

ABFE MAGAZINE

— A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities —

A Collection of Quarterly Editorials for ABFE Members



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By: Lynne Harwell Algrant, ABFE



When the nation’s eyes turned to Ferguson, I poured over the minutes of their City Council meetings and read their budget. I am a member of my city council and I wanted to know what they discussed in their meetings. My city has a diverse population of 29,000—one-third White, one-third Black and one-third Latino—with a socio-economic range from multi-millionaires to folks living in public housing to a growing population of undocumented folks living in illegal housing.

In short, my city looks like a growing number of communities in the United States. And perhaps more importantly, my constituents are governed the way most Americans are governed. Now that the majority of people of color and growing numbers of poor people live in the suburbs, if we care about improving the lives of people of color, we have to understand how small cities work.



Photo: Ferguson, MI (Mario Anzuoni/Reuters/Landov)

In most of Small City USA, elected officials are very part-time (my colleagues and I make \$5,000 a year; the Mayor of Ferguson earns \$3,600 a year) and the city is actually run by a professional city manager. The single most important decision the City Council makes each year is the annual budget, both how money is raised and how it is spent. In Ferguson, their second largest source of revenue is ticket fees and court fines. This indicates that the Mayor and Council were funding their annual

budget through excessive and aggressive policing without ever asking themselves who was paying all these fines and fees.

My first year on the City Council, the City Manager proposed privatizing garbage pick up, which he predicted would save \$250,000 a year. This outsourcing would have led to the elimination of 18 union jobs with good salaries, benefits and pensions; that most of these employees were people of color, who live in town added insult to injury. Without any clear explanations for how the streets would be plowed if we sold off all our garbage trucks or how a department reduced by 25% could clear the branches when 100 trees come down in a freak October snowstorm, I refused to support the plan. Without the two African American votes on the Council, the plan was politically untenable—“White members of City Council lay off 18 people of color—Hand contract to non-union company made famous on ‘Undercover Boss’—” is not a headline any local politician wants to see.

How did we eliminate \$250,000 from expenses that year? We cut police overtime for court appearances. In my city, a police officer is guaranteed three hours pay for court appearances on their days off, even if they are only in court for 5 minutes. By scheduling more court appearances while officers are on duty, we saved \$300,000 in overtime costs. I wonder how much additional income Ferguson police officers make showing up in court for all the tickets they write?

I would venture to guess that most of us know more about the policies of the Bloomberg Administration in NYC—stop, question and frisk, trying to ban big gulp sodas—than we do about the policies in the communities in which we live. All politics are local and most people in the USA are governed in small communities with amateur, part-time elected officials, who are being advised by their professional staff. Our role is to make sure the professionals know what we value—good jobs for hard work; a summer employment program for local kids—and write a budget that carries out those goals and values.

In my city, elections are often decided by fewer than 100 votes, and sometimes by as few as 20. In Small City, USA voting matters; being an elected official matters; governing matters. As Ferguson taught us—lives are at stake -- and Black lives matter. ♦



Photo: Ferguson, MO (AP Photo/St. Louis Post-Dispatch, J.B. Forbes)



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service

How does your organization promote the message of philanthropy and the importance of giving back to your emerging leaders or mentees?

Service to those in need is the hallmark of The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated. A commitment of 48 service hours annually is tied to membership to our organization, resulting in more than 500,000 hours each year devoted to uplifting our communities. Best practices and inspirational stories as well as service and grant opportunities are shared with our members and chapters to support and inspire the great work they perform.

Are you hoping that your organization's next generation of leaders has the same community values or different ones?

The giving of time, talent and treasure is fundamental to who The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated are. Our giving history is reflective of the philanthropic endeavors that have sustained the black community for centuries. It is vital that our next generation of leaders hold tight to the values of our ancestors and our organization for the betterment of our global society and for generations to come. These values serve as a beacon for our continued progress.

What's been your organization's best giving experience?

The Links history of giving dates back to its founding. Philanthropy has always been a part of the threefold purposes of the organization, expressed through monetary contributions and volunteerism.

