

Philanthropy in Indian Country: Who is Giving? Who is Receiving?

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Abstract

Using data from approximately 900 of the largest independent, corporate, community, and operating foundations in the United States covering the period 1988-2002, this paper examines formal philanthropy with regard to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and non-profits serving Native America. Analyses address total giving, top grantmakers and top grant recipients, specific sectors, geography, and the degree to which American Indian tribal governments versus nonprofits benefit from philanthropy. As much as possible, philanthropic trends in Native America are compared to mainstream trends. The paper concludes with recommendations for researchers, foundations, tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations.

Philanthropy in Indian Country: Who is Giving? Who is Receiving?¹

I. Introduction

In the last 15 years, several studies have begun to provide a data-based picture of foundation giving to, and the development of the nonprofit sector within, an oft-overlooked ethnic and political segment of the US population – Native America. The studies focused on philanthropy (Brescia 1990, LaPier 1996, Brimley and Jorgensen 2001) were groundbreaking in their use of national data to calibrate giving to Native causes and concerns. The studies focused on nonprofits serving Native America (Black 1998, revised 2004; Mantila 1999) contributed to the field's understanding of the structure, role, and financing of these organizations.

Yet both sets of studies have important limitations. Brescia and LaPier err by failing to normalize the annual flow of dollars to Native America and by double counting grants that may have been used for more than one purpose. Brimley and Jorgensen suffers from its derivation from a larger, proprietary report to the Ford Foundation and is thus lacking as a comprehensive analysis of sectoral tendencies and activities. Black and Mantila's attempts to survey non-profits serving American Indian tribal communities are plagued by low response rates, which impair the generalizability of the findings beyond their samples.

Further, these papers make few comparisons between Native America and the US mainstream – meaning that research has yet to address the comparisons and distinctions between the funding and development of the mainstream and Native sectors. For example, the mainstream non-profit sector is said to embody great diversity with regard to the level, sources, and mix of funding; agency missions; services provided; paid staff and volunteer pool size; board composition and function; and relationships to other agencies and sectors (Salamon 1999, Salamon 2002, Weitzman et al. 2002). Previous studies of the nonprofit sector in Native America indicate comparable diversity, but more work needs to be done to gain a firm understanding of the sector's contours.

The goal of this paper is to build and improve upon the analyses of its forebears. The methodology section makes explicit the data and measurement challenges in doing this work but also underscores the value of the present approach. The analytic sections that follow highlight important patterns in donor giving, shedding light on questions such as: How much is the foundation sector contributing to Native American causes and concerns? What percentage of foundation giving is directed towards Native American issues? Which foundations are the leaders in addressing Native concerns? In which topic areas are foundations investing? Which and what kind of organizations (for example, nonprofit organizations versus tribal governments) benefit most from foundation giving? When possible, comparisons are made between findings for

¹ The authors would like to thank: Stephen Brimley for compiling the original dataset on which this research expands and for his ongoing input to the project; Catherine Curtis for conducting key follow-up research with Foundation Center staff; the many Foundation Center staff members who provided guidance; Aaron Belkin for locating critical back copies of *Grants to Minorities*; Kimberly Parks for locating various Foundation Center resources within the St. Louis Public Library's Cooperating Collection; and the Ford Foundation and W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which supported parts of the data collection and analysis effort.

Native America and mainstream US philanthropic and nonprofit sector regularities and trends. The paper concludes with research, policy, and practice recommendations for social scientists, philanthropic organizations, Native-oriented nonprofits, and tribal governments.

II. Methodology

The leading repository for information about the dollar value, recipients, and topics of foundation grants is the Foundation Center, an independent nonprofit information clearinghouse that focuses on grantmaking. The Foundation Center maintains a database containing information about more than 75,000 currently active grantmakers and 2.3 million grants, and annually publishes a variety of print and electronic products that describe trends in philanthropy and that itemize and cross-reference grants by donor, recipient, and grant purposes.² It should be noted, however, that much of the information contained in the Center's database and reported in its publications ultimately originates in foundations' tax returns (US Internal Revenue Service form 990-PF).³ These are public documents on which foundations annually report grant amounts, recipients, and purposes. The Foundation Center extracts this information using a keyword search technique and indexes it based on the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE). Grants are assigned various codes, reflecting the many different populations and issues addressed by the nonprofit sector. For instance, "Native American" grants may occur in the subject areas of "education," "human services," "environment," etc.

The research presented here relies on two Foundation Center indices: the *Foundation Grants Index* (for data spanning 1989-1998) and *Grants to Minorities* (for comparable data spanning 1999-2002). Using these references, a dataset was constructed from the "Native American" category.⁴ This dataset contains more than 7,400 philanthropic grants to non-profit organizations and tribal governments made between 1988-2003, which we believe is most complete for the period 1989-2002. Grants were recorded in the nominal dollars of the year they were made and converted to 2002 dollars using annual values of the Consumer Price Index.

While this is the most comprehensive dataset of its kind, it has several important limitations:⁵

² See www.foundationcenter.org. Specific numbers can be found via the "Frequently Asked Questions" page; the source here is fdncenter.org/learn/faqs/html/resource/html (accessed November 2004).

³ From the mid-1990s onward, tax records have dominated the Foundation Center's data collection methodology, although Center researchers also rely on foundations' annual reports and on survey/interview information to construct their data files. We note, though, that these latter sources of information have been more prominent than they are today (see discussion of Foundation Center data and data collection methodology in LaPier 1996).

⁴ This methodology is essentially the same one used by Brescia (1990) and LaPier (1996) although they contracted with the Foundation Center for specific electronic extracts of data. Brimley and Jorgensen (2001) switched to hand extraction of grant information from the *Foundation Grants Index* as a cost-effective means of annually updating the data series. This paper builds on the Brimley and Jorgensen dataset, although it has been updated using *Grants to Minorities* rather than the *Foundation Grants Index*, as the hard copy version of that publication was discontinued in 2001. Conversations with knowledgeable Foundation Center staff and our own analysis of overlapping editions of the two publications confirmed the comparability of these data sources.

⁵ LaPier (1996) also details limitations of the data and methodology, although "intensity" changes in the Foundation Center's reliance on various sources of data (see footnote 3) makes her discussion more relevant for the early 1990s.

- Source publications only include information on “higher dollar-value” grants from the 900 or so largest independent, corporate, community, and operating foundations in the US.⁶ Grants serving Native America that do not meet these criteria are excluded, a practice which may skew analysis. Most foundations give a number of lower-value grants, and some smaller foundations primarily give such gifts. The effect of these exclusions depends on how significant “small” gifts and the giving of smaller foundations are in overall grantmaking to Native causes and concerns.

Despite this concern, our sense is that the dataset captures a substantial and representative share of overall foundation grantmaking to Native America, and that derivative analysis and conclusions increasingly describe the field, not merely the behavior of “large” grantmakers making “large” grants. Several observations support these contentions. First, smaller dollar-value grants appear to constitute a decreasing proportion of total grantmaking to Native America: Both the number and inflation-adjusted average dollar value of Native American grants listed in our database increased over time, which means that grants of \$10,000 and above are growing both larger and more numerous. Because “small” grants automatically become “large” at the \$10,000 cut point, small grants would maintain or increase their share of the total dollar value of Native American grants only if their numbers and size grew very quickly *and* the individual grants’ dollar values were still below the \$10,000 ceiling. Second, the foundations whose activities are captured in the *Foundation Grants Index* and *Grants for Minorities* publications constitute a substantial proportion of the foundation sector’s overall grantmaking resources; in 2002, for example, the 50 largest foundations by total giving accounted for 27 percent of the sector’s grantmaking resources.⁷ This means that the smaller foundations, whose activity is not captured in our dataset, are unlikely to be giving enough to substantially change the average picture derived from these data.⁸

- The Foundation Center uses keyword searches to categorize its data, which leads to errors of exclusion and inclusion. For example, keywords such as “American Indian,” “Native American,” “tribal,” and “reservation” are used to compile the population category. Errors of exclusion arise if these critical words and phrases do not appear in the grantee organization’s name or in the grant description. Given the size of the Foundation Center’s databank, the potential impact of such

⁶ In the source publications and, hence, in this dataset, “higher dollar value” grants were defined as grants of \$5,000 or above until 1991 and \$10,000 or above from 1992 onward.

⁷ These calculations are based on information in the tables “50 Largest Foundations by Total Giving, 2002” and “Aggregate Fiscal Data by Foundation Type, 2002 (National Level)” available at fdncenter.org/fc_stats/listing01.html (accessed November 2004). We also note that *The Foundation Grants Index, 2000* reports on 915 funders that “represent only 2 percent of the total number of active, grantmaking foundations [although] their giving accounts for half of total grant dollars awarded by all US independent, corporate, community and grantmaking operations in 1999” (*The Foundation Grants Index, 2000*, New York: The Foundation Center, p. vii).

⁸ Of course, expanding the analysis to include grants less than \$10,000 and grants made by smaller foundations is desirable. The former is possible only through anecdotal research on individual foundations’ activity; the latter is the focus of a dissertation project by author Sarah Hicks, which reports on the broader donor universe tracked in the Foundation Center tool *FC Search*.

errors on the analysis at hand is unknown.⁹ Errors of inclusion are easier to correct. The mechanical keyword approach includes grants that it certainly should not and, in other cases, a somewhat broader pool of grants than is relevant for our analysis.¹⁰ We have conducted a hand search of the data and appropriately narrowed our extract, and are confident that few of these errors remain.

- The extract from Foundation Center records used in this analysis was compiled by hand (information was hand-transcribed from printed sources and hand-entered into an Access database), which may have led to errors in copying and entry.¹¹

III. Basic Measures

Tables and Figures 1 and 2 provide an overview of foundation grantmaking to Native American causes and concerns by showing the annual number of grants made from 1989 to 2002 and the total dollar value of this activity. Obviously, large foundations' giving to Native America is increasing. The number of grants rose from 301 in 1989 to 504 in 2002, and total inflation-adjusted annual grantmaking rose from \$33 million to \$92 million. Yet it may be more accurate to consider the three-year averages, as they smooth economic vagaries (the short-term spikes and dips that grant funding that are not part of the overall trend) and the fact that many grants are for periods greater than one year. According to these statistics, the total number of grants increased

⁹ Private work by the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development helps calibrate the problem: In the period 1993-2002, Foundation Center data on W.K. Kellogg Foundation giving to Native America captured 77 percent of the foundation's self-identified Native grants, and in the period 1989-1998, Foundation Center data on Ford Foundation giving captured 87 percent of that foundation's self-identified Native grants. In other words, most but not all relevant grants show up in the Foundation Center's coding of grants serving Native America.

¹⁰ An example of a mechanically included but completely irrelevant grant is one made to the Massachusetts-based organization "Trustees of Reservations." In Massachusetts, state-owned parks and conservation areas are often called "reservations," and thus, the grant is to a conservation group, not a Native American concern. The "broader pool" referenced above refers to the fact that the Foundation Center's "Native American" category captures many grants to indigenous groups in Canada, Mexico, and other parts of Latin and South America.

¹¹ There was a movement in the 1990s to increase transparency in the philanthropic sector, the goals of which were to generate a reasonably complete and accurate pool of data about the sector and to increase the ease with which information could be accessed. The Foundation Center was tapped to facilitate the change; in particular, foundation tax records were made more readily available to its researchers. Yet the movement's goals have been only partially satisfied. There is today a much more complete data record of the philanthropic sector's work and investments, but ease of access remains an issue. The main stumbling blocks are cost and the completeness and historical comparability of records in the Foundation Center's publicly available electronic sources. The first issue is that the Foundation Center charges relatively steep fees for database searches – which would need to be conducted annually – so there is no reasonable cost-effective alternative to hand creation of a database from print sources. The second issue is that *FC Search* is neither a fully historical tool (it does not include information for more than the last several years of grantmaking), nor does it report the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) category assignments made by the Foundation Center in the same way as the *Foundation Grants Index* did (some of the *FC Search* category assignments deviate from the "major group index" of the NTEE system used in the *Foundation Grants Index* to provide more detailed, subcategory descriptions). These facts mean that data series arising from a combination of print sources for older records and electronic sources for newer records are incompatible. Finally, *FC Search* departs from the *Foundation Grants Index*'s practice of assigning each grant a unique identification number, inhibiting the ability of researchers to assess whether a particular grant is duplicated in a search or to verify if, for example, a grantmaker really gave two \$50,000 grants to the same organization for the same purpose in the same year.

