I enrolled at Southern Oregon University (SOU) to study business and environmental studies, a decision that would lead me down a path of activism and philanthropy.

As a part of my studies, I found my passion around renewable energy and became active in student government. I was appointed the Director of Sustainability, and I began working towards tangible solutions. I realized students had ideas but rarely had the funding to see them manifest. In response, we developed the SOU Green Fund to support student projects related to sustainability. The impact of this fund showed me the power of getting money to leaders, innovators, and thinkers.

Before graduating, I began working with leaders in the community to form Rogue Climate, an organization working to create a faster transition to clean energy. MRG was a natural partner for our new organization. We began collaborating with other groups in our region. I’m inspired by the way we elevate and encourage each other to press the boundaries of our own leadership.

I became an MRG donor because I realized philanthropy is not just about the amount we give but what we do in order to ensure the success of the organizations we believe in. I’m looking forward to supporting MRG and the leaders they empower well into the future.
MRG has a natural way of attracting activists, and before you know it, you are part of the movement and are stepping up to lead.

“MRG has a natural way of attracting activists, and before you know it, you are part of the movement and are stepping up to lead.”
Community Leaders

I felt an instant connection after being introduced to MRG Foundation at the annual Open House a few years ago. From the moment I walked in and saw the diversity, vibrancy, and joy in that room, I knew I wanted to be a part of this community. I have always been active in the Asian American Pacific Islander community and saw MRG as an opportunity to do more.

My MRG path continued as I volunteered for the Justice within Reach Committee and became Chair the next year. My next step was joining the Board of Directors. I had the skill, experience, and ideas to support the growth of the foundation, and recognized I could learn more from my MRG experience.

Getting involved with MRG helped me broaden my scope, deepen my understanding of intersectionality, and engage in a larger movement. By working with MRG and our community, I grew and transformed as a leader, examining social justice through a racial justice lens.

MRG has a natural way of attracting activists, and before you know it, you are part of the movement and are stepping up to lead. When I first volunteered, I didn’t know how involved I would become or what I would learn. I am thankful for the opportunity to be involved because, in the end, I love MRG people, my people, and the work we do.

Jeff Selby
Chair of JWR Committee, Member of MRG Board of Directors

62% of MRG Foundation’s grantee organizations are led by people of color.

SEE MORE ABOUT MRG’S GRANTEES ON PAGE 20+
“By working with other social justice organizations we are able to find connections, build relationships, and transform our work to truly change perceptions around disabled people in Oregon.”
I started the Disability Arts and Culture Project (DACP) in the early 2000s because there was a group of us who couldn’t find an accessible and welcoming place to dance. As we continued to gather, share experiences, and review the research, we saw there was a need for a cross-disability arts and culture organization embedded in disability studies and the Disability Justice movement. Thanks to hard work, connecting with partner organizations and, of course, dancing, we built an organization that supports the development of disability leaders and serves as a home and family for disabled people in Portland.

One of the key principles of Disability Justice is intersectionality, which includes and celebrates all of our identities, not just our disability. This year we are excited to partner with fellow MRG grantees Sankofa Collective (formerly PFLAG Portland Black Chapter) and Living Stages to create plays, hold conversations, and gain a deeper understanding of our partners in the movement. We also worked with partner ReelAbilities to host a national film festival, Portland’s first disability film festival, and further elevate the work being done by local and national disabled artists. By working with other social justice organizations we are able to find connections, build relationships, and transform our work to truly change perceptions around disabled people in Oregon.

My work with MRG Foundation as a grantee, Capacity Building Initiative cohort member, and a grantmaker has provided me a strong and active network of organizations and organizers who share my values and continue to help make DACP and the movement stronger.
“Rooted in the voices of our community, we are elevating the issue of affordable housing to a matter of neighborly values, community pride, and long-term livability.”

Angel shares her work during the leadership academy where community members work to provide kids with a place to play, learn, and dream about their future.
Communities by Elevating Voices

The Welcome Home Coalition, a new grantee to MRG, brings together a broad community to build a movement empowered to address the problem of our missing affordable housing infrastructure. We aren’t alone in this housing crisis. Cities across the nation are facing similar challenges, and many of us are stepping up and taking action. At Welcome Home, we’re building power by bringing together and sharing the stories of local voices impacted by this crisis and wanting to make a better, safer community for everyone. With support from MRG Foundation, we are making change through the voices of those most affected.

