



**Ms. Amina J. Dickerson**  
**ABFE's Eighteenth *James A. Joseph* Lecturer on**  
***Philanthropy***



**Building Bridges of Opportunity:  
Succession Planning for OUR Next Generation**  
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**Amina J. Dickerson**, senior director of global community involvement for Kraft Foods, leads the company's community involvement initiatives by directing the company's global charitable giving activities in hunger, healthy lifestyles, humanitarian aid and employee involvement programs. Ms. Dickerson brings to this post three decades of experience with non-profit institutional and program development, community and public/private partnerships and an extensive involvement in youth development, arts education, museums and cultural programming.

Previous to her appointment to Kraft Foods in 1997, Dickerson held senior appointments at the *Chicago Historical Society*; the *DuSable Museum of African American History*, the *Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum* of Philadelphia and Smithsonian Institution's *National Museum of African Art* and has served on numerous boards, panels and consultant teams. Currently, she is a board member of the Harris Center for Music and Dance at Millennium Park, Congo Square Theatre, Vice Chair of the International Committee of the Council of Foundations and co-chair of the Peer Network for International Giving at the Donor's Forum of Chicago. She was appointed by Mayor Daley to serve on the Department of Cultural Affairs Advisory Board, a role she has held since 1987. In 1996 Dickerson was named a Distinguished Visitor with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and was appointed a Class XVI Kellogg Fellow. In 2002 she was named Chicago's Professional Grantor of the Year, and in 2004 received the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Sor Juana Award from the *Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum* and a legacy award from *eta Creative Arts Theater*, both in Chicago. Her leadership at Kraft Foods resulted in a series of national awards from Feeding America and other local hunger relief organizations. In 2005, joined by four other funders, Amina was named Chicagoan of the Year by the Chicago Tribune for the partnership to advance jazz she helped initiate. She received the Timuel Black Award for Community Service from the Jazz Institute of Chicago in 2007 and the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award from the African American Arts Alliance in Chicago. Most recently she received the Handy Lindsay Award from Chicago African Americans in Philanthropy and was named one of 25 Influential Black Women in Business by N.Y's *The Network Journal*. She is a frequent speaker and panelist on philanthropy, arts, non-profit and community issues.

Ms. Dickerson holds a M.A. in arts management from the American University in Washington, DC, and was named to their Alumni Hall of Fame in 2005. She studied theater arts at Emerson College and holds a certificate from the Harvard University program in Arts Administration. She resides in Chicago with her husband, Julian Roberts.

*(Editor's Note: After careful thought and planning for her successor's transition Ms. Dickerson's official tenure with Kraft Foods will end on May 15, 2009).*



## **Building Bridges of Opportunity: Succession Planning for OUR Next Generation**

Written and Delivered by Ms. Amina J. Dickerson

Good evening and thank you Carol for your thoughtful, generous, introduction.

As you might imagine, at this moment there are a sea of emotions moving through me as I stand before you this evening. I am deeply humbled, first and foremost, by the honor being given me. Like most of you, I am keenly aware of the important legacy this award embodies as a tribute to the extraordinary individual for whom it is named--our distinguished colleague, teacher, mentor, leader and friend, James Joseph. And, in honoring his example, the legacy extends to the 17 other African American Foundation Executives who have preceded me to this podium as honorees. This distinguished group has collectively made substantial contributions to our field and our community. It is an under-statement to say how gratified I am to now be associated with this fraternity.

I am humbled as well because I know how many talented, experienced colleagues in this audience I have had the privilege of learning from—leaders who could equally stand before you in this role. They have not only provided me indispensable counsel and important, nurturing support over many years but have taught me the importance of laughter and loyalty-- two ingredients that have stood me in good stead during more challenging moments in my career. My heartfelt thanks go out to each of you. The value of your enduring friendships cannot be measured. To my staff here and in Chicago and to all my Chicago colleagues, I extend a special recognition and thanks. You've played a major role in bringing me to this podium tonight and I am in your debt.

