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In a context of continuing decentralization in social policy, innovation, and experimentation, community foundations and metropolitan universities are natural partners. Foundations and local governments increasingly need timely information, analysis, and evaluation, which universities are in an excellent position to provide. Universities should seek foundation assistance to build capacity for accessible, relevant, ongoing research, and service.

Philanthropic Organizations and Metropolitan Universities

I eagerly accepted Dean Johnson's invitation to address this conference because I believe so fervently that the cause of community-building can benefit enormously from collaboration between philanthropic funders and metropolitan universities.

This belief has been formed largely by my direct experiences as executive director of the nation's oldest and second-largest community trust. It has also been reinforced in conversations with my colleagues from around the country—colleagues who work in national, regional, and community foundations with a strong interest in urban affairs and, mostly, colleagues in other community foundations. I think the relationships between universities and foundations can be greatly strengthened, and I will share with you some ideas on that, as well as some challenges.

But first, I should digress long enough to tell you a little bit about community foundations and how they differ from other types of philanthropies. I think that you will readily see why I perceive such a good "fit" with metropolitan universities.

As I mentioned, The Cleveland Foundation was the nation's pioneer community trust, having been established in 1914 by a Cleveland banker, Frederick Harris Goff. Whereas most private foundations—such as the Ford, Rockefeller and, here in Texas, Hogg Foundations—came from the fortunes of a single

individual or family, the community foundation was conceived as a *single, great, permanent endowment* made up of gifts from *many donors.* The income from the endowment would be used to benefit charitable and educational causes in the community. The foundation was to be governed by an independent group of citizen leaders selected for their knowledge of community needs.

You may be surprised to learn that in order to retain the maximum tax benefits, community foundations must meet high standards of public accountability and must continue to attract new funds from multiple donors.

There are now more than 350 community foundations in the United States; most metropolitan areas are served by one. They vary considerably in size, structure, and visibility. Most are general-purpose grantmakers in their communities, providing support to public and nonprofit organizations in the arts, education, health care, social services, and community and economic development.

In addition to grantmaking and service to donors, community foundations from their inception have had a third purpose: community leadership. In its earliest years, even before it had any money for grantmaking, The Cleveland Foundation commissioned studies of the major community issues of the day: criminal justice, public education, the welfare system. The intent was to arouse the public to demand reform, and indeed many of the surveys had that effect.

Today, you can find community foundations exercising leadership in many ways: some continue to commission and publish research on major issues; many act as neutral convenors of community organizations around specific issues; quite frequently they partner with private foundations, government agencies, and organizations such as United Way on matters of high priority.

Community foundations are now the fastest-growing segment of organized philanthropy. There are many reasons for this, and I think one key reason is the widespread recognition that communities must be deeply involved in seeking solutions to their problems. Despite the prospect of a more activist administration in Washington than we have had for most of the past 20 years, it seems clear to me that the long-term trend away from centralism is not going to be reversed. In social policy, innovation and experimentation, the action will continue to be at the state and local levels.

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Community foundations and metropolitan universities have much to offer to each other and to their communities in this context. We also have much in common. Our missions stress improvement of the quality of life in a defined geographic area. Your institutions seek to fulfill this mission through teaching, research, and professional service; community foundations through grantmaking, service to donors, and community leadership. We both depend on public support and so must be accountable to the public and responsive to donors. We can safely predict that both kinds of institutions will be durable. And both metropolitan univer-

sities and community foundations can address issues on a regional basis, without having to stop at the city limits or the county line. This is a tremendous advantage in a period of high mobility and suburban growth.

There are also important differences between my institution and yours. Foundations seldom provide direct services; universities exist largely to operate programs. Foundations and other policy-makers increasingly need, but seldom have the staff capacity to produce, sophisticated information, analysis, and evaluations. Universities have that capacity.

