

Announcing the 2009 Effies™ Award Winners!

Effective Communities LLC is pleased to announce the 2009 winners of The Effies™ Awards for Effective Philanthropic Practice. This year's open competition provides recognition for *effective uses of philanthropy to advance social justice and racial equity*.

“Until philanthropic organizations – foundations, nonprofits, and donors – address the structural inequities that contribute significantly to human suffering, their own effectiveness will be limited,” said Steven E. Mayer, Director, Effective Communities. “This year's Effies competition showcases excellent uses of philanthropy to create progress in reducing social, economic, or racial disparities.” Winners earned points for how well they described their use of six different pathways to progress as presented on our website, www.JustPhilanthropy.org

In making their judgments, members of the review team looked for:

Philanthropy that strengthens a philanthropic organization's ability to address issues of justice and equity.

Philanthropy that creates create constructive conversations that create momentum to address issues of justice and equity.

Philanthropy that advances promising gap-closing ideas and solutions along the road from inception to successful implementation.

Philanthropy that strengthens the relationships, networks, and leadership necessary for moving promising solutions along.

Philanthropy that increases the resources needed – financial, human, technical – and allocates them to reduce disparities.

Philanthropy that decreases a gap or disparity by artfully combining several of these pathways – preparation, discussion, solutions, leadership, and resources.

“I applaud funders who are committed to social justice philanthropy,” said Sherece Y. West, Ph.D., President and CEO of Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation in Little Rock, Arkansas. “We need social justice philanthropy to support those who work for the sustainable structural change our country needs to ensure equity and inclusion of those who are politically, socially and economically disadvantaged. At the core, we *all* want the same thing – equitable access and opportunity for all.”

Three categories of awards were created to honor this year's winning entries. The hyperlinks lead to their winning case statements.

The 2009 Effies Social Justice Philanthropy Award, for effectively using the resources of philanthropy to make society's systems and markets work more fairly and effectively for all, is awarded to:

[Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation](#) – For raising awareness nationally to the unprecedented opportunity to transform the disaster caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita into a new Louisiana that ensures access and opportunity in rebuilding its communities and culture; for bringing together nonprofit leaders, community organizers, activists and advocates representing low-income communities across the Gulf Coast to re-engage them in our country's democratic processes in the earliest stages of post-storm recovery; for nurturing grassroots leadership and facilitating citizen-driven systems change to promote social justice and ameliorate generational disadvantage; and for creating a stronger base for a comprehensive approach to advocacy and distribution of funds for a full and just Gulf Coast recovery.

[Arkansas Public Policy Panel](#) – For helping distressed and marginalized rural communities turn their worries into goals, plans, legislative solutions, and campaign structures; for helping these communities understand and participate in the democratic process for their own benefit by forming critical relationships with elected and potential candidates for office; for helping them develop the organizational skills to mount their own neighborhood improvement and community development projects; and for supporting the interests and capabilities of dozens such communities through a statewide Arkansas Citizens First Congress in advancing a statewide legislative agenda to improve basic infrastructure such as safe water, educational and employment opportunities.

[Humboldt Area Foundation](#) (California) – For working to reverse the local marginalization of American Indians by adding Native cultural leaders and activists to its board, hiring Native staff, and prioritizing Native communities and projects in its grantmaking; for using its influence to bring Native representation to the table in a range of policy, planning, resource distribution, and leadership support contexts; for helping to create an enabling environment in which stolen Native land was returned, apologies offered, and sacred sites, customs, and language preserved; and for early and pivotal support for partnerships that brought in millions of dollars that directly support Native services and projects.

The 2009 Effies Community Leadership Award, for effectively leading their community in implementing initiatives that address a pressing community opportunity or problem, is awarded to:

[Norfolk Foundation](#) – For leading its own organization first and its community second through a process of learning about the challenges faced by its children in starting kindergarten ready to succeed; for its convenings and trainings to mobilize support from civic and political leaders; for raising dollars from its board, existing donors, and beyond; for creating an organization that educates area residents, advocates for greater public and private investment, and encourages collaboration; and for creating a system for monitoring quality improvements made to individual preschools.

[Parkersburg Area Foundation](#) – For striving to build civic capacity and philanthropy in a small, rural, dispersed, economically distressed, and often forgotten part of the country; for working to transform its organizational character into one that more fully embraces the broad spectrum of those it serves; for substantially increasing its grantmaking funds to combat persistent poverty; and for fostering stronger access to education and employment opportunities; and for creating rural networks for stimulating voluntarism, engagement, and resource development.

[Headwaters Fund for Social Justice](#) – For mobilizing a group of Minnesota foundations, donors and activists to address inequalities in the electoral system in follow-up to the 2000 Presidential elections. With a goal “to increase participation and political power of disenfranchised groups,” the specially created Democracy! Fund made grants to increase civic engagement, support public policy and advocacy, and build political power in disenfranchised communities.

The 2009 Effies Community Advocate Award, for effective persistence in providing a necessary voice for constructive change, is awarded to:

[Families and Friends of Louisiana’s Incarcerated Children](#) – For drawing attention to Louisiana’s “school to prison pipeline” and to the plight of those left behind in the two-tiered and racially divided New Orleans public school system; for supporting the passage of a statewide school discipline plan for Louisiana’s schools that includes evidence-supported efforts for keeping kids in school by using alternatives to suspensions and expulsions (which push children onto a criminalized path toward failure); and for advocating for parents and children by insisting on accountability for the plan’s implementation.

[Brett Family Foundation](#) – For undertaking a statewide listening tour to create relationships of trust and discovery of opportunities and challenges that this new Colorado foundation could address; for choosing to invest in opportunities to provide greater voice in the civic arena for people of color, people with limited socio-economic opportunities, and LGBTQ persons; for supporting several “organizing collaboratives” to provide safe space for discussing challenging issues; and for supporting organizations that allow their constituent communities to identify problems and seek solutions.

For more information about The Effies™ Awards Program, please contact:
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