

Council of Michigan Foundations

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Memo to: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

From: Task Force on Improving Philanthropy

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Re: Proposed CMF Project

Recommended Action: The Council of Michigan Foundations undertake a two-year special project to improve philanthropy. The project would be part of CMF's purpose "to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Michigan's philanthropic network."

The proposed two-year, \$60,000 budget would be supported by interested CMF Members. The project would be compatible with CMF's purpose to increase philanthropic resources in the state and with national efforts to increase and improve philanthropy.

Background

A group of foundation and corporate representatives interested in philanthropy met in June, 1985 at the invitation of Russell G. Mawby to discuss how to improve philanthropy in Michigan. Discussions included beginning and/or enhancing undergraduate and graduate programs in nonprofit management; training programs for nonprofit board members; campus volunteerism; and public understanding of philanthropy. Brian O'Connell, President, Independent Sector, met with the group to share needs and responses in other parts of the country.

During the last two years Task Force Members explored how various programs might work in Michigan. Programs to improve philanthropy could include:

- Creation of Michigan Center for Nonprofit Management
- Courses for board members and specific training sessions for board chairpersons
- Encouragement of student community service activities
- Undergraduate and graduate courses and degrees

- Advanced management courses for talented people already in the sector
 - Encouragement of research in academic disciplines
 - Identification of the basic body of literature so necessary to awareness, study and encouragement to community and academic libraries to secure and promote such materials
 - Governor's Award Program
- and much more.

The Task Force recognized that

- many of these ideas should be implemented by interested, committed educational institutions, associations and individuals. CMF, nor one foundation, wanted or could do it all.
- many institutions and associations need to be made aware of the need and market for such programs.
- it would be extremely helpful to have a coordination point, as well as an advocate encouraging development of programs and ideas.
- the project to improve philanthropy is compatible with CMF's efforts to increase philanthropy in the state in concert with national programs sponsored by Independent Sector and the Council on Foundations.

Therefore, the Task Force proposes that CMF undertake this coordination/advocacy on a two-year basis.

Program

It is proposed that CMF undertake the project engaging the necessary part-time staff member to implement the program from August, 1987 - August, 1989. The individual would be responsible for the following:

- Develop written materials about the need and potential project to improve philanthropy
- Share materials with institutions, associations and individuals who can be helpful
- Meet with key persons in the interested institutions and associations to explore and encourage their interest
- Share results of discussions with interested CMF Members
- Facilitate directory of nonprofit technical assistance providers

The person hired would need to be a self-starter, with entrepreneurial skills and interest in philanthropy, who relates well with the public and has good writing skills. The individual should be familiar with the nonprofit and educational communities, have respected credentials and be available for a two-year, part-time commitment. It is suggested that an Advisory Committee be established to advise on the project. Several Members of the Task Force have expressed an interest in serving on the committee.

Budget - 1 year

Program Associate - half-time	\$16,000
Travel - Meeting Expenses	5,000
Publications/Materials	7,000
Other expenses - telephone, clerical, etc.	2,000

Potential Sources of Support

Many of the members of the Task Force have expressed an interest on behalf of their foundation or corporation to receive a proposal for a two-year contribution. If the project is adopted by the Board of Trustees, CMF Members would be asked if they would like to participate in the program. A similar approach was utilized for the increasing philanthropy project which resulted in contributions from nearly 100 members.

What is Going On Elsewhere

Many board members are aware or have read about the number of nonprofit centers that have been established around the country in recent years. The latest is the Center on Philanthropy sponsored by Indiana University and supported by a \$4 million grant from the Lilly Endowment (see attachment).

Other Centers exist at Duke, Vanderbilt, City University of New York, Yale, Case Western Reserve, and the University of San Francisco. The Association of American Colleges is sponsoring a program again in 1987 to develop and teach undergraduate courses on philanthropy in American society. In 1986, nine awards of \$15,000 each were made to institutions to underwrite the development of curricula, the preparation of course materials, the purchase of books, the provision of released time, etc. Seven awards are planned for 1987. CMF has learned that one Michigan institution applied for a grant, but it was not awarded (see attached letter).

It should be noted that whatever comes of the Michigan project, the Task Force is sincerely interested in not reinventing the wheel just to have a Michigan project; to have whatever center or projects are developed cooperate nationally; and not to have CMF operate programs, but only facilitate the concept to providers who, in turn, would provide their own expertise and ingenuity to the challenge.

A further endorsement for a Michigan effort comes from Robert L. Gale, president of the Association of Governing Boards, who, in recent remarks reported in The Chronicle of Higher Education - May 20, 1987, indicated that there are a growing number of university programs to study philanthropy. "He said, 'the time is here to study philanthropy, warts and all'...He called for more and better research and writing on the subject."

Continued Funding

The special project is proposed to last two years. Ideally, the idea of improving philanthropy will be well accepted by that time and several programs underway. At this time it is anticipated that CMF would have no need to continue funding.

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attachments