The Leadership Academy, an open-door leadership development program, engages, trains, and activates tenants, case managers, and partner organizations to be leaders in this movement. Participants learn how to construct personal stories and use them effectively to impact policy and action on affordable housing. At a time when affordable housing and homelessness are in the media every day, we strive to pivot from sensationalized sound bites to thoughtful, hopeful, and constructive conversations that lead to solutions.

Rooted in the voices of our community, we are elevating the issue of affordable housing to a matter of neighborly values, community pride, and long-term livability. It’s not real estate or housing stock — affordable homes are public infrastructure like libraries, parks, and bridges. Welcome Home, with support from MRG Foundation, is building power, voice, and story for better communities where home is a place we can all afford.

Jes Larson
Executive Director,
Welcome Home Coalition
“MRG’s support transformed our work by providing us with the financial support necessary to share what we know and help other communities include the voices of houseless people in the larger social justice movement.”

Right 2 Survive and other Capacity Building Initiative cohort members gather in Ashland to stand in solidarity with Harney County community members during the armed standoff at the Malheur Wildlife Refuge.
Organizing through Seed Funding

It started at the intersection of respect and dignity in the streets of Portland. Ibrahim Mubarak, other houseless community leaders, and I came together to organize for the rights of the houseless in Portland as we faced discrimination and unfair city practices. Many felt voiceless and powerless, but there was resolve to work for change.

We decided the only way to effect change in our community was to recognize we have dignity and to organize to gain access to services, and advocate for safe places to sleep and congregate. Right 2 Survive (R2S) was founded, with the support of MRG Foundation, to serve as the conduit for connecting people to make that a reality.

R2S gained early key victories in establishing self-governing houseless camps that provide a safe space for individuals to sleep, eat, and call “home.” We ultimately envision becoming a national model for other houseless advocates. It can be challenging to find funding for such an ambitious goal, but we know our experiences and the work we do is important. Seed funding — initial grant support to jump-start organizing — from MRG helped us to share our model with other communities by organizing the Pacific Northwest Social Forum. This gathering brought together advocates from cities all over the NW. We shared our experiences and explored the intersectionality of issues such as climate justice, houselessness, environmental justice, and Native American treaty rights.

MRG’s support transformed our work by providing us with the financial support necessary to share what we know and help other communities include the voices of houseless people in the larger social justice movement.

Lisa Fay  
Right 2 Survive Chairperson
In the first year of the program, participants strengthened their internal systems, deepened relationships with funders, and grew their base of supporters, but we at MRG also experienced a transformation.

“...”
Grassroots Groups through the CBI

As a social justice funder, our position in the community is unique. MRG’s activist-led grantmaking funds Oregon’s social justice movement in partnership with our grantees. This year the Capacity Building Initiative (CBI), a joint project of MRG and Meyer Memorial Trust, was established to work with both our grantees and philanthropic partners in new ways. The CBI engages a cohort of grassroots social change groups in an innovative way, while also deepening our understanding of the sector and our work.

The CBI provides grantees with multi-year funding, a statewide network of partners, and skill building opportunities necessary to overcome growth and sustainability barriers commonly faced by grassroots groups. In the first year of the program, participants strengthened their internal systems, deepened relationships with funders, and grew their base of supporters, but we at MRG also experienced a transformation. We were challenged by our grantees and partners to be more transparent and accountable, which inspired us to explore emergent strategies. This reflection, and our well-established values, drove us to integrate Critical Race Theory as a tool to inform our shared learning and identify shared values to strengthen relationships within the cohort and with our philanthropic partners.