The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated has bestowed more than \$25 million in grant awards, including four \$1 million gifts. This generosity has come at the hands of our members, currently more than 12,000 strong. The harnessing of our collective power is a legacy for which we are proud of.

What's been your worst?

With the current state of the economy, essential funding has been cut for many organizations. Through the awarding of grants, The Links Foundation, Incorporated strives to alleviate some of the financial need in order for organizations to expand and broaden the reach of their transformational programs. Unfortunately; the number of women, families and communities in need of our support and the support of other like-

minded organizations, exceeds our giving capacity.

What person or movement has had the most influence on your organization?

The Black Women's Club Movement had a profound impact on the 1946 founding of The Links, Incorporated. The Movement was a catalyst for co-founders Sara Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins to pool their resources, along with seven of their friends, to address the needs of black women and children in their Philadelphia community.

What started with nine friends has since grown to more than 12,000 members in 280 chapters across 41 states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Like the black women's organizations formed in the late 19th and 20th century, The Links, Incorporated mobilizes its members to empower black communities.

How does your organization make its philanthropic decisions?

The Links Foundation, Incorporated provides grants to innovative programs that address problems to be solved or opportunities to be seized that are of regional, national or international significance. We act favorably on programs that provide measurable and meaningful results; demonstrate financial stability and accountability; have an impact on a measurable number of citizens; have a significant impact on the black community and align with the mission and work of The Links Foundation, Incorporated and The Links, Incorporated.

What are your organizations top 3 philanthropic interests and why?

The Links, Incorporated has a long tradition of promoting and engaging in educational, civic and inter-cultural activities in order to enrich the lives of members of the larger community. The Links Foundation, Incorporated was established in 1979 to enhance and expand the philanthropic endeavors of The Links, Incorporated in these areas. Our Foundation supports programs that provide creative responses to the changing needs also in the areas of health and social services.

What does your organization aspire to do to make a difference in the Black community?

The Links, Incorporated is a volunteer service organization of concerned, committed, and talented women who, linked in friendship, enhance the quality of life in the larger community. The organization is concerned primarily with enriching, sustaining and ensuring the identities, culture and economic survival of African-Americans and persons of African descent.

To contribute to the formulation of a positive, productive, and culturally diverse society, The Links, Incorporated also focuses on education, cultural enrichment, health and wellness and civic involvement. This focus is implemented through strategies such as in public information and education, economic development, and public policy.

How does your organization define success?

The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated are committed to transforming communities through innovative, impactful programming. Our success is defined by our ability to improve the lives of women, children and families as well as our ability to give our communities the necessary tools and resources for sustained growth and progress; empowering them to achieve a better standard of living. ♦



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Individual Philanthropic Profile: Dr. Glenda Newell-Harris

How do you plan on teaching your children or grandchildren about philanthropy? If you don't have children or grandchildren, how do you plan to establish your legacy for giving?

I come from a community service oriented family so it's natural for me to give back. We have four children who have attended schools that include community service in their curriculum---they've all been exposed to giving to the underserved as early as pre-school. When our children were growing up there were various school events and functions that they participated in which provided them an opportunity to understand the value and importance of giving. As parents, we have tried to lead by example in our home and hope that this will have an impact on how they value philanthropy.

Are you hoping they (your kids) have the same community values or different ones?

I am hoping they will have most of the same community values. I feel the children and young adults of today have more opportunities than we did growing up. Born in the South, during racial segregation and civil rights demonstrations, I was taught at an early age to be mindful of the social inequities and the importance of giving back. Our children, and many children of today, have many more opportunities afforded to them because of the hard work of parents. We often tell our children 'To whom much is given, much is required.' We believe that they have an obligation to do more and give more.

What's been your best giving experience?

Most of my giving experience is very purposeful. I research causes and the work organizations do. I tend to give where there is a passion that engages me and therefore most of my giving experiences are meaningful and rewarding. Giving with dollars is one way of giving; it's easy to write a check but influencing others to give to a cause that you believe in is also exciting.

