

CONNECTS

CASEY

FALL 2001
A REPORT FROM THE
ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

IN THIS ISSUE: Beloved Employee Leaves Foundation; FAMILIES COUNT 2001 Honorees Gather; Center Focuses on Improving Child Welfare Practice; In the News; Resource Corner; INSITES

FOUNDATION MOBILIZES RESOURCES IN RESPONSE TO TERRORISM



The Casey Foundation has set aside more than \$3 million to support aid and assistance for the children and families directly affected by the tragic events of September 11.

Douglas W. Nelson, president of the Foundation, said the Foundation wanted to help ensure that public child-serving agencies in New York and in the

Washington, D.C., area had flexible financial resources to respond rapidly to the range of material, psychological, and special needs of families victimized by the violence of September 11.

“In very real ways, the terrorist acts and their aftermath have disadvantaged all children,” Nelson said. “Heightened anxiety and fears about physical security, family safety, and abandonment have effectively placed all kids at greater risk, particularly with regard to their emotional well-being. But the most horrifically injured are those families and children directly affected by the violence.”

In addition to the pledge of financial resources, the Foundation is offering to deploy experienced family and crisis counselors from its direct-services unit to assist local New York agencies in supporting traumatized and grief-stricken families.

Casey personnel have been meeting with New York City and District of Columbia officials to begin directing the deployment of Foundation resources.

LAWMAKERS, FAMILIES RALLY AROUND ADOPTION

Some 700 parents, children, child welfare professionals, advocates, and legislators took part in an uplifting celebration of adoption on Capitol Hill last month.

The event took place September 10, less than 24 hours before terror struck in New York City and Washington, D.C. But on this tranquil day, attention was riveted on the 134,000 children in foster care who are waiting to find permanent families.

The celebration, which honored adoptive families and highlighted the need to help them succeed, was cosponsored by Casey Family Services, the direct-services arm of the Foundation, along with the Congressional Adoption Coalition Institute, the Children’s Action Network, the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, and the Freddie Mac

A Capitol Hill celebration to honor adoptive children and families highlighted the need to help these families succeed.



ROBERT MAAS

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A CONSUMMATE PROFESSIONAL WITH A TENDER HEART LEAVES THE FOUNDATION

One of the Casey Foundation's most beloved employees retired last month, ending a decade of service distinguished by an endearing personality, a dedication to staff and grantees, and a commitment to excellence.

During his tenure at the Foundation, Rama Ramanathan became one of the most respected authorities in the world

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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.

of foundation finance. As vice president and chief financial and operations officer, Ramanathan had oversight responsibility over the past decade for accounting, finance, investment, and legal issues, as well as employee benefits administration.

"Rama's work is undergirded by his deep knowledge of finance and his absolute integrity," said Foundation President Douglas W. Nelson. "He combines those traits with an unwavering dedication to service, a consistent attention to detail, and an extraordinary sensitivity to the moral dimensions of Casey's mission."

Many Foundation staffers and grantees have marveled at Ramanathan's ability to resolve grant-making situations that are both complex and time urgent.

"Rama has more management secrets than anyone I know," observed Vice President Ralph Smith. But it is his generous spirit, warm personality, charm, and self-effacing wit that his friends at the Foundation will miss most. "There are at least 30 people in this organization whose best friend is leaving," Smith noted. "His office is the place where everyone ended up at some point to get good advice."

"Rama is loyal and completely genuine. He is selfless and tender-hearted, and that has made working with him a joy every day," said Noreen McIntosh, a long-time Foundation employee and currently grants administrator.

Born near Madras, India, Ramanathan earned his undergraduate degree in political science, philosophy, and psychology, and master's degrees in sociology and public administration, all from universities in India. He holds an MBA in public accounting from Baruch College, City University of New York.



LAURA STAFFORD

Rama Ramanathan, leaving the Foundation after 10 years of dedicated service, will be remembered for his generous spirit as well as his legacy of accomplishments.

He and his wife, Chandra, have a 27-year-old son, Rajiv, who is an assistant vice president with Solomon Smith Barney in New York.

