



Dear ABFE Members, Friends and Supporters;

The 40th anniversary year for ABFE went by so quickly! The first quarter was dominated by the planning and excitement around our anniversary celebration and Annual Conference in April. The remainder of the year, my third with the organization, was filled with planned activities as well conversations about new directions. It is a dynamic time for us as we strive to make a difference today while we simultaneously think about how we re-position and re-structure ourselves for impact in the future.

Today we are pleased to share a summary of our work in 2011. A few highlights of our busy year include:

- **our 40th Anniversary celebration** that convened 250 colleagues in Philadelphia, PA; one of our largest meetings to date. We had the pleasure of discussing the past successes of the organization as well as our charge for the future with the original ABFE founders and early leaders as well as current members;
- **the launch of two new areas of work.** The first is our *Leverage the Trust Campaign* which aims to engage 100 Black foundation trustees in activities related to effective and responsive grantmaking in Black communities. The second is our work to engage Black investment managers, who are critical donors themselves, in the field of philanthropy;
- **the growth of the Black Philanthropic Network (BPN)**, the coalition of regional Blacks in philanthropy groups. The BPN is growing in size, influencing the launch of new regional groups in Philadelphia and North Carolina this year, and is deepening its capacity to be a peer resource for leaders moving important work around the country for Black communities;
- **the return of the Connecting Leaders Fellowship**, one of ABFE's signature programs. Congratulations to the Class of 2011-2012- watch their leadership and activity in the field – they mean business!
- **the deepening of our work to improve outcomes of Black men and boys.** ABFE received funding this year from the Open Society Foundations to launch a Black Male Funders Learning and Action Network to further coordinate and leverage the resources of select foundations. Stay tuned for an announcement about our work with the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities relating to Black male college access and completion;

- ***the continuation of our Responsive Philanthropy in Black Communities (RPBC) trainings*** with select foundations. In 2011, we were able to further hone this new offering to the field by working with leaders in the community foundation field who are committed to racial equity in grantmaking.

Next year promises to be a critical time for us as we step up our efforts to organize a movement among philanthropic entities, donors and nonprofits to address some of the challenges of the future. ***Our evolving work will be discussed at our 41st Annual Conference in Los Angeles – save the date April 27-29th, 2012. I hope you will join us!*** Until then, all of us at ABFE wish you health and progress...and the ability to lead and embrace ***change***.

Susan Taylor Batten

President and CEO