Community Leader Fellowship Grant Program: The 1993-1995 Cohort

Maryann Jacobi Gray, Carole Oken

DRU-1246-1-TCWF

December 1995

Prepared for The California Wellness Foundation
PREFACE

This is the first in a series of evaluation reports about the Violence Prevention Initiative Community Leader Fellowship Grant Program sponsored by The California Wellness Foundation.

This report focuses on the first cohort of fellows who served from 1993 to 1995. Future reports will address subsequent fellowship recipients.

The Violence Prevention Initiative evaluation is coordinated by the Johns Hopkins University Injury Prevention Center, the Stanford Center for Research in Disease Prevention and RAND. RAND is responsible for evaluating the Community Leader Fellowship Grant Program.
Acknowledgments

An evaluation assessing programmatic effects requires numerous interactions among the program developers, participants, and evaluators. During these first two years, many people generously responded to our requests for information and guidance. We are grateful to all who contributed to this report.

The California Wellness Foundation provided documentation on the program and the fellows, and responded to our inquiries. They and their representatives Crystal Hayling, Susan Hicks and Roz Pierson were most helpful.

Our thanks to Rigo Orozco of Community Partners who updated us on fiscal issues and fellowship effects as he encountered them.

We particularly want to acknowledge the fellow’s contributions to this report. They were patient and open when describing their programs and responding to our questions. It was not always convenient for them to meet with us or spend a large block of time on the telephone, but they were always accommodating and sincerely engaged in providing information to us.

Within RAND, Tanya Burton, Derek Diaz, and J. Diego Ibanez contributed telephone interviews and site visits to our information gathering process. We appreciate their efforts and their insights.

Finally we extend our gratitude to Peter Greenwood, Director of the Criminal Justice Program at RAND, for his encouragement and for his dedication to violence prevention research.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** ........................................................................................................ vi

**I. INTRODUCTION** .............................................................................................................. 1
   - Overview of the Violence Prevention Initiative ......................................................... 1
   - Fellowship Program Description ............................................................................... 2
   - Selection Process .......................................................................................................... 2

**II. EVALUATION GOALS AND METHODS** .................................................................. 3
   - Evaluation Goals .......................................................................................................... 3
   - Methods .......................................................................................................................... 3
     - Telephone Interviews ............................................................................................... 3
     - Site Visits .................................................................................................................. 4
   - Other Data Collection Methods .................................................................................. 4
   - Caveats and Limitations of the Methodology ............................................................. 4
   - Plan for the Report ........................................................................................................ 5

**III. RESULTS** ...................................................................................................................... 6
   - Demographic and Program Profiles .......................................................................... 6
   - Overview of Accomplishments ................................................................................... 6
   - Implementation of Fellowship Requirements and Expectations .............................. 10
     - Time Commitment .................................................................................................... 10
     - Equipment Purchases ............................................................................................... 10
     - Conferences and Retreats ......................................................................................... 11
     - Mentorship Program ................................................................................................. 11
     - Pacific Center for Violence Prevention ................................................................... 12
     - Evaluation .................................................................................................................. 13
     - Quarterly Reports ...................................................................................................... 13
   - Other Implementation Issues ...................................................................................... 13
     - Financial Issues ......................................................................................................... 13
     - Community Issues ..................................................................................................... 14
     - Relations with TCWF and the VPI .......................................................................... 14
     - Sustainability .............................................................................................................. 15

**IV. DISCUSSION** ................................................................................................................ 16
   - Summary of Major Findings ...................................................................................... 16
   - Unresolved Issues ...................................................................................................... 17
     - Unclear Goals and Objectives ................................................................................ 17
     - Unclear Policies and Expectations .......................................................................... 18
     - Role of the Public Health Model ............................................................................. 19
     - Role of Fellowship Program in VPI ....................................................................... 19
     - Reflections on Evaluation ....................................................................................... 19
     - Recommendations ................................................................................................... 20
     - Concluding Comment ............................................................................................... 21

**Appendix A**
   - Violence Prevention Initiative
   - Community Leaders Fellows
TABLES

3.1—Demographic Profile of Fellows................................................................. 7
3.2—Community Fellows’ Program Overview.................................................. 8
3.3—New Programs and Activities Created During Fellowship ......................... 9
3.4—Mentee Profile ....................................................................................... 12
3.5—Post-Fellowship VPI Program Plans.......................................................... 15
4.1—Implications of Different goals for Fellowship Program Development .......... 17
Executive Summary

Evaluation of the Community Leader Fellowship Grant Program:
The 1993-1995 Cohort

This report presents preliminary findings from RAND’s evaluation of the Community Leader Fellowship Grant program. This program is one component of The California Wellness Foundation’s (TCWF) thirty million dollar Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI). The Initiative strives to reduce youth violence in California by supporting individuals and organizations that operate to relieve and prevent conditions leading to youth violence by developing violence prevention strategies and programs.

Each year, ten individuals active in community based youth violence prevention are competitively selected to receive a two-year, fifty thousand dollar Community Leader fellowship. As described by TCWF, the fellowship recognizes past accomplishments of the fellows and supports future violence prevention work. In return, the fellows are asked to: commit a substantial portion of their time to violence prevention activities; mentor two youths; purchase equipment to facilitate communications among VPI participants; report quarterly on their activities; and participate in conferences, training, technical assistance, and evaluation activities.

The evaluation of the Community Leader Fellowship Grants program is designed to provide descriptive information about how recipients used their fellowship awards and to indicate how TCWF might strengthen the program and thereby better support grass-roots violence prevention efforts. Information was obtained from fellows’ self-reports during telephone interviews and site visits, as well as observation at conferences and retreats, and review of fellows’ applications and quarterly reports. The results presented here focus on the first cohort of nine fellows, who served from 1993-95. Major findings are:

- Fellows uniformly agreed that the fellowship was a positive experience. Although they did have some concerns and suggestions for improving the program, the benefits far outweighed the problems.

- The 1993-1995 cohort had roughly equal numbers of males and females, and was also evenly divided between blacks and Hispanics. All were over thirty years of age, and all were high school graduates. Three had post-graduate college degrees.

- Fellows used their $50,000 award for both personal stipends and programmatic expenses. Seven fellows budgeted personal stipends up to $30,000. Two donated their entire grant to the organization or agency where they worked. As required, all fellows committed a substantial portion of their time to violence prevention activities. Five provided their time through activities at their place of employment, and four through extracurricular activities. At least seven of the nine devoted on average far more than 40 hours per week to their violence prevention activities. The other two were more limited due to work responsibilities.

- Seven fellows created new programs, and two substantially enhanced existing programs. In all, up to 20 new programs were created and another 15 enhanced. The programs concentrated on middle and high school age students with four fellows offering some programs for elementary age youth. The most commonly employed youth violence prevention activities included mentoring, recreation, education, and counseling. Fellows were most likely to mention improved services to youth as their major accomplishment over the past two years.

- All fellows purchased the required equipment including a computer, modem, and voicemail or answering machine by the end of the fellowship program. At least three fellows had prior access to equipment and were, therefore, more sophisticated users. Although all fellows did enroll in the Handsnet network, most found it of little use or interest, and only three were planning to retain the service following the fellowship.
• Fellows met as a group at two annual conferences and at quarterly retreats. The conferences were attended by all but one fellow each time. Over half brought mentees. All actively participated in conference programs, three presented sessions at the 1993 conference, and four presented at the 1994 conference. Quarterly retreats were introduced during the second year. Between one and five fellows attended the retreats. Those who didn’t attend cited competing demands on their time, a lack of travel money in their budgets, and a lack of interest in participating.

• All fellowship recipients supported the concept of a fellowship mentorship program. As originally conceived, each fellow was expected to select two mentees and retain them for a full two year commitment. However, turnover among mentees was more the rule than the exception. Although a small number of mentees were dismissed, the majority left voluntarily due to changes in their school, work, or family circumstances. Fellows were undecided about whether to use the mentoring requirement as an opportunity for intensive intervention with youth at high risk, or to build leadership skills in those showing promise. Results also indicate the fellows wanted youth, and their mentees in particular, to have a more clearly defined role and to provide greater input to the Initiative.

• Few fellows participated in training sessions on policy and media offered by The Pacific Center and the Berkeley Media Studies Group. In the first year, in fact, only one fellow participated in a training session. At least three fellows believed the training sessions were for the CAPs, not for fellows. For the most part, the fellows did not perceive a need for training in these areas because they were already successfully managing social action and media activities.

• Quarterly reports were the primary reporting method to TCWF. Five of nine fellows completed all reports, while four are missing one or two reports each. Fellows found this requirement time consuming, and reports were often turned in late. Three had assistance preparing the reports, and five had little or no prior experience preparing activity or budget reports. Fellows found the format awkward, and the evaluation analysis extracted only limited information for this report.

• Although the positive aspects of receiving a fellowship far outweighed the negative, fellows did encounter a number of frustrations and problems. Financial, community, TCWF relations, and sustainability were mentioned most often. For example, ambiguity about Foundation policy regarding adjustments and changes in their budgets was a source of anxiety and occasional frustration. The recognition conferred by the fellowship led to increased demands on recipients' time, by other groups and communities. In addition, some experienced personal discomfort and ambivalence about being singled out. Further, anecdotal evidence obtained from observing group meetings suggests that most fellows perceived the Community Leaders program as ancillary to the VPI. Finally, fellows questioned their future relationship with TCWF and the VPI. They were concerned about obtaining new funding, although most expected some aspects of their programs to continue. Three fellows will carry remaining funds over to the 1995-1996 fiscal year.

