

# The Foundation Review

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## Executive Summaries

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# Executive Summaries

VOL. 11 ISSUE 4

## Results

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### Can Coaching Help Community Partnerships Promote Health Equity, Community Engagement, and Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes? Results from an Evaluation

*Jung Y. Kim, M.P.H., Lisa Schottenfeld, M.P.H., M.S.W., and Michael Cavanaugh, M.A., Mathematica*

Foundations and other entities have increasingly funded coaching and technical assistance to support multisector community partnerships to promote health and health equity. However, much remains to be learned about how coaching can best support these partnerships.

An evaluation of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's effort to strengthen the capacities of community partnerships found that the coaching program provided valuable support.

The authors propose that funders invest in partnerships that already prioritize leadership of community members.

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### Moving Upstream: An Intersectoral Collaboration to Build Sustainable Planning Capacity in Rural and Appalachian Communities

*Laura Milazzo, M.A., and Holly Raffle, Ph.D., Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs at Ohio University, and Matthew Courser, Ph.D., Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation*

As part of an effort to address health inequities in Appalachian and rural Ohio, the state's Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services focused on the lack of infrastructure and other capacity issues that create barriers to obtaining federally funded prevention services among communities with the highest need for those services. The department partnered with two nonprofit organizations and a university to create an investment strategy that provided monetary awards to community organizations and included intensive, customized training and technical assistance. This article discusses successes and lessons learned from implementing this initiative.

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## Building Nonprofit Capacity to Achieve Greater Impact: Lessons from the U.S.-Mexico Border

*Meg Loomis, M.S.W., and Shirly Thomas, M.P.H., Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas; and Carla Taylor, Ph.D., Community Wealth Partners*

Foundations often rely on strong relationships with grantees doing frontline work in marginalized communities. This article discusses the capacity-building funding experiences of Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, which created a \$1.5 million capacity-building program for those organizations. Findings from an evaluation led to learning in three areas for grantmakers that award capacity-building support: the role of the funder, ensuring sustainable change, and impact evaluation that is useful for both foundations and grantees.

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## Making Health Equity Real: Implementing a Commitment to Engage the Community Through Fellowships

*Saphira M. Baker, M.P.A., Communitas Consulting, and Mark D. Constantine, Ph.D., Richmond Memorial Health Foundation*

Between 2016 and 2019, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation transformed from a health legacy foundation committed to increasing access to health care to one promoting regional health equity through a racial and ethnic lens. A central component of this new focus was the trustees' decision to invite community members to inform and advance the health equity strategy through two distinct community fellowship programs — the Equity + Health Fellowships. This article highlights the outcomes of both programs, how the experience enhanced the foundation's impact and learning, and how the foundation identified areas that require strengthening as its transformation continues.

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## Sector

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## Capacity-Building Catalysts: A Qualitative Assessment of Nonprofit Capacity Building by Community Foundations in Illinois

*Benjamin S. Bingle, Ph.D., DeKalb County Nonprofit Partnership*

Community foundations have the potential to promote collaborative learning in a variety of ways as conveners, funders, and, in some instances, as nonprofit capacity builders. This article focuses specifically on nonprofit capacity building that is funded, organized, or led by community foundations in Illinois. It summarizes results from a qualitative survey sheds light on how community foundations define both capacity building and success in capacity building, what challenges they encounter, and how funders can overcome obstacles to effective capacity building.

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### Balancing the Competing Demands of Strategic Philanthropy: The Case of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative

*Edward W. Wilson, Ph.D., Edward W. Wilson Consulting; Carol Bromer, M.A., Independent Consultant; and David LaRoche, Ed.M., Independent Consultant*

Strategic grantmakers teeter between unilateral agenda-setting and excessive reliance on their own intellectual frameworks and methods; and too much deference to competing voices from the field, with the risk that funding will be haphazard and incoherent. This article examines how the William Penn Foundation has endeavored to achieve this balance in its support for watershed protection and restoration. Based on an evaluation conducted during the first four years of the initiative, the article examines four interrelated tensions and how each of these tensions has played out as the initiative has evolved.

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### Strengthening the Ecosystem of Capacity-Building Service Providers: A Case for Why It Matters

*Caroline Altman Smith, M.A., The Kresge Foundation, and Carla Taylor, Ph.D., Community Wealth Partners*

Nonprofits often find it challenging to find providers best suited to meet their capacity-building needs, especially true when looking to strengthen racial equity capacity. The Kresge Foundation's Fostering Urban Equitable Leadership program sought to build leadership capacity and add value for grantees by offering a curated menu of services from a range of providers. The program also has an explicit goal of helping strengthen participating service providers' own capacity, which it does by providing grant support and opportunities for peer learning and collaboration. This article explores why more foundations should invest in the capacity of nonprofit capacity builders and offers recommendations for how to do so.

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### The Cultivation Approach to Place-Based Philanthropy: Evaluation Findings from the Clinton Foundation's Community Health Transformation Initiative

*Douglas Easterling, Ph.D., Sabina Gesell, Ph.D., Laura McDuffee, M.P.A., Whitney Davis, M.P.H., and Tanha Patel, M.P.H., Wake Forest School of Medicine*

Cultivation is a decentralized approach to place-based philanthropy where the foundation seeks to activate local stakeholders and assist them in translating their ideas into action. Cultivation presumes that the seeds of high-payoff solutions are already circulating somewhere in the community. This article describes the cultivation approaches taken by the Clinton Foundation, Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, and The Colorado Health Foundation, and presents findings from an evaluation of the Clinton Foundation's Community Health Transformation model. It also introduces a taxonomy of the six roles foundations play in place-based philanthropy, which is useful in clarifying the intent of place-based foundations.

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