2014 Fundamentals of Effective Grantmaking
Speaker Biographies

Session One

Paul Vandeventer
President and Chief Executive Officer, Community Partners
Paul Vandeventer is President and Chief Executive Officer of Community Partners, a nonprofit he co-founded in 1992 to help foster, launch, and grow creative solutions to community challenges. Vandeventer has led the organization through 20 years of dynamic growth to now include more than 135 projects, a core staff of 30, close to a dozen partnerships with grantmakers, and annual revenues of over $26 million. His expertise includes management, training, and organizational development. Vandeventer is the co-author of Networks that Work: A Practitioner’s Guide to Managing Networked Action, and writes and speaks on civil society and its dependence on a holistic model of engagement.

Wendy Garen
President and Chief Executive Officer, The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
Board Chair, Southern California Grantmakers
Wendy Garen became President and Chief Executive Officer of The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation in 2008, after working for the Foundation in increasing levels of responsibility for more than 20 years. She was a founding staff member of the nonprofit Crystal Stairs and headed the Los Angeles Child Care and Development Council. Garen is a member of the Philanthropy Leadership Group and The Trusteeship, and serves on the California Advisory board of the Milken Institute.

Mary Odell
President, UniHealth Foundation
Board Member, Southern California Grantmakers
Mary Odell is President of the UniHealth Foundation, a private healthcare foundation that makes grants primarily to hospitals in Los Angeles and Orange Counties in California. Prior to joining the Foundation in 1999, she served for eight years as President of The Riordan Foundation and its associated public foundation, Rx for Reading. Before becoming a foundation officer, Odell pursued a career in elementary school teaching and administration and worked as an education and instruction specialist for IBM. She currently serves on the Board of Southern California Grantmakers and LA’s BEST After School Enrichment Program. Odell has done extensive graduate work in early childhood education and early speech and language acquisition; she has credentials to teach preschool through 12th grade and adult education. She holds a certificate in nonprofit management from the Harvard Graduate School of Business.
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John E. Kobara
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, California Community Foundation
After serving five years on the Board of Directors, John Kobara was appointed Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the California Community Foundation in 2008. Prior to his appointment at CCF, he was Chief Executive Officer of the CK12 Foundation, a nonprofit technology startup. Kobara also served as President/Chief Executive Officer of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Los Angeles, Senior Vice President of Online Higher Education for Sylvan Learning Systems Inc, President/CEO of OnlineLearning.net, Vice Chancellor of External Affairs at UCLA, and Executive Director of the UCLA Alumni Association. He posts ideas on his popular blog about Adopting the Mentoring and Networking Lifestyle @ SWiVELtime.com. Kobara currently serves on the boards of the national Grameen America Advisory Board, HUB-LA, Japanese American National Museum, and Walden University.

Adrienne Wittenberg
Executive Director, S. Mark Taper Foundation
Adrienne Wittenberg serves as Executive Director of the S. Mark Taper Foundation. She has worked at the Foundation for the past 16 years in both financial management and grantmaking positions. Wittenberg has served as a member of Southern California Grantmakers’ Management and Program Committees. Prior to joining the field of philanthropy, she earned her license as a Certified Public Accountant while working as a tax consultant with the public accounting firm, Deloitte and Touche. Wittenberg is a member of the AICPA and the California Society of CPA’s.

Vincent Jones
Chief Executive Officer and Chief Strategist, Reinvent Communications
Co-Chair, Southern California Blacks in Philanthropy
Vincent Jones is Chief Executive Officer and Chief Strategist of Reinvent Communications, a social impact agency that leverages communications to harness the power of relationships to advance change. He previously served as Deputy Director of Campaigns and Senior Program Officer at the Liberty Hill Foundation. He has worked with The California Endowment on a campaign to improve outcomes for boys and men of color in California. He was Executive Director of the Center for Health Justice, led a youth civic engagement project for California Common Cause, and was the LA County Field Representative for U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer.
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Currently, Jones serves on the national Board of Lambda Legal, is a founding Board Member of the African-American Board Leadership Institute, and is Treasurer of the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. He is a Co-Chair of Southern California Blacks in Philanthropy.