Given the lack of clarity about goals, expectations and underlying philosophy, we recommend the Foundation engage in a planning exercise, preferably with the participation of at least some fellows, to clarify and prioritize fellowship goals. This should then become the basis for developing selection criteria, policies, and programmatic activities congruent with fellowship goals. We also recommend that TCWF explore approaches to keeping the fellows involved in the VPI after their fellowship term expires.
DRAFT
Community Leader Fellowship Grant Program:
The 1993-1995 Cohort

I. INTRODUCTION

Responding to the problem of violence inflicted and experienced by young people in our society, The California Wellness Foundation (TCWF), in association with seven other foundations, is conducting a five-year Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) in communities throughout California. The thirty million dollar Initiative disperses funds for violence prevention strategies and programs, and for evaluations of these strategies and programs. Following models established by public health practitioners to involve communities in preventing the spread of adverse effects on society, the Initiative strives to reduce youth violence by supporting individuals and organizations that operate to relieve and prevent conditions leading to violence. To gain community attention and participation, TCWF has designed the Initiative to increase the visibility and skills of violence prevention activists and organizations.\(^1\)

Overview of the Violence Prevention Initiative

The VPI has four main strategic components:

1. A Policy Program utilizing the Pacific Center as the VPI policy and advocacy center, a public education campaign to curb the effects of handgun violence, and an entertainment industry project that "promotes positive social and public health images in entertainment;"\(^2\)

2. A Community Action Program (CAP) to provide resources and support in eighteen communities selected to run violence prevention collaboratives that incorporate substantial community and youth involvement;

3. A Research Program to offer individual grants to academic researchers on topics that explore aspects of public policy and violence prevention; and

4. A Leadership Program with three components: A) Annual Community Leadership Awards to recognize the violence prevention efforts of outstanding individuals; B) An Academic Scholars Fellowship Program to promote violence prevention commitment among professional health workers, and; C) Two year Community Leader Fellowship Grants to recognize and support the work of community based violence prevention leaders and to enhance their skills

In addition to these four program components, the VPI includes a comprehensive evaluation program. The evaluation program consists of a team from the Johns Hopkins Injury Prevention Center, Stanford Center for Disease Research and RAND.

As part of the evaluation, RAND was asked to assess the Community Leader Fellowship Grants Program. This report documents findings relating to the first cohort of fellows who participated from 1993 to 1995.

\(^1\) The manual "Violence Prevention Initiative: a new direction for improving health and well-being in California," December 1994, prepared by TCWF, provided most of the information we use to describe TCWF and the Violence Prevention Initiative. Additional information was provided by TCWF staff during telephone and in-person conversations, or from other VPI documents.

\(^2\) Mediascope Statement of Purpose and Programs, pg. 1.
Fellowship Program Description

Each year 10 individuals active in community-based youth violence prevention are competitively selected to receive a two-year $50,000 fellowship. The fellowship goals are broad and adapt to a variety of programs. TCWF provides the following description:

The Community Leader Fellowship Grants Program is designed to provide financial support and recognition to individuals who have effectively organized community efforts in violence prevention. The Fellowship Program is both a recognition of the past accomplishments of the fellows and support for specific goals and objectives to be achieved during the two-year period of the fellowship grant. TCWF will provide ten fellowships each year to community leaders to be involved in the Foundation’s Initiative and to increase their leadership, media and policy advocacy skills. The Foundation envisions a community fellowship program fostering a two-directional influence -- from fellow to Foundation and from Foundation to fellow.³

While the Fellowship awards are relatively unstructured, fellows are asked to:

1. commit a substantial portion of their time during the fellowship to violence prevention activities,
2. purchase a computer, fax, modem and voicemail,
3. participate in TCWF training sessions,
4. participate along with two youth mentees in TCWF annual meetings,
5. identify and obtain the participation of two community youths as mentees and provide an annual stipend to them,
6. actively cooperate and receive technical assistance and training from the Pacific Center for Violence Prevention,
7. actively cooperate and participate with Initiative evaluators, and
8. submit quarterly reports on their activities and experiences.⁴

Selection Process

Fellowship recipients are selected by a 20-member nominating committee, convened by TCWF. Committee members represent a diverse cross-section of violence prevention leaders and activists. Each committee member may nominate two individuals for a fellowship. To qualify for a grant, the foundation requires the nominees' involvement in violence prevention to be visible, their activities to be significant, and their commitment to high risk groups and to their communities proven. A selection committee then narrows this group of 40 nominees down to 10 finalists. Finalists are asked to submit an application form describing their past experiences, views on the causes of youth violence, how they would use their fellowship funds, how they would approach the youth mentoring requirement of the fellowship, a workplan, and a budget. Following review of the applications and individual interviews by TCWF staff, final selections are approved by the TCWF Board of Directors and announced to the public.

³ "Violence Prevention Initiative: a new direction for improving health and well-being in California," December 1994, pg. 7-8
⁴ Fellowship Grant Agreement, attachment 1, page 2.
II. EVALUATION GOALS AND METHODS

This report describes the implementation of the fellowship program among the first cohort of fellows, selected in 1993. The evaluation is not designed to measure the impact of each individual fellow's efforts on the level of youth violence in their communities. Rather, this evaluation assesses the effects of the Fellowship Program upon recipients' violence prevention activities. In other words, we seek to determine the programmatic factors that enhance and strengthen grass-roots violence prevention activities. Results can then be used to improve both the Community Leader Fellowship Program and other programs intended to support the efforts of community-based leaders in youth violence prevention.

Evaluation Goals

The key evaluation goals are to: (1) obtain descriptive information about how fellowship funds were used; and (2) provide TCWF with feedback that will enable them to strengthen the fellowship program and thereby better support grass-roots violence prevention efforts by individuals. Specific questions this evaluation was designed to answer include:

- How did fellowship recipients use their fellowship? What plans and activities did they implement?
- What barriers did fellows encounter in implementing their plans? How did they try to overcome these barriers? What factors facilitated their plans?
- What were the subjective fellowship experiences of recipients, including their satisfaction with the program, perceived achievements, and recommendations for the future?
- Did fellows comply with TCWF requirements and expectations related to the fellowship? How if at all did these requirements facilitate or extend their violence prevention work?
- To what extent do fellows continue their violence prevention efforts after the fellowship ends?

Methods

Data collection methods included: telephone interviews with each fellow; in-person interviews with the fellows, youth mentees, and collateral contacts; observation both within the fellows' communities and in VPI-related conferences and retreats; and reviews of fellows' applications and quarterly reports to TCWF.

Telephone Interviews

The evaluation plan called for four telephone interviews with each fellow over the two-year fellowship period, but due to the fellows' busy schedules, only five fellows were interviewed four times. Two were interviewed three times; two were interviewed twice; and one (who later resigned from the program) did not participate in any telephone interviews. Telephone interviews lasted one hour on average. These interviews were primarily intended to obtain descriptive information about fellows' violence prevention activities, including their progress in implementing their plan, any changes in their plans, any barriers or problems they were encountering, and their satisfaction with the fellowship. In the second year, they were also asked about plans for the future.
Site Visits

Additional data were collected through site visits that included in-person interviewing and observation. Site visits were made to nine of the ten fellows in the first year; follow-up site visits were made to three fellows in the second year. We attempted to schedule visits when community activities were conducted to allow for program observation as well as self reporting. A typical site visit lasted six to eight hours.

In-person interviews with the fellows supplemented the information about implementation obtained through telephone interviews and addressed additional issues including perceived root causes of violence, needs for technical assistance, participation in other aspects of the VPI, and suggestions for improving the fellowship experience.

In addition to interviews with the fellows, mentees were interviewed in nine of the 12 site visits. Brief interviews with collateral contacts were conducted at eight site visits. Additionally, to familiarize the evaluators with the setting for fellowship activities, visits also included neighborhood and program site tours, and collection and review of program materials.

Other Data Collection Methods

The annual conferences and fellowship program retreats provided additional opportunities for observation and informal interviews. Group discussions about the fellows’ problems and perceptions regarding the fellowship are incorporated into this report.

Caveats and Limitations of the Methodology

As discussed above, our reliance on self-report methods precludes us from drawing conclusions about fellows’ impacts on community violence. Rather, the evaluation indicates fellows’ perceptions of the impact of the fellowship upon their work.

The kinds of information fellowship recipients were able to provide was limited. Most were unable to clearly or consistently differentiate those violence prevention activities supported by or attributable to their fellowship from violence prevention activities that received other sources of support (such as their own volunteer labor). Similarly, many of the fellows were constantly changing and modifying their programs and services in response to perceived needs of youth, which increases the difficulty of determining how fellowship support affected or changed their activities. We also cannot measure the extent to which the fellowship enhanced or extended fellows’ activities as opposed to substituting for other sources of support.

Another caveat is that resource limitations restricted our ability to closely track implementation of fellows’ plans and to assess new programmatic elements. For example, the evaluation budget did not enable us to consistently attend the quarterly retreats introduced in 1994-95 fiscal year and restricted the time available to meet with others who could offer insight into the Fellowship program (e.g., staff from Community Partners, Pacific Center, or the retreat facilitator). With more time available to interact with the fellows and participate in the fellowship-related services offered by TCWF, we might have uncovered both additional accomplishments and concerns.

This evaluation report is limited to the first cohort of fellows. The extent to which these findings will be applicable to future cohorts is unknown. Our preliminary analyses suggest, however, that despite some enhancements to the fellowship program (e.g., the introduction of Community Partners as the fiscal agent for the fellows), these findings largely apply as well to the second cohort of fellows.
Finally, one fellow left the program at the end of the first fellowship year (fall, 1994). Because this fellow did not respond to repeated requests for interviews, the evaluation does not address this situation. The results that follow are based only on the nine fellows that completed the program and participated in the evaluation.

Plan for the Report

The results that follow are divided into four sections. First, we provide a description of the fellows' backgrounds and activities. Second, we summarize the fellows' major accomplishments. Third, we review implementation of fellowship requirements, and we discuss some factors relevant to the implementation of the fellowship program. The report concludes with a discussion of our findings and recommendations for strengthening fellowship impacts. Additional information about the individual fellows and their programs can be found in Appendix A.
III. RESULTS

Demographic and Program Profiles

Table 1 presents descriptive information about the 1993 to 1995 cohort of fellows. Fellows were about evenly divided between men and women and all were at least thirty years of age. All were high school graduates, seven of the nine attended at least some college, and three have postgraduate degrees. At the time they were selected, all were employed full or part time. Only two ethnic groups were represented -- black and Hispanic. Additionally, there are two representatives from each of 3 cities -- Sacramento, Fresno and Long Beach/Wilmington.