Finally, I am exceedingly grateful to the ABFE selection committee, and to ABFE itself, for the leadership you have provided over three decades to all of us who have the privilege to serve the needs of throughout our world using the tools of philanthropy. On this 38<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we look back to the 7 who stood so boldly at the COF Annual Meeting to demand a place at the table to represent the unique perspectives of our communities. ABFE continues in this role today—offering a haven for us to hone our skills and platform from which we affirm the legitimacy of the concerns of our communities.

I'd also like to dedicate this address to my family who have be a deep well of support and guidance—particularly my husband Julian Roberts and my parents Ann and Dick Dickerson, in Washington DC. And I dedicate this to the memory of the great Dr. John Hope Franklin, whose pioneering scholarship changed the social and political landscape for us all and who was himself a great mentor and gracious teacher. With his death, as they say in Ghana, “a great tree has fallen.”

The events that led me to this recognition tonight ironically are not prompted by the work which we at Kraft Foods have done in the area of hunger and food security for more than 20 years. I'm quite proud of our record in this arena, beginning with our role, with other corporate funders, in helping establish the national food bank network, Feeding America (formerly known as America's Second Harvest). As a company, we listened carefully to our food bank partners and as a result created The Community Nutrition Program in order to fill a major void in providing fresh fruit and vegetables to those in need. Over a bit more than the past decade, and with more than \$26 million invested, we helped build the capacity of the national food bank network with trucks, equipment, staffing and technical support to implement sustainable systems throughout the nation. More than a billion nutritious servings are now annually collected and distributed because of these efforts. This is critical because of the health implications—heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc. that result from poor diets, particularly in the communities of color.

This US based effort is augmented by a growing role for Kraft Foods in the global movement to address the massive food crisis that places more than 1 billion people at grave health risk because of the lack of access to food.

This food insecurity work has been transformational for me personally, and I am indebted to the hunger relief partners who inspired and tutored me. Ultimately it has been that work, along with my long career in the cultural arena, which often focused on African Diaspora communities around the world, which led me to consider how I might more effectively connect the passions of my background, the skills gained in the corporate arena and the profound needs of our global communities. And, it was this examination and the act that it prompted, that ultimately led me to stand before you this evening.

It has been a great privilege to serve Kraft Foods and the communities around the world where we built strong partnerships. Make no mistake – I LOVE this profession. So you can imagine the surprise of my staff, and my colleagues— when I announced in February that I was stepping down as the leader of Kraft’s philanthropic and employee engagement programs. More important, I used that occasion—the Handy Lindsay Lecture on Inclusiveness and Diversity hosted by Chicago African Americans in Philanthropy, to introduce with pride and purpose, my successor—Nicole Robinson, who is here with us tonight. Nicole—please stands for just a moment. I informed everyone Nicole would immediately take up the reins of leadership and I would remain on hand for a few months to provide support and counsel.

It seems this decision, and the manner in which Nicole and I have managed our transition of leadership, has resonated deeply with many young and, uh, “seasoned colleagues.” Young professionals have sensed an opportunity to talk about their professional training and development and have sought me out to express their ambitions to excel and to lead as well as their need for counsel and support. ABFE leaders found our intentional process of leadership succession a timely topic for our membership to embrace. So tonight begins the effort to explore the application of succession planning within our work.

So this evening, my talk is “Building Bridges of Opportunity: Succession Planning for OUR Next Generation.” I want to talk about the significant human resource challenge before us and to share with you ideas of how we can address the immense needs we will have as a sector. The future of philanthropy requires leaders prepared to wrestle with a daunting array of global issues. We must ensure a robust, creative philanthropic sector with well trained and effective professionals to lead our foundations and nonprofits. Now is the time for our field to implement *with intent* stewardship of generational succession. Now is the time to offer those that follow us

the wisdom of our experience, the historic context for our work, and ensure them positions that endow them with authority to advance new and novel solutions.

I want to talk about **why** this is so critical and I want to share with you **how** Nicole and I approached succession, understanding that there are many paths to leadership change and ours is but one. Finally, I'd like to offer some ideas on **what** we, in our own organizations, as well as through ABFE, can do. My recent experience suggests we must take more deliberate steps to cultivate the next generation of leaders so as to assure seamless and successful transitions as often as possible.