Ramanathan is characteristically modest about his accomplishments, but does note with pride that he has never had to ask for a time extension on filing the voluminous Casey Foundation tax return. And, he says, the external audit that annually examines the books has never been challenged.

Burton Sonenstein, a long-time executive of nonprofit and corporate organizations, is filling the position of chief financial officer. Sonenstein was founder and CEO of United Insurance Management Company, which administers the operations of United Educators Insurance, the world's leading liability insurance company for educational institutions.

FAMILIES COUNT HONOREES REFLECT ON MUTUAL GOALS

Members of the FAMILIES COUNT class of 2001 gathered for a two-day meeting in Aspen, Colo., last August to share their expertise and experience in community and family strengthening.

The FAMILIES COUNT awards program, now in its second year, honors organizations that do exemplary work to connect families to the opportunities, services, and relationships they need to succeed.

“What drives all of us, no matter what our strategies may be, is an impulse toward social justice,” observed Salvador Balcorta, chief executive officer of Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe in El Paso, Tex., one of the eight 2001 FAMILIES COUNT honorees.

The missions of the honorees span a broad sweep of tested pathways and strategies to strengthen families and communities. The honorees are: AVANCE Inc., of San Antonio, Tex.; Babyland Family Services Inc., of Newark, N.J.; Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe; Family Services Research Center of Charleston, S.C.; Freeport of Minneapolis, Minn.; Highbridge Community Life Center of Bronx, N.Y.; Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families of New York, N.Y.; and Self-Help of Durham, N.C. (see *Casey Connects*, Winter 2001 issue).

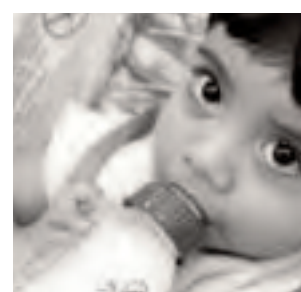
An early highlight of the meeting was a screening of the Academy Award-nominated documentary, “Legacy,” a film supported by the Foundation that chronicles the challenges and triumphs of a Chicago family for several years in the aftermath of the tragic death of a promising young family member. The film and a thought-provoking discussion with producer

Tod Lending set the tone for the meeting and evoked many recurrent themes about how to foster family resilience in isolated neighborhoods.

The high point of the meeting was a conversation on predatory lending practices by unsavory financial institutions that lock low-income individuals deeper and deeper in debt on the pretext of helping them get loans and make large purchases. This discussion, stimulated by the work of Self-Help, fostered a shared sense of injustice about how these practices strip assets and wealth from low-income communities. The discussion shed light on how underequipped social services organizations are to combat these practices and sparked debate about how the Foundation can help grantees become more competent on issues of family economic success.

In the closing session, James Joseph, former ambassador to South Africa, zeroed in on the issue of integrating ex-offenders into society and helping them play a productive role, stressing the importance of forgiveness and rehabilitation as a matter of public policy.

Robert Goodwin, president of the Points of Light Foundation, presented each honoree with special Presidential Awards. Each honoree will receive a total of \$500,000 over three years from the Casey Foundation. The class of 2002 FAMILIES COUNT honorees, to be selected through an internal Foundation process, will be announced during National Family Week in November. More information on FAMILIES COUNT is available at www.aacf.org.



What DRIVES all of us, no matter what our strategies may be, is an IMPULSE toward social justice.

CENTER FOCUSES ON IMPROVING CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE



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Raymond Torres, executive director of Casey Family Services, announced the launch of the Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice at the first national conference on post-adoption services in Washington, D.C.

The term “technical assistance” too often conjures up images of parachuting experts into states, cities, or towns to tell them how to do their business. A hallmark of the Casey Foundation’s approach has been finding better and more relevant ways of helping folks get the on-the-ground experience, resources, and exposure to new ideas and successful models they need to reach better results for children and families.

Increasingly, we have worked to reduce the role of the middleman by bringing together people who need guidance with folks who have direct experience and success. That’s the idea behind the Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice, a new venture that draws on the seasoned experience of Casey Family Services staff to help improve the quality of child welfare services nationwide.

Casey Family Services, which has divisions throughout New England and in Baltimore, is the direct-services arm of

the Foundation. For 25 years, it has been providing services to children and families at risk of or already involved in the child welfare system, and it has earned a national reputation for quality practice.