Belen Vargas
Vice President, Programs, Weingart Foundation
Belen Vargas began her professional career in nonprofit legal services in Los Angeles County, focused on women’s issues and school inclusion issues for children with disabilities. Prior to joining the Weingart Foundation, she worked at Public Counsel on the Childcare Law Project. Vargas joined Weingart Foundation in 2000 as the Foundation’s first Program Associate, was promoted to Program Officer in 2003, and Senior Program Officer in 2007. In 2008, she became Associate Vice President, Grant Operations, and then subsequently as Vice President, Grant Operations. In 2014, she assumed the role of Vice President, Programs, where she oversees the Foundation’s grant strategy and planning, communications, and overall program assessment. Vargas holds a juris doctor degree from the University of Southern California School of Law. She is a graduate of the Council on Foundations’ Career Pathways leadership program.

Jennifer Price-Letscher
Program Officer, The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
Jennifer Price-Letscher is a Program Officer at The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation. Prior to joining the Foundation, she was a Consulting Program Officer with the Sterling Foundation, where she designed programs to promote college access practices in community-based organizations, and Executive Management Academy coordinator at the Whitecap Foundation, where she created and evaluated cohort-based training programs for nonprofit executives and board members. Price-Letscher has worked with a variety of organizations, including Shakespeare Center/LA, the Archdiocese of Cleveland, CARS, Diavolo and Grand Performances. Formerly Board President at Hill & Dale Family Learning Center and a founding Board Member for Diavolo Dance Theatre, Price-Letscher currently serves on the Board at Westside Neighborhood School and on the Membership Committee for Grantmakers for Effective Organizations. She holds an MSc in positive organizational development and change management from Case Western Reserve, and professional certifications in college counseling, leading/coaching with emotional intelligence, building sustainable enterprises, and appreciative inquiry.
Kamella Tate
Director of Research and Evaluation, The Music Center
Kamella Tate currently serves as Director of Research and Evaluation at The Music Center. She is responsible for providing in-house services in program monitoring, assessment, and evaluation; compiling and analyzing current research on topics in arts education and cultural policy; and managing a variety of documentation and evaluation projects. In addition to her work at The Music Center, she is the owner/manager of KTA/LLC, a consulting firm that provides management and fund development services to community-based nonprofits in the arts, healthcare, and education sectors. Clients have included the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center, among others. Dr. Tate designs and teaches workshops in research methods and program evaluation throughout Los Angeles. She has served as an adjunct professor at University of Southern California, Claremont Graduate University, and Chapman University. She holds an MFA from the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco and an EdD in educational psychology from USC.

Shane Goldsmith
President and Chief Executive Officer, Liberty Hill Foundation
Shane Murphy Goldsmith is President and Chief Executive Officer of Liberty Hill Foundation, one of the nation’s most admired social change foundations. Prior to joining Liberty Hill, she was Executive Director of PATH Ventures, an affordable housing development agency. She also served as a Senior Advisor to City Council President Eric Garcetti for four years, overseeing field and legislative projects, including housing, economic development, the city budget, public safety, and LGBTQ issues. In addition, Goldsmith ran the Council District 13 Leadership Institute. Goldsmith sits on the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles Board of Commissioners, the national Board of the Neighborhood Funders Group, and the Steering Committee of the Los Angeles Funders Network for Smart and Equitable Growth. She recently received the Congressional Hunger Center 2014 Alumni Leadership Award.
Sandra J. Martínez
Director of Public Policy, The California Wellness Foundation
Sandra J. Martínez is Director of Public Policy at The California Wellness Foundation. She originally joined the Foundation in 2002 as a Program Director. Previously, Martínez served as a Program Director at Community Coalition, where she led the People on Welfare community organizing efforts. In 2010 she was selected as a Fellow in the inaugural class of the Grantmakers in Health Terrance Keenan Institute for Emerging Leaders in Health Philanthropy. Martínez has served as a Commissioner for the City of Los Angeles Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families and as a community-funding Board Member for Liberty Hill Foundation. She currently serves on the Advisory Committee for the California Health Information Survey (CHIS) and has served on the Boards of Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, the Echo Park Film Center, Women and Youth Supporting Each Other, and the California Child, Youth and Family Coalition. She holds an MPH from the University of California, Berkeley.