I have enjoyed the opportunity to make donations to schools to help meet a gap in a student's school experience: additional support for a school uniform, a class field trip or an extra-curricular activity is very important to me. Some students lose out on a social experience simply because their family can't afford it. Meeting that financial gap opens up a new set of social experiences for a child and often times these experiences are life changing for some students.

I also have a passion for music programs that identify talented young musicians that allow you, through giving, to become part of their journey and success. It is heart-warming to attend their recitals years later where their skills and talents are being showcased. In addition, it is inspiring to see that these young musicians are good academic students and exemplify excellent citizenship.

And to see them work hard to improve their musical talent re-energizes me to give more and to share their talent with others who can give. To me, this is truly a rewarding giving experience.

I prefer to give to smaller organizations and causes and invite others to fundraise along with me.

What's been your worst?

This is very few and far between because I am so purposeful in my giving. I would say the most challenging is when I give and don't get any feedback in return on how the organization is doing or how the gift has made a difference. I have been very fortunate - my giving opportunities have had more favorable responses than not.

What person has had the most influence on you and your life?

My parents --- my mother is a mathematician and my father, a science teacher. I was raised in a household that emphasized the importance of STEM before it was popular, which probably had a significant impact on my decision to pursue a career as a medical doctor. They taught me the importance of getting a good education and helping the less fortunate. They were determined to teach us the values and principles that would make us good people. Good ethics, giving back, and appropriate discipline were the hallmarks of our household. We were taught that there was nothing we could not accomplish and this strong 'can do' emphasis has carried me through.

While my parents were our cheerleaders, they also taught us the importance of humility --- a quality that has served us well in this competitive world of today.

How do you and your spouse/family/close community make your philanthropic decisions?

As a family, we make sure to do our research first; it is purpose-driven giving. My husband and I give to causes that inspire us. Sometimes, we give collectively and sometimes individually, based on our interests and our passions. I applaud who he believes in and wants to support and he does the same for me. Over time, we have been able to persuade and encourage each other to give to new opportunities - that way we can reach more places.

What are your top philanthropic interests and why?

My philanthropic interests have changed over the years; service work allows me to be more knowledgeable about what's out there to support.

I now have special interests in supporting young adults who have chosen and embraced the Arts as their path in life. I have a son who is a young performing artist learning the 'ropes' as a classical baritone. There is no set track for a career path for such a young professional, as one might find if they chose to pursue a career in law or medicine. My new responsibility has been to assist and support my son to navigate this terrain, but what about the young people who do not have parents to assist in this way? Could there be a toolkit or more clearly defined pathway to reach this goal as a dancer, a visual artist or an actor? The career path to becoming a great artist is rather circuitous and complicated and based more on relationships than perhaps any other profession. While I am still learning a lot about this journey, I enjoy engaging young artists in a dialogue about how they plan to achieve their goals.

Having practiced medicine for so many years, I am keenly and painfully aware of the significant gaps in the area of patient care and the delivery of healthcare. It is difficult for patients to have a meaningful experience and a good medical outcome, when faced with so many obstacles and burdens in accessing care and being able to understand the reasons for their illness which are often complex and complicated. My passion to meet this need motivated me to co-author my first book, "Focus On YOUR BEST HEALTH," which is a smart guide to assisting consumers to get the medical care that

Individual Philanthropic Profile:

Dr. Glenda Newell-Harris

they need through effective communication, savvy navigation and appropriate advocacy. We must never underestimate the value of a patient advocate which is emphasized over and over in the text. Over the years, I have served as a patient advocate for friends, family and even often times for those I didn't even really know personally but was asked by a friend to help another friend.

If you could volunteer full time – what would you do?

I would definitely be a patient advocate as I have done over the years, but because I like variety, I would also help guide/mentor/support middle school and high school students to help them understand the value of a good education, great discipline and giving back. In some ways, I guess I have become my parents.

How do you define success?

Success can be identified by the following: individual, parenting and by your occupation.

Individually, I continue to strive for success. Though personal success for me is having meaningful relationships with the people in your life, I have been fortunate to have a meaningful relationship with my husband for 30 years, great friends and a wonderful and supportive family and extended family.