“A few years ago, it occurred to us that we have a huge resource in our own direct-services practitioners, and that their engagement in technical assistance would complement the work being done by our Technical Assistance Resource Center and policy reform unit,” said Douglas W. Nelson, president of the Foundation.

Casey Family Services launched the new Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice in December of 2000, following a groundbreaking conference on post-adoption services in Washington, D.C. (see *Casey Connects*, Winter 2001 issue).

The Center’s main focus in its first year will be post-adoption services. Joy Duva, deputy executive director of planning and policy for Casey Family Services, said the Center has been working with the National Association of State Adoption Managers to establish an agenda that helps support states in expanding post-adoption services. The Center is developing publications on financing post-adoption services and on improving linkages between mental health and post-adoption services. The Center also will provide on-site technical assistance in five states and sponsor regional meetings to support state teams that attended the post-adoption conference.

The Center’s first client was District 12 of the Florida Department of Children and Families, which was looking to carry out two weekend retreats for adoptive families and a two-day conference for school personnel, psychologists, juvenile justice staff, doctors, lawyers, and other professionals who work with adoptive families.

“So much effort goes into placement that many professionals assume the child will live happily ever after once the adoption goes through,” said Lynn Kennedy, community facilitator for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program for District 12. In fact, adoptive families often have a hard time coping with a child who has had multiple losses or has been abused or neglected. Kennedy said the technical assistance and clinical expertise provided by the Center were “invaluable” in making her program a success.

The Center expects to contribute to the Foundation’s public policy agenda on a broad range of issues in the future and will work closely with its Technical Assistance Resource Center, which is based in Baltimore, in developing peer-to-peer counseling programs and materials. “Together, we have the expertise and sense of urgency to make it easier for states to ensure that adoptive families get what they need when they need it,” said Sarah Greenblatt, the Center’s director.

The Center’s first white paper, “Strengthening Families and Communities: An Approach to Post-Adoption Services,” is available for free by contacting Lee Mullane at 203-929-3837 or Lmullane@caseyfamilyservices.org.

IN THE NEWS

The NonProfit Times recently cited Casey Foundation President Douglas W. Nelson as one of the 50 most powerful and influential shapers of the nation's nonprofit sector. The twice-monthly publication, which focuses on management issues in nonprofit organizations, conducts an annual survey asking nonprofit leaders to name those who have had the most positive impact on the nonprofit world over the past year.

"NPT Power and Influence Top 50," published August 1, states: "Few organizations have had more to do with bettering the lives of disadvantaged children than the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Nelson leads the way by reminding people, while waving data and developing programs, that functional

families are the best foundation for American communities."

The September 1 issue of *The NonProfit Times* highlighted partnerships the Casey Foundation has forged to help working-poor families take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) in cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service and local government agencies, corporations, foundations, regulatory agencies, and nonprofits.

The effort also is aimed at helping families in low-income neighborhoods use the EITC as a first step toward building for the future through such mechanisms as savings accounts, Individual Development Accounts, and financial literacy



Amanda Fernandez and Irene Skricki

programs. Program Associate Amanda Fernandez notes that free, high-quality tax-preparation services, linked to asset-building opportunities, can help families convert tax credits to cash and savings. Irene Skricki, who also has been instrumental in this work at the Foundation, said pilot projects involving EITC outreach and free tax preparation can be accomplished relatively inexpensively.

MARTIN O'NEIL

LAWMAKERS, FAMILIES RALLY AROUND ADOPTION ON CAPITOL HILL

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Foundation. Members of Congress who have personal experience with adoption spoke at the event, as did Tommy Thompson, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 14-year-old Debra Supnick, who grew up in foster care and was recently adopted; and actress Victoria Rowell, who is a former foster child and Casey national spokesperson. More than 70 family members served by Casey Family Services attended the celebration.

"We're here to celebrate adoption, but it's not our only mission," Casey Foundation President Douglas W. Nelson said. "We're also here to remind Congress and the nation what adoptive families truly need to make the extra commitment that they make and to stay strong and stay together."