First, let's set a bit of context for this moment.

We have just passed the first 100 days of the Obama administration. I continue to pinch myself and am grateful that my talk comes as we still exult in new moment for America and our global society. An era in which an African American, a person of color, a *community organizer*, serves as 44<sup>th</sup> president of our nation. It is a defining moment we are privileged to witness. A child of Africa and America, President Barack Obama gives new meaning to diversity and inclusion and in the process offers us an extraordinary opportunity to raise these issues with fresh momentum and urgency.

The backdrop for President Obama's term is one that finds the nation and the world in the most troubling, turbulent time in decades. A dispirited, disengaged U.S citizenry struggles with economic challenges. Critical supports for the nation's poorest-- health, housing, education—now face severe funding and resource shortages that threaten potentially devastating consequences. It is an environment that offers philanthropy it's most daunting and urgent state of affairs in more than 60 years. And economic forecasts suggest the imperative for philanthropy to do more to help stem the hemorrhaging of human potential will only intensify.

President Obama urges us all to take responsibility, to play an active role, to collaborate and to work across our differences to help, in his words, “build ladders of opportunity that were unavailable for previous generations.” In fact, philanthropy and the third sector overall is increasingly seen as an essential component, together with government and individuals, in efforts to address intransigent problems of our communities.

These calls for action come at the onset of yet another trend: the graying and retirement of the baby boomer workforce. With this generational shift, there is a looming deficit of experienced leaders and professionals to guide critically important institutions through the most tumultuous of times. The Bridgespan report, covered in April's [Chronicle of Philanthropy](#)<sup>i</sup>, stated that the generational change is going to hit us—big time—in just a few years. As the recipient of a flurry of retirement notices from corporate philanthropy colleagues; (American Express, P&G, Levi Strauss, BP, ITW... the list goes on), I can personally testify, that the shift has in fact already begun.

### **So WHY is talent development and succession planning so critical?**

Let me tell you why.

In 1982, there were approximately 300,000 public charities; in 2008 there were 1.2 million. According to Bridgespan's estimates, we'll need somewhere in the neighborhood of about 640,000 senior leaders by the year 2016.<sup>ii</sup> This at a time when we have greater challenges and fewer funding options for organizations serving vital social service functions and in an environment where government support is limping along, if in fact it is present at all. Now, add to this the growth in foundations. According to researcher Susan Raymond of Changing Our World and contributor to onPhilanthropy.com, foundations have been increasing in number by 25% every 5 years; 80% of foundations have been founded since 1980 and we now have some 100,000 in this country alone<sup>iii</sup>. As Susan suggests, we "are a young sector, with much growth and innovation ahead." So this trend in both retirement and a commensurate need for new leaders is relevant to all of us in the field.

Beyond the astounding numbers needed, there are numerous other reasons planning for leadership transition is important:

### **To start, the contours of philanthropy are changing**

The speed of communication, the democratization of information exchange and the growing recognition of our global inter-dependence are leading to new forms of philanthropy: MRIs, PRIs, venture philanthropy, giving circles, for-profit philanthropies, Diaspora philanthropy, micro-credit and micro-finance strategies. It's astounding the number of giving strategies we now employ. Cause marketing contributions have risen 80% in the past four years—funds to do

good, but not controlled by foundations or corporate giving programs. Online vehicles allow people nearly anywhere to contribute, to become “mini-philanthropists,” tracking the progress of their donations and seeking greater involvement. These new models have permanently changed the shape and expectations for philanthropy in today’s society. Such approaches often call for new kinds of skills and, at the very least, an ability to adapt quickly. Millennial youth, even Generation Xers, have grown up with technology, social networks and other strategies and are already bringing these innovations into our work. This is the dawn of a new era and young people will be largely responsible for shaping it over the next few decades.