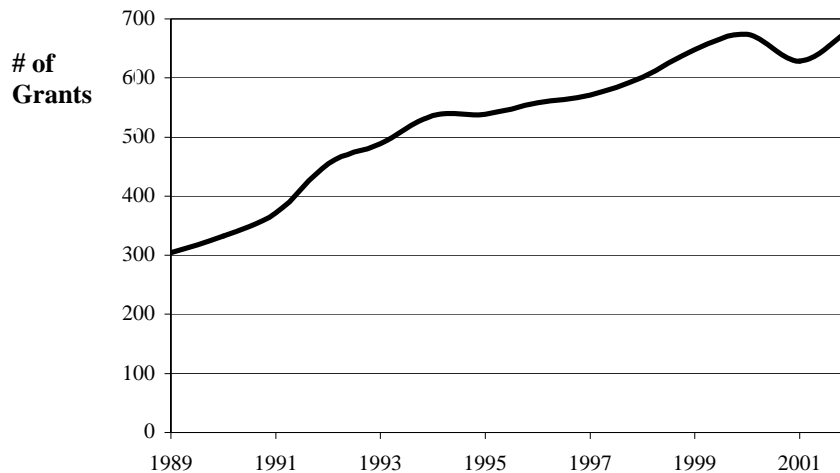
by 89 percent from 1990 to 2001, and the combined dollar value of grants increased by 161 percent. Also positive is the fact that between 1989 and 2002, approximately 60 percent of the 900 or so largest foundations in the US made grants in support of Native causes and concerns.

Table 1 and Figure 1. Total Number of Grants Made by Large Foundations to Native American Causes and Concerns, 1989-2002

| Year | # of Grants | 3-Year Running Average |
|------|-------------|------------------------|
| 1989 | 301 | 305* |
| 1990 | 292 | 332 |
| 1991 | 404 | 372 |
| 1992 | 420 | 455 |
| 1993 | 541 | 489 |
| 1994 | 505 | 536 |
| 1995 | 563 | 539 |
| 1996 | 549 | 558 |
| 1997 | 561 | 571 |
| 1998 | 603 | 602 |
| 1999 | 641 | 648 |
| 2000 | 699 | 674 |
| 2001 | 682 | 628 |
| 2002 | 504 | 684* |

Changes in 3-Year Running Average, 1990-2001

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Absolute Increase: | 296 |
| Percent Increase: | 89% |
| Increase Factor: | 1.89 |



Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

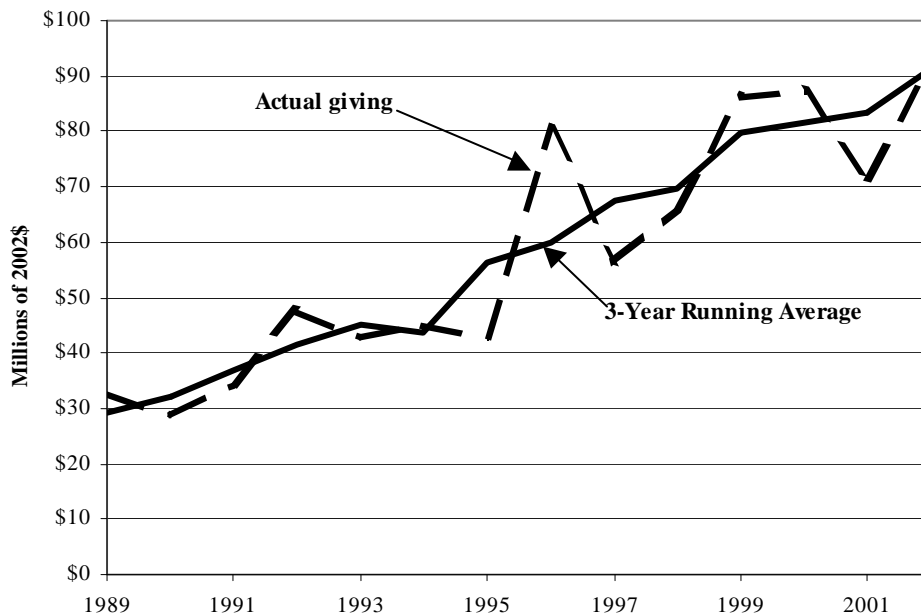
* Estimate based on the average annual rate of growth of the three-year running average.

Table 2 and Figure 2. Combined Value of Grants Made by Large Foundations' to Native American Causes and Concerns, 1989-2002 (2002\$)

| Year | Total \$ | 3-Year Running Average |
|------|--------------|------------------------|
| 1989 | \$32,965,720 | \$29,292,737* |
| 1990 | \$28,900,776 | \$32,048,845 |
| 1991 | \$34,280,038 | \$36,902,551 |
| 1992 | \$47,526,840 | \$41,635,321 |
| 1993 | \$43,099,086 | \$45,303,443 |
| 1994 | \$45,284,402 | \$43,833,709 |
| 1995 | \$43,117,638 | \$56,277,882 |
| 1996 | \$80,431,606 | \$59,951,374 |
| 1997 | \$56,304,878 | \$67,563,207 |
| 1998 | \$65,953,138 | \$69,526,614 |
| 1999 | \$86,321,827 | \$79,878,856 |
| 2000 | \$87,361,604 | \$81,680,775 |
| 2001 | \$71,358,894 | \$83,556,586 |
| 2002 | \$91,949,260 | \$91,418,292* |

Changes in 3-Year Running Average, 1990-2001

Absolute Increase: \$51,507,741
 Percent Increase: 161%
 Increase Factor: 2.61



Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

* Estimate based on the average annual rate of growth of the three-year running average.

A less positive finding is that American Indian causes and concerns receive a very small share of the pie – and this share appears relatively unchanged over the long decade captured by our data-

base.¹² The Native American grantmaking by large US foundations accounted for a mere 0.287 percent of independent, corporate, community and operating foundations' overall grantmaking resources in 1989, a statistic which apparently rose to 0.302 percent in 2002 (see Table and Figure 3).¹³ But here the "smoothed," running average figures are more telling (again, these figures help account for national economic fluctuations and longer-term grants). In these terms, large foundations' giving to Native America accounted for some 0.270 percent of foundations' overall grantmaking resources in 1990 and rose to only 0.279 percent by 2001. The explanation is that while grantmaking to Native American causes and concerns rose 161 percent over the period, the sector's overall, inflation-adjusted grantmaking resources increased approximately 153 percent (based on three-year running averages) – that is, Native grantmaking was growing at only a slightly faster rate than overall grantmaking resources. Indeed, in the mid-1990s (the "go-go" stock market days), foundation resources were increasing at a *faster* rate than their investments in Native communities.

Here we stress that even if it were possible to include grants under \$10,000 and grants from smaller foundations in the analysis, it is unlikely that grantmaking to American Indian issues totals any more than 0.5 percent of the US foundation sector's overall resources. This percentage calls attention to the substantial gap between the amount of funding directed toward Native America (less than 0.5 percent) and the population size (1.5 percent of the total US population). In the face of still other considerations – such as the proportion of Native Americans who are poor, tribes' major institution-building and service provision needs, and the sheer volume of innovative approaches to social and civic concerns evolving in Native America – this lack of foundation engagement is truly startling. The finding not only signals underinvestment in Native issues but also leads to the suspicion that many funders who *do* support Native causes and concerns are making only nominal grants to the community and do not view grantmaking to Native America as terribly relevant or interesting to their work overall.

¹² The word "appears" in this sentence reflects our lack of knowledge about exactly how the smaller foundations are allocating their grantmaking resources and for what purposes grants of less than \$10,000 are being made. Even so, we stand by our contention in the methodology section that the data at hand are likely to reflect tendencies in the sector, and thus, the most likely conclusion *is* that the share of the pie received by Native American causes and concerns has increased only slightly over the last 14 years.

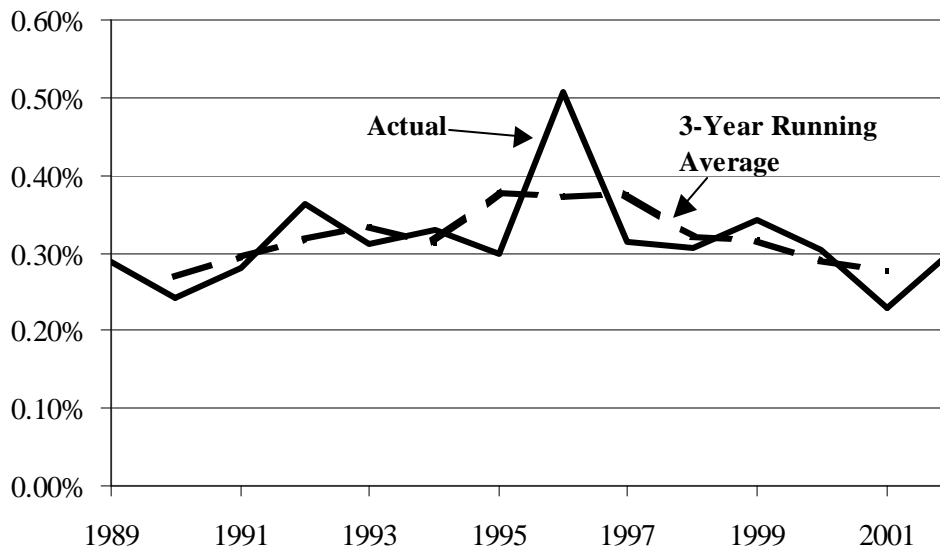
¹³ In an earlier paper (Brimley and Jorgensen, "Grantmaking to Native American Causes and Concerns," Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, June 2001, table and figure 3), it was reported that Native American causes and concerns received less than one-twentieth of one percent of foundation resources (<0.05 percent), as opposed to less than one half a percent (<0.5 percent). That calculation was based on an incorrect denominator – the estimate of all philanthropic spending each year (including foundation giving, corporate giving, and critically, individuals' philanthropic giving). This paper corrects the error.

Table 3 and Figure 3. Percentage of Foundation Grantmaking Resources Committed to Native American Causes and Concerns, 1989-2002

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Annual Total</u> | <u>3-Year Running Average</u> |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1989 | 0.28726% | ... |
| 1990 | 0.24191% | 0.27032% |
| 1991 | 0.28178% | 0.29557% |
| 1992 | 0.36301% | 0.31880% |
| 1993 | 0.31159% | 0.33501% |
| 1994 | 0.33042% | 0.31332% |
| 1995 | 0.29794% | 0.37841% |
| 1996 | 0.50685% | 0.37301% |
| 1997 | 0.31424% | 0.37607% |
| 1998 | 0.30712% | 0.32138% |
| 1999 | 0.34278% | 0.31777% |
| 2000 | 0.30339% | 0.29216% |
| 2001 | 0.23031% | 0.27861% |
| 2002 | 0.30215% | ... |

Changes in 3-Year Running Average, 1990-2001

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Absolute Increase | 0.00829 |
| Percent Increase | 3% |
| Increase Factor | 1.03 |



Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

IV. Grantor Involvement

While they are instructive for initial comparison purposes, the gross statistics presented in Tables and Figures 1-3 deserve closer scrutiny. To begin, it is useful to list the top 25 players and break out their specific activity levels over the study period, both in terms of grants awarded and the total dollar value of those grants. Table 4 provides this information.

Table 4. Top 25 Foundation Donors by Grantmaking Dollars, 1989-2002 (2002\$)

| Rank | Foundation | Total \$ | # of Grants |
|------|---|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Ford Foundation | \$92,263,185 | 363 |
| 2 | W.K. Kellogg Foundation | \$81,968,764 | 276 |
| 3 | Lilly Endowment, Inc. | \$74,005,415 | 38 |
| 4 | Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | \$71,557,215 | 160 |
| 5 | Northwest Area Foundation | \$37,652,713 | 106 |
| 6 | Bush Foundation | \$36,778,880 | 319 |
| 7 | Lannan Foundation | \$31,943,894 | 177 |
| 8 | David and Lucile Packard Foundation | \$27,283,898 | 209 |
| 9 | Educational Foundation of America | \$26,593,657 | 157 |
| 10 | California Endowment | \$20,064,275 | 72 |
| 11 | McKnight Foundation | \$19,566,225 | 168 |
| 12 | Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation | \$16,709,812 | 122 |
| 13 | John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation | \$15,948,956 | 109 |
| 14 | Otto Bremer Foundation | \$11,923,070 | 400 |
| 15 | Charles Stewart Mott Foundation | \$9,966,101 | 67 |
| 16 | Rockefeller Foundation | \$9,348,176 | 95 |
| 17 | M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust | \$7,697,244 | 32 |
| 18 | US WEST Foundation | \$7,455,190 | 157 |
| 19 | William and Flora Hewlett Foundation | \$7,436,625 | 37 |
| 20 | Wallace Foundation | \$7,113,634 | 23 |
| 21 | Kresge Foundation | \$5,624,403 | 13 |
| 22 | California Wellness Foundation | \$4,810,141 | 23 |
| 23 | John S. and James L. Knight Foundation | \$4,559,298 | 31 |
| 24 | Meyer Memorial Trust | \$4,550,389 | 25 |
| 25 | Pew Charitable Trusts | \$4,525,787 | 16 |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

A first observation about this list is that it would differ somewhat from lists compiled using nominal (non-inflation-adjusted) grant amounts, the approach of some earlier work. Here, all grants are translated into comparable dollar terms, so that earlier dollars, which have been subject to less inflation, are appropriately accorded greater value. Inflation adjustment thus provides the most accurate estimate of foundations' cumulative investments in Native America.