Over time, it is possible for foundations and universities to develop relationships on a number of levels. The Cleveland Foundation works with a number of smaller colleges and, on occasion, with state universities outside metropolitan Cleveland, but I will draw most of my examples from two institutions with which we have sustained relationships across all our program areas: Cleveland State, a state-supported urban university, and Case Western Reserve, a private research university.

I would characterize three basic kinds of relationships as follows: 1) the traditional funder-grantee relationship; 2) the contractor relationship; and 3) the partnership.

1. *The traditional funder-grantee relationship.* The university comes to the foundation with an idea or project and seeks funds to support it. Typically, these emanate from academic departments or schools of the university and most often relate to curriculum and instruction.

2. *The contractor relationship.* The foundation (or public agency) approaches the university, a department, or an individual to commission a specific study, a service, or a project evaluation. Two examples come to mind: 1) a grant to Cleveland State University to develop a revenue and expenditure forecasting model for the City of Cleveland; and 2) a grant to conduct a study of our county's adult protective services system.

3. *The partnership.* The foundation and university jointly identify and mold a project or program, and over time provide mutual, ongoing support and assistance. The Cleveland Foundation has been instrumental in the creation and growth of the Urban Center at Cleveland State University and the Center for Regional Economic Issues at Case Western Reserve. In both instances both the Foundation and the universities have invested substantial funds over time to assure core institutionalization. Most recently, the Cleveland and Rockefeller Foundations jointly supported the creation of the Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change at Case Western Reserve University, whose research influenced the recommendations of the Cleveland Commission on Poverty.

Some of you no doubt would be grateful just to be on the receiving end of a traditional grant or contract. Certainly the Cleveland Foundation continues to use a mix of these approaches in working with our area's major research universities.

I personally find that the partnership model, where it is appropriate, yields the greatest rewards to the foundation, the university, and the community. It helps generate the kind of longitudinal information and analysis that foundations and public policy-makers need to make sound decisions. That, in turn, raises the profile of the university with community leaders—not a bad thing in a period when every institution is called upon time and again to prove its relevance and utility.

A less obvious benefit is the informal give-and-take that develops between university-based researchers and community leaders. I cannot begin to count the number of times we call upon researchers at the Urban Center or the Center on Urban Poverty to talk over an idea, obtain some statistics to bolster our case, or get a reality check on a contemplated plan of action. They are more than our grantees; they are our colleagues. And we funders are in a position to draw these experts into the broader public debate.

Let me give you an example from Cleveland that I think illustrates this well.

Ten years ago, the City of Cleveland had nothing remotely resembling a coherent neighborhood development strategy. Many once-proud neighborhoods were declining precipitously, losing the rich mix of people and commerce that make a city vibrant. And although the city had recovered from its near-ruinous fiscal default, resources available for community development continued to be divvied up on the basis of politics rather than potential impact.

Today, City Hall, the State of Ohio, several major local businesses, and philanthropic funders are concentrating their development funding on a limited number of neighborhoods that have a real chance to reverse the long-term loss of population and investment.

What has brought about this remarkable change? A number of factors come to mind, including a period of relative stability in local government, a newfound corporate commitment to the quality of life in the central city, and a tradition of public-private partnerships.

But I believe that we would not be where we are today—we would not have had the courage and foresight to target selected neighborhoods and issues—if it were not for the information, analysis, and direction provided by the Urban Center at Cleveland State University.

For over a decade, with major support from The Cleveland Foundation, the Center has tracked population movements in metropolitan Cleveland and, equally important, conducted surveys to determine why people move out of the central city. (Top reasons consistently include crime, quality and variety of housing, and schools.) Early on, the findings were dismissed by many as "too negative." But because the Center and its Housing Research Program and Center for Neighborhood Development had the capacity to continue the research, and the findings remained so clear and so consistent over time, the policy-makers had to start paying attention. This information now has proven indispensable in guiding the creation of a citywide development strategy.