"We know how important post-adoption services are in saving a family from unraveling, and we know that many families who could benefit from those services are not," said

Raymond Torres, Casey Family Services executive director. "It's time to remedy that."

Thompson outlined the Bush administration's proposed "Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act," which would guarantee additional funding for adoption, foster care, and post-adoption services. Several members of Congress announced that they would back the bill, which was introduced that day.

Although nearly all families and staff reached home safely Monday evening, those who were still in Washington when the Pentagon and World Trade Center were attacked had to make alternative lodging and travel arrangements.

"It's impossible to look back on this day apart from the tragic events of the following day, but the Adoption Celebration itself was unforgettable," said Sharon Goedkoop, a social worker in the Vermont Division of Casey Family Services.



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RESOURCE CORNER

In Print

All publications listed below can be ordered from the Foundation website (www.aecf.org) or by calling our publications voice line at 410-223-2890, unless otherwise noted.

- **THE SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE: LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT COMMUNITY BUILDING & IMPLEMENTATION** — This report describes lessons and challenges from the Enterprise Foundation's 10-year community-building initiative in a Baltimore neighborhood. This report shows why it is important to build on a deep understanding of the neighborhood, invest early in community capacity, and establish a clear decision-making process early. The challenges include such issues as altering the balance of power, acknowledging issues of race and class, and honoring residents' competence as leaders.
- **EXTENDING LADDERS: FINDINGS FROM THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION'S JOBS INITIATIVE** — The Casey Foundation launched its Jobs Initiative in 1995 in six cities (Denver, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Seattle) to explore what it would take to move low-income, inner-city families beyond poverty.

This report documents the lessons, challenges, and policy implications of this effort, offering insights for employers, job seekers, recruiters, and economic development advocates.

- **TAKING THE INITIATIVE ON JOBS AND RACE: INNOVATIONS IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR MINORITY JOB SEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS** — This report, also drawn from the Jobs Initiative, offers a fresh perspective on the complex issue of race and regional labor markets, particularly for low-skilled workers. It provides lessons learned around issues of cultural competence and identifies tools to improve workforce development for job seekers, workers, and employers.
- **COMMUNITY MAGAZINE: THE INDY STORY: CHANGING GOVERNMENT, CHANGING LIVES** — The Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *Community*, published by the United Way of America, contains an article about lessons learned from innovative approaches to government reforms in Indianapolis that sought to change the way the city addressed problems, provided services, and interacted with citizens. The article is excerpted from a larger report published by the Foundation called *The Indy Story*, available on our website. For copies of the *Community* article, visit www.unitedway.org.

On the Web

- **THE ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE** — Established in 1995 by Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research, the ABCD Institute has been involved primarily in producing resources and tools for community-building efforts focused on building capacity. ABCD also helps identify, nurture, and mobilize neighborhood assets: www.nwu.edu/IPR/abcd.html.
- **COALITION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS** — The Coalition promotes access to capital and economic growth by directly investing in and supporting community development financial institutions and expanding financial service organizations' lending, investment, and service within underserved markets: www.treas.gov/cdfi/.
- **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING INSTITUTE** — This site provides access to a technical guidebook, prepared by the Providence Plan, to help local community development officials and their partners use information as a tool for connecting unemployed and underemployed individuals to job opportunities: www.ncdaonline.org/cdti/guidebook_introduction.htm.

INSITES

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FAMILY STRENGTHENING FELLOWSHIP: A UNITED WAY TO WORK FOR CHANGE

Jaime Garcia, then vice president of community services for the United Way of King County in Seattle, got a sneak preview of the future as a participant in the United Way/Casey Family Strengthening Fellowship.

In an exercise at a Fellowship seminar at Harvard University last May, Garcia was asked to assume the persona of a program officer working with a family foundation.

The role-play explored how to balance the needs and challenges of the community with the goals and desires of the family running the foundation.

“That’s exactly what I’m doing now,” said Garcia, who left the United Way in Seattle last summer to join the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as a senior program officer for northwest giving. The parallels between that exercise and his current job are “almost eerie,” he said.

