

Building on our legacy: The Future of the Ms. Foundation for Women

Founded in 1973, the Ms. Foundation for Women was born of a bold, yet simple, vision: that by building the collective power of women, we could build a better world.



Ms. Foundation for Women
Building women's collective power to ignite change

THE CURRENT STATE

For almost 40 years the Ms. Foundation has invested in social justice trailblazers — especially women from low-income communities and communities of color — who have the vision and drive to fight for justice.

Given the economic and political climate today and the fact that by 2050 people of color will comprise half of the nation's population, it is more important than ever that we support women in these communities and all women throughout the country who are working to address the inequities that plague our system.

We know the recession that has crippled our nation and sent shockwaves throughout the world has had a disproportionate impact on women, particularly low-income women and women of color. For example, from June 2009 (the official start of the recovery) to November 2011, women **lost 117,000 jobs** while men gained more than 1.1 million. According to our 2011 Community Voices on the Economy poll, more than half of women report **living paycheck to paycheck** all or most of the time.

This job loss and insecurity has been compounded by deficit-cutting measures at the federal, state and local levels that specifically target social supports and

programs for women and families struggling to live healthy, secure and productive lives.

Despite all these challenges, women in communities across the country are fighting back. They are fighting for workplace protections for the most vulnerable workers, including those in the informal child care and home care sectors who have no legal recourse; they are fighting for an end to sexual violence against children; they are fighting to secure access to reproductive health as a right, not a privilege. They are fighting to create a nation that values women's lives, their families, and their communities.

OUR MISSION

To build women's collective power to realize a nation of justice for all.

Our **new** strategic plan prioritizes impact and positions us to address the challenges that face our communities and our nation.



Photography by Elizabeth Waugh

ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

Integration & Focus

Focus grants & capacity-building on fewer issue areas: safety, health & economic justice.

Strong & Respected Voice

Position the Ms. Foundation as a well-respected thought-leader in the national arena.

An Expanded "We"

Widen our circle of influence to achieve greater impact.

Grants & Capacity-Building:

giving dollars, staying engaged



1. SAFETY

Ensuring child sexual abuse is no longer a hidden epidemic. Combating the sexualization of young girls.

► *1 in 4 women are sexually abused before age 18.*

2. REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Advancing equity and access to **family planning** including contraception and abortion.

► *Over the last 15 years, the number of laws obstructing women's access to family planning and reproductive health services more than doubled.*

3. ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Securing rights for child care workers and ensuring parents have access to care.

► *The average cost of full-time infant daycare is 41% of the median income of a single mom.*

CAPACITY-BUILDING

In order to create a real movement for change, we know we must seed and support organizational capacity. From leadership development to communications support, capacity-building programs will continue to be a hallmark of the Ms. Foundation's support to our grantees.



Advocacy & Policy:

amplify, address, enhance

AMPLIFY Grassroots Voices
ADDRESS Structural Barriers
ENHANCE Ms. Foundation's Thought-Leadership

Strategic Communications:

raise visibility nationwide

ONLINE INITIATIVES
SUPPORT TO GRANTEEES
SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

MOVING FORWARD

The current economic and political climate for women demands that we sharpen our focus, speak out individually and collectively, and continue to fund women's solutions to some of the most pressing issues facing our nation. Together we can build a brighter future for all.

Photography by Elizabeth Rappaport