Table 2 presents an overview of programmatic information. In their initial workplans four fellows expected to create new programs, three to enhance existing programs and two to continue with pre-existing programs essentially unchanged. In fact, seven of the nine fellows did create one or more new programs during the course of the fellowship. Programs show great diversity in sponsoring organizations and primary service or activity offered. All the fellows served youth between the ages of 5 and 23. Most concentrated on middle and high school-age students, although four offered at least some programs for elementary school children. Only one fellow restricted services to males, and only one focused exclusively on youth in the criminal justice system. It was difficult for most fellows to estimate exactly how many youth were served since attendance at programs fluctuated, and participation in special activities was often higher than regularly scheduled meetings and activities. The numbers presented are conservative estimates based on the fellows' reports of youth attending regularly scheduled activities.

To accomplish their plans, seven fellows budgeted personal stipends and two donated their entire grant to the agency or organization where they worked. One of these two fellows hired a program coordinator in lieu of taking a personal stipend. The personal stipends originally budgeted ranged from $0 to $30,000 over the two-year fellowship period.

Three fellows worked in collaboration with local CAPs. Two maintained these links throughout the fellowship and the third connected with the CAP in the second year following restructuring.

Overview of Accomplishments

The most commonly employed youth violence prevention activities included mentoring, recreation, education, and counseling (see Table 2).\(^5\) Other activities included job training, neighborhood organizing, studio art, field trips, tutoring, conflict mediation, and spiritual/religious activities.

In total, the nine fellows created at least twenty new violence prevention programs and activities. In addition, at least fifteen existing programs were enhanced to increase the frequency with which events were offered or the numbers of youth served. We do not yet know how many of these programs will continue beyond the fellowship term. Many of these appear to be self sufficient or new sources of funds have already been identified, but some more resource intensive activities, such as publishing a magazine, will not continue. Table 3 displays a list of the new programs.

\(^5\) This mix of activities is very similar to those offered by the CAPS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central California</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern California</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Graduate Degree</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3.2: Community Fellows’ Program Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Original Objectives</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed new program</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced existing program</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or no change in activities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Headquarters</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/recreation center</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice system (police, courts)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social service agency</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood organization</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art studio/school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Activity Type</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Organizing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number Served</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 40</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 80</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 - 200</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males only</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females only</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both males and females</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School status</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on youth attending school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Either in or out of school</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Links to criminal justice system</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on youth on probation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on all at-risk youth</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Stipend</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took personal stipend</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not take personal stipend</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.3</td>
<td>New Programs and Activities Created During Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Workshop to keep non-gang-affiliated youth in school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community watch committees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Inter-school pen pal program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adult school monitors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- New cultural curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Youth job training by community volunteers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ongoing community cleanup and graffiti removal network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- After school program for teenage mothers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summer program for at-risk youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- School board supported tutoring program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Job referral program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Workshops and support groups for at-risk youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mentoring program for youths on probation or within criminal justice system jurisdiction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Training program for juvenile judges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Public/Private collaboratives to provide youth mentoring services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- In school twelve session class to promote life skills and self esteem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community resource guide by and for youths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community magazine by and for youths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Regularly scheduled mediation, leadership training, and cultural meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Gang rescue program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When asked about their major achievements over the past two years, fellows were most likely to mention the improved services they were able to provide to youth. For example, some fellows said:

The fellowship generated public and private interest.... Many people responded favorably by committing to play an active role in the program.

Participating in program activities helped kids to alleviate a lot of frustration and tension.

New resources were introduced into the neighborhood while community interest and active participation increased.

Receiving a national award increased contacts and opportunities to expand the program.

The fellows also mentioned improved skills and abilities. Almost all said they had strengthened their report writing and budgeting skills. Many of these grass roots activists conducted their activities prior to the fellowship in an informal manner and did not document activities or create budgets. Some reported that tracking their activities helped them become better organized and more productive.

**Implementation of Fellowship Requirements and Expectations**

Fellows generally complied with the major fellowship requirements and expectations. In doing so, however, most experienced some barriers and concerns. Nonetheless, the perceived benefits of the fellowship far outweighed the problems. This section reviews implementation of the major components of the fellowship program.

1. **Time Commitment**

All fellows were required to commit a substantial portion of their time to violence prevention activities. All the fellows satisfied this requirement, but in different ways. Five provided their time through activities at their place of employment, and four through extracurricular activities. At least seven of the nine devoted on average far more than 40 hours per week to their violence prevention activities. The other two were more limited due to work responsibilities.

The fellowship stipends enabled five fellows to maintain or increase the time spent on these activities. The other four did not change the time spent on violence prevention activities as a result of the fellowship, primarily because they were already spending close to all their time in this domain.

2. **Equipment Purchases**

As required, all fellowship recipients bought a computer, modem, and voicemail or answering machine by the end of the fellowship period.\(^6\) All also linked into a statewide computer network.

The computer equipment was more desirable and useful for some than for others, and this variation was reflected in the way they purchased and used each item. At least three fellows had prior access to computers and were more sophisticated users than the others. On the other hand, two delayed purchasing a computer until the fellowship was more than half completed. The six

---

\(^6\) The budget for one fellow was administered by a sponsoring organization that supplied all the required equipment and did not permit purchase until the fellowship expired. Since this fellow used the equipment throughout the fellowship period and did purchase equipment with remaining funds, we report compliance with the requirement.
beginning users did not consistently receive the support they needed in purchasing and learning to use the computer. As a result, two fellows purchased equipment that could not perform the applications they were expected to use when the network was selected. In the first year, most of the beginners used word processing only, although at least one used spreadsheet applications as well. Two others cited concern about protecting the equipment from theft and damage.

Late in 1994 TCWF introduced the networking component called Handsnet to the Initiative. Some fellows did not recall that they had agreed to participate in a VPI network and that funds had been allocated for this purpose. Fellows received information and training about the system at the annual conference in December, and were strongly urged to purchase the service, but most preferred to pass. Later in the spring of 1995, TCWF sent a letter to the fellows that informed them they were not complying with their agreement and would not receive their quarterly stipend unless Handsnet was purchased. Although all eventually purchased the service, the majority found it of little use or interest. Only three were planning to retain Handsnet following the fellowship.

3. Conferences and Retreats

Nine out of ten fellows attended the first annual VPI conference, and eight out of nine attended the second conference. Over half brought mentees each time. Fellows actively participated in the programs. Three presented sessions at the 1993 conference, and four presented at the 1994 conference.

While fellows appreciated the opportunity to network, four mentioned the sessions were not relevant to their needs or programs. They wanted more substantive discussions of issues such as state politics and gang mediation and more brainstorming sessions to generate new approaches. Two fellows also criticized the conferences for the lack of sessions serving the interests of youth mentees.

The quarterly retreats, introduced during the second year, were not mandatory for the 1993 fellows. TCWF program officers initiated the retreats after perceiving a need for skill enhancement, team building, an accessible forum for discussion, and a closer link with the VPI and the Foundation. Attendance at the retreats by the 1993 cohort, however, was sparse. Between one and five fellows attended each retreat. Those who didn’t attend cited competing demands on their time, a lack of money in their budgets to travel to the retreats, and a lack of interest in participating.

4. Mentorship Program

All fellowship recipients expressed support for the concept of a mentorship program within the fellowship. Nonetheless, implementation of the mentorship did not proceed as planned. As originally conceived, each fellow was expected to select two mentees and retain them for a full two year commitment. In fact, however, turnover among mentees was more the rule than the exception, as shown in Table 4 below. Although a small number of mentees were dismissed, the majority left voluntarily due to changes in their school, work, or family circumstances.

Moreover, fellows perceived the mentoring component as having two conflicting goals: (1) to provide intensive support for youth at high risk of becoming perpetrators or victims of violence; and (2) to enable the fellow to gain assistance and support in program planning and delivery. Because the youth with the greatest need for adult guidance are typically least able to provide reliable assistance, fellows who selected such youth as mentees were not able to assign them substantial responsibility. Those who selected youth with the skills and ability to provide meaningful assistance, however, initially expressed concern they were not playing the role of a "turnaround person" in these youths' lives. Fellows were evenly split in their selection of mentees initially but by the end of the fellowship, at least seven fellows had opted for mentees who already showed promise as leaders and could assume relatively high levels of
responsibility. They noted that even these youth were still at-risk of gang involvement, delinquency, and school drop-out.

Results also indicate the fellows wanted youth, and their mentees in particular, to have a more clearly defined role and to provide greater input to the Initiative. One fellow summed up the prevailing group sentiment when he said, "The problems are different now (compared to the past), and these kids need to know that we are making a concentrated effort to listen to them."

**TABLE 3.4**
Mentee Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches to mentoring requirement</th>
<th>Number of Fellows</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of mentees</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 mentees only</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 mentees</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 mentees</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more mentees</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Mentee Turnover**                |                  |
| Retained all original              | 2                |
| Retained one and replaced oned     | 1                |
| Retained one and replaced three    | 1                |
| Replaced two after first year      | 1                |
| Retained two and added one         | 1                |
| Replaced five or more              | 3                |

5. Pacific Center for Violence Prevention Training and Activities

The Pacific Center and the Berkeley Media Studies Group offered training sessions on policy and media geared towards enhancing the effectiveness of social and media actions that enlarge the youth violence prevention forum to include both a law enforcement and public health focus. Although fellows were eligible to participate, few chose to do so. In the first year, in fact, only one fellow participated in a training session. At least three fellows believed the training sessions were for the CAPs, not for fellows.

For the most part, however, the fellows did not perceive a need for training in these areas because they were already successfully managing social action and media activities. For example, during our site visits, one fellow appeared on the evening news protesting a City Council action, another displayed a large wall covered with national press clippings, and a third had just finished breakfast with the editor of the local newspaper. These fellows suggested that, rather than receive training in media and policy advocacy, they could be of service to the VPI as instructors or facilitators.

One challenge confronting TCWF and the VPI in designing training sessions is the diversity in fellows' violence prevention skills and interests. Most had been involved in youth violence prevention for one or more decades, but others were relative newcomers to community action. Moreover, although all fellows were active to varying degrees in their local communities as youth advocates, they ranged from working within the system (e.g., law enforcement officers) to working outside of established systems.

---

7 Evaluators did not have information about fellows' attendance in training sessions in the second year.
Starting in the second year of the fellowship, the Pacific Center offered one-on-one technical assistance to the fellows. They also offered library services and technical assistance. We did not review those activities, since they are incorporated into the records of the Pacific Center.