Garcia was one of 44 Fellows tapped by local United Way affiliates to participate in the program, launched by the Casey Foundation in the fall of 1999. The Fellowship helps a cadre of United Way senior staff and volunteers assume leadership roles in community-building efforts built on the premise that if families succeed and neighborhoods thrive, children will reap the benefit.

The program was designed to advance the Foundation’s Neighborhood Transformation/Family Development agenda by spreading successful family- and neighborhood-strengthening strategies throughout the United Way network, beginning in cities participating in our *Making Connections* initiative.

“It would be hard to find a more far-reaching or influential network than the 1800 United Ways around the country that serve as funders, conveners, and knowledge resources in their communities,” said Oz Nelson, chairman of the Casey Foundation Board of Trustees, who is also a long-time board member of the United Way of America and of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta.

What intrigued Garcia most was the program’s emphasis on practical application of a family- and neighborhood-based framework. The faculty “presented theories and ideas, but let them be shaped by the field and by reality.”

The Fellowship curriculum, led by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, focused on hands-on problem solving geared around issues the Fellows have or might encounter in their work, noted Xavier de Sousa Briggs, the faculty chair of the program.

Garcia refers to literature and notes from the Fellowship often, and he finds the family-strengthening, place-based framework relevant and consistent with his new job.

“It is going to impact the work I do for a very long time,” he said.

The Foundation did not require direct links between the Fellows and



Xavier de Sousa Briggs,
Fellowship faculty chair.

Making Connections site teams, which some Fellows, like Garcia, found unsettling. But once they understood that the Foundation was willing to invest in strengthening local United Ways regardless of their links to *Making Connections*, he and others respected the Foundation's approach.

In a number of sites, partnerships between the Fellows and *Making Connections* have emerged naturally—to the benefit of both organizations.

The United Way Fellows in Hartford have become “invaluable advisers and collaborators,” said Debra Delgado, site team leader for *Making Connections* in Hartford. “We pull them along and they pull us along.”

As they prepare for their sixth and final formal training session in November, other Fellows reflect in this issue on the lessons they have learned.

DRAWING MORAL SUPPORT

The United Way of San Diego County, Calif., is the fiscal agent for a Neighborhood Funders group in San Diego that has been exploring a resident-driven mini-grants program. But the group was wavering until Larry Johnson, one of the United Way Fellows, heard colleagues from Denver, Providence, and Savannah describe similar efforts in their communities.

“When I heard about the success these communities had, it inspired me to research other communities in the country and bring back evidence” to the local funders, Johnson said. “I’m not sure we would have pulled it off if I hadn’t had this kick start.”

What Johnson takes away from the Fellowship is a renewed motivation to keep struggling for meaningful outcomes.

“This isn’t easy work, and there are no cookie-cutter approaches,” he said. The Fellowship “helped develop this network of people who can be great moral support for each other, just to say ‘hang in there and keep on trying.’”

DEFINING INTERESTS

The Fellows aren’t the only ones emerging with fresh ideas and inspirations. “We’ve all learned something about how to define this work in ways that make it both doable and teachable,” said Xavier de Sousa Briggs, the faculty chair of the program at Harvard. One of the biggest lessons was that “the agreement-seeking and negotiation aspects of this work are very tricky and deserve special focus,” he said. Beyond the skills people need to build consensus, they need to learn the intricacies of “positioning things strategically to persuade people” to unite around a common cause.

“When asked to name the stakeholders in the problem and list the interests and capacities they bring, most folks in the program much more instinctively tell you about the interests they *think* stakeholders should have than the ones they really have,” noted Briggs, who along with other faculty helped push the group to find ways to engage neighborhood organizations, schools, social agencies, and other institutions around the issues that really consume their attention.

Jaime Garcia finds what he learned in the Fellowship useful in his new job at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



NEED CREDIT

It would be hard to find a more FAR-REACHING or influential NETWORK than the 1800 United Ways.



LEFT: LORIN KLARIS, RIGHT: NED CREDIT

Above: Paula Gilberto, vice president of community services for the United Way of the Capital Area in Hartford. Above right (from left to right) Lori Warrens, former chief operating officer of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta; Lottie Wade, senior vice president for community building for the United Way of Greater St. Louis; and Ronald Copes, vice president of community relations for MassMutual in Hartford.