Our grantees, Oregon’s grassroots movement, and MRG have all been transformed through the work of the CBI. Witnessing this work informs MRG and motivates us to re-evaluate our effectiveness, listen deeply to our community, and continue to grow our capacity in social justice philanthropy.
MRG’s Donor-advised funds strengthen our impact in the field of social justice. In 2015-16, MRG DA fund donors designated over $275,000 to state-wide, national and international organizations that are working to make this a just and joyful world. Opening a DA fund with MRG ensures that your contribution will be used responsibly and gives you, the donor, the opportunity to make a difference. All DA fund disbursements are board-approved prior to awarding.
Community organizing and social justice are what I do. I have spent much of my later life volunteering with community organizing non-profits and organizing with those who are marginalized. This commitment to social justice pushed me to think about the best ways to support the movement and share my passion with my family. Philanthropy is one way that is important to me. My background in social justice made opening my DA fund with MRG a natural fit.

It is important to have structure for my philanthropy. Having a donor-advised fund is structured philanthropy that I can do with my family. With this style of planning, I can work with my daughter while I am living and have discussions about how we want to demonstrate our values through giving. It’s a way that we can come together as a family.

Partnering with MRG is important to me because it supports organizations as they are coming up. You just need a strong mission and a connection to the affected community. This is important because the funds nurture organizations that are just starting. I also appreciate MRG’s grantmaking process. It is not a secret board of people who are deciding. It is people from the community that I want to represent my money.

MRG’s DA Fund program has provided me with the structure, research, and confidence I need to make decisions with my family about how our money can make a difference in the social justice movement now and into the future.
**GRANTS BY TYPE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Amount Granted</th>
<th>Average Grant Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>$433,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Building</td>
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<td>$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Response</td>
<td>$9,700</td>
<td>$1,940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donor Advised Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
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<td>$858</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,078,100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**205 GRANTS**

**LEADERSHIP**

- People of color: 62%
- Female identified: 51%
- Low income: 22%
- Immigrant or refugee: 13%
- LGBTQ: 7%
- Disabled people: 2%

**45 GROUPS**

**ISSUE AREAS**

- Civic Engagement [3]: $18,500
- Criminal Justice Reform [3]: $29,000
- Cultural Preservation [4]: $26,700
- Disability Rights [1]: $35,000
- Economic Justice [6]: $60,000
- Environmental Justice [7]: $121,000
- Gender Equity [1]: $9,000
- Housing & Homelessness [5]: $77,000
- Human Rights [17]: $180,800
- Immigrant Rights [5]: $58,000
- LGBTQ Rights [4]: $81,000
- Youth & Education [6]: $124,000

**62 GRANTS**

**MRG EXPENSES**

- Grassroots grantmaking: 13%
- Capacity Building Initiative: 5%
- Donor-advised grantmaking: 14%
- Community education: 31%
- Fundraising: 10%
- Administration: 27%

**62 GROUPS**

**GEOGRAPHIC**

- Central [5]: $53,000
- Coast [3]: $18,000
- Eastern [1]: $20,000
- Portland [19]: $227,700
- Southern [14]: $193,700
- Statewide [9]: $114,000
- Willamette Valley [11]: $193,600

**Grand Total**: $820,000

Outside of Portland: 72%
Transforming...
the social justice movement by giving to MRG Foundation

You can contribute in the following ways:

- **Write a check or give online**
  Send a check to our office or give online through our website. www.mrgfoundation.org

- **Become an MRG Movement Builder Sustainer**
  Join our simple and automated monthly giving program that allows you to enter your information once and support MRG all year long.

- **Donate stock or appreciated IRA**
  You can give stock or distributions from your IRA. Please contact the MRG office or visit our website for stock gift information.

- **Establish a donor-advised fund**
  Open a donor-advised fund with MRG Foundation. MRG DA fund holders are able to nominate grantees throughout the world to be the beneficiaries of their support.

- **Include MRG in your will**
  Become a supporter for life! MRG staff and advisors are available to help you identify and develop long-term vehicles to support your progressive charitable goals throughout your lifetime and beyond. Please contact us!