6. Evaluation

All fellows fulfilled this contractual obligation, generously accommodating us during lengthy telephone calls and site interviews. Some contacts were more difficult to establish and required perseverance, but all the fellows were cooperative. An April 1994 survey of all VPI participants indicated that a majority of Community Fellows understood and supported the evaluation.

7. Quarterly Reports

Quarterly reports were the primary reporting method to TCWF and a key source of information for the evaluation. Foundation records indicate that five of the nine fellows completed all quarterly reports; the other four are missing one or two reports each. Reports were often turned in late. Fellows found the reporting requirement time consuming. Only three had staff or associates who could assist them in this task, and at least five had little to no prior experience in preparing activity or budget reports. Additionally, most found the reporting format awkward and, in fact, the information that could be gleaned from these reports was limited.

Other Implementation Issues

To say that the fellows were pleased to receive fellowships is somewhat of an understatement. The financial award was of course welcome, but fellows also appreciated the validation and recognition underlying the award. They also enjoyed the opportunity to meet others throughout the state engaged in related work.

Nonetheless, fellows did encounter a number of frustrations and problems related to the fellowship. This section reviews these issues in order to inform future planning and program development.

Financial Issues

Almost all the fellows mentioned concerns about budgeting and finances. Problems ranged from confusion about budget management to increased taxes and decreased social security payments. Interview notes indicate that six fellows needed outside assistance in preparing, adjusting and managing fellowship budgets.

In addition, the fellows were unsure of Foundation policy regarding budget changes. Particularly during the early months, fellows needed to know when it was necessary to consult TCWF about changes to their budget and when they could use their judgment. Some areas that were particularly problematic included revising budgets in response to program changes, shifting funds from one budgeted category to another, increasing personal stipends, increasing or decreasing stipends for mentees, covering the cost of attending retreats, and covering other unbudgeted fellowship costs (e.g., legal or accounting fees).8

---

8 The introduction of Community Partners in year 2 as the fiscal agent for the fellows has been very helpful in addressing these issues.
Community Issues

The fellowship offered recipients opportunities to expand violence prevention linkages within the state and beyond. Social service agencies, law enforcement, neighborhood associations, advocacy organizations, and schools often asked fellows to assist them in their own violence prevention efforts. Most fellows enjoyed the opportunity to share their expertise, but such recognition did come at a price. All experienced increased time pressure. For some, this was sufficiently severe to cause concern that external demands were pulling them away from their home communities and core activities. Four fellows expressed concern about controlling the time required for these linkages and contacts.

In addition, at least two fellows expressed personal discomfort and ambivalence about being singled out. Being selected as a fellowship recipient modified their relations with their community in ways that were sometimes uncomfortable. From this perspective, the individual recognition conferred by the fellowship is incongruent with community values that emphasize teamwork and sharing. For example, when the fellowship grants were announced, one community group expressed concern that a single person had been chosen for recognition when many were already working together. They were not clear about the fellowship terms and why all funds went to an individual rather than the community. Although the problem was resolved, it surfaced again when the 1994 cohort was announced. This is an issue that needs to be tracked as future fellowships are granted.

Relations with TCWF and the VPI

The first cohort of fellows enjoyed substantial autonomy for most of their fellowship term. Fully two thirds of the fellows appreciated the freedom to proceed without burdensome regulations or oversight. Overall, the fellows uniformly reported a positive experience that far outweighed any negative responses designed to enlighten our evaluation. At the same time, however, anecdotal evidence obtained from observation of group meetings suggests that most fellows perceived the Community Leaders program as ancillary to the VPI and less important than some other components, especially the CAPs. In this context, fellows noted that they were often informed of changes in the Initiative after the fact, rather than being forewarned or consulted. This led to difficulty implementing changes, such as acquiring Handsnet and attending retreats.

In general, the fellows were confused about the fellowship policies. One fellow said, "(TCWF) must make the terms clear and known before money is given." Another fellow said, "I want feedback on my input; let me know how I'm doing." To alleviate confusion and expand knowledge, a fellow suggested that minutes and materials from the retreats be sent to those who could not attend. A fourth fellow offered the following recommendations for improving relations between the fellows and TCWF:

1. TCWF needs to provide immediate feedback on questions and calls.
2. Intensive training and support during the first few fellowship months would help to relieve anxiety.
3. TCWF should clearly describe fellowship goals, objectives, and requirements prior to awarding the grant.9

---

9 Although the introduction of Community Partners in year 2 has been helpful addressing many of these concerns, the fellows continue to seek direct contact with and feedback from TCWF.
Sustainability

Fellows also questioned their relationship to the VPI and TCWF after their two-year fellowship ended. Specific questions included whether they would be invited to participate in VPI activities and have access to the Pacific Center for technical assistance. Concern was especially high about how Fellows could obtain new funding and whether TCWF could provide direct aid (e.g., continuation grants) or indirect support (e.g., letters of support or assistance in grant-writing).

On the other hand, all fellowship recipients were confident their violence prevention activities would continue after the two years. Most expected to continue some aspects of their VPI programs either with modifications or new funding. Table 5 displays fellows’ future plans as of mid-summer, 1995.

Three fellows have VPI funds remaining after two years. TCWF has agreed to allow these fellows to carry funds over into the 1995-96 fiscal year. No spending or reporting framework was developed at the time of this report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Activities</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue full VPI Program</td>
<td>New grant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue partial VPI program</td>
<td>New grant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue modified VPI Program</td>
<td>Donations and volunteers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoping to continue full or partial VPI program</td>
<td>Submitting grant proposals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New activities (Non VPI-related violence prevention position)</td>
<td>New employer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV Discussion

As with any new initiative, particularly one as large and ambitious as the VPI, observation of the first cohort of Community Leader fellows reveals unexpected challenges and unresolved issues. This section reviews these challenges and, where appropriate, offers recommendations for strengthening the Fellowship Program.

Summary of Major Findings

Nine fellows completed the first two-year Community Leader Fellowship Program offered by TCWF. Fellows were highly diverse in their demographic and background characteristics and in their approaches to youth violence prevention.

The fellowship led to an expansion of violence prevention work in California. In total, about 20 new programs were launched and another 15 improved or expanded. The most common violence prevention activities were recreation, mentoring, education, and counseling.

The nine fellows who completed the program were generally in compliance with the fellowship policies and expectations. All devoted substantial time to youth violence prevention, and most devoted well over 40 hours per week to such efforts. All selected two (or more) community youth to mentor. All purchased the required equipment, and most attended the annual conferences and submitted quarterly reports.

Despite high levels of compliance, fellows encountered a number of barriers and concerns related to fellowship requirements. The value of some requirements was questioned, and many fellows did not agree that investing their time and money in computers, Handsnet, conferences, and other meetings brought a substantial return. Participation in training session and retreats other than the annual conference was low. Although fellows expressed strong support for the concept of mentoring, its implementation was hindered by high levels of turn-over among mentees and unclear goals.

Fellows shared a number of common concerns about the fellowship program beyond those related to the required elements. Financial management was a widespread problem, especially since fellows lacked clear guidelines about TCWF policies. A second unexpected impact of the fellowship was changed relations between some fellows and the communities in which they worked. In some cases, fellows were uncomfortable being singled out for attention; in others, community members questioned why one individual rather than the group received the financial award. Another concern was the role of the Fellows within the VPI overall. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most fellows perceived their program as somewhat peripheral or ancillary to the VPI. Finally, sustainability emerged as a key concern in the second fellowship year, and fellows were unsure about how to continue the initiatives launched with fellowship support.
Unresolved Issues

Unclear Goals and Objectives

At different times, or from different perspectives, the Community Fellowship program appeared to serve at least five distinct goals: (1) to reward recipients for their past efforts related to youth violence prevention; (2) to facilitate the extension and expansion of these efforts in directions that are determined by each individual fellow; (3) to provide professional development so that fellows learned new skills and information; (4) to implement a public health model of youth violence prevention; or (5) to disseminate model violence prevention programs to other communities by giving visibility to fellows’ activities.

Each of these five goals was reflected in the implementation of the fellowship program, but their relative importance varied over time and across the fellows. As a result of the diversity of goals guiding the fellowship experience, the accomplishments and contributions of the fellows are more diffuse than would be the case if all were guided by a common understanding of the goals.

More importantly, perhaps, ambiguity about goals carried over into all aspects of the program -- selection, planning, programmatic requirements, training and technical assistance, and reporting and evaluation. Table 6, for example, shows how each of these different goals would produce quite different programs.

Table 4.1
Implications of Different Goals for Fellowship Program Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Program Activities</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Monitoring/Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reward for past work</td>
<td>Quality of past work</td>
<td>Minimal or None</td>
<td>Minimal or none</td>
<td>Minimal or none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance or extend work</td>
<td>Quality of past work and future plans</td>
<td>Designed to strengthen programs</td>
<td>Moderate -- Customized to program needs</td>
<td>Report on implementation of plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop skills in vp</td>
<td>Potential for assuming leadership roles</td>
<td>Designed to teach skills</td>
<td>Extensive -- Leadership development</td>
<td>Report on skill development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement public health model</td>
<td>Interest in &amp; fit with p/h model</td>
<td>Designed to teach p/h model</td>
<td>Extensive -- Focus on p/h model</td>
<td>Report on implementation of p/h model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disseminate work</td>
<td>Interest by and applicability to other communities</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Moderate -- Focus on communication, dissemination</td>
<td>Report on &quot;spread&quot; of model programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unclear Policies and Expectations

Given unclear goals, it is unsurprising that the fellowship was marked by a lack of clarity, infrequent but frustrating changes, and occasional contradictions in rules and policies related to fellowship administration. Fellows were consistently unclear about their freedom to change their activity plan or budget, and they did not know the protocol for gaining Foundation approval of such changes. To the extent the fellowship is intended as personal support, one might assume that fellows should be free to modify their plans as they see fit within general legal and ethical guidelines. On the other hand, if the fellowship is intended more as a grant or contract enabling the fellows to undertake specific projects, one would expect higher levels of interaction and oversight by TCWF in reviewing proposed changes.

