



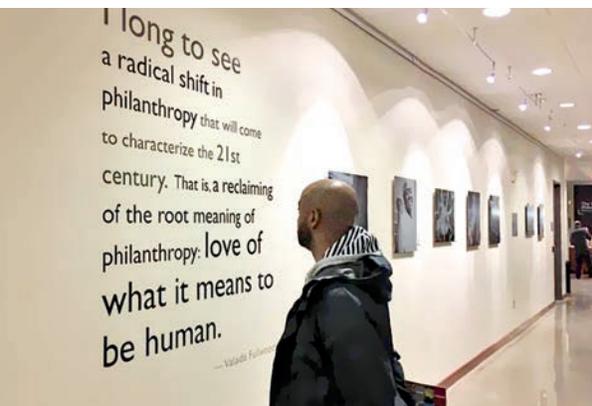
IMPACT REPORT 2016 - 2017

MOVEMENT

Zora Neale Hurston said, “There are years that ask questions, and there are years that answer.” So many questions have surfaced in the past year: How did this happen? What can we do? Didn’t we do this work already?

MRG continues to work every day to be part of the answer.

In the last year, MRG has adapted our grantmaking to be more responsive to the political moment and diffuse attacks on immigrants and refugees. We’ve re-imagined our general grantmaking program to further center our grantees. We’ve moved to a multi-year grant model to provide space for grantees to prioritize organizing.



Giving Back: The Soul of Philanthropy Reframed and Exhibited, Concordia University, January – April 2017

To build resilience, we connected with our community across the state with food and stories. This year, MRG shared the exhibit **Giving Back: The Soul of Philanthropy Reframed and Exhibited** with our community. The show expanded and celebrated deep roots of African American philanthropy through photography, poetry, and prose: the vivid stories that reveal the long and unsung legacy of Black philanthropists — from generous donors of wealth to ingenious givers carving a way out of no way. This exhibit was partnered with community-based learning activities that invited folks to look at the ways they approached their own philanthropy and asked the question, Who gets to be called a philanthropist?

This kind of year demands self-reflection. MRG chose to re-ground in our mission and values as we continue to move resources to groups working for long-lasting change. We began the transition from applying a social justice lens to centering race in the movement for justice to examine — and disrupt — white supremacy within our organization, across issue areas, and in every part of our state. This report shares our movement building work and the incredible work of justice seekers across our state.

BUILDING

“Know your role.” I’ve heard that a number of times over the years, sometimes as a caution, sometimes as validation, though it means something more significant this year. Social justice and racial equity work has taken on new urgency in the face of all-out assaults on human dignity. The temptation may be to be all things to all people. To best serve the movement, we are each required to ‘know our role.’

Movement Building, to MRG, means the people who are most impacted by social injustice and racial inequity are best-situated to prioritize and address the needs of their movement. MRG is grounded in our role in the movement: using the tools of philanthropy we support organizations doing the work of advancing social justice and racial equity by redistributing wealth and resources to those organizations. Within the philanthropic community, MRG’s role is to raise awareness of the paradigms at play and be the catalyst to question assumptions at tables where power and privilege can easily dominate other narratives.

To be clear, social justice is not a destination. The movement is not something we can quantify in simple terms. Instead, our work today is rooted in the organizational self-awareness required to know our historic posture, how best to serve in these times, and how best to use what we have to advance social justice and racial equity.



Roberta Phillip-Robbins, J.D.
Executive Director



Roberta
and Frankie

“Social justice and racial equity work have taken on new urgency in the face of all-out assaults on human dignity.”

The Ralph Smith Movement Building

The intentional spend down of the Movement Building Fund was completely consistent with MRG values by moving money directly to the groups doing the work across Oregon.

The remarkable gift of the Movement Building Fund started with \$3 million from the Ralph L. Smith Foundation in 2008. This gift marked the end of the Ralph L. Smith Foundation's granting in Oregon and moved millions from a family foundation to MRG, a foundation where community members and activists decide how grants are distributed.

The Movement Building Fund was started at a time when many foundations were pulling back from granting to grassroots groups because of the onset of The Great Recession. MRG made a conscious decision to get this money out – to fund groups where people directly affected by a problem were the ones leading the way to a solution. These funds grew internal capacity and increased our general fund grants by \$100,000 per year. The internal investment increased our visibility statewide and helped position us for moving our funding partners around general operating grants and funding social and racial justice.