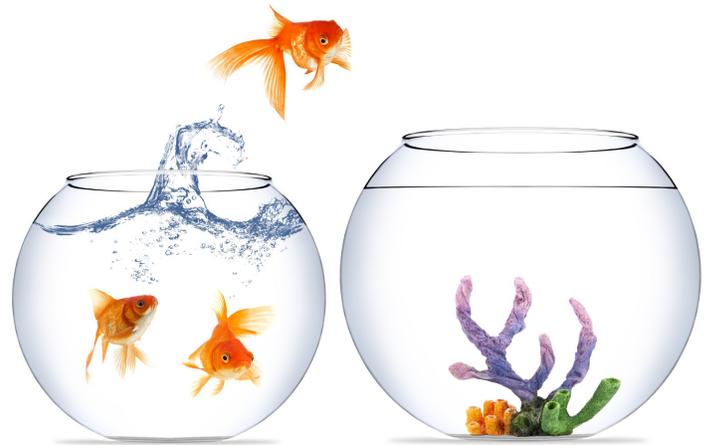
As a parent, when I hear my own children repeat what I have been telling them over the years, that is a feeling of success. Success is when my children begin to sound like me. I feel like something has stuck. One of my children shared her tutoring experience and said that it came to a point the child's parents had to make time for tutoring rather than their extra-curricular activities. She continued on to ask, 'What's more important: your child's extra-curricular activities or your child's education?'

I feel like my children have appreciated and adopted my values and principles. It's no longer my voice, but now their voice.

Success in terms of being a physician is when a patient comes back to my office, many years later and says, 'I heard you when you told me I needed to lose weight. I lost 25 lbs. It has changed my life. Thank you.' They took the time and were kind enough to tell me I have impacted their life --- that is success.

Success as the National President of the Links, Incorporated involves propelling our organization forward to meet our future needs in the area of membership, financial responsibility, technology and transformational programming – that would be leaving a legacy and a success. ♦

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Susan Taylor Batten Interview



Nonet Sykes
Senior Program Officer
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Please describe the framework and theory behind The Annie E. Casey Foundation's current work on racial equity.

Casey's Race Equity and Inclusion (REI) Framework is built upon a vision that all children are able to reach their full potential in life regardless of race, ethnicity or where they live. The mission of the Annie E. Casey Foundation is to make sure all kids in the United States have a bright future. We know the demographics of the nation are shifting rapidly. By 2018, the majority of children in the United States will be children of color.

The simple and tragic fact based on the data we have gathered and in the stories of the communities in which we have worked for decades, is that children of color have a much steeper hill to climb. So, for Casey to achieve our mission, we must do more than closing gaps and pointing to disparities. All of our work must strive to achieve race equity, a state in which all children have the same opportunity and access to the resources and conditions necessary to reach the potential we know they have.

Earlier this year, the Foundation released a report called *Race for Results*. What were your goals in developing this document and can you share some of its highlights and major findings?

The purpose of the [Race for Results](#) report was to explore and show the intersection between kids, race and opportunity in the United States. The report features the new Race for Results Index, which compares how children are progressing on key milestones across racial and ethnic groups at the national and state levels. The index is based on 12 indicators that measure a child's success in each stage of life, from birth to adulthood. The indicators were chosen based on the goal that all children should grow up in economically successful families, live in supportive communities and meet developmental, health and educational milestones.

Based on the 12 indicators the report shows that no one racial group has all children meeting the recommended milestones. Using a single composite score placed on a scale of one (lowest) to 1,000 (highest), Asian and Pacific Islander children have the highest index score at 776 followed by white children at 704. Scores for Latino (404), American-Indian (387) and African-



American (345) children are distressingly lower, and this pattern holds true in nearly every state across the country. The report also makes four policy recommendations to help ensure that all children and their families realize their full potential.

How are you working with grantees of the Foundation to advance equitable opportunities for all children regardless of race and/or ethnicity?

We are supporting Casey staff, grantees and partners to implement policies and practices that advance equity and equitable opportunities for children and families. We have identified three strategies that drive our work.