A second observation is the great "market concentration" in grantmaking to Native American causes and concerns. The record of the past 14 years is that a mere 25 foundations contributed

more than 78 percent of the total resources transferred to Native America that are tracked in our dataset. Indeed, the top ten contributed 61 percent of the resources.

A closer look at the activities and outreach undertaken by specific foundations is also revealing. For example, despite the common perception that the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Native American grantmaking is "education focused," the data show that from 1989 to 2002, its Native American grantmaking occurred across 21 NTEE subject areas and in 29 different states. Certainly, the foundation *is* a strong supporter of American Indian educational institutions and efforts, as best demonstrated by its \$30 million "Native American Higher Education Initiative," a project that alone accounted for more than half of the 1996 spike in sector grantmaking to Native causes and concerns.¹⁴ The statistics nonetheless demonstrate that the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's grants have been multidimensional (awarded in support of Native education and *other issues*), a cross-cutting approach that has underwritten the organization's broad impact in Native America. Among top grantmakers, only the Ford Foundation and Otto Bremer Foundation came close to supporting as many programmatic areas (working in 21 and 20 NTEE categories respectively), and only the Ford Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reached more states in the same period (their Native grantmaking occurred in 30 states).

The Lilly Endowment's grantmaking serves as an important contrast. From 1989-2002, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indian and Western Art received the bulk of Lilly Endowment grants coded as "Native American" through the Foundation Center keyword search process (53 percent of the Native-coded monies and 28 of its 38 Native-coded grants).¹⁵ One conclusion to be drawn from this example is that a large investment in Native American causes and concerns may not equate with broad outreach; Lilly is ranked as a top grantmaker, but its giving spans only six NTEE categories and reaches only six states. Another lesson is that many foundations, especially those with strong local roots, are committed to giving in their locality or region (the Eiteljorg Museum and the Lilly Endowment are both located in Indianapolis). To the extent that other major foundations have a local focus, the success that individuals and institutions seeking support for American Indian causes and concerns have will be limited. Unless Native individuals and Indian-oriented organizations make a concerted effort to connect themselves to such grantmakers, and unless such grantmakers are made increasingly aware of the fact that American Indian issues and concerns are truly *everywhere*, it is all too easy for Native concerns to fall off these foundations' geographically focused radar screens.

The Northwest Area Foundation is an interesting addition to the list. It is one of only a handful of other top donors to Native American causes and concerns that is not also a "national" donor, with a nationally ranked asset base, nationally ranked annual grantmaking, and a national focus for its work (see Table 6). Thus by contrast to many other top donors, the Northwest Area Foundation is a smaller scale, local/regional foundation, and in these terms, plays a disproportionately large role in the sector. An examination of the Northwest Area Foundation's mission and

¹⁴ See www.wkkf.org/Pubs/YouthED/Pub3723.pdf (accessed November 2004).

¹⁵ Here we stress that it is the Foundation Center coding process and not the Lilly Endowment itself that labels grants to the Eiteljorg Museum as serving Native causes and concerns. But even when the Museum is dropped from the reckoning, the Lilly Endowment is still a central player. The organization's non-Eiteljorg Native-coded inflation-adjusted giving totaled \$33,639,929 in the period 1989-2002, which still placed it sixth on the top donors list.

purpose suggest that the large number of American Indian nations and large Native population in its mandated service area have motivated the Northwest Area Foundation to make a strong commitment to Native American causes and concerns.¹⁶

Yet the Northwest Area Foundation's activity also is linked to an important statistic describing philanthropy toward Native America. Earlier studies (Brescia 1990, LaPier 1996) noted that grantees located in Minnesota capture a sizable portion of the grant dollars flowing to Native causes and concerns. In the period examined here (a longer period than the earlier studies), the finding holds. Minnesota-based grantees garnered 20 percent of the grants and 12 percent of the grant dollars flowing to Native America (see Table 13). Thus, Native grantmaking by the Northwest Area Foundation and, similarly, by other Minnesota-based entrants on the top grantmakers list – the Bush Foundation (6th), McKnight Foundation (11th), Otto Bremer Foundation (14th), Blandin Foundation (29th), General Mills Foundation (30th), and Minneapolis Foundation (31st) – is part and parcel of a larger phenomenon, one that might best be described as a “virtuous cycle” of grantmaking. According to the Minnesota Council on Foundations, “although Minnesota accounts for less than 2 percent of the nation’s total foundations, it consistently maintains its top ten ranking [in foundation giving per capita] due to the high level of giving per foundation and the high level of corporate giving.”¹⁷ On the other side of the equation, Minnesota is a stronghold of liberal activism (it was the home state of both Hubert Humphrey and Walter Mondale, for example), including activism on Indian issues (the American Indian Movement is headquartered in Minneapolis). In other words, both in general and on Indian issues in particular, grantmakers and grantseekers in the state are extremely active, with the result being that organizations working on Native issues receive a large number of grants and high total of grant dollars. As seekers get used to applying, grantors get used to giving, and the cycle reinforces itself.

Table 5 raises the point that the universe of donors to Native America is in great flux. In the first seven years captured by our database, the most active funders tended to be of three types: nationally ranked and nationally involved independent foundations, many with roots in private fortunes earned in the early 20th century; foundations drawn in through the “Minnesota effect”; and a few corporate foundations with Western interests. In the second seven-year period captured by the data, this characterization changes somewhat. Again there are the nationally ranked and nationally focused foundations, although several rising stars and new entrants were capitalized through earnings from newer, later 20th century technology-based industries. And again there is the Minnesota effect, although only the Northwest Area Foundation held its position; all the rest fell in the rankings of large-dollar donors. Noteworthy changes include the exit of corporate foundations from the top-25 list and the entry of a community foundation.

¹⁶ There are 75 federally recognized Indian nations in the Northwest Area Foundation's eight-state service area (Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon). According to the 2000 Census, 14.9 percent of the total American Indian population, and more than 25 percent of the reservation-based American Indian population, lives in these eight states (Ogunwole 2002, Taylor 2004, also see Table 14).

¹⁷ www.mcf.org/mcf/giving/faq.htm (accessed May 2001).

Table 5. Top 25 Foundation Donors by Grantmaking Dollars (2002\$), Changing Ranks Over Time

| 1989-1995 | | | 1996-2002 | | |
|-----------|--|--------|-----------------|--|--------|
| Rank | Foundation | Mil \$ | Rank +/- | Foundation | Mil \$ |
| 1 | Ford Foundation | \$35.3 | +4 | Lilly Endowment Inc. | \$59.6 |
| 2 | W.K. Kellogg Foundation | \$30.8 | -1 | Ford Foundation | \$57.0 |
| 3 | Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | \$25.0 | -1 | W.K. Kellogg Foundation | \$51.2 |
| 4 | Bush Foundation | \$15.3 | -1 | Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | \$46.5 |
| 5 | Lilly Endowment Inc. | \$14.4 | +15 | Lannan Foundation | \$29.9 |
| 6 | John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fdn | \$12.9 | +15 | David and Lucile Packard Foundation | \$25.5 |
| 7 | Northwest Area Foundation | \$12.7 | 0 | Northwest Area Foundation | \$25.0 |
| 8 | McKnight Foundation | \$11.4 | -4 | Bush Foundation | \$21.4 |
| 9 | Educational Foundation of America | \$10.3 | Founded '96 | California Endowment | \$20.0 |
| 10 | US WEST Foundation | \$6.0 | Founded '00 | Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation | \$16.7 |
| 11 | Wallace Foundation | \$4.8 | -2 | Educational Foundation of America | \$16.3 |
| 12 | Otto Bremer Foundation | \$4.6 | -4 | McKnight Foundation | \$8.1 |
| 13 | Rockefeller Foundation | \$4.1 | -1 | Otto Bremer Foundation | \$7.3 |
| 14 | Charles Stewart Mott Foundation | \$3.5 | 0 | Charles Stewart Mott Foundation | \$6.5 |
| 15 | Pew Charitable Trusts | \$3.4 | +10 | M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust | \$6.0 |
| 16 | Blandin Foundation | \$2.9 | +7 | William and Flora Hewlett Foundation | \$5.7 |
| 17 | Kresge Foundation | \$2.5 | -4 | Rockefeller Foundation | \$5.3 |
| 18 | General Mills Foundation | \$2.3 | +18 | California Wellness Foundation | \$3.8 |
| 19 | Meyer Memorial Trust | \$2.1 | +26 | William Randolph Hearst Foundation | \$3.5 |
| 20 | Lannan Foundation | \$2.1 | -3 | Kresge Foundation | \$3.1 |
| 21 | David and Lucile Packard Foundation | \$1.8 | -15 | John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fdn | \$3.0 |
| 22 | John S. and James L. Knight Foundation | \$1.8 | +19 | Public Welfare Foundation, Inc. | \$3.0 |
| 23 | William and Flora Hewlett Foundation | \$1.8 | -1 | John S. and James L. Knight Foundation | \$2.8 |
| 24 | Hearst Foundation, Inc. | \$1.7 | First Grant '96 | Turner Foundation, Inc. | \$2.6 |
| 25 | M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust | \$1.7 | +37 | Minneapolis Foundation | \$2.6 |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

There are several emerging players of note. One is the Lannan Foundation. Until the mid-1990s, this foundation was little involved in Native America. But in 1994, it began concentrated programming in Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native issue areas through its “Indigenous Communities Program.” According to the foundation’s webpage, the program “supports the resolve of native people to renew their communities through their own institutions and traditions” and funds projects “that are consistent with traditional values in the areas of environmental protection and advocacy, legal rights, language revitalization, education and culture.”¹⁸ According to the Lannan Foundation report, “Funding in Indigenous Communities,” the program provided over \$30 million in support of Native American concerns from 1994-1998.¹⁹ Remark-

¹⁸ www.lannan.org/ICP/intro.htm (accessed May 2001).

¹⁹ The Foundation Center data report a much lower sum for the same period (approximately \$9 million). The sources of the difference are threefold: (1) coding discrepancies between the Lannan Foundation and Foundation Center; (2) reporting and publication lags (by 2000, the database shows Lannan giving at \$26 million); and 3) the fact that foundation investments may take non-grant forms.

ably, the *sources* of the foregoing statements provide additional instructive detail. The Lannan Foundation is one of the few “Top 25” to immediately signal on its web homepage that it funds Native concerns (another is the Educational Foundation of America²⁰). Likewise, its special report represents one of the few efforts by a major foundation to evaluate its progress in assisting Native people. The Lannan Foundation report was specifically developed as “an internal organizational learning process and tool, and as an external learning report that can be shared with grantees, colleagues, friends, policymakers and a wide variety of donors.”²¹

While founded relatively recently (January 2000), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has a longer history, as it was formed through the merger of the Gates Learning Foundation and the William H. Gates Foundation. These foundations’ involvement in Native America is more similar to the Lannan Foundation’s – a long period of minimal involvement, but at a point, that involvement skyrocketed. According to our database, the main vehicle for this change was the Native American Access to Technology Program, which (notably) made many grants directly to tribal governments.²² But the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s own records also show significant recent investments in Native American higher education through the Gates Millennium Scholars Program. These scholarships are awarded by the American Indian Graduate Center under a subcontract from the United Negro College Fund. Unfortunately, because the funds flow first to a non-Native organization, the Foundation Center coding methodology fails to identify the money that ultimately flows to Native people as grantmaking to Native America. If it did, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s position on the “top donors” list would be even higher.

The Public Welfare Foundation (PWF) is “a non-governmental grant-making organization dedicated to supporting organizations that provide services to disadvantaged populations and work for lasting improvements in the delivery of services that meet basic human needs.”²³ Given this description, one might assume that the Foundation’s Native work has centered on human services provision. It has not. Instead, environmental concerns are the single issue area in which the PWF appears to have been most active in Indian Country. This suggests that the foundation takes a multidisciplinary approach to public welfare; indeed, its website goes on to note that “grants have been awarded in the areas of criminal justice, disadvantaged elderly and youth, environment, population, health, community and economic development, human rights and technology assistance.” Our sense is that this is an approach that resonates well in Native America. We also observe that not only has PWF been a long-time player in Native America (it was awarding grants to Native entities in 1989 all the way through to 2002), but its commitment

²⁰ The Educational Foundation of America (EFA) lists “Native American Issues” as a funding area on its homepage (www.efaw.org), and a potential grantee finds these statements just one click away: “Improving the lives and preserving the culture of North American native people has long been the goal of EFA’s native grant giving. EFA will maintain its funding commitment to Native American issues, especially those that educate children and tribal communities as a whole; ensure growth and cultural sustainability; promote environmental conservation of native lands; encourage better health habits; and foster artistic expressions and historical preservation” (accessed May 2001).