Similarly, the purpose and appropriate level of effort for quarterly reports remained unclear. These could variously appear to be an oversight device to ensure the fellows are implementing the exact plan proposed in their application, an effort to ensure they are generally acting in good faith to work on behalf of youth violence prevention, or simply an exercise designed to better prepare them for future grant-related obligations they may encounter.

The mentoring requirement was also fuzzy. The purposes and goals of the mentoring were never fully developed, so that some interpreted the requirement as the opportunity to try to intervene in the lives of at-risk youth while others worked with youth leaders who were able to provide a high level of support and assistance. The mentoring relationships differed in intensity, longevity, mutual responsibilities, and payment agreements. Although all the fellows were committed to youth and demonstrated a capacity to work effectively with them, the value-added to fellow-youth relations by the mentoring component is uncertain at best.

The core ambiguities related to fellowship administration were exacerbated by several changes in the fellowship program. The introduction of retreats in year two, although appreciated even by the fellows who didn't attend, signaled a subtle shift in emphasis from individual efforts to group cohesion and from programmatic enhancement to self enhancement. Some fellows felt a strong obligation to attend if possible; others dismissed the retreats as of little interest or importance.

The HandsNet situation in Spring 1995 also demonstrates how policy changes created confusion. Although the fellows had agreed to link with a statewide network, the implementation of the HandsNet requirement after over a year of almost complete autonomy represented a new level of oversight and control over the fellows by TCWF. Thus, despite letters and announcements, fellows did not share the Foundation's expectation that they should and would comply with all VPI recommendations and policies. Moreover, fellows expected to use their fellowship for personal and community empowerment; the requirement to sign on to HandsNet, particularly when few found it useful or interesting, ran counter to this expectation.
Role of the Public Health Model

Our interviews with the fellows indicated great diversity about the philosophies underlying their violence prevention activities. Certainly not all ardently supported the passage of more gun control laws, due to concern that such laws would only lead to additional detention and incarceration of at-risk youth. At least three fellows strongly believed that violence prevention started with acceptance of youth for who they were, and they therefore did not see their role as dissuading youth from joining gangs or participating in risky activities. Two fellows worked within the criminal justice system while two others were harsh critics of the system and had little or no interest in working collaboratively with law enforcement.

In other words, the work of the fellows was in no way guided by a common model, core belief system, or agreement about root causes, particularly emerging from a public health view of violence prevention. This lack of a guiding philosophy was also apparent in fellows’ responses to the VPI advocacy and media training. Most receive substantial press and media coverage and have demonstrated their ability to advocate for youth within local political arenas. They therefore did not see the need for such training -- in fact, several suggested they should be providing rather than receiving the training. The notion that the training could help them by reshaping the way in which they present issues to the media or approach their advocacy activities was not effectively communicated.

Role of Fellowship Program in VPI

Informal conversation at meetings and retreats indicated the fellows perceived their program as somewhat peripheral to the main thrust of VPI (the CAPs). Infrequent contact with the Foundation, difficulty obtaining clarification of goals and objectives for the fellowship, and requirements that were viewed as poor fits with their own activities contributed to this conclusion. Particularly in the first year, technical assistance and training sessions were viewed as primarily serving the CAPs, and some did not know they were eligible or invited to attend. Most of the fellows believed (rightfully so) they had much to offer TCWF and other VPI participants, but outside of presentations at the annual conferences, few were tapped to share their expertise and knowledge.

Reflections on Evaluation

The first two years of the Community Leader Fellowship Program also provides an opportunity to test the effectiveness of the evaluation plan. Our experiences suggest some strengths and weaknesses of the methods and some possible future directions. The evaluation was successful in providing an overview of the Fellowship Program, including fellows’ activities and contributions, the perceived “value-added” of the fellowship, and perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program. This information, over time, should reveal some useful lessons about how foundations and other institutions can support the efforts of grass-roots violence prevention leaders.

On the other hand, our data are limited regarding the specific accomplishments of the fellows, partly due to resource limitations that restricted the time available for data collection and partly due to the fellows’ own difficulties in providing this information. Few were able to clearly separate their fellowship-related activities from other aspects of their personal and work lives, and few kept the kind of information that evaluators use, such as numbers of people served, types of services provided, changes in programs and plans and the reasons for such changes, etc. Even compiling a list of new programs proved unexpectedly difficult.
This evaluation was not intended to measure the impacts of fellows' programs on community crime or violence. Our experience over the past two years confirms the appropriateness of this decision. It is of course unreasonable to expect any one person, regardless of their personal talents or charisma, to produce measurable decreases in community crime rates. More realistically, few if any of the programs meet the criteria for evaluability. Most of the fellows had been engaged in their community activities long before the fellowship was offered, so there is no clear "before" or "after" to compare. Few fellows kept track of participants or even had regular participants in their programs. Some offered structured programs, but others provided settings that offered safe and supportive places for youth to gather, so the formal interventions were constantly changing and no two youth received the same treatment. For those with more structured programs, it is doubtful the number of participants would offer sufficient statistical power to enable investigators to detect program effects.

In our choice of methods and goals, this evaluation places the needs of the Foundation above the interests of the fellows. That is, by focusing on the Fellowship program, we are providing little information of direct usefulness to the fellows, although we are providing information that will be useful to future cohorts of fellows. Nonetheless, the evaluation is largely another requirement or expectation imposed upon fellows as part of the "cost" of receiving a fellowship rather than a benefit of participation. Alternative approaches to evaluation, particularly those that involve the fellows in shaping and addressing the evaluation questions and in some process of peer review and consultation, may be of more use to the fellows and also might yield important insights for TCWF. Such approaches, however, are time and resource intensive in relation to the current evaluation plan and would almost certainly produce different kinds of information than provided in this report. Nonetheless, this is a direction worth considering in the context of the overall VPI goals.

Recommendations

The Community Leader Fellowship Program in its first two years was marked by a lack of clarity about goals, expectations, and underlying philosophy. While this did not prevent the fellows from moving forward with their plans, it did create widespread if intermittent confusion and occasional frustration, disappointment, or anxiety. Our primary concern, however, is that this lack of clarity dilutes the potential impacts of the fellowship program since staff and fellows' energies are widely scattered and unfocused at the aggregate level.

We therefore recommend that the Foundation engage in a planning exercise, preferably with the participation of at least some fellows, to clarify and prioritize the Fellowship goals. This should then be used to re-assess and, where needed, revise the fellowship program. Among the questions that should be addressed in this planning process are:

- What are the goals and objectives of the fellowship program? How should these goals and objectives be prioritized?

- What programmatic elements are necessary to achieve the fellowship goals? Which of these programmatic elements should be required and which should be optional?

- What training, technical assistance and other resources will enhance the overall effectiveness of the fellowship program? To what extent should training and technical assistance be
required or optional? To what extent should training and technical assistance be provided to groups of fellows, and to what extent should fellows be encouraged or empowered to develop their own, customized training programs?

- How if at all should the selection criteria be honed to ensure that future fellows and the selection committee fully understand and are prepared to invest in achieving the fellowship goals?

- To what extent should the fellows be integrated into other aspects of the VPI? How can TCWF make better use of the fellows' talents and abilities?

- To what extent should the fellowship program emphasize team building and peer support across or within fellowship cohorts? What activities will promote this outcome? Should such activities be required or optional?

- What are TCWF policies regarding changes in fellows' workplans and budgets? What information should fellows convey to TCWF, and how should this be achieved with minimal burden for fellows and Foundation staff? What level and types of contact should TCWF seek to maintain with the fellows?

- How can TCWF continue to work with fellowship alumni? Issues for consideration include both how TCWF could serve alumni as well as how alumni could serve the VPI--particularly the Leadership program. Perhaps TCWF could enlist fellowship alumni to provide guidance to new fellows.

- How can the fellows become more active participants in, rather than recipients of, the evaluation? What resources is TCWF willing to invest in revising the Community Leader Fellowship evaluation plan to achieve this outcome?

After resolving these and related questions, the Foundation should strive to communicate these expectations as clearly as possible at the beginning of the fellowship (preferably even before fellows are selected) and should seek to avoid mid-course changes. Where changes are inevitable, the fellows should be provided with full explanations regarding the purpose and context.

Concluding Comment

The first cohort of nine Community Leader fellows was characterized by great diversity in participants' backgrounds, activities, and interests. All shared in common, however, a passionate commitment to youth and an abiding belief in the potential and worth of all youth, whatever obstacles and problems they faced. This alone is deserving of our admiration and respect. Beyond this, however, the fellows act on their commitment every day. They offer guidance, respect, attention, and affection to youth who have been written off by large segments of our society. Many of the fellows have risked their own jobs or personal safety to mediate gang conflicts, improve neighborhood quality of life, prevent a child from becoming victimized, or stand up for their beliefs. Although this evaluation was not intended to measure the effectiveness of the fellows' efforts, there is no doubt among those who have the privilege to know them that our communities would be grimmer and less hopeful places without them. Community fellowships have enabled these fellows to gain validation and recognition for their work, experiment with new programs, and enhance or extend existing methods. Greater clarity about goals and expectations will enable the program to even better support its participants in the future.
Appendix A\textsuperscript{10}

Violence Prevention Initiative
Community Leaders Fellows

\textsuperscript{10}Description for Mitchell Salazar is forthcoming.
Background

Alfonso is among the founders of The Chicano Youth Center (TCYC) at Dickey Park in Fresno, which has provided social, educational, and recreational opportunities for urban and rural Chicano youth for nineteen years. The Center is a refuge for at risk Fresno youth seeking alternatives to gangs, drugs, and despair. Alfonso attempts to anticipate potential long and short term problems affecting youth and the community, such as population change effects in neighborhoods and student response to such political mandates as California's Proposition 187. He directs his programs in ways that validate youthful concerns, allow for organized planned responses, and emphasize conflict resolution. To offer direction and services to young people who are unable to attend Center activities Alfonso organizes MEChA (Student Movement Chicano of Atzlan) chapters at twenty-six local schools in and around Fresno.