The first strategy is focused on creating and disseminating data products that Casey staff, grantees and partners can use to strengthen their decision-making and measure progress toward results. The Race for Results report is an example of this.

The second strategy is about developing and disseminating best practices, tools and resources that can help advance the outcomes we seek. An example of a tool we recently developed is the [Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion within your Organization](#). The purpose of this tool is to add to the resources already created by partners who have been working in the field by demonstrating how a race equity lens can be adopted by foundations or other organizations that work directly with systems, technical assistance providers and communities. The 7 Steps tool provides concrete steps necessary for organizations and individuals to become change agents and understand what steps to take to make sure they are creating equitable opportunities for the populations they serve.

The third and final strategy is focused on advancing policy and practice changes that increase equitable opportunities and outcomes for all children. This is about supporting and advancing policy change at the local, state and national levels, while also sharing lessons learned in our REI work with philanthropic peers. A key example of this is the capacity building support we provide to our KIDS COUNT grantees to strengthen their ability to integrate a race equity lens to their policy reform agendas.

What would you say are some of the Foundation's successes in the area of race, equity, and inclusion (e.g., Influence policy? Reduce disproportionate attachment among children of color to deep-end systems? Contribute to inclusive national or local data sets that help move agendas for communities of color)?

The release of our Race for Results report in April was a milestone event for us. The new index provides the data that is needed to show just how far children of different racial and ethnic groups need to go to achieve economic opportunity in America. The report and index was sobering. Through our history, the nation has created devastating barriers for children of color with institutional and structural racialization that has hurt families of color from one generation to another. The report illustrated that, but it didn't stop there. It pointed to solutions – the need for all sectors to work with a sense of urgency to remove those barriers.

We will continue advocating for policies and strategies that create paths to opportunity for all kids, and we will track the progress the nation makes toward truly providing equitable opportunity so a child's race or ethnicity will not determine that child's success in life.

One of our longest initiatives, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives (JDAI) and our work to reform all parts of the juvenile justice system, is helping more than 200 communities across the country find effective ways to handle young people who get into trouble with the law without placing them in secure confinement. From 1995 to 2010, the rate of youth in confinement declined by 41 percent. While JDAI cannot claim credit for all that progress, it certainly has been a leader. The alternative approaches promoted by JDAI not only prevent young people from unnecessary confinement that lead to improved outcomes for them, but it shows that you can use alternatives and keep communities safe.

Our work to reform juvenile justice is important to race equity and inclusion because African-American youth and children of color in general are treated unfairly and are disproportionately represented in the system. Our leadership is committed to eliminating racial disparities in the juvenile justice system.

Inside our Foundation, we are also excited to share that the Foundation recently refined its core competencies as part of our performance management system. The core competencies represent essential knowledge, skills and attributes that all staff should bring to work every day. Starting in 2015, being “race equity informed” will be one of six measures used to rate how our staff are performing. The expectation is that staff members understand that race equity and inclusion are essential to achieving the Foundation’s mission, and we work to ensure that all Casey employees have the capacity to perform their role and tasks through an equitable opportunity framework.

[At ABFE, we’ve noticed the role that many Trustees play in advancing effective and responsive philanthropy for Black communities and other communities of color. What has been the role of the Foundation’s Board in shaping your investments in racial equity?](#)

Our Board of Trustees is extremely supportive of the race equity work. The Board’s support comes from their belief that diversity and inclusion is a best business practice. UPS executives comprise the majority of our Board of Trustees. As a global business with over 400,000 employees, UPS must pay attention to issues of race and equity. UPS appreciates the diverse perspectives and experience that its employees have. Their knowledge and awareness of race equity and inclusion allows the Board of Trustees to proudly support the work that they feel we are doing well.

[In addition to leading the Foundation’s investments in this area, you also are instrumental in its efforts to facilitate diversity amongst its staff and grantees. What are the Foundation’s current strategies in this area?](#)

One of the principles that guides the Foundation’s work is its commitment to creative thinking and effective practice through a diverse network of grantees and consultants representing a variety of perspectives about issues related to race, ethnicity and gender.