**The need for inclusion and diversity has not diminished; if anything it seems to be growing.**

**Another** article from the Chronicle of Philanthropy on “Image versus Reality,<sup>iv</sup>” states the fact that the nonprofit world's ideal of inclusion “is still a dream for many organizations,” and that hiring is similarly dismal: 82% of nonprofit CEOs are white, 94% of foundation presidents are white (though there are more women now), and 86% of board members are white. All of us are keenly aware of the importance of having advocates with direct, relevant expertise, and who offer “first voice” of our communities, in positions to influence policy and program design. It is one of the fundamental reasons ABFE was created.

**We need young energy and talent to foster innovation and maintain relevancy.**

President Obama supplied the example with the extraordinary movement he built utilizing young people. We all know the role they played in helping catapult him into office. He also demonstrated through his campaign how one can benefit from the great lessons the past can teach us.

We are in the city that played a leading role in the Civil Rights Movement and the home of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. And Obama, an ardent student of history, took a page from Dr. King. King understood the potential and empowering impact of including young people in the struggle. They were his army. Among them was a talented, socially conscious student who became a chief lieutenant, and forged his skills through the access, counsel and assignments he was given at that time, Today, Rep John Lewis, building on that experience, has become an even greater leader, still serving the goals of social justice and equity.



We need to follow this example. I feel it is critical for us to identify and embrace young activists. We need to encourage them, counsel them and work beside them. Real leaders are ordinary people with extraordinary determination. Young people agitate for and have the determination to pursue change. We were young in the Civil Rights Movement. We were young when we took up the fight for gender equality. We were young when we began the struggle to assert the rights of the GLBTQ community. And my experience with so many talented young people in this field has taught me to trust what Sondra Tiedemann counseled. “Seek out people who are: better than you, different than you, braver than you,” and I’d add “younger than you.”

**The global context for philanthropy needs both experienced and young talent.**

Higher percentages of giving are now moving to outside of the US. On a global basis, the development and civil society work for Africa in particular, and to a lesser extent, the Caribbean and Latin America does not have sufficient numbers of our faces attached to it—either as informed donors, contributors or workers on the ground. We need to be much more proactive about encouraging our talented students and young professionals to consider philanthropy and non-profit work within the larger global philanthropy movement. Their energetic talent is greatly needed. I recently attended a “global” meeting on philanthropy which left me deeply troubled by the reality of the inclusion of few black people. To be fair, noteworthy leaders like Helene Gayle (CARE) and Jeffrey Canada, (Harlem Children’s Zone) who are doing groundbreaking work, presented. So did was Akwasi Aidoo of Trust Africa, and a few other African representatives who spoke eloquently of the need for schools, for sustained long term support, for increased capacity development for the growing network of NGOs as well as home grown foundations. But unless we are actively engaged in these efforts, we are going to be peripheral to the development of the vast, resource- rich, historically-exploited nation states of Africa-- our homeland. We need both experienced and young professionals who have language aptitude, financial expertise and educational training to be active in global philanthropy work. People who are willing to accept potential challenges of personal discomfort for the rewards of frontline, grassroots participation. This will require a conscious development of the bench of leaders interested and capable to work internationally. ABFE and our individual foundations need to partner with Trust Africa and Grantmakers for Africa, among others, to understand their needs and ways we can assist their important efforts.

**Finally, we need to consider succession a key strategy to best ensure the continuity of the work you have done.**

At the core of all of our efforts is the desire to foster positive change in communities. We strive to understand their needs and develop theories of change to address them. We develop partnerships, collaborations and programs in order to improve, the state of affairs. And these are major investments—time, intellect, trust building, resources and of course, funding. Like other investments, it is our hope to see these grow and mature, not dissipate. In my view, one of the best ways to ensure the **sustainability** of your efforts is to cultivate younger stewards who will maintain the vision while also incorporating innovations to further grow the seeds you have planted. Without succession, new appointees undoubtedly will greatly alter, if not erase, the work you have done, in search for “new initiatives.” The impact on non-profit organizations—can be devastating and over time has fed the negative perception of foundations as sources of serial support where long-term investments are required. If you believe your funding initiatives have important impact, then ensure that next generation leaders understand, and support them, and are prepared to carry them forward.