²¹ Among major foundations, we also know that the Ford Foundation and W.K. Kellogg Foundation have undertaken similar, although less public efforts.

²² See www.gatesfoundation.org/Libraries/NativeAmericanAccessTechnology/default.htm (accessed November 2004).

²³ See www.publicwelfare.org/about/about.asp (accessed November 2004).

was rising in volume (number of grants) on a more or less annual basis (pushing up its ranking in total dollars granted to Native America). What accounts for this trend? Certainly, there is a good fit between Native America's needs and the foundation's mission, but there are many foundations with missions that have a good fit with Native America's needs that nonetheless invest little (see below). One possibility is that the PWF has found that Indian Country, with its diversity of inter-related environment and public welfare-related problems and its diversity of responses to those concerns, is a crucible for knowledge generation about what might work in other settings.

A final observation about the grantors to Native American causes and concerns arises from Table 6, which compares the most active grantmakers to Native America (in terms of dollars invested) to the national list of foundations with the largest grantmaking resources. The striking finding is that a number of major players in the sector give very little to Native causes and concerns. While this may be understandable for corporate foundations such as the Bristol-Myers Squibb Patient Assistance Foundation and the Janssen Ortho Patient Assistance Foundation, whose missions may be so specific as to exclude investments in Native issues, it is difficult to muster the same excuse for many of the other low contributors on the list, which have broader scopes and more obvious intersections with Native America's innovations and needs.

Table 6. Top 25 Foundations Nationally by Total 2002 Giving (2002\$)

| Nat'l Rank | Foundation | Total Giving, 2002 only | Rank in Giving to Native America | Native American Giving, 1996-2002 |
|------------|---|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation | \$1,158,292,441 | 10 | \$16,709,812 |
| 2 | Lilly Endowment | \$557,097,523 | 1 | \$59,593,892 |
| 3 | Ford Foundation | \$509,700,353 | 2 | \$56,992,881 |
| 4 | Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | \$360,347,466 | 4 | \$46,528,099 |
| 5 | David and Lucille Packard Foundation | \$350,048,020 | 6 | \$25,471,971 |
| 6 | Bristol-Myers Squibb Patient Assistance Fdn | \$297,134,526 | 179 | \$150,685 |
| 7 | Pew Charitable Trusts | \$238,534,822 | 47 | \$1,114,020 |
| 8 | Andrew W. Mellon Foundation | \$222,662,386 | 30 | \$2,276,072 |
| 9 | Starr Foundation | \$209,301,410 | 175 | \$156,571 |
| 10 | John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fdn | \$195,573,328 | 21 | \$3,017,002 |
| 11 | Annenberg Foundation | \$192,070,571 | 348 | \$24,525 |
| 12 | W.K. Kellogg Foundation | \$176,303,269 | 3 | \$51,167,364 |
| 13 | William and Flora Hewlett Foundation | \$168,214,000 | 16 | \$5,673,368 |
| 14 | Annie E. Casey Foundation | \$159,309,655 | 108 | \$390,179 |
| 15 | Janssen Ortho Patient Assistance Fdn | \$155,304,420 | No rank | \$0 |
| 16 | California Endowment | \$153,440,691 | 9 | \$20,064,275 |
| 17 | Rockefeller Foundation | \$149,159,867 | 17 | \$5,283,886 |
| 18 | Open Society Institute | \$130,683,149 | 73 | \$710,248 |
| 19 | New York Community Trust | \$126,484,987 | 190 | \$137,161 |
| 20 | Robert W. Woodruff Foundation | \$122,731,185 | 173 | \$156,705 |
| 21 | Duke Endowment | \$120,622,142 | 78 | \$626,579 |
| 22 | Charles Stewart Mott Foundation | \$108,659,450 | 14 | \$6,464,969 |
| 23 | Wal-Mart Foundation | \$103,000,000 | 443 | \$10,000 |
| 24 | Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation | \$100,951,353 | 140 | \$222,551 |
| 25 | Kresge Foundation | \$98,974,162 | 20 | \$3,085,133 |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

V. Grant Purposes

Foundations' leading areas of grantmaking emphasis can be determined from the National Center for Exempt Entities "subject area" codes. The one complication in this process is the fact that grants may serve multiple purposes and may be coded as relevant to more than one subject area. When total investments in various subject areas are compared, multiple subject codes give rise to double counting. In order to characterize investment totals more accurately, this analysis divides each grant's dollar amount evenly between its coded subject areas. While the method is still inaccurate, as it is impossible to truly untangle how much of each grant goes to each purpose, we believe the method is a better way to understand foundations' emphases, because it does not overvalue a particular emphasis when a donor clearly meant for the investment to be multidimensional. As an example of our methodology, in 1996 the Lannan Foundation awarded the Yankton Sioux Tribe a grant of \$57,330 (inflation-adjusted dollars). The grant was identified as relevant to the areas of "arts, culture, and humanities," "community improvement and development," and "human services," and thus, \$19,110 (one-third) was allocated to each category. All sums for Native American giving presented below are based on this allocation process.

Table 7. Large Foundations' Giving to Native American Causes and Concerns by Grant Purpose (2002\$), 1989-2002

| Rank | Category | Total Grantmaking 1989-2002 | % of Grant Funds | Total Grants | Average Grant Amt |
|------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Education | \$199,984,272 | 24.5% | 1,532 | \$130,565 |
| 2 | Arts, Culture, & Humanities | \$131,035,952 | 16.1% | 1,169 | \$112,126 |
| 3 | Community Improvemt & Developmt | \$84,179,541 | 10.3% | 674 | \$124,979 |
| 4 | Health | \$74,824,888 | 9.2% | 490 | \$152,884 |
| 5 | Environment | \$54,903,495 | 6.7% | 426 | \$128,801 |
| 6 | Public Affairs & Government | \$42,947,785 | 5.3% | 302 | \$142,015 |
| 7 | Human Services | \$42,582,856 | 5.2% | 663 | \$64,213 |
| 8 | Mental Health & Substance Abuse | \$35,777,250 | 4.4% | 214 | \$167,418 |
| 9 | Civil Rights | \$35,332,969 | 4.3% | 292 | \$121,162 |
| 10 | Crime, Courts, & Legal Services | \$25,007,572 | 3.1% | 187 | \$133,480 |
| 11 | Science | \$23,104,152 | 2.8% | 296 | \$78,112 |
| 12 | Social Science | \$15,274,150 | 1.9% | 156 | \$97,995 |
| 13 | Youth Development | \$10,208,718 | 1.3% | 163 | \$62,823 |
| 14 | Employment | \$8,831,222 | 1.1% | 142 | \$62,126 |
| 15 | Housing & Shelter | \$7,304,808 | 0.9% | 162 | \$45,208 |
| 16 | Religion | \$5,341,807 | 0.7% | 123 | \$43,376 |
| 17 | Food, Nutrition & Agriculture | \$5,311,938 | 0.7% | 82 | \$64,859 |
| 18 | International Affairs & Development | \$4,277,408 | 0.5% | 49 | \$86,939 |
| 19 | Recreation, Sports, & Athletics | \$3,029,043 | 0.4% | 54 | \$55,596 |
| 20 | Philanthropy & Volunteerism | \$2,998,527 | 0.4% | 28 | \$106,772 |
| 21 | Animals & Wildlife | \$1,660,909 | 0.2% | 36 | \$45,776 |
| 22 | Safety & Disaster Relief | \$614,882 | 0.1% | 5 | \$129,449 |
| 23 | Medical Research | \$321,565 | 0.0% | 4 | \$74,207 |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

Table 7 ranks the large foundations' topics of emphasis. It shows that in the period 1989-2002, large foundations' giving to Native American causes and concerns was concentrated on "education" (24.5 percent of total funding), "arts, culture, and humanities" (16.1 percent), "community improvement and development" (10.3 percent), and health issues (9.2 percent).

One remarkable finding from this rank list is how similar the distribution of funds across top giving categories is to the foundations' overall distribution of funds, regardless of population served (Table 8). While national data are available only for the time period 1998-2002, the aggregation shows that 25.4 percent of large foundations' *overall* giving was concentrated on "education" and that "health" and "arts, culture, and humanities" each received 12.9 percent of large foundations' grant monies.

Table 8. Large Foundations' Giving by Grant Purpose, 1998-2002, distribution for all grantmaking and distribution for Native grantmaking

| Category | All Grantmaking, 1998-2002 | Grantmaking to Native America, 1998-2002 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Education | 25.4% | 25.9% |
| Arts, Culture & Humanities | 12.9% | 15.1% |
| Health | 12.9% | 10.3% |
| Human Services | 6.9% | 5.4% |
| Environment | 5.1% | 8.3% |
| Community Improvement & Development | 3.9% | 9.0% |
| Medical Research | 3.8% | 0.0% |
| Philanthropy & Volunteerism | 3.5% | 0.3% |
| Science | 3.3% | 3.2% |
| International Affairs & Development | 2.8% | 0.6% |
| Public Affairs & Government | 2.7% | 6.5% |
| Religion | 2.3% | 0.5% |
| Social Science | 2.2% | 1.8% |
| Youth Development | 2.0% | 1.1% |
| Mental Health & Substance Abuse | 1.9% | 2.4% |
| Housing & Shelter | 1.4% | 0.7% |
| Recreation, Sports, & Athletics | 1.4% | 0.4% |
| Civil Rights | 1.3% | 3.9% |
| Crime, Courts, & Legal Services | 1.1% | 2.7% |
| Animals & Wildlife | 1.0% | 0.2% |
| Employment | 0.9% | 0.7% |
| Food, Nutrition, & Agriculture | 0.7% | 0.7% |
| Safety & Disaster Relief | 0.5% | 0.1% |

Sources: "Distribution of Foundation Grants by Subject Categories" (charts for 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002), from www.foundationcenter.org (accessed January 2005), and the dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

Several interpretations of this finding are possible. On the one hand, it may be true that, regardless of the population served, philanthropic support is vitally necessary in the areas of education,

arts and culture, and health. This might be the case if, for instance, these issues are universally affected by market and government failures, making it necessary for nonprofit organizations to step into the breach. On the other hand, the similarity in rankings at the top of the funding distribution could signal that foundation actors are making grants to Native America rather blindly, assuming that the needs of Native people are similar to those of other populations served.

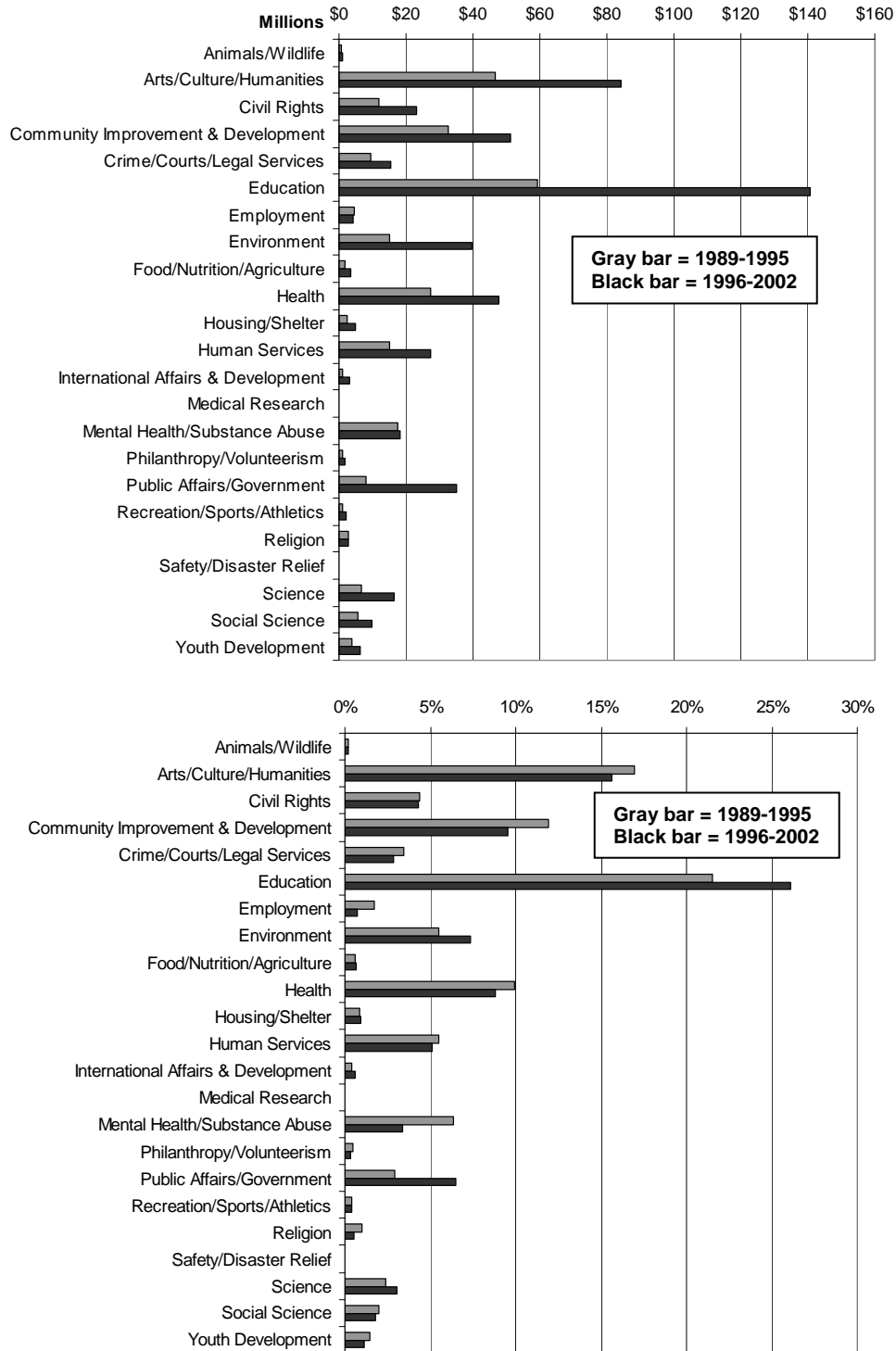
Of course, it is equally important to observe that the major foundations' grantmaking to Native America diverges from the usual giving pattern in several important subject areas. On the upside, the categories of "community improvement and development," "public affairs and government," "environment," "civil rights," "crime, courts, and legal services," and "mental health and substance abuse" receive rather more support in Native America than they do overall. These increases must come at a cost in the distribution, with many other subject areas receiving disproportionately less support. Among these, areas of concern might be "philanthropy and volunteerism," "religion," and "youth development," issues which might nonetheless be assessed as critical to Native America.