Casey is committed to reducing racial and ethnic disparities and promoting equity and equitable opportunities in all aspects of its work, including its grantmaking. Over the years, Casey has become more intentional in articulating how our grantmaking and investments will promote equity and equitable opportunities in the issue areas that we support.

Since 2011, Casey has been asking our grantees and consultants to provide basic information on their organizational workforce composition. We collect the information annually and present the survey findings to our senior leadership team and staff. We provide our staff with a few key questions and set up teams to review and analyze disaggregated grantee and consultant data. We are then able to have meaningful discussions about how best to diversify the pool of grantees and consultants.

To facilitate diversity among our staff, we had to change our recruitment strategy. We currently use an internal team to recruit new staff to the Foundation. Our recruitment strategy includes posting job descriptions to diverse sites, advertising among affinity groups, diverse networks and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and recruiting from outside of the nonprofit sector. As a result, we receive a larger pool of racially and ethnically diverse applicants who also have diverse backgrounds and experiences. Similar to the way our grantee and consultant workforce diversity data are presented, our staff diversity data is presented to all staff where we have an opportunity to discuss implications.

We then develop an action plan so that we have a plan and a strategy for holding ourselves accountable. The data is also shared with our Board of Trustees. We also post our staff diversity data on our website annually.

[The Foundation has long been a leader in the field of philanthropy on issues of race, equity and cultural competency. What are some of the factors that you think have helped sustain this work over the course of time?](#)

I think one of the things that have sustained our work over time has been RESPECT, our staff affinity group that focuses on racial, ethnic, and other forms of equity in the Foundation’s grant making, operations and services.

For nearly 18 years, RESPECT has served as an informal place for staff concerned about race, equity, class, culture and power to exchange ideas and raise concerns within the context of Casey’s work in underserved communities. Over the years, RESPECT has evolved into an entity that addresses issues of race, equity, diversity and inclusion by serving as an open forum and safe space, raising staff awareness and understanding, providing information and resources, strengthening staff competencies and providing technical assistance.

RESPECT seeks to change organizational and institutional policies and practices that lead to or sustain inequitable outcomes for kids and families. RESPECT works in collaboration with our Race Equity and Inclusion portfolio as well as other Casey units to promote race equity and inclusion and serves as a model for other foundations and organizations seeking to address race equity and inclusion in their policies and programs. RESPECT’s staff forums, brown bag discussions, Casey-sponsored public events, and trainings are designed to allow staff to build and sustain knowledge about race equity and inclusion issues. ♦



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Dear White People: Black Millennials Give Too

by Ebonie Johnson Cooper,
Chief Millennial Officer,
Friends of Ebonie; Chasity
Cooper, Digital Media
Strategist, Millennial on A
Mission; and Jalisa Whitley,
Principal Consultant, The
Nonprofit Help, LLC

**FRIENDS OF
EBONIE**
CHANGING THE FACE OF PHILANTHROPY

The 2014 satirical film, *Dear White People*, follows four black students at a fictitious Ivy League university illustrating overt and covert racial biases that exist at the university. Based on true events, the film helps to shed light on the diversity challenges faced by black students at traditionally all-white institutions. How does this relate to philanthropy? Philanthropy, conventionally speaking anyway, is associated with the “old, white and wealthy.” The inclusion of communities of color into the philanthropic narrative, while not new, is not yet fully realized. Further, the introduction of a new, younger generation within the African - American community seems almost impossible. Like the students highlighted in the film *Dear White People*, African – American or black millennials are fighting to have their voices heard within a space many would consider out of their league.

Millennials are the most talked about generation of our time. There’s not a day that goes by when the spending habits, living situations and bank accounts of this nation’s largest generation aren’t discussed in the media. And while there are millions of millennials with thousands upon thousands of dollars in student loan debt, there are a large percentage giving back to their favorite nonprofit organizations and charitable causes. The 2014 Millennial Impact Report released by Achieve and the Case Foundation, reports 87% of millennials--those aged 20 to 35--gave a financial gift to nonprofits in 2013. Fantastic. But do all of millennials give alike? What we don’t see reflected in mainstream reports like these is a racial breakdown that offers insight into the giving of the most “ethnically, economically, and socially diverse generation of all time,” according to a report by Edelman Public Relations. If this is true, then why don’t we see a more accurate reflection in millennial giving reporting?