**SO HOW DO YOU PLAN FOR SUCCESSION? HOW DO WE BUILD BRIDGES TO FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES?**

Earlier I noted there are many ways to approach leadership change. Family foundations have incorporated numerous strategies to ensure continuity and stewardship: next generation training, with consultants sometimes, like the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, participation in board meetings and decision making, small funding portfolios youth are permitted to manage. There is active mentoring and Face Book is used so that the younger generation can network with each other and a track within the Family Foundations meetings focused on these younger philanthropists. The sense of stewardship responsibility is nurtured.

Overall, COF, regional associations of grantmakers and a plethora of outside organizations provide fundamental training in grantmaking skills. And within ABFE there is a long tradition of mentoring from James Joseph, Franklin Thomas, Lynn Huntley, Jean Fairfax, Emmett Carson—too many to name. Now is the time for us to invigorate this tradition *with intent* the vision and values of our work.

Generally, a planned progression of training and increasing levels of responsibility does not exist in many foundations. Dan Martin wrote about this in the Chronicle's Op Ed pages<sup>v</sup> and I agree with his perspective that we need to establish a career path, with clear competencies for our work as a profession, and to encourage both a discipline-based and management track of development for our future leaders. The generation that follows ours is tremendously talented, but they need opportunities to prove themselves, pursue their theories about our practice, build their leadership skills and, well – lead. The next generation views the challenges through the lens of a different time, view history from different perspectives, grew up in a different moment, (and listen to different music!). I want them to forge in our work a sensibility that is tailored more closely to contemporary realities, to their time. I want to be inspired by the work they will do and the strategies they will employ. But they can only fully do that when they are given the power and the authority—as well as the responsibility.

### **The Kraft Case...**

One of the benefits of being with Kraft Foods has been to observe the corporate process of training, competency development, coaching, and advancement. Understanding the importance of leadership continuity, Kraft, like many corporate entities, has a long tradition of developing what they call “bench strength,” It caused me to wonder, “How do we ensure this for POC in third sector?” Because it is essential to long term success, corporations institute thoughtful processes for advancement which including skill assessment, a focus on developmental needs, training and stretch assignments—all to ensure a pipeline of leadership. There are clear stages of advancement—from an individual contributor, to executive positions. Key competencies, like personal leadership, functional/technical knowledge and strategic capability are identified for development for employees as part of their annual performance reviews. Is a candidate ready in, say one to five years for a senior post? What will it take to get them there? Do they have the skills, intellect and drive? Are they ready now? At its best, this is a very transparent process, and the employee identifies their ambitions, their own view of strengths and the developmental path they would like to take. When well managed, the process leads to great and candid conversations, and ultimately, the pride of seeing talented young people rise to meet their potential.

### **Our Case**

I wish I had been thoughtful enough to review the literature available on transition. I only recently have become aware of the marvelous resources developed by Ralph Smith and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. While intended for the non-profit sector, these materials can also provide helpful ideas for all of us in succession approaches.

Mine was a much more intuitive and evolved intent. It began with my decision to take advantage of early retirement policies at Kraft. After a year of strategic planning, I felt that stepping down would afford me a rare moment to reflect and renew and to be thoughtful about the next chapter of my own work.

But it also led to a realization of what leaving would mean for our programs and longstanding relationships, and the support of our internal leadership. I came to realize that programs – and areas of focus for our giving, would more likely be sustained if there was leadership continuity.

The advancement discussions identified a few potential candidates for the post. Changes within the organization also signaled another realization: “Don’t replace you with yourself.” Really embrace long term change and strive to find younger generation leadership.

With these considerations, my clear choice was Nicole. She is well trained, with a finance undergrad degree and her MBA. She is smart, talented. She has more than a decade with the company and well-deserved this opportunity. Nicole (like so many young people) has a deep commitment to create positive change and has a demonstrated investment in our programs. She prepared to work in this field; she obtained a certificate in philanthropy from Loyola, and – another significant factor: she had just been named an ABFE Fellow. The ABFE fellowship provided her a special kind of counsel, coaching support, grounding in the social issues pertinent to African Americans and a national cohort of colleagues. She was ideal for this role.