Figure 4 presents a second data comparison. It provides information about the consistency of major US foundations' focus areas. The gray bar in each panel provides information about foundation giving to Native causes and concerns during the 1989-1995 period (the first seven years of our data); the black bar provides information about the 1996-2002 period (the second seven years of our data). The top panel graphs the investment comparison in dollar terms, while the lower panel graphs the changing investment picture in percentage terms.

The figure suggests that the sector's emphases have changed over the last decade and half. Notably, it shows:

- While nearly all topic areas received more funding in the second period – reflecting the much larger investments made by foundations as the 1990s progressed – the amount of money invested in employment-related activities actually fell and there was little discernable change in the amount of foundation funding flowing to Native religion-oriented projects.
- In percentage terms, foundations' concentration on the "arts, culture, and humanities" category fell in the second period, which may signal more informed giving. Yet, spending on another "easy" investment option – education-related activities – increased nearly five percentage points.
- In percentage terms, several topics areas that might be judged critical to progress in Native America received relatively less funding in the second period than in the first: "community improvement and development"; "crime, courts, and legal services"; "health"; "mental health and substance abuse"; and "youth development."
- In both absolute dollar *and* percentage terms, an important area in Native nations' development – "public affairs and government" – received greater support in the latter period.

Figure 4. Foundation Giving to Native American Causes and Concerns by Grant Purpose (2002\$), 1989-1995 and 1996-2002



Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

Reflecting on the rank list for 14 years of grantmaking, the similar and differing topical emphases when giving to Native America and overall foundation giving are compared, and changing emphases over time, a number of questions arise. In particular, are the major foundations concentrating on the right subjects? Are they moving in appropriate directions?

The answers are beyond the scope and methodology of this paper, but some indicative observations can be made. For instance, government infrastructure development is necessary for tribes to realize the benefits of self-determination, and to some extent, it appears that funders recognize this: the categories “public affairs and government” and “crime, courts, and legal services” capture a higher percentage of Native American grant dollars than they do mainstream grant dollars, and grantmaking to “public affairs” increased by several percentage points in the later period. But is this enough? The categories clearly remain much less popular with funders than “arts, culture, and humanities” and “education.” Is that appropriate? In a related vein, we query the ranking of “religion” on the list. Given the tight linkage in many Indian nations between religion and culture, why has this occurred? Might not “religion-oriented” projects sometimes be a better path toward the protection of Native culture and Native identity than more generalized “cultural” investments?

The point of this series of questions is not to suggest that educational and cultural investments represent unnecessary spending; indeed, funding in support of education and cultural projects is needed and can help underwrite other critical developments in Native America. (For example, cultural and educational investments can support identity formation and pave the way to greater self-determination.) Instead, the point is to remind grantmakers that they must constantly ask themselves if the projects they are interested in are also of importance to the recipient community; whether the projects they are funding are having the intended multidisciplinary effects or if they are instead promoting some idealized, dominant-society view of Native America; and whether there are better, more targeted ways to achieve the hoped-for results. When the answers are not satisfactory, course corrections are necessary.

VI. Recipient Analysis

A close look at the actual institutions and organizations that receive grant funds reveals even more information about donors’ record of grantmaking to Native American causes and concerns. For example, perusal of the grant recipients confirms what researchers knew anecdotally from conversations with grantmakers and with Native-serving grantees: well-established, organizationally capable, and relatively large nonprofits are the typical recipients of \$10,000-plus foundation grants. The sheer size of large foundations’ asset bases is one likely reason for this orientation, which also means that the conclusion is not unique to Native grantmaking. Grantmakers are responsible for the disbursement of relatively large budgets, and it is simply not possible for them to fund numerous small projects proposed by numerous small organizations. Importantly, this is not only an observation about volume, but also an observation about capacity. Small organizations with smaller dollar value projects tend to have less organizational capacity, and thus, moving a project from proposal to implementation takes a larger than proportional amount of a program officer’s time. Unfortunately, the typical nonprofit serving Native causes and concerns *is* smaller, less well-established and struggling to increase its organizational capacity (Black 1998, revised 2004; Brimley and Jorgensen 2001; Mantila 1999).

The implication is that if grantmakers hope to increase their reach into Native America, they may have to find creative ways to reach out to and fund such organizations.

Perusal of grant recipients highlights a remarkable absence as well – tribal governments. Table 9 lists the number of foundation grants to tribal governments by year. From 1989 to 2002, only 6.5 percent of large foundations' Native American grants and 6.7 percent of their spending were awarded directly to tribal governing bodies. This is surprising because tribal governments often take responsibility for tasks that, outside of Indian Country, nonprofits might perform (Black 1998, revised 2004).²⁴ In part, this is due to the underdevelopment of the nonprofit sector in Indian Country. But it may also be due to variation in different cultures' assessments of the appropriate role of government. In other words, some projects or programs that might be considered inappropriate or unexpected for a mainstream government might be considered perfectly appropriate for a tribal government to undertake. Notwithstanding the needs for improved governance in Indian Country, if donors are looking for alternatives to (or even equivalents of) their typical grantee in Native America, many tribal governments are promising candidates. Even so, the data suggest that foundations have generally chosen not to work with them.

Table 9. Foundation Grants to Tribal Governments (2002\$), 1989-2002

| Year | Total Grant \$ | Total # of Grants |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1989 | \$2,316,128 | 26 |
| 1990 | \$2,914,215 | 24 |
| 1991 | \$2,181,547 | 27 |
| 1992 | \$3,956,910 | 25 |
| 1993 | \$4,022,705 | 41 |
| 1994 | \$2,924,047 | 26 |
| 1995 | \$4,447,066 | 44 |
| 1996 | \$7,834,059 | 33 |
| 1997 | \$2,328,180 | 20 |
| 1998 | \$1,509,528 | 23 |
| 1999 | \$1,891,591 | 24 |
| 2000 | \$9,202,678 | 43 |
| 2001 | \$3,599,929 | 48 |
| 2002 | \$5,683,363 | 68 |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

²⁴ Boris and Steuerle (1999) highlight tensions and opportunities around government/nonprofit interactions in their volume *Nonprofits and Government: Collaboration and Conflict*. While there is a growing body of literature on government/nonprofit relationships, this focus has yet to extend to Native America.

Table 10. Leading Recipients of Grants for Native American Causes and Concerns, 1989-2002

| Rank | Top Recipients | Total 2002\$ | # Sum |
|------|---|--------------|-------|
| 1 | American Indian College Fund | \$61,847,935 | 230 |
| 2 | Eiteljorg Museum of the American Indian and Western Art | \$40,365,486 | 66 |
| 3 | First Nations Development Institute | \$28,953,245 | 170 |
| 4 | Indian Land Tenure Foundation | \$20,204,550 | 2 |
| 5 | Native American Rights Fund | \$20,034,152 | 46 |
| 6 | Native American Preparatory School | \$15,749,293 | 24 |
| 7 | Indian Law Resource Center | \$12,322,114 | 90 |
| 8 | United Indian Health Services/California Rural Indian Health Bd | \$11,019,779 | 20 |
| 9 | Sinte Gleska University | \$10,831,207 | 45 |
| 10 | Salish Kootenai College | \$9,385,357 | 55 |
| 11 | Navajo Nation | \$8,521,972 | 20 |
| 12 | Smithsonian Institution* | \$7,885,473 | 27 |
| 13 | American Indian Science and Engineering Society | \$7,874,605 | 131 |
| 14 | Seventh Generation Fund for Indian Development | \$7,828,777 | 106 |
| 15 | American Indian Higher Education Consortium | \$6,484,351 | 22 |
| 16 | Minneapolis American Indian Center | \$6,385,492 | 88 |
| 17 | American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center | \$6,283,094 | 91 |
| 18 | Americans for Indian Opportunity | \$5,744,393 | 16 |
| 19 | Oglala Lakota College | \$5,676,690 | 47 |
| 20 | Blackfeet Reservation Development Fund | \$5,515,097 | 14 |
| 21 | National Museum of the American Indian* | \$5,437,693 | 45 |
| 22 | University of California | \$5,166,941 | 20 |
| 23 | Harvard University | \$4,925,181 | 22 |
| 24 | Tides Foundation | \$4,782,329 | 12 |
| 25 | Pueblo of Santa Clara | \$4,724,426 | 3 |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

* Grants to the Smithsonian Institution and to the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) are listed separately in Foundation Center data, even though NMAI is part of the Smithsonian. Brimley and Jorgensen (2001) hypothesize that grantmaking to the two entities should be combined. We argue that this is unnecessary because: 1) many Smithsonian grants were made in the same years as NMAI grants, which suggests that the Smithsonian was not merely acting as a fiscal agent until NMAI was separately established, and 2) Smithsonian grants appear to have been made for a wider spectrum of purposes, with grants falling into five NTEE categories, whereas all of the 45 NMAI grants fell within a single category (“arts, culture, and humanities”).

Table 10 lists leading recipients (in terms of total dollars received) of grants to Native American causes and concerns. Two of the top 25 recipients were tribal governments (the Navajo Nation and the Pueblo of Santa Clara); three were tribal colleges (Sinte Gleska University, Salish Kootenai College, and Oglala Lakota College). Grants to these top 25 organizations crossed an average of 7.6 NTEE categories, with a range between 1 and 16. Fifteen of the top 25 grantees were located in the five states (Colorado, Minnesota, California, New Mexico, and Montana) receiving the largest inflow of Native American grant funding (see Table 13). Just over half of the top 25 recipients have Native-controlled boards. By far the most interesting fact about this group, however, is the portion of overall support they receive. From 1989 to 2002, the top 25

recipients received 19.4 percent of the grants and 39.8 percent of the monies that large foundations directed to Native American causes and concerns. The skewing is even more marked at the very top of the list. Between 1989 and 2002, the five largest recipients of Native American grants – the American Indian College Fund, the Eiteljorg Museum of the American Indian and Western Art, First Nations Development Institute, the Indian Land Tenure Foundation, and the Native American Rights Fund – collectively received 7.1 percent of the grants and 21.0 percent of the grant funding that large foundations invested in Native America.

The American Indian College Fund (AICF), the top recipient of grants for Native American causes, received \$61,847,935 (7.6 percent of all Native American grant funds) in 230 grants from 72 grantors during the 14 years captured by our database.²⁵ The grants received by AICF cross two NTEE categories, “arts, culture, and humanities” and “education.” Established in 1989 and located in Denver, Colorado, AICF is an organization that raises money for scholarships for Native students enrolled at tribal colleges and for other needs of the schools, including capital projects, operations, endowments, and program initiatives. AICF has a Native-controlled board.