The biggest challenge, Briggs said, was the “enormous diversity in the room” with regard to training, perspectives, learning styles, and interests.

But he notes with satisfaction that many of the Fellows report using insights and literature from the program “to move a conversation with any number of stakeholders.”

NEGOTIATING A DELICATE ROLE

The United Way of the Capital Area in Hartford has been playing a pivotal role in bringing together various organizations involved in implementing the federal Youth Opportunity Grant that city received from the U.S. Department of Labor.

As the only partner not directly receiving funds, the United Way must play an objective role in helping the other organizations collaborate and apply a case management approach to helping young people targeted by the program.

The Hartford Fellows got lots of insights from their peers on how to do this more effectively through a highly interactive case study, called a charette.

“What stood out was being able to directly apply this learning to something this United Way is involved in,” said Paula Gilberto, vice president of community services. The Casey framework “helped tremendously in terms of clarifying what we innately believed but were having trouble giving voice to,” said Gilberto, who along with the other Hartford Fellow, Ronald Copes, works closely with *Making Connections*.

But even without that link, “one of the real gifts has been the opportunity for us as an organization to learn with our peers from other United Ways,” she said. “How many organizations have the opportunity for this kind of learning that will help us maximize our mission in this community?”

LOOKING BEYOND THE FELLOWSHIP

Laurie Ryan, interim vice president for community impact at the United Way of America, says the partnership has given the organization a framework for focusing on families and neighborhoods that is “explicit rather than implicit.”

“Our hope is to take the learning around this framework and all the rich discussions we’ve had and promote these principles beyond the Fellowship,” noted Ryan, who said the United Way is working with a group of national and local staff and Fellows to develop a long-term plan to advance this family and neighborhood focus throughout its network of affiliates.

Ryan noted that the organization’s Success By 6[®] program, which involves a network of over 300 local United Ways, is incorporating family strengthening into its training. Discussions about policy issues such as welfare reform are also now “in the context of this framework that the Casey Foundation has given us regarding the most vulnerable families in the toughest neighborhoods.”

“We see a great opportunity for us to continue our shared goals with Casey in this national partnership,” Ryan said.

Providence Fellows Allen Stein, senior vice president of public policy for the United Way of Southeastern New England; and Jennifer Wood, chief legal counsel and chief of staff of the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.



DEFENDING THE ARGUMENT

Margaret Oser, director of neighborhood initiatives for the United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County, Tex., cites two emerging local initiatives that the Fellowship has left its mark on: a resident-led mini-grant program and a learning institute to help institutions that interact with children and families become more family and neighborhood focused.

Although these projects had been in the works, Oser noted, the Fellowship “gave us a better opportunity to defend the argument and show how it’s worked in other communities, as well as exposing our volunteers to those efforts and getting them to advocate at the board level.”

The Fellowship also has stimulated Oser’s thinking about how to work better with nontraditional partners, how to change the culture of organizations and communities in positive ways, and how to help residents use neighborhood-level data.

Oser has worked closely with the *Making Connections* team, helping to plan a city summit a year ago and a series of neighborhood summits this past summer. The Casey framework didn’t so much change her perspective, she says, but it “reinforced a lot of things that I had a gut level response to but didn’t have anything to back it up.”

CHALLENGING TRADITION

Lessons learned from the Fellowship have found their way into the United Way’s work in Providence, particularly in the area of education.

The United Way of Southeastern New England has been working with the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and other partners on a community schools initiative involving comprehensive family centers and a nontraditional after-school program. Community-building and citizen involvement concepts explored in the Fellowship have “teased our thinking,” noted Allen Stein, senior vice president of public policy.

The United Way’s niche has historically been health and human services, but its commitment to community building in recent years demands a new level of attention to a broader range of issues and partners, Stein and others noted. “The United Way is challenging itself in terms of its own identity and relevance to the community,” he said.

The Fellowship offered an ideal environment “to work and think and talk and challenge each other,” he said. “We are all wanting to know how we can keep this going.”

The Fellowship offered an ideal ENVIRONMENT to work and think and talk and CHALLENGE each other. We are all wanting TO KNOW how we can keep this going.