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I relate this story not to suggest that it can or should be replicated in your community, but to underscore the natural alliance between metropolitan universities and foundations—and how they can jointly encourage business, civic, and government leaders to get into the habit of asking the right questions before making important public decisions: What are the relevant facts? What has and hasn't worked in similar situations?

Such an approach would have been particularly helpful in the aftermath of last year's tragic events in Los Angeles. All over the country, mayors and civic leaders worked feverishly through the spring to cobble together job programs and youth activities, in the hope of averting a "long, hot summer."

What was missing, in most cities, were people who could rapidly synthesize studies of existing programs and give policy-makers a solid basis for shaping their strategies. Urban universities have, or should have, a unique ability to respond quickly and cogently to such crises. This may in fact be the greatest contribution we can make together to public policy-making.

We can, and should, also collaborate in the more traditional endeavors of teaching, training, research, and service.

First, teaching: Public universities located in urban centers frequently represent the only access to higher education open to the disadvantaged, minorities, nontraditional, and first- generation college students. Institutions have had to alter their academic programs and ancillary services, from establishing child- care centers to providing remedial summer coursework, to accommodate the needs of these populations.

I expect that these student populations will grow, fueled by the demands of the rapidly changing labor market and by the opportunity to repay student loans through national service, if President Clinton's proposal is enacted.

These are populations about which many foundations are deeply concerned. And so are the businesses which will one day employ your graduates. Local philanthropic funders and businesses in many communities should be quite receptive to supporting the testing-out of new approaches to serving special student populations—provided that the university is willing to assume full financial responsibility for new programs after a reasonable period of trial and fine-tuning.

Another opportunity for collaboration lies in the area of training in certain disciplines such as elementary education, public administration, and health care. Let me cite another example with which The Cleveland Foundation has been deeply involved.

It is now beyond dispute that this nation is producing too few minority teachers. It is a national problem that is felt in virtually every urban community, including Cleveland and, most likely, your city too. A few years ago, the Ford Foundation committed $6 million to support innovative approaches to increasing the quantity and quality of minority teachers in six states. Five Ohio universities—four of which are in metropolitan areas—are participating in this program, and two have received additional funding from The Cleveland Foundation, in the hope that they will produce teachers who will be employed in the Cleveland area.

Likewise, internships are a potentially fruitful area of collaboration. We have in the past supported internships for students at the Cleveland State University College of Urban Affairs to work in neighborhood-based community development corporations. The students gain valuable field experience, and the organizations—which in many cases are our grantees, too—get much-needed assistance and strengthen their ties to the university.

As for research and service—the latter often taking the form of technical assistance—I believe they should be closely linked in the urban university.

You will often hear foundation executives say, "We don't fund research." And it is true that relatively few foundations have sufficient resources to support large-scale basic research projects, particularly in the sciences.

But that doesn't mean that the foundation wouldn't be interested in supporting applied research on issues of local relevance, such as a study of the local water quality or an analysis of demographic changes in suburban school systems. This sort of research produces the kind of information that foundation boards and public policy-makers need to make sound decisions.

Obviously there are many other forms that collaboration between funders and urban universities can take . . . and virtually no limits on the kinds of issues we can tackle together. Yet it's not happening to the degree that it should.

For their part, foundations as a group are beginning to acknowledge their role in promoting responsible public policy-making. The Council on Foundations—our "trade association"—has recently formed a special committee to examine precisely that issue, and you can be sure that community foundations are represented on that committee. I, for one, plan to be an advocate for the kinds of collaborative relationships we have been discussing.

And what would I advise *you* to do to further these relationships? I will leave you with four ideas.

First, organize to be user-friendly. Traditional universities are impenetrable institutions (and I suppose the same criticism could be leveled at foundations).

It is up to you to ensure that university-based experts are accessible to policy-makers. Part of being accessible is making your assets known. And part of being accessible is being responsive in a timely fashion. It is tremendously frustrating to be told that the analysis "isn't quite ready for publication" when you are on the spot to make a decision. For most decision-makers in the public arena, ball park estimates are quite sufficient; the statistical refinements can be saved for the journal articles.