Fellowship Objectives

To create new activities and sustain existing programs at TCYC, and to bring urban and rural Chicano youth together, Alfonso set the following objectives for his California Wellness Foundation (CWF) Community Leadership Fellowship:

- to develop a youth produced magazine and newsletter to serve at risk Fresno youth;
- to involve MEChA members, and gang and ex-gang members in developing 10 sports, recreational and/or cultural activities; and
- to establish a network of community groups interested in focusing on increasing services to Fresno youth.

Implementation

Throughout the fellowship period objectives remained the same, but the quantity of activities was significantly larger than originally anticipated. At least one major social/recreational event was offered each month, and usually two or three events. Additionally ad-hoc programs to respond to community youth concerns (e.g., police efforts to decrease violence in a public park that were culturally incompatible with the majority of those using the park), to channel student protests, and to mediate issues were frequently organized. In response to increased summer gang activity, over 25 youth were hired and trained to work on different projects in the Fresno barrios. Youth summits and Zero Tolerance programs in the schools were instituted to respond to increased gang activity. Rather than establishing a separate networking group, Alfonso chose to support the existing Fresno Youth Violence Prevention Network and actively work to increase membership and activities.
Accomplishments

Youth attendance and participation in Center and MEChA programs and activities is notable. Examples of accomplishments for the past two years include:

- publishing a 60 page magazine with interviews, articles, and color and black and white photographs of the youths and their activities compiled by approximately 25 youths, and initiated preparations for volume two;
- establishing numerous athletic leagues and sporting events involving 800 people, and creating regularly scheduled youth activities at the center;
- obtaining 5 volunteer mediators to work with gang related conflicts in the local schools;
- expanding MEChA groups into rural areas;
- organizing and producing large holiday parties, violence prevention barbecues, summer car show, and dances that often attract several hundred youth;
- mediating a potential crisis at a local park and bringing civic, community and youth leaders together to create policy for a gun free zone;
- organizing youth to respond to Proposition 187 in large groups without violence, and to advocate for increased Chicano Studies programs in public schools;
- providing field trips to the snow and to Baja California;
- attracting over 30 youths to improve local barrio houses and streets through the "Love Thy Neighbor Program";
- conducting numerous leadership and training conferences and workshops, seminars, and empowerment meetings.

The mentoring component of the fellowship provided valuable experiences for the mentees and invaluable assistance to the Center and MEChA programs. Four mentees (two each year) participated in fellowship programs. Alfonso encouraged the mentees' leadership skills by assigning them to assist a MEChA group, including them in conference planning and presentations, encouraging leadership in areas of interest such as sports, youth counseling, community activities, networking, media presentations, attending and presenting at community and civic meetings, recruiting youth for Center and Chicano studies' programs, and assisting with administrative tasks. Two additional students were hired to assist with the magazine and other project activities.

While using the Center as a base, Alfonso and his staff attempted to draw young people from the entire Fresno area into activities and programs that exposed them to conflict resolution methods, alternative social behaviors, positive educational experiences, and pride in their cultural heritage. For these efforts Alfonso received several community awards and is frequently consulted by law enforcement and other civic organizations. He participated in CWF activities and was invited to present a workshop on "How Gang Prevention Programs Can Be Effective in Changing the Community" at the Oakland annual conference as well as to display photographs of Fresno youth involved in fellowship programs.
NANCY IDLET
The Ivy Center
1350 East Annondale
Fresno, CA 93706

Background

Save Our Sons and Daughters (SOSAD) was established at the Ivy Center in Fresno by Nancy Idlet to provide services to youth who experience or perpetrate violence. It is an umbrella organization for children and youth aged 9 to 17 incorporating special programs for teenage mothers (SPIN); for youths who are victims or witness violence, or live with family members who commit violent acts (Harvest Program); and for 13-17 year olds (Nubian Soul). Programs involve individual and group counseling, peer support, mediation, recreation, tutoring and summer camp. The SOSAD goal is to provide youth with tools and information to prevent involvement in violence either as victims or perpetrators. Nancy works with state and community organizations, and schools to bring young people into the program. She also regularly sends volunteers to canvass the neighborhood for youth who are in immediate need or on probation, and counsels them, arranges regular support group activities, and incorporates the young people into SOSAD programs that build their confidence and self-esteem.

Fellowship Objectives

Prior to the fellowship SOSAD programs operated with exclusively volunteer time and minimal funds from small donations. The fellowship allowed Nancy to expand her program objectives as follows:

- increase by at least 30 youth participants in support groups for those whose lives were affected by street or gang violence;
- create a teenage single mothers support group and workshops for 30 teen mothers with gang experience;
- offer and expand year round Harvest programs for youth aged 9-12 who exhibit behavior typical of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Implementation

The expanded SOSAD program satisfied all of its California Wellness Foundation (CWF) Community Leadership Fellowship objectives. The program is a recognized resource in the Fresno community. The organization is currently evaluating its activities, improving its structure and funding, and organizing to serve more youth. A recently formed board of directors now guides programs and identifies funding sources. In expanding services, SOSAD is reaching beyond its roots in the African American community to serve a more diverse cross-section of Fresno youth. Nonetheless, funding constraints limit SOSAD's ability to offer its support, mediation and empowerment activities.
Accomplishments

During the early fellowship period Nancy faced the challenge of balancing her SOSAD responsibilities with family and outcome activities. Initially, just the basic actions of finding and equipping an office, contacting sources to identify youth participants, and recruiting volunteers were extremely important accomplishments. Subsequently, as the program and her time commitment expanded, she has reorganized and accomplished the following:

- designed and implemented the SPIN program for teenage mothers whose lives were affected by violence, attended by 15-20 young women; each meeting
- enlarged the Harvest program with individual counseling and regular workshops, to provide survival skills to over 45 youths who have witnessed or had family members commit a homicide or are at high risk for violent encounters;
- created a summer Harvest program that provides stipends to 15 youths who attend regularly;
- arranged with the West Fresno School District to provide facilities for tutoring 20 students by 13 volunteer staff;
- created a job referral and assignment program for older youths;
- initiated a new workshop/support group program utilizing community volunteers, ex-gang members and college students for local 9 to 13 year old male gang members;
- developed a tap dancing program for young children;
- organized the Nubian Soul cultural/dance group for 13 to 17 year olds.

After some turn-over in mentees in the first fellowship year, Nancy developed a mentoring system that was successful and rewarding. She observed the young people with gang or violence backgrounds who attended SOSAD programs, selected an individual for a trial period and, if the arrangement was satisfactory, hired and trained the mentee to provide administrative and targeted services geared toward future employment. The mentees were informally supervised and counseled by Nancy. Mentees rotated frequently as they were trained, moving into part or full time jobs that Nancy believed would be supportive. For example; one recent mentee is working part time as a secretary at the police department and part time for SOSAD while she completes her final semester in high school. Nancy continued to monitor mentee progress for several months after they completed the program.

The fellowship has allowed Nancy to devote her efforts towards organizing and enlarging the program, and training volunteers to manage ongoing tasks such as accompanying youth for court appearances, or responding to emergency calls. The program is also utilizing college students as recreation directors and counselors. A professional grants writer is assisting Nancy in identifying and applying for grants, and is also providing her the skills to continue seeking funding after the fellowship expires. Nancy developed collegial contacts with CWF Fellows, and intends to pursue these relationships.
AKINSANYA KAMBON
2240 Atlantic Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90806

Background

Akinsanya is an artist dedicated to improving daily life and future prospects for youth. Under his direction the Pan African Art (PAA) was founded in 1984 to serve the Long Beach community. In 1992 Susan Tamasha Ross (current Executive Director) joined the program. The organization focuses on building self-esteem through positive cultural experiences, and building hope for the future through education. The population served are 58% African American, 40% Chicano and 2% Asian.

Objectives

To enhance existing after school and Saturday programs, the three primary fellowship objectives were to:

- train four youths as program assistants to develop and present the Second Annual Graffiti, Taggar, and Mural Expo showcasing the work of at least 50 youth;
- research and plan a "Journey Home to Africa" trip for youth successfully involved with the Gangs for Positive Action program and remaining in school; and
- organize educational field trips as incentives and rewards for art program participants and community mentors.

IMPLEMENTATION

Akinsanya used the California Wellness Foundation (CWF) funds to extend general support for Pan-African Art. As the fellowship program evolved the basic objectives remained the same, but were modified to include more young people in programs. The Journey Home to Africa expanded to include youth in any PAA Center program that satisfy PAA requirements. A new program, Young Peoples Territory (YPT), was established for 15-23 year olds not in gangs. The purpose of YPT was to keep these youth out of gangs, and provide discipline and learning skills to enable them to complete high school and attend college. Teachers are older ex-gang members and college students. The second annual Graffiti Expo is scheduled for May 1996. Work on a large Expo mural will begin in the fall along with individual art projects for display at the Expo. Field and camping trips were held to allow young people from different gangs and different backgrounds to experience cultural and recreational activities without constraints. Additionally, thirty PAA graduates who are in the twenty to thirty year age group worked in their communities and at the Center. Their efforts were designed to steer youths away from gangs and redirect them to school and to community improvement activities.

Accomplishments

Among the accomplishments of the past two years are:
• Gangs for Positive Action tutorial and educational opportunities were offered to about 20 gang members per year, aged 13-19;
• "Journey Home to Africa" preparations by participants who are immersing themselves in research about Africa. Additionally, Akinsanya toured six countries, identified sites and established work plans. The key mission of the trip will be to expand their world view, and realize the value of their contributions to humanity. However, additional travel funds are required;
• a Second Annual Graffiti Mural Expo to be held in May, 1996, that will allow youth to respond to pertinent themes, express feeling, and relieve tension about such issues as racism, violence, families and community. Four youths serve as program assistants, and 50 will contribute art to the Expo;
• field trips that were each attended by 20 - 30 youth such as camping trips in the Los Padres Forest where nature experiences and group discussions highlighted the activities, and an outing to the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana with strong parental support and involvement;
• a new program, Young Peoples Territory (YPT), was designed and implemented to keep youths 15-23 out of gangs and in school;
• a curriculum on Mayan and Inca peoples of Mexico was developed and incorporated into PAA activities along with existing African American programs. Youth aged 5 to 18 who participate in the art school program used art to express feelings and develop confidence.