In 2008 there was no way to see into the future; to imagine the political landscape we find ourselves in today. We recognize our partners in social and racial justice in grassroots movements across the state are under attack and progress we have made over the past eight years is at risk.

MRG is focused on adapting to the current landscape by asking: how can we be more responsive? Get even better at centering the work of grantees? Support collaborative work like the cohort approach of the Capacity Building Initiative? Imagine new ways to engage our donor community, such as the creative donor-advised funds that move money to the movement in new and strategic ways to support populations at risk? How do we respond organizationally by reducing operations proportionately to ensure our effectiveness as stewards of your resources? For example, this report shows that 79% of our total expenditures went to programming, with 63% going directly to our grantmaking programs. **This is how we support the movement.**

Fund comes to an end



We fund **social change organizing**

that addresses the root causes of critical social and racial justice issues by bringing people together and building their power to change political, social, and economic systems.

We are actively engaged in hard conversations. As you read this report, see how your partnership has helped us continue to be responsive and nimble. Thank you for being an integral part of our community and for joining us on this journey as we find our way to Next.

MRG is keeping its finger on the pulse of the Social Justice Movement



“The postcards give people a way to take action that fits in with their daily lives and is very concrete.”

— Erika Leaf

Since the 2016 Presidential Election, there has been an explosion of political activity and perhaps just as much political fatigue. In response, Erika Leaf, a recently retired graphic services provider, created **Collective Vision: Postcards for Political Action**.

“The postcards give people a way to take action that fits in with their daily lives and is very concrete,” Erika says. “For me, it calms the anxiety.”

Collective Vision postcards utilize provocative local art submissions; targeted, succinct messages; and ongoing civic pressure to affect change. By the 2018 midterm elections, Erika hopes to have 100,000 postcards ready to deliver to elected officials. She even offers instructions on who to write, what to say, and how to sustain the momentum.

Collective Vision also allows Erika to support other vital social justice efforts throughout Oregon, especially as an MRG Foundation donor.

“MRG has the finger on the pulse of what’s happening in Oregon and Portland in particular, so it’s really a great way to keep the movement strong,” she says. “The more we can keep up the pressure with the aggregated effect of these small individual actions, then the more likely that things will turn in the way we want them to.”

MRG enables donors to strengthen the Movement

Covering the Iraq War, Mike Francis remembers Iraqi interpreters who faced daily death threats and kidnappings of family members, only to have promises of immigration to the US broken. Those memories motivated him to start the **Newcomer Scholarship Fund**, a donor-advised fund of MRG.

“I had this very deep, kind of personal concern about the plight of folk who are fleeing horrible situations at home that endangered them,” says Mike. “That they have to flee somehow is an activist issue in America, that there’s this question about whether we welcome people or turn them away. I guess I come down on the side of welcoming.”

The Newcomer Scholarship Donor-advised Fund offers four \$1,000 scholarships to high school and current college students. In the inaugural year, scholarships were awarded to students from Nepal, Kenya, and Mexico. More than the dollar amount, Francis believes the strength of the scholarships is letting recipients know there are people on their side who want them to succeed.

He especially credits the MRG Foundation for its no-strings-attached support.

“This is a small fund and I wouldn’t pretend we’re changing the world in any kind of major way with this, but in a very small way, we’re doing something, and it’s all because MRG made it possible.”



“The strength of the Newcomer Scholarships is letting recipients know there are people on their side who want them to succeed.”

— Mike Francis

Community radio as an organizing tool

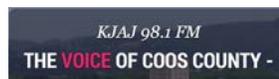
“Independent news is so important to democracy. We don’t have the resources to drown out fake news, but it’s our responsibility to put out news for the good of the public.”

In the struggle for liberation, the voices of the people are integral. Drowned out by the noise of corporate oligarchy, fake news, and alternative facts, mainstream media distracts us from what’s really happening in the world. This is why community radio is an integral part of the movement for social justice. As hubs that work to amplify the voices of the people and communities they serve, community radio is a unique form of organizing and their impact is especially present in rural Oregon.

KSKQ’s Connie Saldaña reminds us that the radio bands belong to the community, for the good of the public. “Independent news is so important to democracy. We don’t have the resources to drown out fake news, but it’s our responsibility to put out news for the good of the public.” Mary Geddry of KJAJ reminds us, “In rural areas like Coos County, where there’s no central congregation of people and it’s not easy to reach people, independent radio has a lot of power and impact.”