Kafi Blumenfield
Executive Director, Discovery Cube, Los Angeles
Board Member, Southern California Grantmakers
Kafi Blumenfield is the first Executive Director of Discovery Cube – LA, a 71,000 square foot museum campus offering exhibits and educational programs that focus on science, environmental stewardship, early learning, and healthy living. She has more than two decades of experience as a nonprofit leader and advocate for social change. Between 2007 and 2013, she served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Liberty Hill Foundation. Blumenfield also has direct experience working on issues related to social determinants of health and the environment. She has served as Deputy Director of Neighbor to Neighbor, Director of Programs for the Fair Housing Council of San Gabriel Valley, and as an Urban Air Advocate for the Natural Resources Defense Council. Blumenfield is an appointee to the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls and serves on the Boards of Tides Foundation, ARC, Southern California Grantmakers, and Planned Parenthood Advocacy Project in Los Angeles. She is a member of the Advisory Board of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Corporation and of the Draper Center for Community Partnerships. Blumenfield is a member of the Selection Committee for the James Irvine Foundation Leadership Awards.
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Raúl Bustillos
Senior Vice President, Community Relations, Bank of America
Raúl Bustillos is Senior Vice President, Community Relations for Bank of America’s Greater Los Angeles region. He coordinates civic and philanthropic activities for Bank of America in Los Angeles County. Prior to his current position, Bustillos served for 10 years at the Los Angeles Times where he oversaw philanthropic efforts including the Los Angeles Times Fund, Los Angeles Times Family Fund, Summer Camp Campaign, Holiday Campaign, and Donor Advised Giving Fund. He has served on various boards and advisory committees including the Koreatown Youth & Community Center, Southern California Grantmakers, American Camp Association Southern California/ Hawaii, Archdiocesan Youth Employment Services, and others. Bustillos has a MA in Public Policy from Claremont Graduate University and is a graduate of the Coro Fellows program in Public Affairs.

Wendy Chang
Director, Dwight Stuart Youth Fund
Wendy Chang directs grantmaking, initiatives, and capacity building activities at the Dwight Stuart Youth Fund. Her previous positions include Executive Management Academy Director at the Whitecap Foundation; Director of Training and Advancement at Public Corporation for the Arts; Special Projects/Membership Director for the California Association of Nonprofits; and Director of Consulting Services for CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, Silicon Valley. Chang has served as an Executive Board Member of Liberty Hill Foundation; Chair of the Los Angeles Partnership for Early Childhood Investment; member and past chair of Asian American Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, Los Angeles; member of Women’s Leadership Council. She was also a member of Los Angeles Urban Funders, as well as the Family Foundation and Program Advisory Committees of Southern California Grantmakers. She is a founding member of five community giving circles: Asian American Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy’s National Donor Circle, Women of Color Giving Circle, Circle of Change, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Islander Giving Circle, and the OUT Fund, which she currently co-chairs. Wendy is an alumnus of National Urban Fellow’s America’s Leaders of Change and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation’s James P. Shannon Leadership Institute. She is a graduate of University of California at Santa Cruz, with majors in Business Economics and Computer Science.
Alicia Procello Maddox  
President, Avery Dennison Foundation, and Senior Director of Community Investment,  
Avery Dennison Corporation  
Alicia Procello Maddox develops and leads Avery Dennison Foundation programs and initiatives related to global grantmaking, employee benefits, cause marketing, and disaster response. She also leads the Global Community Investment platform for the Foundation and the Avery Dennison Corporation that supports education and environmental sustainability in communities where Avery Dennison employees live and work. Procello Maddox joined Avery Dennison in 2009 from Nike, Inc., where she was Senior Manager of Corporate Responsibility and also served as a Government Affairs Representative for the corporation at the state and local level. Prior to that, she was a Program Director at The California Wellness Foundation. Her nonprofit roles also include health educator at Planned Parenthood Los Angeles and Coordinator for Adolescent Pregnancy ChildWatch in Los Angeles. Procello Maddox has served on boards including the YWCA Pasadena-Foothill Valley, Southern California Grantmakers, Women and Philanthropy, and the Southern California Public Health Association. She received an MPA from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Mitchell Singer  
Director, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors  
At Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA), Mitchell Singer helps individuals, foundations, and corporations create strategies for giving, identify organizations to support, and understand the impact of their gifts. He manages grant portfolios and assists foundations in optimizing their operations and governance. Before joining RPA, Singer served as Associate Director of The Center on Philanthropy and Public Policy at the University of Southern California and worked at The California Endowment, where he managed several grant programs and served as The Endowment’s Ethics Officer. He also served as a Congressional Aide and Caseworker for Congresswoman Jane Harman. Singer serves on the Advisory Board of the MBA program in Nonprofit Management at American Jewish University and the Board of Funders for LGBTQ Issues. He holds an MBA in Nonprofit Management from American Jewish University.