Akinsanya also established a Congress of Tribal Nations six years ago to reduce violence in the Long Beach area. The Congress provides an event where gangs can meet, define their issues and problems and work towards resolution. Akinsanya believes that the Congress directly affected the reduced death rate in Long Beach last year, and that the art programs, workshops and conflict resolution teams, continue to reduce violent responses from the youth.

A highlight of the fellowship experience was the Mentee program. Each quarter two young people were selected as mentees. They assisted with the Expo, coordinated field trips, organized and managed youth artwork sales and exhibitions, attended violence prevention and city agency meetings, obtained food donations for the ongoing lunch program, and learned professional skills to design, implement and promote activities. For most mentees the mentorship program expanded their awareness of their own potential and variety of goals, and provided some new skills to achieve those goals. Family and personal problems prevented one mentee from participating regularly, while another mentee reassessed his priorities and decided to return to college.

Overall, the fellowship has provided funding necessary to expand and enrich Pan African Art programs. Books, supplies and field trips were possible without financial concerns. The city has recognized and cited many activities encompassed in the center. Akinsanya also worked closely with the Pacific Center prior to and during the fellowship by obtaining technical assistance to set up his organization and as a member of the Wellness Foundation Advisory Committee. At the 1993 CWF Violence Prevention Initiative Conference, Akinsanya presented a workshop on The Black Panther Party: Gangs, Guns, and Violence. Shortly before receiving the fellowship Akinsanya faced a major challenge when the City of Long Beach found his art studio violated building codes. His ability to continue to serve youth was seriously threatened. The Fellowship provided vital support to Akinsanya during this difficult period. At this time, a new building is under construction in the same neighborhood.
Background

Alice Lytle is a juvenile court judge committed to reducing youth violence, the number of detained youth, teenage pregnancy, recidivism rates, and the over representation of African American males in the juvenile justice system. She has organized and supports activities that incorporate mentoring for at risk youth and youth on probation such as: The Sacramento Program, The Birthing Project, and The Task Force on Fairness. She is involved with organizations and committees that address sensitivity training for judges dealing with juveniles, prenatal care and child rearing classes for pregnant juveniles, and recruiting and training community mentors to act as role models for delinquent youth.

Fellowship Objectives

To expand her strategies and increase acceptance and support in the community for her programs, Judge Lytle planned to use the California Wellness Foundation Community Leadership Fellowship grant to establish a SacraMentor program, through which youth involved in the juvenile justice system obtain mentoring and support from an adult role model. Specific fellowship objectives are to:

- establish SacraMentor Program as an alternative to incarceration or other detention of youth, where appropriate, in the community justice system by coordinating recruitment and training of 80 volunteer community mentors through community collaboration,
- demonstrate that the mentor program reduced recidivism rates by 15% for participating youth,
- conduct at least four training workshops per year for Sacramento County judges while preparing an outline for a statewide workshop program to include topics such as alternatives to incarceration, the public health approach to prevention, youth substance abuse, cultural diversity, and developing public/private partnerships in community violence prevention strategies,

Implementation

The SacraMentor mentorship program responds directly to the need of the Probation Department and the Courts to seek alternatives to placing juveniles in detention facilities, and the need for greater community involvement in preventing youth violence. Judge Lytle’s position as a juvenile court judge enables her (and other bench officers) to refer juveniles she believes are appropriate through the SacraMentor Program for assignment of a mentor.

Judge Lytle used some Fellowship funds in lieu of a personal stipend, to hire a Program Director to develop and run the SacraMentor program. During the fellowship period, under the direction of the current project coordinator, Faythe Canson-Clark, some of the original objectives were revised to reflect more realistic expectations for a new program. The
Program Coordinator position was expanded to allow for promoting the program, establishing policies and procedures, supervising and supporting mentors, and running the day to day operations.

The number of mentors to be recruited and trained during the grant period was reduced to a more accessible and manageable goal of 40. The 15% recidivism reduction goal remained constant, but was measured over a longer time period. Additional efforts were made to establish community collaborative agreements for mentor recruitment, and for community based services.

Accomplishments

The SacraMentor program employed California Wellness Foundation Community Leadership Fellowship funds to accomplish the following:

- selected, screened and trained 29 community mentors;
- processed over 60 requests for mentors, provided mentoring services to over 25; and referred 15 for community services,
- established approximately 35 collaborative relationships with community organizations that provide mentors and services,
- developed policies, procedures and operating guidelines,
- developed Memorandums of Understanding with the Juvenile Court and the Probation Department (the Public Defenders Office is pending),
- identified and submitted applications to ongoing funding sources, and received non-profit status to sustain the program;
- conducted a session for judges, referees and pro tems (who hear cases and can refer juveniles) describing the SacraMentor Program and how to use it;
- sent four youths to the Sacramento Rites of Passage Alliance camp.

In accordance with the Fellowship, two mentees were selected as program assistants. A third mentee was unable to assume her duties due to school scheduling difficulties. The first chosen, a community college student remained with the fellowship about one year. She helped to build the program foundation by recruiting mentors, planning and implementing volunteer orientation sessions, representing the program at community organization meetings and activities, disseminating information, and maintaining telephone contacts. The second mentee serves as Mentor Coordinator and Public Relations Coordinator. He assigns mentors, and reviews and refers cases. He is also instrumental in collaborative agreements with mentoring and service organizations, and public testimony given to large funding organizations.

The fellowship provided Judge Lytle the opportunity to design and implement an ongoing community program, while her professional associations afforded her access to agencies and organizations willing to cooperate. Early recruiting efforts helped to define mentorship parameters, stimulated program design refinement, and created the framework necessary to solicit and receive community support. The legal and financial structures necessary to sustain the program are also in place.
ELEANOR MONTANO  
1107 West Papeete Street  
Wilmington, CA 90744

Background

As a lifetime resident in Wilmington and nearby South Bay cities, Eleanor has devoted her violence prevention efforts to improving social conditions in her community. She spends substantial time organizing and participating in activities to eliminate guns, gangs and graffiti from her neighborhood while working closely with police and schools. Her chief vehicle for these activities is Mothers and Men Against Gangs (MAGS). In addition, she serves on a number of committees and commissions such as Women Against Guns and Violence (WAGV), and the California Youth Authority Fred C. Nellis Advisory Council in Whittier. Among the recognition she has received was an invitation to visit the White House in 1994 for a Crime Initiative Symposium.

Fellowship Objectives

To continue and expand her activities with youth, Eleanor expected to fulfill three California Wellness Foundation (CWF) Fellowship objectives:

- increase by 25 percent the number of youth and adults involved in curfew enforcement, graffiti abatement, and tattoo removal programs;
- recruit and train at least six youth leaders to assist with inter group conflict resolution in the schools;
- recruit at least 30 adult volunteers as school monitors during lunch and after school to mediate potential gang-related conflict and violent outbreaks.

Implementation

Changing conditions in the community occasioned revisions in the original objectives. Eleanor added a mentoring program that provided adult mentees to at risk youth, and developed a pen pal program at two grade schools in rival gang territories. A community resource guide was produced primarily by her mentees, and she arranged for volunteers in the MAGS program to work with curfew violators at the time they are booked by the police. To abate graffiti, she enlists the perpetrators to help paint over the graffiti. She also implemented a CWF sponsored Rites of Passage program in a local junior high school. This twelve session program supports fellowship goals by building confidence, social integration, self esteem, community responsibility, and cultural and historic ties. New funding was recently obtained to continue the program. Because so many of Eleanor’s activities in the violence prevention domain overlap, it is often difficult to distinguish between fellowship and non-fellowship involvements.

Two key principles promote and define her fellowship programs. First, programs are designed to cross gang borders because Eleanor believes young people who know each other will be less likely to enact violence against one another. Second, Eleanor empowers young people to become responsible for their communities by constantly reminding them that their graffiti and gang activities degrade the neighborhood and negatively affect loved ones by reducing property values and creating slums.
Accomplishments

The fellowship program successfully accomplished the following:

- obtained the support of gang leaders and conducted several neighborhood cleanup days with 20 youth and other community members;
- recruited eight adults to monitor schools, and eventually expanded their role to volunteer services for the California Youth Authority;
- organized a Tattoo Removal program that will be implemented when equipment is purchased;
- designed and promoted the pen pal program;
- recruited some youth for a conflict resolution program that will be offered when recruiting is complete;
- produced a Youth at Risk community resource guide to be published and distributed this fall;
- obtained additional funding for the Rites of Passage Program based on her ability to support the program with equipment acquired during the fellowship.

Two mentees were selected early in the fellowship and one remains. Both mentees are Hispanic college students who represented Wilmington community projects at community meetings and conferences, volunteered at local agencies and police activities, and researched and produced the at risk resource guide. The mentees are an important bridge between Eleanor and neighborhood youth.
DONALD NORTHCROSS  
711 G Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Background

Deputy Donald Northcross is a member of the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department and a man committed to providing the conditions necessary for young people to succeed. In a statement to the California Wellness Foundation (CWF) Donald's goals are to help youth "love themselves and others, to be more responsible, compassionate, dependable, and hard working." To provide the structure, support, and guidance young people need to reach their goals, he created the O.K. (Our Kids) Program. African-American male youth aged 12 to 18 were teamed with mentors from the Black Deputy Sheriff's Association. A middle school in the community cooperated with Deputy Northcross to establish the program.

Fellowship Objectives

After operating O.K. for two years, Donald received a CWF Community Leadership Fellowship that supported accomplishing the following objectives:

- provide consultation and technical assistance to Latino deputies to create a similar model program for Latino youth;
- provide lunch and transportation for an additional 50 students to participate in the O.K. Program’s Saturday study hall and sports activities;
- recruit at least 30 African-American male community members as mentors to expand the program to one new school.

Implementation

The O.K. program has achieved its goals and earned wide acceptance by law enforcement, the local community, and students. By expanding the original objectives Donald created a generic, replicable program to serve all communities and genders, also provided consulting and technical assistance. He also will provide consulting and technical assistance by request to other communities. While the school assumed responsibility for transportation on Saturdays, the O.K. program continued to supply lunches and field trip transportation.