Both stations work to support the local community organizing and many groups come on to share their work and events, keeping listeners informed of what’s happening in the area. In addition to traditional shows they will attend events and record them for the public archive, supporting organizers in documenting their work.

Free from the constraints of advertisers and executives, community media’s independence means they look to the community to keep them going, funded by grants and the communities they broadcast to and for. The current media landscape is a threat to democracy and it is the power and support of the people that keeps community radio amplifying our voices for social change.



Bend Community Radio



AMPLIFICATION



GENERAL FUND AND RESPONSIVE GRANTS BY ISSUE AREA

62 GRANTS

	Amount Granted
Art & Media	\$35,000
Criminal Justice Reform	\$32,000
Civic Engagement	\$32,000
Cultural Preservation	\$56,000
Disability Rights	\$35,000
Economic Justice	\$33,000
Environmental Justice	\$103,500
Gender Equity	\$10,000
Housing & Homelessness	\$49,000
Human Rights	\$99,500
Immigrant Rights	\$77,000
LGBTQ	\$73,400
Youth & Education	\$98,000
Grand Total	\$733,400



Sharing Power by Building Trust and Promoting Agency



“Policy work should be driven by individuals and communities ... that is what grassroots organizing does.”

— Shizuko Hashimoto

MRG Foundation board member Shizuko Hashimoto believes, to affect real change, we must fundamentally change the way we think and operate.

“As we do social change work, it’s really easy to slap labels on what we want,” she says. “We want diversity, but what does that look like?”

According to Shizuko, it’s a process, not a result. That process starts with promoting agency.

“It’s difficult to give trust. Often I think philanthropy is geared more towards social services. It’s geared more to providing funds to the experts who are doing more policy work. I think the policy work should be driven by individuals and communities and I think that is what grassroots organizing does.”

This is especially urgent, she says, because the racism, misogyny, and homophobia dominating the current political climate are long-term trends, that require a unified, long-term approach. As a vital member of the MRG community since joining staff in 2005, Shizuko believes the organization is more than up for it.

“I know, in 20 years, what I do and my commitment to making the world a better place is still going to exist,” she says. “It’s still going to need to be present.”

MRG Leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sirius Bonner, *Chair*

Alaí Reyes-Santos

Andrea Valderrama

Colin Crader II

Jeffrey Selby

Kim Thomas

Shizuko Hashimoto

Vicky Falcón Vázquez

GRANTMAKING COMMITTEE

Khalil Edwards, *Co-Chair*

Vicky Falcón Vázquez, *Co-Chair*

Asa Wright

Bruce Morris

Kathy Coleman

Lisa Arkin

Shaun Franks

RESPONSIVE GRANTS COMMITTEE

Ari Rapkin

Esther Stutzman

Penny Lind

Tova Woyciechowicz

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Olga Turner, *Chair*

Dani Bernstein

Alaí Reyes-Santos

Lizzie Martinez

Miriam Levitt

Pamela Phan

Kim Thomas

JWR COMMITTEE

Jeff Selby, *Chair*

Andrea Harvey

Bobby Foucher

Heather Pruess

Mariotta Gary-Smith

Pam McElwee

Vena Ford

Wendy Weaver

STAFF

Sharon Gary Smith, *Executive Director*

Roberta Phillip-Robbins, *Executive Director*

Alison Wandschneider

Brooks Nelson

Carol Tatch

Colin Crader II

Cris Lira

Edith Casterline

Esther Kim

Ranfis Giannettino Villatoro

Stephan Herrera

We fund **strategically** by focusing on groups whose work will have a deep impact in their community. We look for opportunities to support organizing that plays a critical role in the movement for social change.

MRG Grantees 2016-2017

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 • Right 2 Survive \$35,000 • Rogue Climate \$35,000 • Rogue Valley Oregon Action \$35,000 • Sankofa Collective \$35,000 • Unidos Bridging Community \$35,000

CRITICAL RESPONSE ▶ Beyond Coalition \$1,700 • Don't Shoot Portland \$2,000 • Enlace \$2,000 • Eugene PeaceWorks \$2,000 • Innovation Law Lab \$2,000 • Main Street Alliance of Oregon \$1,000 • Northwest Community Coalition for Police Accountability \$2,000 • Portland Harbor Community Coalition \$2,000 • Portland Jobs with Justice \$1,000 • Rural Organizing Project \$2,000 • Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality \$2,000 • Voz Hispana Cambio Comunitario \$1,000 • Voz Workers' Rights Education Project \$2,000