To volunteer, make a one time gift, or become an MRG Movement Builder Sustainer contact Ranfís Giannettino Villatoro, Grassroots Giving Director ranfis@mrgfoundation.org

For information about donor-advised funds, donating stock, and planned giving contact Carol Tatch, Major Giving Director carol@mrgfoundation.org
# GRANTEES 2015-16

## Capacity Building Initiative
- **Beyond Toxics**: $35,000
- **Disability Art and Culture Project**: $35,000
- **Latinos Unidos Siempre**: $35,000
- **Lotus Rising Project**: $35,000
- **NAACP Eugene-Springfield**: $35,000
- **Sankofa Collection (formerly PFLAG Portland Black Chapter)**: $35,000
- **Right 2 Survive**: $35,000
- **Rogue Climate**: $35,000
- **Rogue Valley Oregon Action**: $35,000
- **Unidos Bridging Community**: $35,000

## Critical Response
- **350PDX**: $2,000
- **Center for Sustainable Economy**: $1,700
- **Commit 2 Respond Climate Coalition**: $2,000
- **Community Alliance of Tenants**: $2,000
- **Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality**: $2,000

## General Fund
- **350Deschutes**: $9,000
- **African Women’s Coalition**: $9,000
- **African Youth Community Organization**: $9,000
- **CAPACES Leadership Institute**: $18,000
- **Central Oregon Jobs with Justice**: $10,000
- **Civil Liberties Defense Center**: $18,000
- **COFA Alliance National Network**: $8,000
- **Community Alliance of Tenants**: $22,000
- **Confederated Tribes of the Lower Rogue**: $11,000
- **Coos Community Radio**: $9,000
- **Don’t Shoot Portland**: $10,000
- **Human Dignity Coalition**: $10,000
- **Instituto De Cultura y Arte In Xocitl In Cuicatl**: $9,000
- **Komemma Cultural Protection Association**: $9,000
- **KPOV High Desert Community Radio**: $23,000
- **Lakota Oyate Ki**: $10,000
- **Latino Club**: $6,000
- **Living Stages**: $9,000
- **Lower Columbia Hispanic Council**: $8,000
- **Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas**: $9,000
- **Northwest Forest Worker Center**: $20,000
- **NOWIA Unite Center for Farmworker Advocacy**: $10,000
- **OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon**: $18,000
- **Oregon Community Health Workers Association**: $20,000
- **Oregon Rural Action**: $20,000
- **Our Children’s Trust**: $20,000
- **Portland Jobs with Justice**: $18,000
- **Portland Parent Union**: $9,000
- **Red Earth Descendants**: $7,000
- **Red Lodge Transition Services**: $18,000
- **Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality**: $18,000
- **Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice**: $10,000
- **Uhuru Sa Sa**: $5,000
- **Voz Workers’ Rights Education Project**: $22,000
- **Welcome Home Coalition**: $9,000

## Travel Grants
- **Community Alliance of Lane County**: $600
- **Confederated Tribes of the Lower Rogue**: $1,000
- **KPOV High Desert Community Radio**: $1,000
- **KSKQ Community Radio**: $700
- **OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon**: $1,000
- **PFLAG Portland Black Chapter**: $1,000
- **Portland Jobs with Justice**: $1,000
- **Portland Parent Union**: $1,000
- **Rural Organizing Project**: $1,000
- **Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice**: $1,000
- **Spect-Actors Collective**: $1,000

## Donor-Advised Funds
- **1,000 Friends of Oregon**: $5,000
- **350PDX**: $2,500
- **ACLU Foundation**: $1,500
- **Adopt-A-Native-Elder**: $1,000
- **Alliance for Justice**: $2,000
- **American Bird Conservancy**: $1,500
- **American Near East Refugee Aid**: $2,000