Law enforcement and community volunteers, students and schools participated in the O.K. program. The officers, promoting the concept of community policing, served as role models, allowed students to relate to them in a non-threatening environment, and guided the program. Each community member supported two or three students with bi-weekly telephoned progress reports, and supervised or assisted with recreational, tutorial, and field trip activities. A central feature of O.K. is a four step program based on academic and citizenship achievement. By satisfying all of the following requirements, a student may advance one step each school quarter:
1. Maintain good school attendance
2. Bring all necessary materials to class
3. Submit classwork and homework assignments when due
4. Follow classroom rules

Reporting forms with specific achievement criteria are provided to every teacher the student encounters each day, and collected by O.K. officers every two weeks. Before a student can advance a step, most teachers must agree, according to program instructions, that the criteria were satisfied.

Students receive awards as they advance from step to step including tickets to athletic events and field trips. Those who achieve all four steps during one school year are honored by the group and are taken on a two to three day trip to a major amusement park. Students who fail to advance are supported and encouraged to keep trying.

Accomplishments

The first group of twenty students graduated from high school in 1995. These students graduated with plans to attend college, enlist in the military, enter the work force or job training program. Additionally, the following goals were accomplished:

- all of the original objectives were met or exceeded including completing the replication design and documentation, adding more than 50 additional students, recruiting over 35 community members, instituting the program in a high school, and providing weekly lunches;
- student outcome objectives for the four step program were exceeded;
- numerous fundraising activities and student field trips were conducted;
- community service activities, such as preparing and delivering Christmas cards for senior citizens, were organized and executed by the students;
- a collaboration with U C Davis to provide tutors, action team recruiting and training, and administrative support was in place and awaiting final funding;
- and the Sheriffs department expanded its support by assigning an additional deputy to the program.

Two sets of mentees were selected during the fellowship program to directly assist with program activities. All four mentees were long-term members of the O.K. program who exhibited strong leadership abilities. In each pair, one student took the lead, while the other student assisted. They organized and conducted recruiting, planning, program and support meetings; fundraising activities; community service programs; and maintained telephone contacts. Reflecting the program's goals, one of the original mentees is attending college, and another is participating in a Job Corps training program.

Donald was assisted by a board of community professionals who recruited Action Team members, raised funds and provided technical assistance for the replication process. However, he continues to dedicate appreciable effort to gaining support, funding, and volunteers for the O.K. program. Donald credits fellowship funding of additional student rewards, field trips, technical equipment and mentees for increased program attendance and expansion. Recently the O.K. Program won an award from the National Association of Attorneys General. He also presented a session at the 1994 CWF annual conference designed to equip attendees with the information required to start an O.K. program in their community.
CATHY RAMSEY  
155 Meadowbrook Drive  
San Diego, CA 92114

Background

Over the past four years, graffiti and violence in the Skyline neighborhood has noticeably declined. Cathy Ramsey contributed to this change by creating the Greater Skyline Community Association. The Association has been active in attracting support and attention from city agencies, in conducting projects such as graffiti clean ups and street patrols, and in disseminating information to community members. More recently Cathy has been working directly with youth by leading counseling sessions, and by helping them find employment. The new found community pride is also the impetus for block party fund raisers, goodwill get-togethers to help needy or elderly neighbors clean-up and paint, and civic pride activities.

Fellowship Objectives

To enhance the job preparedness program, and increase neighborhood participation in providing youth services and sustaining community cohesion Cathy established the following California Wellness Foundation (CWF) Community Leadership Fellowship objectives:

- develop a community based volunteer staffed job preparedness program in the greater Skyline neighborhood;
- provide eight week job preparedness courses to at least 144 youth and assist with job placement;
- recruit at least twenty community residents as neighborhood watch members and as volunteers/mentors for the job preparedness program.

Implementation

While overall goals remained the same throughout the fellowship, objectives changed to permit less formal structures. A leased office space was rejected because it could not be sustained after the fellowship. In addition to Cathy's efforts in preparing youth to seek employment, she found jobs for some and sent others to outside resources for job training and placement assistance. Community volunteers also provided job training to one or two youths at a time or in structured classes. Some volunteers with a range of skills taught youth individually to enter professions such as electrician and, secretary, while others provided group courses at the recreation center in hygiene and job preparedness. Small informal neighborhood watch committees alerted the community and responded when graffiti appears or potential violent activity was suspected.
Accomplishments

While incorporating program changes and adjusting as community needs and emphasis changed, the following goals were achieved:

- expanded youth job training by neighborhood volunteers;
- expanded youth job networking and referrals;
- directly trained or referred for job training about 40 youths;
- established informal community watch committees;
- attracted new resources to the community including regular attendance at monthly meetings by 4th district city councilman or his representative, heightened city services (police, street maintenance, traffic control, fire department response time, telephone company), obtained parks and recreation department support, and organized church programs;
- eliminated sources of violence such as drug dealing, kids hanging out, liquor stores, unpatrolled empty lots, unused recreation facilities;
- increased citizen attendance at regular city agency meetings;
- helped establish surrounding neighborhood associations and created cooperative network;
- supported cleanup and new community oriented programs at the local park and recreation center.

Cathy selected two promising young people for mentorships who voluntarily participated in community improvement activities prior to the fellowship, and who wanted to enhance their own skills and abilities while serving the neighborhood. She viewed these mentees as a link between older and younger community members as well as monitors for suspected gang activity and other problems. They attended the monthly community association meetings and reported on issues such as youth unemployment problems and needs, graffiti control, and recreation center programs. One mentee set up a telephone tree to notify residents of meetings and emergencies, joined the recreation center council, counseled young people about employment, and established a regular car wash and lawn mowing business with ten youths participating. The other mentee printed and distributed the monthly newsletter, organized meetings, speaks about the program to schools and organizations, and recently created an outreach program for gang and troubled youth at his church. Both mentees met with Cathy regularly for planning and strategy discussions. Additionally, they both will continue their education beyond high school; one in a technical school and the other at a university. They attended the 1993 and 1994 CWF Annual Conferences and both presented in Oakland.

The Greater Skyline Community Association began functioning prior to the fellowship with limited funds earned at community events or through small donations. The fellowship has created an awareness of the opportunities and activities that can be realized with extra funds. Although Cathy intends to retain the philosophy of community responsibility, she does expect that fundraising activities will become more frequent and more elaborate as time goes by. She will take advantage of outside funding, but does not plan to actively seek assistance as a usual source of financial management. She feels the heightened level of organization along with the gains already accomplished will motivate the community to sustain their involvement and continue to ensure a safe, clean, friendly neighborhood.
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ  
Set Free Church  
850 East Grand Avenue  
Pomona, CA 91766

BACKGROUND

Daniel is a member of the Pomona Unified School District Police Department and a volunteer reserve deputy with the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department. As a student intervention program manager for the school district, he creates and runs programs in conflict resolution to prevent gang involvement, intervenes with gang members, and offers youths opportunities to experience alternative behaviors. As a fellow, he has expanded the school district programs to include recreational, educational, and violence prevention experiences for his students and the Pomona community. His fellowship work also includes consulting, and creating programs that promote community reclamation by assisting neighborhood residents with violence prevention, conflict resolution, housing, and personal problems.

FELLOWSHIP OBJECTIVES

Daniel's programs stress interaction among competing gang members at a neutral site provided by The Set Free Church. He also promotes community involvement in neighborhood reclamation activities. Using his California Wellness Foundation (CWF) Fellowship, Daniel planned to devote appreciable time to accomplishing the following objectives:

- developing a drop-in recreational center to provide counseling, recreational programs, tutoring and social events to serve approximately 200 youth;
- establishing a core leadership team of 10 to 12 youths to promote safe neighborhoods, and recruiting at-risk youth to daytime drop-in violence prevention program; and,
- working with south Pomona gang leaders and at least three community-based organizations to promote SAFE Neighborhoods, a community reclamation project.

IMPLEMENTATION

Daniel's objectives have been achieved. Specifically, he provides four regularly scheduled after school and evening programs:

1. Time Out Club for Conflict Mediation attended by approximately 200 youth every Friday evening, and conducted by the CAP;
2. Time Out Club for Leadership Training every Thursday and Friday at the church; attended by approximately 75 youth;
3. Theater Troupe on Tuesdays and Thursdays with 20 - 30 participants; and,
4. GRASP - a gang rescue and support program for 15-20 youth on an ongoing basis.

These programs serve youth between the ages of 7 and 12. Daniel solicits geographically diverse middle school youths to help unite North and South Pomona factions.

In the early months of the fellowship, all programs were offered at the Set Free Church. However, over time, it became more difficult for youth to access this site due to increasing neighborhood violence. To accommodate these changing conditions and facilitate youth participation, Daniel worked with the local CAP to provide some programs in their downtown Pomona site. This has become the site for most of the Time Out Club workshops and recreational activities, although the Set Free Church continues as the site for most fellowship related activities. The Set Free Church was also refurbished to better serve the needs of the community.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Under the fellowship program, Daniel accomplished the following:

- identified and trained gang and youth leaders to provide positive role models and promote anti-violence programs;
- provided an ongoing safe meeting place for youth;
- created the GRASP program as a gang rescue and support group;
- expanded center programs with the participation of the local CAP and church-based Gangs for Grace (former gang leaders and members in their twenties and thirties);
- identified job sources and placed several youths and former gang members; and,
- conducted the FACES program to provide information and services for community reclamation

When the fellowship began, two mentees were selected from the local middle and high school and remained throughout. During the second year, a third mentee was invited to join the program. The mentees had strong leadership abilities, but needed training to use their skills effectively with their peers. They provide informal conflict mediation in schools and assist Daniel with programs at the church. They both have remained in school, maintain part-time jobs, and devote time to violence prevention activities.

Daniel’s guiding philosophy teaches young people values, self respect and self esteem. He wants the young people to have access to a safe place where they can experience their feelings and emotions, and learn to dissociate from the gangs. By participating in supervised activities, youths can freely enjoy themselves, and learn to express themselves. The fellowship enabled Daniel to devote the time necessary to expand violence prevention programs and gain community support. He is often invited to speak in Pomona and other communities where civic educational, and law enforcement organizations invite him to speak and conduct seminars. Daniel’s presentation “Gangs: A Desperate Cry” was well received by participants in the 1993 CWF Violence Prevention Initiative Conference. By combining elements of his fellowship, school, and church activities he created a variety of training and support choices for at-risk youth.