GENERAL FUND ▶ 350PDX \$20,000 • African Youth Community Organization \$4,000 • Black United Fund of Oregon \$13,500 • Civil Liberties Defense Center \$20,000 • Health Care for All-Oregon \$15,000 • Human Dignity Coalition \$10,000 • Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice \$7,000 • Living Stages \$10,000 • Micronesia Islander Community \$6,000 • Multicultural Association of Southern Oregon \$10,000 • Northwest Forest Worker Center \$20,000 • PassinArt: A Theatre Company \$10,000 • Portland Jobs with Justice \$15,000 • Red Earth Descendants-NOWIA \$7,000 • Red Lodge Transition Services \$17,000 • Trans*Ponder \$6,000 • Unete NOWIA \$9,000 • 350Deschutes \$9,000 • Confederated Tribes of the Lower Rogue \$9,000 • Don't Shoot Portland \$10,000 • Komemma Cultural Protection Association \$8,000 • Lakota Oyate Ki \$10,000 • Latino Club \$6,000 • Lower Columbia Hispanic Council \$8,000 • Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas \$9,000 • Oregon Rural Action \$15,000 • Portland Parent Union \$9,000 • Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality \$15,000 • Voz Workers' Rights Education Project \$18,000 • Welcome Home Coalition \$9,000 • Women's Civic Improvement League \$14,000

TRAVEL GRANTS ▶ Civil Liberties Defense Center \$1,000 • Multicultural Association of Southern Oregon \$1,000 • Northwest Forest Worker Center \$1,000 • Rural Organizing Project \$1,000

MICRO ▶ Coos Community Protection Council \$2,000 • Eugene PeaceWorks \$2,000 • Heartisan Foundation \$1,200 • Queer Rock Camp \$3,000

RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION



DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS ▶ 1,000 Friends of Oregon \$2,000 • American Jewish World Service \$1,000 • Basic Rights Oregon \$3,500 • Catholic Charities (El Programa Hispano) \$1,000 • CAUSA \$3,000 • Civil Liberties Defense Center \$2,500 • De La Salle North Catholic High School \$2,000 • Deschutes Basin Land Trust \$3,000 • Ecumenical Ministries Of Oregon (SOAR Refugee Program and General Support) \$2,000 • Federation of Jewish Charities (The Icarus Project) \$2,500 • Havurah Shalom \$2,300 • Innovation Law Lab \$2,000 • Jesuit Volunteer Corps NW \$500 • Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center \$2,000 • Komemma Cultural Protection Association \$600 • Latino Community Association \$1,000 • Main Street Alliance of Oregon \$2,000 • Momentum Alliance \$3,000 • Multnomah County Library Foundation \$1,000 • National Lawyers Guild Foundation \$500 • Native American Youth & Family Center \$1,000 • Open School Inc \$2,000 • Oregon Environmental Council \$6,000 • Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health \$2,500 • Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste \$1,000 • Portland Jobs with Justice \$2,000 • Portland Piano International \$1,000 • Portland YouthBuilders \$2,000 • Reed Institute \$2,000 • Rogue Farm Corps \$7,000 • Rural Organizing Project \$700 • Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality \$2,000 • Showing Up for Racial Justice (National HQ) \$500 • Showing Up for Racial Justice - Eugene/Springfield \$500 • Sisters of the Road Café \$500 • Solidaire \$15,000 • St. Andrew Nativity School \$3,000 • Third Wave Fund \$5,000 • Unite Oregon - Rogue Valley Chapter \$2,000 • United We Dream Network, Inc. \$1,000 • Virginia Garcia Memorial Foundation \$2,000 • Voz Workers' Rights Education Project \$3,012 • Whole Earth Nature School (Equity Project) \$2,500

**TOTAL GRANTS
2016-2017
\$835,012**



**Write a check
or give online**



**Become an
MRG Movement
Builder Sustainer**



**Donate stock or
appreciated IRA**



**Establish a donor-
advised fund**



**Include MRG
in your will**

How to Engage with MRG

As you read this Annual Impact Report, I am sure you were astounded by the diverse groups who receive MRG funding – whether from our activist-led grantmaking or through our Donor-advised funds. MRG Foundation continues to be Oregon’s leading social justice funder because:

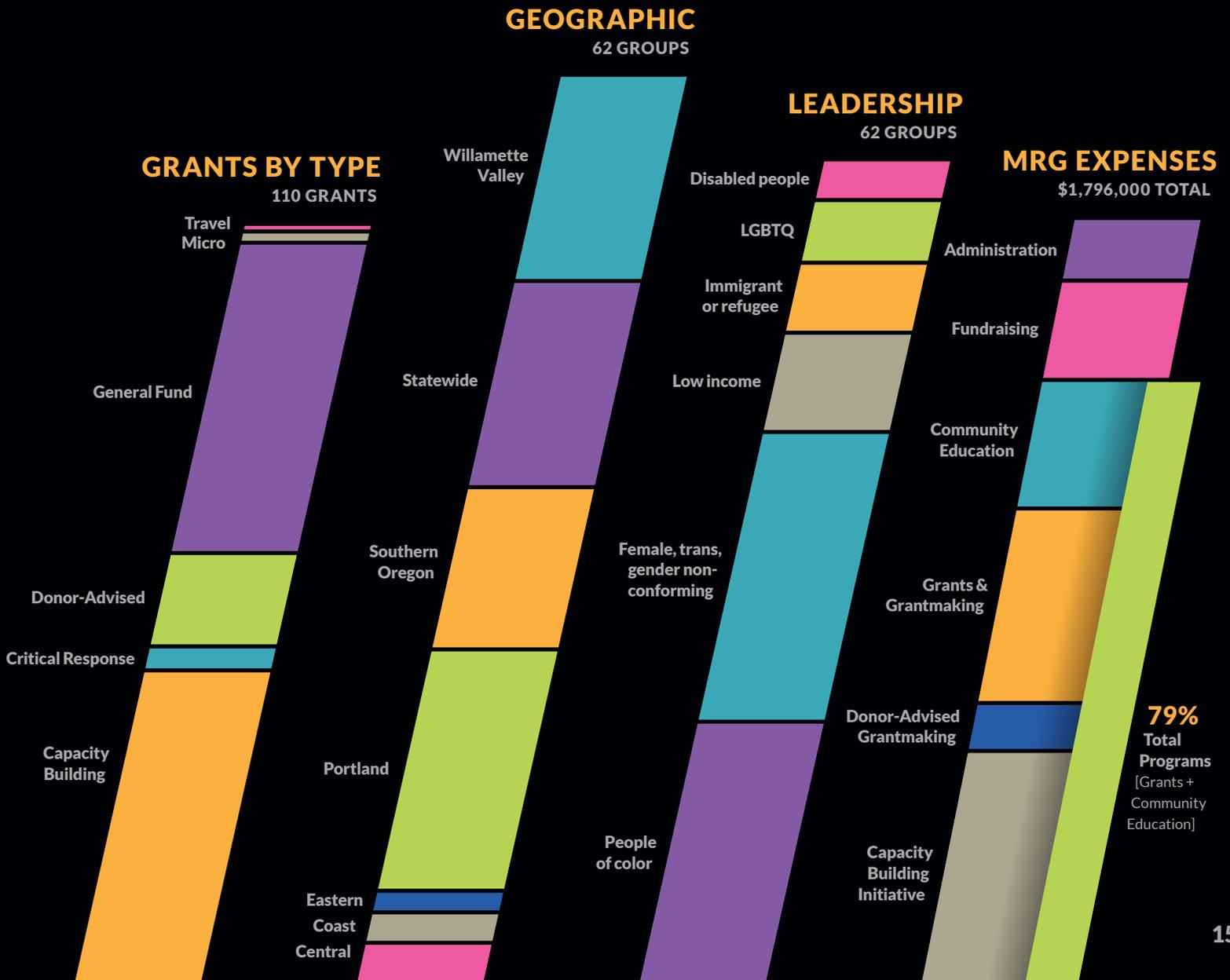
- **We listen** – *our ears are always to the ground to know what issues are affecting Oregon’s myriad communities.*
- **We learn** – *we take the time to learn what our grantee groups need to respond to crises and opportunities.*
- **We lead** – *we continue to lead and be the focal point for social justice funding in Oregon.*

We are able to do this because of donors and community members like you who value the work being done and who understand that it takes resources to keep the movement strong, vibrant, and responsive.

Please take a moment or two to decide how you will keep the movement strong. Support the work of MRG and you are supporting social justice change makers state- and nation-wide.

To learn more about MRG, volunteer, or learn more about our giving programs please contact **Carol Tatch, Development Director** carol@mrgfoundation.org

MRG by the Numbers 2016-2017



MOVEMENT BUILDING THROUGH

YOU



Look inside our 2017 Impact Report for all the ways YOU can contribute to social change in Oregon.