I then sought the approval of our most senior executives at Kraft. My rationale was simple and straightforward. With the acceleration of my timeline for retirement, I had identified the person I felt should replace me. The senior leaders had already, through the advancement process, pegged her as a rising talent with demonstrated ability. In naming her, we had a candidate that understood the corporate organization, was trained and had experience in the function. In preparing and appointing her to succeed me, there would be savings in search firm costs, and less stress for the incumbent staff. While she was younger than other leaders, why not take the risk?

As one of our HR counselors said, “Throw them in the deep end of the pool. Stand by with the life preserver, but you’ll be surprised to see how well they can swim.” My managers agreed, and thus I was given the great privilege to choose my successor. But in many ways, it wasn’t a hard push because of our ongoing advancement program. Ours was not a deep bench, but at least we had a pipeline. I just accelerated the succession for my role, something that an unplanned departure, a promotion or a sudden crisis could also have provoked. Advancement planning gives an organization options and prevents hasty appointments.

Nicole got some special assignments, was included in special events and meetings, but it was not until six months later, last July, I shared my decision with Nicole over dinner. Her first reaction? As she put it, she was “humbled and surprised. She was surprised because though she had great passion for our work and making impact in the community and at Kraft, she had not expressed a great aspiration for my job. She expected that I was going to be there for some time because of my own passion and commitment to our giving program. As she saw herself, she was the “campaign manager.” She was very happy in her role, and it never occurred to her that I had a vision for her to move up and for me to pursue work/life outside of Kraft. But with the decision made, and Nicole excited about her new role and our ambition for her, we began our shared work of succession planning and transition.

How do you make the candidate successful? We need to provide them multiple levels of training and development: coaching, leadership training, mentoring, peer mentoring, introductions, shadowing at meetings. We need to empower them to use the techniques, methods and tools of their time and in the process; they will honor our legacy by leading us forward. Nicole and I began this in earnest.

I had a great coach, with whom I had talked through my desire to step down and the appointment of my successor. I asked him to now take us BOTH on—to coach her INTO the position and coach me OUT of it. With his guidance, we outlined the plan for what each of us individually and collectively needed to put in place over the next seven months, leading to the public announcement in February. And Nicole has identified that having this coach has been the critical factor for her. He is an objective, experienced third party who works directly and confidentially with Nicole as she takes on the reins. And he counseled me on how to be a good lame duck.

For her part, Nicole has clearly begun to assert herself in her new role and to adapt to being the one in charge. She has taken on the challenges of personnel, politics and programs. And for me, transition has meant that I've had to learn how to let go, to be silent to allow her voice to be heard and to **lead**. My role has become that of counselor, someone to talk through strategies, to help her to read situations. But ultimately, I *defer to her leadership*. I've made myself less visible, less active in the arenas where needs to have authority. I try to be a sounding board and consistent source of support. I forward (often with relief!) the e mails which now she must handle. Through this all, she has been exceedingly gracious, sensitive to my needs and feelings and we've managed the change with mutual respect, honesty and forthright communication.

### **What can we do? What can ABFE do? How do we build “bridges of opportunity?”**

In my CAIPP address, I talked about the refreshing, challenging voices I am encountering in the non profit field. Voices like: the blogger Rosetta Thurman, and young leaders in the field Trista Harris, Paulette Pierre, Jasmine Hall Ratliffe. In Chicago there's Phil Thomas and his team, among many other young talents around the country. It's a growing list with too many to mention, but I am excited by their blogs, their tweets and their websites, like “New Voices in Philanthropy.”

I want these bold voices in our field and I want them to be included at the table. But they need our support, they need to know what we've been through to get “here” so they can be smarter as leaders and so they can avoid the missteps we may have made.