The Eiteljorg Museum of the American Indian and Western Art is the second largest recipient of Native American grants, having received \$40,365,486 (nearly 5 percent of all Native American grant funds) in 66 grants from 15 grantors from 1989-2002.²⁶ Grants to the Eiteljorg Museum cross two NTEE categories – “arts, culture, and humanities” and “education.” The Eiteljorg Museum, located in Indianapolis, Indiana is a non-Native controlled organization that was established in 1989 with a grant from the Lilly Endowment in order to “inspire an appreciation and understanding of the art, history, and cultures of the American West and the indigenous peoples of North America.”²⁷

The First Nations Development Institute (FNDI), located in Fredericksburg, Virginia, is the third largest grant recipient of Native American grants. Between 1989 and 2002, FNDI received 170 grants from 47 grantors totaling \$28,953,245 (3.6 percent of all Native American grant funds). First Nations’ grants spanned 16 NTEE categories, ranging from “civil rights” and “food, nutrition, and agriculture” to “international affairs and development,” “philanthropy and volunteerism,” and “science.” Founded in 1980, FNDI aims to help Indigenous communities to “control and develop their assets, and through that control, build the capacity to direct their economic futures in ways that fit their cultures.”²⁸ FNDI has a Native-controlled board.

The Indian Land Tenure Foundation (ILTF), the fourth largest recipient of Native American grants, received two grants from the Northwest Area Foundation in 2002 which together totaled

²⁵ According to its website (www.collgefund.org), 40 percent of AICF’s funding comes from foundation and corporate giving (accessed October 2004).

²⁶ For those uncomfortable with the fact that the Eiteljorg Museum of the American Indian and Western Art is ranked second on the “top recipients” list, we reiterate the observation of note 15, that it is the Foundation Center keyword search and coding process that designates grants to the museum as serving Native America, not the Lilly Endowment (whose gifts placed the museum on the top-25 list).

²⁷ See www.eiteljorg.org (accessed October 2004). Although the museum’s board of directors is not Native-controlled, it has formed a Native American council.

²⁸ See www.firstnations.org (accessed October 2004).

\$20,204,550 (2.5 percent of Native American grants). ILTF was incorporated as a community foundation in 2001. The Northwest Area Foundation seeded the creation of the ILTF to educate Indian and non-Indian people about land tenure issues and maintain the integrity of Indian land across the United States. ILTF's grants are both in a single NTEE category, "environment." Located in Little Canada, Minnesota, the ILTF is governed by a Native-controlled board.

The Native American Rights Fund (NARF) is the fifth largest Native American grant recipient. During the fourteen-year span of our database, NARF received \$20,034,152 (2.5 percent of Native American grants) in 46 grants from 13 grantors. NARF's grants fall within 8 NTEE categories and are concentrated in "civil rights" and "crime, courts, and legal services." Founded in 1970, NARF was founded to "secure the sovereignty and right to self-determination to which all Native American peoples are entitled."²⁹ Since its establishment, NARF has provided legal representation on issues critical to Native America, especially when the individuals and Native nations engaged in the legal dispute could not otherwise afford such representation. NARF is headquartered in Denver, Colorado and has a Native-controlled board.

To summarize, all of the top five recipients are located in the top 10 recipient states of Native American grants. Three of the five (AICF, ILTF, and NARF) are located in the top two recipient states (Colorado and Minnesota). NARF is the only one of the top five to have more than one office.³⁰ Four of the top five (AICF, Eiteljorg, FNDI, and NARF) were founded at least 15 years ago. While two of the top five recipients (FNDI and NARF) receive grants for quite diverse activities (NARF crosses eight NTEE categories and FNDI spans 16), the remaining three top recipients received grants focused on only one (ILTF) or two (AICF and Eiteljorg) categories. Four of the five top recipients (AICF, FNDI, ILTF, and NARF) have Native-controlled boards of directors. Three of the top five (AICF, FNDI, and ILTF) re-grant funding to other nonprofit organizations.

These statistics and analyses suggest that many foundations rely on a "usual suspects" strategy when funding Native American causes and concerns. On the one hand, this strategy is good both for foundations and for Native America. When a foundation has discovered an organization whose work is important and effective, it is worthy of long-term support. Or when a grantmaker has new investment ideas but lacks a means of implementation, grantees with which they have established relationships and which have proven capacities can function as "go to" organizations – grantmakers can rely on them to help implement the new ideas. Long-term grantees also serve as important sources of information.

But the usual suspects approach is not without its downsides. It can seduce a foundation away from the hard work of strengthening weaker, more marginal organizations or from soliciting new grantees. For a grant recipient, being a grantor's go-to organization may cause mission creep and weaken work on original issues and commitments. Moreover, on-going funding is important to usual suspects, but it usually does not free them from one of the most difficult and time-

²⁹ See www.narf.org (accessed October 2004).

³⁰ In addition to the Denver headquarters, NARF supports an Anchorage, Alaska office and a Washington, DC office.

consuming aspects of the grantor-grantee relationship – the need to re-justify the organization’s core activities as program officers come and go, and as grantmaking fads rise and fall.

The Native American Rights Fund (NARF), which is a leading recipient of sectoral support, may be an instructive example of the latter problem.³¹ Table 11 catalogs *all* of the 46 grants to NARF recorded in our dataset. The table shows that, over the period 1989-2002, NARF received consistent and substantial support from five of its thirteen donors. Most of the grants from these donors lasted for one to two years only, and it is likely that, in order to secure renewals, NARF’s principals needed to frequently communicate with, visit, and prepare documents for these funders. While the burden of work with just one donor is manageable, each may have had different reporting requirements, fiscal years, and expectations of grantee feedback, which would have increased the work of fundraising and grants management exponentially.

Table 11. Sources, Frequency, and Amount of Foundation Grant Support to NARF, 1989-2002

| | Sum | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|---|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Bush Foundation | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Carnegie Corp of New York | 5 | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | |
| Educational Fdn. of America | 2 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| Ford Foundation | 11 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | |
| General Service Foundation | 5 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation | 5 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 | |
| Levi Strauss Foundation | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| New York Community Trust | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| New-Land Foundation | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Northwest Area Foundation | 2 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rockefeller Foundation | 8 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 |
| W.K. Kellogg Foundation | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| William and Flora Hewlett Foundation | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

³¹ The discussion about NARF is offered as an illustration only, in an attempt to make a larger point. The authors stress that they had no personal communication with NARF’s leadership with respect to grantseeking or endowment strategies. Indeed, it may be the case that NARF’s principals are not at all interested in changing the way the organization is funded.

Thus, as useful as the usual suspects strategy may be, grantmakers might do well to re-think their approach to funding leading recipient organizations. If a donor believes that a long-time grantee is truly successful (which may be judged according to criteria such as organizational strength, a track record of good work, and a willingness to collaborate with funders), it may be appropriate for the donor and grantee to broker a new funding relationship. They might seek an arrangement that maximizes the positives and minimizes the negatives of the grantor-grantee relationship and, within reasonable accountability bounds, frees the grantee organization to spend as much time as possible doing its critical work. Mutually agreeable endowment support might be one way to accomplish those aims. Certainly, the call for endowment support is common among nonprofit organizations and may often be correctly interpreted as an example of the non-satiation principle (more is better than less). But this analysis suggests that for leading recipients with a track record of good work, organizational strength, and a willingness to collaborate with funders, the call for endowment support may be justified.

As with NARF, careful consideration of other top recipients can teach important lessons, raise questions, and even clarify specific needs. In the latter category, we have heard concerns that the major American Indian scholarship organizations, as easily identifiable “good causes,” draw donor dollars away from the tribal colleges and, specifically, from their institutional development needs. The reasoning is that while scholarship monies do support tribal colleges through the provision of tuition funds, the colleges have substantial infrastructural needs that are often left unmet (“infrastructural needs” is a blanket term used to cover technology, teaching materials, administrative staff and systems, extra-curricular activities, research, building and grounds needs, etc.). The perceived problem is exacerbated by the fact that tribal colleges already operate with an estimated 40 percent less funding than mainstream community colleges (*American Indian Report* 2000, p. 3).

Table 12. Foundation Giving to Tribal Colleges and Scholarship Organizations (2002\$), 1989-2002

| Year | <u>Scholarship Giving Organizations</u> | | | <u>Tribal Colleges</u> | | |
|--------------|---|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| | # | Total \$ | 3-Year Running Average | # | Total \$ | 3-Year Running Average |
| 1989 | 16 | \$2,170,815 | ... | 38 | \$6,820,854 | ... |
| 1990 | 13 | \$669,521 | \$1,420,453 | 12 | \$2,186,919 | \$3,583,440 |
| 1991 | 22 | \$1,421,023 | \$1,465,386 | 33 | \$1,742,546 | \$2,484,519 |
| 1992 | 17 | \$2,305,614 | \$1,792,461 | 29 | \$3,524,091 | \$2,192,963 |
| 1993 | 29 | \$1,650,746 | \$1,717,249 | 36 | \$1,312,251 | \$3,058,685 |
| 1994 | 27 | \$1,195,388 | \$1,642,959 | 52 | \$4,339,714 | \$3,151,213 |
| 1995 | 28 | \$2,082,743 | \$1,570,651 | 65 | \$3,801,675 | \$3,923,890 |
| 1996 | 30 | \$1,433,823 | \$2,066,667 | 34 | \$3,630,282 | \$6,430,364 |
| 1997 | 31 | \$2,683,435 | \$1,931,811 | 41 | \$11,859,134 | \$7,771,871 |
| 1998 | 39 | \$1,678,176 | \$13,367,862 | 41 | \$7,826,196 | \$9,086,613 |
| 1999 | 32 | \$35,741,974 | \$17,119,744 | 52 | \$7,574,509 | \$8,265,561 |
| 2000 | 40 | \$13,939,082 | \$17,137,546 | 47 | \$9,395,979 | \$6,947,535 |
| 2001 | 32 | \$1,731,583 | \$5,743,975 | 49 | \$3,872,116 | \$5,240,709 |
| 2002 | 22 | \$1,561,259 | ... | 29 | \$2,454,032 | ... |
| Total | 378 | \$70,265,182 | | 558 | \$70,340,298 | |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

Based on the information in our dataset (Table 12), the major scholarship organizations³² received a total of 388 grants between 1989 and 2002, amounting to \$70,265,181 in inflation-adjusted terms. By comparison, tribal colleges accounted for 558 grants, amounting to \$70,340,298 in inflation-adjusted terms.³³ Many grants to tribal colleges were made for assorted purposes, in issues areas such as environment, general health, public affairs and civil rights, which suggests a desire on behalf of donors to support the colleges' broader needs (although it is still difficult to tell how much money was provided for *non-curricular* needs). In other words, there appears to be substantial foundation spending on scholarships *and* on non-tuition assistance to tribal colleges. Facts such as these encourage both grantees and grantors to be more specific about the nature of their needs and about the ways different kinds of spending can complement or compete with each other. In sum, the facts facilitate strategic thinking – but only to the extent that donors are prepared to ask the questions and to respond to the answers.

When grantmaking is examined geographically (Table 13), one interesting finding is the concentration of foundation investment. Another is the apparent lack of parallel between the geographic distribution of foundation grantmaking and the geographic distribution of American Indian people and tribes; Table 14 makes the comparison explicit. In summary form, the findings are that:

- The top five recipient states received almost half of the grant resources invested in Native America (48.6 percent of total funding and 52.7 percent of total grants); these states contain approximately one-quarter of the American Indian population and one-quarter of the federally recognized tribes.
- The top ten recipient states received nearly three-quarters of large foundations' investment in Native America (72.4 percent of total funding and 72.8 percent of total grants); they contain 41.2 percent of the US' self-identified American Indian and Alaska Native people and 30.9 percent of federally recognized tribes. In other words, nearly three-quarters of grants to Native America went to states containing less than half of the US' Native population and less than one-third of tribes.
- The five states with the highest American Indian populations (California, Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas) account for 46.6 percent of the American Indian population; nonprofits and tribes in these states received 25.8 percent of large foundations' total Native-oriented funding and 27.4 percent of total grants.

³² The “major scholarship organizations” whose funding is analyzed here are the American Indian College Fund, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and the Native American Scholarship Fund. Significantly, as discussed in the text in Section IV above, the Gates Millennium Scholars Program is excluded from this analysis.

³³ The fact that scholarship organizations and tribal colleges received roughly equal grant funds, but with tribal colleges receiving these funds through 558 grants (instead of the 388 grants that scholarship organizations received) speaks to the relatively lower grant amounts and higher administrative burden borne by tribal colleges.