# Americas Foundation/Fundación de las Américas
- **Bat Conservation International**: $1,000
- **Beyond Nuclear**: $500
- **Bronx Defenders**: $1,000
- **Canticle Farm for Terra Foundation**: $1,000
- **CAPACES Leadership Institute**: $1,000
- **Cascadia Wildlands**: $2000
- **Catholic Charities**: $2,000
- **Causa Oregon**: $3,000
- **Center for Biological Diversity**: $6,000
- **Center for Constitutional Rights**: $2,000
- **Central City Concern**: $1,000
- **Citizen’s Climate Lobby**: $2,000
- **Civil Liberties Defense Center**: $2,000
- **Climate Trust**: $1,000
- **Community Alliance of Lane County**: $5,500
- **Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology**: $1,000
- **Corporate Accountability International**: $2,000
- **Crag Law Center**: $2,000
- **De La Salle North Catholic High School**: $3,000
- **Democracy Now Productions, Inc.**: $2,500
- **Doctors Without Borders USA, Inc.**: $5,000
- **Earth Island Institute**: $1,000
- **Earthjustice**: $11,000
- **Ecumenical Ministries Of Oregon**: $1,000
- **Eugene Public Library Foundation**: $1,000
- **Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting, Inc.**: $1,000
- **FINCA International**: $4,000
- **Foundation for National Progress**: $2,000
- **Friends of Land Air Water**: $1,000
- **Friends of the Earth**: $1,500
Grassroots International $3,500
Greenpeace Fund, Inc. $3,000
Havurah Shalom $1,000
Heart of America Northwest $2,500
Heifer Project International $5,000
Human Rights Watch $1,500
Independent Media Institute $1,000
International Book Bank $1,500
International Development Exchange $5,000
International Rescue Committee $6,000
International Snow Leopard Trust $500
Jesuit Volunteer Corps NW $500
Jubilee USA Network $500
Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center $2,000
Komemma Cultural Protection Association $600
KWAX-FM Fund at University of Oregon Foundation $1,000
Latino Community Association $1,000
League of Conservation Voters Education Fund $1,500
Madre $6,000
Make the Road New York $1,000

McKenzie River Trust $1,000
Mercy Corps $5,000
Migrant Legal Action Program, Inc. $2,000
Momentum Alliance $3,000
Multnomah County Library Foundation $1,000
National Audubon Society $2,000
National Council of La Raza $500
National Immigration Forum $1,500
Native American Youth & Family Center $1,000
Natural Resources Defense Council $3,000
New Israel Fund $2,000
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides $1,500
NOWIA Unete Center for Farmworker Advocacy $2,000
Oceana, Inc. $2,500
Open Meadow Alternative Schools $3,500
Option for Homeless Residents of Ashland $2,000
Oregon BRAVO Youth Orchestras $1,000
Oregon Center for Public Policy $2,500
Oregon Climate $2,000
Oregon Community Foundation $1,000
Oregon Environmental Council $7,000
Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health $2,500
Oregon Public Broadcasting $500
Oregon State University Foundation $1,500
Oregon Wild $2,500
Pacific Environment and Resources Center $1,000
Peace Development Fund $5,000
Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste $2,000

Planned Parenthood Federation of America $1,000
Planned Parenthood of Southwestern Oregon $1,000
Ploughshares Fund $2,000
Pollinator Partnership $2,000
Portland Piano International $1,000
Rainforest Action Network $1,500
Reed Institute $2,000
Refugees International $1,000
Resist, Inc. $3,000
Rogue Climate $2,000
Rogue Farm Corps $5,000
Rogue Riverkeeper $2,000
Rogue Valley Oregon Action $2,000
Ruckus Society $2,000
Rural Arts Center $500
Rural Organizing Project $2,500
Save the Children $2,000
Save the Manatee Club $1,000
School Garden Project of Lane County $500
SEVA Foundation $1,500
Sightline Institute $1,000

Sisters of the Road Cafe $500
Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice $2,000
Southwest Research and Information Center $1,000
St. Andrew Nativity School $2,000
St. David of Wales Episcopal Church $1,000
St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal Church $500
The Family Nurturing Center $2,000
The Nature Conservancy $2,500
The Other 98% $5,000
THRIVE $5,000
Truthout $1,500
Umpqua Watersheds $2,000
Union of Concerned Scientists, Inc. $1,000
Unite Oregon $3,000
United For A Fair Economy $1,000
Virginia Garcia Memorial Foundation $1,500
Western Environmental Law Center $1,500
Western States Center $1,500
Wild Salmon Center $500
Wildlife Conservation Society $5,000
Willamette Farm and Food Coalition $500
Winterspring $1,000
WNED-NY Public Radio $2,000
Women for Women International $1,000
Women’s Action for New Directions Education Fund $500
Womenspace, Inc. $1,000

Photo credits:
Disability Arts and Culture Project, Mac Adamic, Tony Funchess, Welcome Home Coalition