I happen to favor the "urban center" model used by Cleveland State University; I find that it provides a central referral point that simplifies our access to researchers across many disciplines who are working on aspects of urban problems and who understand our information needs. As the readily identifiable outreach arm of the university, it has quickly established itself as an indispensable resource for foundation staff and local government officials.

That model may not be feasible or desirable for every institution, but at the very least, you can publish and distribute to key community leaders a list of faculty and staff members with particular expertise in urban affairs, modeled on the media guides produced by many universities.

My second suggestion is that you build capacity for *ongoing* research about the people, economy, governments, and institutions in your metropolitan area. Foundations, governments, and other civic organizations must anticipate and respond to change. Longitudinal data are good indicators and sometimes good predictors of change, yet in many fields they are frustratingly hard to obtain.

I recognize that building, maintaining, and analyzing databases is an expensive proposition that is unlikely to be funded from a university's core budget. It is worth your while to initiate conversations with local and regional funders about such a project, even if you cannot see any immediate tie to your university's instructional mission. At the very least, the dialogue will deepen your understanding of the local philanthropic community and may lead to a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship.

Third, you should do what you can to change the academic reward system, which discourages the sort of highly collaborative, locally focused, applied research and consultation that are so valuable to policymakers. Academics are to a large degree "lone rangers" who play to a national audience of fellow chemists or demographers. Tenure is usually awarded according to traditional criteria, and being an informal adviser to the city planning department, however valuable, is not typically one of those criteria.

You, as leaders of your institutions, must find ways to reward community service and community-focused research. You may not control tenure decisions, but you do control compensation. You might consider bonuses, awards, or even mini-grants, modeled on the highly successful work done by public education funds, to show that the university values collaboration and outreach as well as traditional scholarship. And you should actively encourage faculty and staff to give their time as volunteers in the community.

And my fourth piece of advice: Think big. You may be accustomed, in your dealings with foundations, to thinking in terms of a discrete project, a small target population, a time-limited study. There is a great deal of comfort in projects, for grantmakers and grantees alike: they are easily managed, easily evaluated, and easily jettisoned if it becomes hard to find funding to continue after the grant period. The risks are low, and the payoffs usually are too. For that reason, foundations are moving away from a project orientation, particularly in the complex areas of social services, education and youth development.

We are beginning to favor a more comprehensive, cooperative approach to urban problems, in which the university may be but one of several role players. For example, Cleveland's urban poverty initiative made use of the superb research and policy analysis performed by faculty and staff at Case Western Reserve University, and it also brought to the table people who operate settlement houses, ministers, school leaders, leaders from the health-care system and many others in an attempt to fashion an integrated approach to fighting poverty.

In similar fashion, The Ford Foundation's youth development program, now at work in 16 cities across the nation, brings urban universities into a broad partnership. In Seattle, the University of Washington is finding out what happens to students after they graduate or drop out of high school. In Boston, researchers at the University of Massachusetts campus are carrying out studies of urban community colleges that are particularly successful at sending students on to four-year institutions in order to identify the factors associated with success.

The Kellogg Foundation, in its most recent annual report, writes about "Transitions: Meeting the Challenges of Change". It comments about the need for community-based programming: "We're then encouraging educational institutions and long-established agencies and organizations to mobilize their resources in new and different ways to meet the needs of people. Thus, for example, we are asking institutions of higher education—public and private, from community colleges and technical institutes to research universities—to focus their superb knowledge resources more effectively and directly on the problems of society."

I would be less than honest if I didn't point out that both foundations and universities stand to lose some control when our institutions are just one of many at the table. I believe, though, that what we have to gain is far greater.

It is the difference between being *in* the community . . . and *of* the community. Or, as John Ruskin reminds us about building:

> "When we build, let us build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be for such work as our descendants will thank us for."

Suggested Reading

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Annual Report, "Transitions: Meeting the Challenges of Change", (1991).