Table 13. Foundation Giving to Native American Causes and Concerns by State (2002\$), 1989-2002

| Rank | State | Total Grant \$ | % Grant \$ | # of Grants | % of Grants | Av Grant Amt |
|------|-------|----------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1 | CO | \$101,446,797 | 12.45% | 541 | 7.45% | \$187,517 |
| 2 | MN | \$98,693,749 | 12.11% | 1481 | 20.39% | \$66,640 |
| 3 | CA | \$79,506,752 | 9.76% | 656 | 9.03% | \$121,199 |
| 4 | NM | \$67,592,709 | 8.30% | 683 | 9.40% | \$98,964 |
| 5 | MT | \$48,448,607 | 5.95% | 414 | 5.70% | \$117,026 |
| 6 | AZ | \$42,939,053 | 5.27% | 470 | 6.47% | \$91,360 |
| 7 | IN | \$40,742,361 | 5.00% | 75 | 1.03% | \$543,321 |
| 8 | SD | \$39,862,664 | 4.89% | 391 | 5.38% | \$101,951 |
| 9 | VA | \$37,404,319 | 4.59% | 208 | 2.86% | \$179,828 |
| 10 | DC | \$33,446,596 | 4.10% | 192 | 2.64% | \$174,201 |
| 11 | AK | \$28,445,043 | 3.49% | 184 | 2.53% | \$154,593 |
| 12 | WA | \$23,321,466 | 2.86% | 210 | 2.89% | \$111,055 |
| 13 | NY | \$18,763,191 | 2.30% | 195 | 2.68% | \$96,221 |
| 14 | OR | \$18,613,792 | 2.28% | 158 | 2.17% | \$117,809 |
| 15 | ND | \$18,043,419 | 2.21% | 235 | 3.23% | \$76,781 |
| 16 | MI | \$15,592,603 | 1.91% | 95 | 1.31% | \$164,133 |
| 17 | OK | \$12,615,682 | 1.55% | 117 | 1.61% | \$107,826 |
| 18 | MA | \$12,516,258 | 1.54% | 84 | 1.16% | \$149,003 |
| 19 | WI | \$11,678,772 | 1.43% | 153 | 2.11% | \$76,332 |
| 20 | NC | \$10,724,312 | 1.32% | 100 | 1.38% | \$107,243 |
| 21 | TX | \$7,508,782 | 0.92% | 63 | 0.87% | \$119,187 |
| 22 | IL | \$7,436,993 | 0.91% | 106 | 1.46% | \$70,160 |
| 23 | MD | \$5,718,517 | 0.70% | 33 | 0.45% | \$173,288 |
| 24 | NE | \$5,262,079 | 0.65% | 61 | 0.84% | \$86,264 |
| 25 | HI | \$3,656,995 | 0.45% | 20 | 0.28% | \$182,850 |
| 26 | OH | \$2,349,687 | 0.29% | 33 | 0.45% | \$71,203 |
| 27 | CT | \$2,273,901 | 0.28% | 16 | 0.22% | \$142,119 |
| 28 | FL | \$2,205,666 | 0.27% | 14 | 0.19% | \$157,548 |
| 29 | PA | \$1,806,040 | 0.22% | 21 | 0.29% | \$86,002 |
| 30 | TN | \$1,660,614 | 0.20% | 5 | 0.07% | \$332,123 |
| 31 | ID | \$1,526,092 | 0.19% | 14 | 0.19% | \$109,007 |
| 32 | ME | \$1,522,644 | 0.19% | 17 | 0.23% | \$89,567 |
| 33 | UT | \$1,390,826 | 0.17% | 53 | 0.73% | \$26,242 |
| 34 | WY | \$1,374,935 | 0.17% | 16 | 0.22% | \$85,933 |
| 35 | WV | \$1,350,000 | 0.17% | 1 | 0.01% | \$1,350,000 |
| 36 | KS | \$1,300,536 | 0.16% | 21 | 0.29% | \$61,930 |
| 37 | NV | \$1,022,872 | 0.13% | 33 | 0.45% | \$30,996 |
| 38 | VT | \$923,891 | 0.11% | 13 | 0.18% | \$71,069 |
| 39 | GA | \$746,020 | 0.09% | 11 | 0.15% | \$67,820 |
| 40 | MO | \$683,382 | 0.08% | 15 | 0.21% | \$45,559 |
| 41 | NH | \$599,051 | 0.07% | 12 | 0.17% | \$49,921 |
| 42 | IA | \$568,414 | 0.07% | 10 | 0.14% | \$56,841 |
| 43 | AL | \$520,993 | 0.06% | 8 | 0.11% | \$65,124 |
| 44 | NJ | \$326,563 | 0.04% | 5 | 0.07% | \$65,313 |
| 45 | RI | \$243,602 | 0.03% | 8 | 0.11% | \$30,450 |
| 46 | DE | \$154,121 | 0.02% | 4 | 0.06% | \$38,530 |
| 47 | KY | \$145,361 | 0.02% | 3 | 0.04% | \$48,454 |
| 48 | SC | \$98,396 | 0.01% | 5 | 0.07% | \$19,679 |
| 49 | LA | \$55,185 | 0.01% | 1 | 0.01% | \$55,185 |
| 50 | MS | \$25,395 | 0.00% | 1 | 0.01% | \$25,395 |
| 51 | AR | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University), based on data from Foundation Center publications.

Table 14. Foundation Giving to Native American Causes and Concerns (2002\$), by State and in Comparison to Location of American Indian People and Federally Recognized Tribes, 1989-2002

| Rank | State | Total NA Grant \$ | % NA Grant \$ | # AI People | % AI Population | # AI Tribes | % AI Tribes |
|------|-------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | CO | \$101,446,797 | 12.45% | 44,241 | 1.79% | 2 | 0.34% |
| 2 | MN | \$98,693,749 | 12.11% | 54,967 | 2.22% | 13 | 2.23% |
| 3 | CA | \$79,506,752 | 9.76% | 333,346 | 13.46% | 106 | 18.21% |
| 4 | NM | \$67,592,709 | 8.30% | 173,483 | 7.01% | 23 | 3.95% |
| 5 | MT | \$48,448,607 | 5.95% | 56,068 | 2.26% | 7 | 1.20% |
| 6 | AZ | \$42,939,053 | 5.27% | 255,879 | 10.33% | 21 | 3.61% |
| 7 | IN | \$40,742,361 | 5.00% | 15,815 | 0.64% | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | SD | \$39,862,664 | 4.89% | 62,283 | 2.52% | 8 | 1.37% |
| 9 | VA | \$37,404,319 | 4.59% | 21,172 | 0.86% | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | DC | \$33,446,596 | 4.10% | 1,713 | 0.07% | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | AK | \$28,445,043 | 3.49% | 98,043 | 3.96% | 229 | 39.35% |
| 12 | WA | \$23,321,466 | 2.86% | 93,301 | 3.77% | 29 | 4.98% |
| 13 | NY | \$18,763,191 | 2.30% | 82,461 | 3.33% | 7 | 1.20% |
| 14 | OR | \$18,613,792 | 2.28% | 45,211 | 1.83% | 9 | 1.55% |
| 15 | ND | \$18,043,419 | 2.21% | 31,329 | 1.27% | 4 | 0.69% |
| 16 | MI | \$15,592,603 | 1.91% | 58,479 | 2.36% | 12 | 2.06% |
| 17 | OK | \$12,615,682 | 1.55% | 273,230 | 11.04% | 37 | 6.36% |
| 18 | MA | \$12,516,258 | 1.54% | 15,015 | 0.61% | 1 | 0.17% |
| 19 | WI | \$11,678,772 | 1.43% | 47,228 | 1.91% | 11 | 1.89% |
| 20 | NC | \$10,724,312 | 1.32% | 99,551 | 4.02% | 1 | 0.17% |
| 21 | TX | \$7,508,782 | 0.92% | 118,362 | 4.78% | 3 | 0.52% |
| 22 | IL | \$7,436,993 | 0.91% | 31,006 | 1.25% | 0 | 0 |
| 23 | MD | \$5,718,517 | 0.70% | 15,423 | 0.62% | 0 | 0 |
| 24 | NE | \$5,262,079 | 0.65% | 14,896 | 0.60% | 6 | 1.03% |
| 25 | HI | \$3,656,995 | 0.45% | 3,535 | 0.14% | 0 | 0 |
| 26 | OH | \$2,349,687 | 0.29% | 24,486 | 0.99% | 0 | 0 |
| 27 | CT | \$2,273,901 | 0.28% | 9,639 | 0.39% | 2 | 0.34% |
| 28 | FL | \$2,205,666 | 0.27% | 53,541 | 2.16% | 2 | 0.34% |
| 29 | PA | \$1,806,040 | 0.22% | 18,348 | 0.74% | 0 | 0 |
| 30 | TN | \$1,660,614 | 0.20% | 15,152 | 0.61% | 0 | 0 |
| 31 | ID | \$1,526,092 | 0.19% | 17,645 | 0.71% | 4 | 0.69% |
| 32 | ME | \$1,522,644 | 0.19% | 7,098 | 0.29% | 4 | 0.69% |
| 33 | UT | \$1,390,826 | 0.17% | 29,684 | 1.20% | 7 | 1.20% |
| 34 | WY | \$1,374,935 | 0.17% | 11,133 | 0.45% | 2 | 0.34% |
| 35 | WV | \$1,350,000 | 0.17% | 3,606 | 0.15% | 0 | 0 |
| 36 | KS | \$1,300,536 | 0.16% | 24,936 | 1.01% | 4 | 0.69% |
| 37 | NV | \$1,022,872 | 0.13% | 24,420 | 1.07% | 19 | 3.26% |
| 38 | VT | \$923,891 | 0.11% | 2,420 | 0.10% | 0 | 0 |
| 39 | GA | \$746,020 | 0.09% | 21,737 | 0.88% | 0 | 0 |
| 40 | MO | \$683,382 | 0.08% | 25,076 | 1.01% | 0 | 0 |
| 41 | NH | \$599,051 | 0.07% | 2,964 | 0.12% | 0 | 0 |
| 42 | IA | \$568,414 | 0.07% | 8,989 | 0.36% | 1 | 0.17% |
| 43 | AL | \$520,993 | 0.06% | 22,430 | 0.91% | 1 | 0.17% |
| 44 | NJ | \$326,563 | 0.04% | 19,492 | 0.79% | 0 | 0 |
| 45 | RI | \$243,602 | 0.03% | 5,121 | 0.21% | 1 | 0.17% |
| 46 | DE | \$154,121 | 0.02% | 2,731 | 0.11% | 0 | 0 |
| 47 | KY | \$145,361 | 0.02% | 8,616 | 0.35% | 0 | 0 |
| 48 | SC | \$98,396 | 0.01% | 13,718 | 0.55% | 1 | 0.17% |
| 49 | LA | \$55,185 | 0.01% | 25,477 | 1.03% | 4 | 0.69% |
| 50 | MS | \$25,395 | 0.00% | 11,652 | 0.47% | 1 | 0.17% |
| 51 | AR | 0 | 0 | 17,808 | 0.72% | 0 | 0 |

Sources: Dataset compiled by Stephen Brimley (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) and Sarah Hicks (GWB School of Social Work, Washington University), based on Foundation Center publications; National Congress of American Indians "Tribal Directory Overview," www.ncai.org/main/pages/tribal_directory/index.asp (accessed September 2004); and Ogunwole (2002), table 2. Tribes with land in more than one state are counted in each of those states. Population data reported refer to persons identifying solely as American Indian or Alaska Native.

- The five states with the highest distribution of American Indian tribes (Alaska, California, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona) account for 416 tribal governments (71.5 percent); these states receive 28.4 percent of large foundations total Native-oriented funding and 29.0 percent of total grants.
- The most extreme case is the State of Alaska, with almost 40 percent of federally recognized tribes and 4 percent of the American Indian population, but which received only 2.5 percent of total Native American grants from 1989 to 2002.
- Sixteen states without any resident federally recognized tribes received 357 grants for Native American causes, almost 5 percent of all such grants made from 1989 to 2002.

What can explain this distribution of funds? One clarifying factor is that several national tribal service organizations are strategically located outside states with large Native populations and high tribal densities. For example, the First Nations Development Institute in Fredericksburg, Virginia and the National Congress of American Indians in Washington, DC are both substantial recipients of grants for Native American causes and concerns located in states that contain no federally recognized tribes.³⁴ They chose to establish their headquarters near Washington for policy-impact purposes. It is also the case that many states without tribes in their boundaries are home to substantial non-reservation, and largely urban, Native populations; grants to nonprofits in such states may underwrite the provision of critical services to those groups. A number of foundation grants directed to nonprofit organizations in Illinois, which serve Chicago's large Native population, fit this characterization.³⁵ Finally, there is the possibility that institutions located somewhat distant from Indian Country and higher-density Native populations nonetheless remain focused on Native America, either broadly (as might be the case with national and regional museums) or narrowly (as would be the case with intermediaries, acting at the behest of large foundations to develop "right size, right project" grants for specific Native communities).

Other explanations of the geographic distribution of foundation funds intended to serve Native America are less positive. For instance, the mismatch between grant distribution and the location of tribal governments is perpetuated by the fact that, as mentioned above, tribal governments and tribal colleges receive a minority of large foundations' Native-oriented grants.³⁶ It is also possible that nonprofits located in states without tribal lands have some Native population-oriented mission elements, but are not really serving Native people and Native communities.³⁷

³⁴ Washington, DC is counted as a state for the purposes of this analysis.

