

Echoing Green Names 2005 Fellowship Winners

12 Bold New Social Change Entrepreneurs Receive \$1 Million in Seed Funding and Support

NEW YORK – Twelve social change entrepreneurs have accomplished the two most difficult challenges facing any start-up: they received their first seed investments and they gained a mentor that will help them build effective organizations to carry out their groundbreaking ideas.

The global nonprofit organization Echoing Green announced the recipients of the 2005 Echoing Green Fellowship (descriptions attached), a program that awards two years of seed funding and training to leaders dedicated to applying innovative approaches to solve the world's most entrenched challenges. Echoing Green will invest \$1 million in supporting these twelve entrepreneurs with bold visions and innovative business plans for creating lasting social change, including:

- Training the nation's first deaf community health workers to ensure that deaf people will have access to the same health information as hearing people.
- Creating a new urban school model that addresses the high-school dropout crisis within the Native American community.
- Resettling displaced families in war-torn Sri Lanka to help spur the country's healing.

Founded in 1987, Echoing Green helps emerging leaders launch innovative nonprofit organizations and social-mission businesses. This year's winners join nearly 400 other individuals who have founded social change organizations thanks to Echoing Green's support, including City Year, Teach for America, Make the Road by Walking and Peace Games.

"Our fellowship is designed to provide critical support to these bold leaders when they need it most," said Dr. Cheryl L. Dorsey, Echoing Green's president (and a 1992 fellowship recipient for The Family Van, a mobile health unit for inner-city Boston neighborhoods).

"These visionaries are not afraid to think big, and they need an investor with a strong track record to pave the way for future support. But that alone is not enough," she said. "That's why Echoing Green also provides strategic counsel, technical support and access to an extensive networking community."

From healthcare to human rights and education to economic development, Echoing Green's 2005 fellowship recipients represent a cross-section of new leaders committed to using smart business principles to right seemingly intractable social wrongs. These twelve fellows were selected from a pool of 700 applicants from 28 countries, representing an acceptance rate of less than 1.5 percent. The rigorous six-month selection process included the submission of detailed start-up plans and a series of in-person interviews before panels of veteran business and nonprofit leaders in New York City. Judges evaluated applicants' leadership and entrepreneurial skills, creativity and the potential of their ideas to deliver long-term social change.

Over two years, recipients receive a grant of up to \$90,000. Fellows also receive technical support, skill-building and leadership training through numerous fellowship conferences and strategic counsel as they launch their nonprofit organizations.

2005 Echoing Green Fellowship Recipients

Aaron Bartley - Buffalo, New York

In a neighborhood with an average annual per capita income of \$6650, *Niagara Community Initiative* will establish a new model for community economic development through the innovative reuse of abandoned property.

Kara Bobroff - Albuquerque, New Mexico

Native American Community Academy (NACA) will be one of the first urban public charter schools dedicated solely to the achievement of Native American students, whose high school dropout rate is twice the national average.

Anita Buel - St. Paul, Minnesota

Deaf Community Health Worker (DCHW) program will train members of the deaf population to be the nation's first deaf community health workers, serving a group that previously had limited access to health information in their language.

Ethan Hutt and Aaron Tang - Washington, DC

Founded by two graduating seniors of Yale University, *Our Education* will empower the student voice in education reform in order to build a national movement of students dedicated to creating excellent schools for every American child.

CV Madhukar - New Delhi, India

Parliamentary Research Service (PRS) seeks to promote a well-informed, transparent and participatory legislative process in India, and is the country's first-ever nonpartisan research service that is focused exclusively on upcoming legislative issues.

Rachel Micah-Jones - Zacatecas, Mexico

Centro de los Derechos del Migrante (CDM) will be the first transnational workers' rights law firm based in Central Mexico to address workplace injustice by connecting Mexico-based workers to US advocates.

Randy Parraz and Scott Sherman - Los Angeles, California

Transformative Action Institute (TAI) will train college students to start social change movements based on the concept of "constructive power" that will fundamentally shift traditional approaches to non-violent social change.

Brenda Rogers - Irvine, California

Through the creation of a powerful network of parents, *Access Center for Education (ACE)* will hold schools responsible for improving outcomes and implementing effective programs and services in special education that comply with federal and state law.

Shreen Abdul Saroor - Mannar District, Sri Lanka

Following 20 years of civil conflict in Sri Lanka, A *Model Resettlement Village (MRV)* will resettle a mixed group of displaced Tamil and Muslim families, thereby creating a nationwide model for healing and transformation.

Clive Stafford Smith - London, England

With an estimated 10,000 individuals held internationally as prisoners in “law free zones,” such as Guantanamo Bay, *Justice in Exile* will establish the first legal and advocacy centers dedicated to upholding these individuals’ basic human rights.