Recently, The Wall Street Journal reported on the philanthropic efforts of the millennial generation. While the article focused on the good work of our generation and it used the widely sourced Millennial Impact Report, WSJ, like many media and non-profit based outlets, failed to recognize the diversity that exists within our generation- starting with the article’s image. Are white millennials the only millennials who give? Where are the black and brown faces that make up most of the generation?



The featured image for the WSJ article.

Continually, while the article provides some knowledge on how to advise millennials to give, it again fails to acknowledge how millennials of color choose to show support to their favorite philanthropies. Connected to Give, a collaborative project that brings together a variety of independent, family and community foundations, provided this insight on the giving habits of millennials of color:

More than one in five African American donors (21%) have participated in giving circles, as have higher proportions of Asian/ Pacific Islander donors (16%), and Hispanic/Latino donors (15%). These are higher rates than among both Jewish donors (14%) and white non-Jewish donors (10%). A particularly striking finding was the age of giving circle participants. Unlike other aspects of charitable giving, giving circle participation is much more strongly related to age than to income: nearly half of all participants are under 40."

Additionally, in April 2013, Friends of Ebonie surveyed 274 African American millennials on their giving habits, yielding the following data:

- 41% of black millennials prefer to give back more in time. 40% prefer to give back both in time and money
- Top three charitable causes : education, women and girls, and mentoring
- 92% said that the biggest influence to donate time to an organization was projects where they feel they can make a difference

- The #1 way black millennials prefer to give their time is through leadership (board leadership, committees work, etc.)

There was even variance within this particular testing group, with 55% of the younger cohort of millennials (aged 20-24) saying that their largest financial gift was \$100 or less, and 45% of the older cohort of millennials (30-34) saying that they gave \$250 at one single time.

Black and brown millennials are as much engaged in community work as non-black millennials, as evidenced in the aforementioned research. So if black and brown millennials are such active givers, how come they aren't being portrayed as such throughout mainstream sector media? Would it have been too unbelievable for the Wall Street Journal to use an image of all black young people?

Diversity is a term that many organizations are utilizing these days from board leadership to donors to volunteers. However, diversity can't be embraced if it isn't celebrated across all mediums. "Black millennials are a part of a rising tide of talent of color in the US that are important for positive social change," shares Dr. Rahsaan Harris, Executive Director of Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy in the Friends of Ebonie report.

Further, Black millennials are the key to long-term sustainability for organizations and causes that focus particularly on the black community. "Black millennials connected to their less well-off family and community members can provide much needed insight to philanthropic efforts aimed at communities of color," said Harris. Leading philanthropy consultant and author, Christal Jackson adds, "by being engaged around creating solutions to problems plaguing their communities, then connecting with the broader community for resources, black millennials can shift the frame of philanthropy." (source)

The shift in philanthropy begins with what we hear and what we see about next gen individuals who give. Seeing millennial faces of color in imagery and learning how to engage with them through research reports is key for long-term growth within the sector. The longer we leave millennials of color out of the conversation, the longer we impede change.

Want to continue the conversation? Join ABFE, along with Friends of Ebonie, on Thursday, January 15, 2015 for Dear Philanthropy: A Necessary Conversation on Millennial Diversity within the Sector. [Register for the webinar >>](#). ♦



ABFE is a membership-based philanthropic organization that advocates for responsive and transformative investments in Black communities. Partnering with foundations, nonprofits and individuals, ABFE provides its members with professional development and technical assistance resources that further the philanthropic sector's connection and responsiveness to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion. Established in 1971 as the Association of Black Foundation Executives, the organization was credited with many of philanthropy's early gains in diversity. It since has evolved into an influential network. In 2013, the organization shed its descriptor and adopted the simpler ABFE (ab-fee) to better reflect its broadening membership. For more information, visit www.abfe.org.

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