³⁵ The 2000 Census data shows that Chicago has an American Indian/Alaska Native (single-identifier) population of 10,290, approximately 0.4 percent of the US total. Every city with a larger American Indian/Alaska Native population than Chicago (New York, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Anchorage, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Albuquerque, and Tucson) is located in a state that has multiple tribes within its boundaries. See Ogunwole (2002), table 3.

³⁶ In combination, tribal governments and tribal colleges combined received 15.4 percent of large foundations' grant resources directed at Native America between 1989 and 2000 and 14.2 percent of their grants.

³⁷ While grantmakers always face the risk that an organizations' services never reach its purported service population, the danger may be greater with regard to Native-oriented grantmaking – the limited grantmaking in this area,

In sum, while grantmaking to organizations outside of tribal lands is certainly appropriate, the geographic data present both research and practice questions. What is the value of large foundations' *direct* investment in Native America? What portion of the nonprofits receiving foundation funding provides services to Indian people, and what types of services are they providing? What criteria can help grantmakers assess the impact that organizations located somewhat distant from Indian Country and Native population bases have on Native America?

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

We conclude this paper with both research and practice recommendations. On the research side, we suggest ways to improve data collection and provide specific ideas for study. On the practice side, we offer recommendations to foundations, nonprofit organizations, and tribal governments as a means of furthering philanthropy and nonprofit development in Native America.

Data collection efforts

More complete data are needed for a more comprehensive picture of philanthropic giving to and nonprofit activity within Native America. First and foremost, we recommend that the Foundation Center begin to account for all grants (including those under \$10,000) from all US grantmakers. While the challenge of managing this information and publishing it in hard copy form was significant in the past, cheaper data storage, improved technology, and new Foundation Center products (like the *Foundation Grants Index* CD-Rom and the *FC Search*) largely eliminate these problems.

The benefits of an expanded data record are numerous – and we note that most of them can be generalized, which supports the notion that the Foundation Center should pursue this effort for all grants, not just those serving Native America. For example, the expanded database would help reconcile grantmakers' claims that they are providing larger, more targeted grants to fewer organizations with grantees' reports of an increase in smaller, product-specific grants (such as funding for a publication or a convening of key stakeholders). Accounting for smaller grants also improves the field's capacity to study newer, smaller nonprofits that may presently lack the capacity to receive larger grants or may be funded primarily by smaller grantmakers awarding smaller grants. For instance, it could clarify the significance of "gateway" grants – small grants that get (usually small) nonprofits "in the door" and help them establish the capacity and familiarity necessary for receiving larger grants in the future. Finally, although the number and value of grants to Native American causes has increased over the 14 years covered by our database, the proportion of foundation sector resources flowing to Native America appears unchanged. More comprehensive data would confirm this finding and narrow the targets for improved grantmaking to Native American causes and concerns.

The second recommendation for data collection efforts is that *FC Search* should adopt the practice of assigning each grant a unique identification number (as the hard copy *Foundation Grants Index* did), to ensure that grants are not double-counted when multiple searches are

limited general knowledge about Native America, and the often over-romanticized public image of "Indians," conspire to make it difficult to vet organizations and more acceptable to make grants without better knowledge.

compared. *FC Search* should also adopt a tiered approach to the use of NTEE categories, listing the major category as well as a more detailed category, if available, in order to make new data as comparable to historical data as possible.³⁸

Researchers

There are many promising avenues for future research on philanthropic giving to Native America. Using the existing database, for example, researchers could refine and expand the work on grantmaking trends over specific periods of time (as initiated in Table 5 and Figure 4). Along these lines, additional study of recipients would be worthwhile: In later periods, which organizations are “climbing” the recipient list? Which are consistent “top recipients”? For organizations on each list, which fields do they serve, what are their funding sources, and where they are located? Are there commonalities along any of these dimensions?

Even more questions could be answered by adding new fields to the database. Adding grant recipients’ zip codes would allow researchers to look specifically at giving to urban locations and to examine the proximity of grant recipients’ locations to Indian land. Tracking the year a recipient organization was established would support an analysis of the correlation between organization age and grant receipt. A field indicating whether grants went to organizations serving only Native Americans, like the American Indian College Fund, or mixed populations, like the Smithsonian Institution, would help researchers estimate the portion of Native-coded grantmaking that narrowly serves Native America. A field coding for “Native American-controlled organizations” (based, for example, on the composition of the board of directors) would allow researchers to examine differences in grantmaking to Native-controlled and non-Native-controlled groups. Adding a field to indicate whether recipients re-grant funds could yield an interesting analysis of the degree to which organizations receiving Native American grants serve as intermediaries.

Finally, research outside of the database analysis is also needed. Researchers could examine why certain grantmakers started giving (or giving heavily) to Native America. They could study *tribal* giving to the nonprofit sector, to both Native and non-Native causes, which through the ongoing development of the Native philanthropic sector, is on the rise (Black 2004, Thorpe 2001). A study of the distribution of funding sources for top recipients of grants for Native causes and would contribute to the body of mainstream research about nonprofit resources. As mentioned earlier, studies of tribal government/nonprofit relationships could be explored. Researchers could also attempt to more specifically identify nonprofit contributions to Indian economies.

Foundations

Based on the findings in this paper, it is our belief that foundations ought to engage in more grantmaking to Native American causes and concerns. We find that relative to their representation in the US population, Native people are underserved by foundations. While we fully understand that foundation support is not an entitlement, we also note that on a needs basis, the

³⁸ In some cases, *FC Search* results yield categories of a more detailed nature, without listing the general category as well.

population's socioeconomic profile ranks them as worthy of increased grantmaking activity.³⁹ Yet it is more than issues of equity and need that should motivate increased foundation giving to Native America – the “thickness on the ground” of innovative social change justifies increased philanthropic attention. Tribal governments and populations are experiencing a period of revitalization. In so doing, tribes are rethinking and restructuring their governmental institutions and economies, with dramatic results for social and economic development. Traditional cultural practices and Native languages are being revived, creating new bonds of community and new social capital. Families, community groups, and public agencies are interacting in new (yet indigenous) ways, improving the effectiveness of programming and service delivery. In sum, Native America is a crucible for innovation and experimentation that has the possibility of informing practice far beyond the boundaries of Indian Country. If they are willing to rise to the challenge, foundations can play a pivotal role in this process, by gathering learning from tribal communities, extrapolating from it, and disseminating these valuable models to other grantees.

As grantmakers expand beyond current commitments, however, they should proceed strategically, not reflexively. They must be open to learning from Native communities what the issues of vital importance *to them* are. This approach may seem obvious, but it has not always been the way forward for grantmakers (or the federal government, or any others with benevolent intentions toward Native America). Too often, the assumption is made that Native communities have similar needs to other poor communities or other ethnic communities and can be treated similarly. Even when specialized “Indian” programs are developed, outsiders may assume that they understand community problems – and their solutions – as well as insiders do. Notably, even when individual grantmakers do not suffer from this failing, it can be an *institutional* tendency. For example, if a foundation funds through “initiatives,” “grant clusters,” or according to certain “action themes,” Native communities are forced to fit their needs and community change ideas into those packages (which are nothing more than institutional ideas about how change ought to proceed) if they hope to receive funding. In addition to these biases against community-specific learning, program officers at large foundations face the added difficulty of needing to disburse relatively large amounts of money, and may not feel they can afford the time for specialized learning about Native concerns. Yet forgoing such learning and outreach may also mean forgoing opportunities to support truly dramatic, self-determined community change.

Particularly based on our review of statistics on grant purposes, we conclude that foundations seeking such transformative opportunities ought to look not only toward educational and cultural investments, but increasingly toward other subject areas. As noted above, there is already movement in this direction, with the categories of “community improvement and development,” “public affairs and government,” “environment,” “civil rights,” “crime, courts, and legal services,” and “mental health and substance abuse” receiving proportionately more through large foundations’ Native grantmaking than they receive overall. The categories “philanthropy and volunteerism,” “religion,” and “youth development” should perhaps be added to that list as promising topic areas on which to work with Native populations. With the caveat that this paragraph is meant to provide guidance and not specific direction (since, in line with the point of the preceding paragraph, specifics must be worked out with the community served), promising

³⁹ For a comparison of the socioeconomic status of Native Americans to the US population as a whole, see Henson, Taylor, *et al.*, “Native America at the New Millennium,” pp. 6 and 8 (figures 1 and 2).

projects for greater investment might include: redesigning or improving a tribe's government infrastructure, streamlining or reconsidering the way a tribe delivers services, or culturally re-envisioning mental health and substance abuse treatments.

We make two further recommendations about the process of giving, one concerning grantees and the other concerning financial arrangements. First, whatever the specific investment, foundations should seek to work with Native-controlled institutions wherever possible. When that is not possible, they should seek to work with institutions that have the clear support of tribes or other Native communities (which might be evidenced through letters of support, tribal council resolutions, etc.). Second, funders should think about appropriate transitions in the way they support grantees. Solid Native-serving organizations that receive grants from the same foundations on a regular basis should be considered for endowment funding. As noted above, endowment support can shift valuable organizational time away from fulfilling administrative responsibilities, like completing grant applications and progress reports, to the real work of the organization. It also shifts the organization's relationship with its funders from one of hat-in-hand (dependency) to mutual focus on self-determination, mission, and sustainability.

Finally, we note that foundations can contribute to the process of improving the data on Native American grantmaking. Our recommendation is that foundations be conscientious and explicit in their grant descriptions. For example, a grant generically characterized as supporting the development of elementary school science curriculum might, upon further inspection, be more accurately described as funding to support teaching elementary school students about conservation using traditional American Indian values and beliefs.⁴⁰

Nonprofits

Nonprofit organizations need to continually make the case for grantmaking to Native America. On-going education of the philanthropic community about tribal governments, Native populations, and Indian lands is a substantial task. Rather than viewing these educational efforts and the resultant funding as a zero-sum game, where only certain nonprofits "win" funding and others do not, nonprofits should recognize that the trend toward increased philanthropic support of Native America is one in which they are all winners.

Nonprofits serving Native communities should also build bridges to other nonprofits, both within the community of organizations serving Native America and beyond it. These bridges can help nonprofits to stay true to their missions, better match grant dollars to organizational capacities, leverage nonprofit resources through collaboration, and bring still more resources into the Native communities that so desperately need them.

⁴⁰ While this recommendation may slightly increase both foundations' and researchers' workloads (researchers in particular must deal with a larger volume of information and the resultant need to develop a process for allocating grants that serve mixed populations), it is nonetheless in both groups' interest. To the extent that researchers are tracking and compiling information in foundation giving to Native American causes and concerns, it is to foundations' advantage to report their Native grantmaking correctly, to make sure they get "credit" for it. And it is in researchers' best interest to have the most complete information possible.

Lastly, Native-oriented nonprofits must be accountable not only to their funders, but also to their service populations, and infrastructure to support these twin responsibilities must be in place. Nonprofits must have the capacity to track grant funding, produce sound financial statements, develop reports for funders, and so on. Just as important, however, are mechanisms to communicate with and be responsive to the Native community(ies) being served. Especially in growth sectors like this one, there is great pressure on organizations to develop their “upward” communication and reporting capacities, so that they can manage more money and develop more programs to help meet the many needs of the target population. In the face of such demands it is easy to neglect “downward” communication capacities – yet without them, new initiatives risk inappropriate design and may be less well-known, less accepted, and less effective.

Tribal governments

Finally, we turn to tribal governments and encourage them to more actively apply for foundation grants. Critically, philanthropic funding allows tribes to pursue activities that do not fall within the narrow federal (and state) government funding streams to which they are accustomed. Thus, tribes should look at foundation grant opportunities as a way to promote their innovative work and support broad community capacity building.

Along with nonprofits in Native America, tribal governments share the responsibility of educating funders. We note that tribal governments are especially well-suited to the task of educating foundation actors about the breadth of tribal government functions and community responsibilities.⁴¹ Tribes may even have to provide potential funders with basic education about the Indian Tribal Governmental Tax Status Act of 1982, which treats tribal governments as state governments for certain tax purposes and allows tribal governments, their political subdivisions, or a department or division that is an integral part of the tribal government to receive tax-deductible donations.⁴²

In all of their interactions with grantmakers and foundation officials, tribal government actors must behave in a way that demonstrates they understand the difference between foundation support and federal government funding. A grantor-grantee relationship is not that of the federal government to tribes; there is no trust responsibility, and nothing is “deserved” or “owed.” As such, tribes have to “work” for the money they are applying for, and their relationships to funders should be characterized by responsiveness and accountability for the funds and services provided. Ideal foundation-tribal government relationships are characterized by mutual respect, joint learning, and a commitment to positive social change for the tribal nation’s citizens.

⁴¹ One useful educational tool is the National Congress of American Indians’ “An Introduction to Indian Nations in the United States” (2001).

⁴² For more information about the Indian Tribal Governmental Tax Status Act, see resources posted on the First Nations Development Institute’s website at <http://www.firstnations.org/philanthropy.asp> (accessed February 2005).

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