They enter this discussion with a different point of view and perhaps it is that distance from the front lines of the movement of “our time” that is needed to ask provocative questions, to find innovative methods to bring change about. It is my hope and belief, that their youth, smarts, skill and determination will enable the powers that be to listen with fresh ears and a more open heart.

Here's how we, the preceding generation (I refuse to call us the older generation!), can support their development and ensure their placement:

- **Let's have the discussion about career paths** as they affect our ABFE members. Can we define the skill sets, including the cross-cultural competencies needed and really provide for the awareness and training in these arenas that our younger generation need to achieve higher posts?

- **Let's be deliberate about identifying and supporting the "bench."** Who is our top talent around the country? How can each of us be invested in supporting their development- via on-line forums or discussions that enable multiple senior "leaders" to participate, offering a variety of leadership styles? How can we foster an ongoing inter-generational dialogue?
- **Include them at the table.** Invite them to be present for the critical discussions—as participants as well as observers. As noted in the Casey materials<sup>vi</sup>, let us set aside our biases and listen and value their ideas.
- **Be clear about the standards we expect.** Help our young leaders address their own developmental challenges by fostering an environment where risk taking is not punished, but critiqued when necessary, and transparency and self-assessment is encouraged.
- **Foster multi-platform mentoring structures.** Let us actively cultivate the pipeline using more frequent phone/group, peer strategies to co-coach and counsel a broader pool of talent. We need to feel we are all responsible for "our" pipeline:
- **Develop support systems to aid those stepping down to "make room" for the next generation.** Earlier in my career I succeeded a founder. I know from personal experience how difficult it is for someone to leave a post if they have no sense of what's possible for them AFTER they leave. We need to help our leaders identify ways they can take on new roles, yet continue to contribute and have their wisdom valued. This includes providing out-placement services—something commonly done in the corporate world. Let's offer, administrative support, executive search assistance and foster forums where a community of colleagues undergoing similar transitions to the "outside" world can become a cohort to share experience and provide mutual support. And while we are at it, let's create better incentives and support for leaving—honoring the choice to step down, by providing sabbatical-type leave arrangements that enable a leader to have 3 or more months of continued salary to start the exploration of post-foundation life.

I want to close by saying again what a privilege it has been to lead the Corporate Community Involvement programs of Kraft Foods. I believe it is particularly important for people of color and those concerned with equity and access to understand that our presence in foundations incurs an essential responsibility. It is our responsibility to be knowledgeable about, open and responsive to, and transparent with the communities of color. We should strive to serve as best we can as intermediaries to our internal organizations about the needs

of nonprofit groups. We must use our agency to advocate and propel resources externally to those institutions that will most effectively employ foundation support to build capacity and program-- that will uplift our communities. For us, the privilege is to serve and the power is to give voice and bring insight in ways that will ultimately help focus favor and funding. And as we leave these roles, we also have a responsibility to ensure that there are individuals in place who will continue to steward these responsibilities.

**Many thanks again for your kind attention and this extraordinary honor. Have a good evening.**

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## **Endnotes:**

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<sup>i</sup> Josyln, Heather, "A Growing Leadership Gap," The Chronicle of Philanthropy, April 2009. Also see Bridgespan Group study, The Non-Profit Sector's Leadership Deficit, 2006, and Finding Leaders for America's Leadership Deficit Report, 2009.

<sup>ii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>iii</sup> Comments of Susan Raymond, "Climbing Out of the Recession: Non-Profit Strategy in Hard Times," Presentation in Chicago for the Donor's Forum, April 30, 2009.

<sup>iv</sup> Josyln, Heather, "Image Versus Reality: The nonprofit world's ideal of inclusion is still a dream for many organizations," The Chronicle of Philanthropy, October 18, 2007.

<sup>v</sup> Martin, Dan M., "Wrong Ideas About What Foundations Need to Do Better," Opinion, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, April 9, 2009, p. 41.

<sup>vi</sup> See the Annie E. Casey Foundation website, Leadership Development Resources, "Executive Transition Monograph Series," Published in conjunction with Compass Point, 2004.