

Council of Michigan Foundations

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Date: June 1, 1988

Memo to: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

From: Improving Philanthropy Committee

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Re: Improving Philanthropy Project -- Progress Report

The committee met on Wednesday, March 23, 1988 at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, at which time it reviewed the focus projects and initiated the following future steps:

1. Technical Assistance Directory

The Michigan Nonprofit Resource Directory, published jointly by the Accounting Aid Society of Detroit and the Council of Michigan Foundations, was received this month from the printer and more than 300 copies have been sold to date. Although the edition was two months behind schedule, we are pleased with the final product and its sales record. Plans call for the management resource to be updated every three years. The Committee will continue to monitor the directory sales, but otherwise, considers this focus of the project completed.

2. The Governor's Award

After researching existing volunteer recognition programs and writing a model proposal, the Committee evaluated the current and potential awards in light of the Council's priorities regarding quality control, allocation of resources, and conflict of interest. The Committee weighed what it felt to be contributions of distinction for CMF against what it perceived as the long-range impact of an additional volunteer honor, and felt that it was NOT in the best interest of the Council to proceed with the development of a new Governor's Award for Voluntary Contribution at this time. The Committee is, however, offering the Council's assistance to the Greater Michigan Foundation, should it wish to extend the participation or visibility of its existing Michigan Week Volunteer Awards to a concept comparable to the President's Volunteer Awards. We are hopeful that GMF's future vision will accommodate this concept.

3. The Academic Center

The Committee studied the summary of the survey of Michigan's higher educational institutions and concluded that although some activities are being offered in the areas of philanthropy and volunteerism, no

fully-developed course or comprehensive program exists at any present location. The following areas of interest to the Committee were identified:

1. Undergraduate Curriculum
 - a. Volunteer service -- "for-credit" and "non-credit" community and campus activities.
 - b. General citizenship and leadership classes -- interdisciplinary study with a focus on nonprofit organizational activities.
2. Graduate level study -- coursework and degree programs for students and professionals interested in nonprofit administration.
3. In-service Training -- continuing education programs for professional and citizen participants.
4. Research Programs -- faculty and student projects.
5. Technical Assistance -- services to apply academic resources to nonprofit activity problem-solving.

The Committee directed its next efforts toward assessing the interest of nonprofit service and grant making organizations regarding educational opportunities in the areas of philanthropy and volunteerism. Surveys have been designed and are in the process of being evaluated and tested before being distributed to statewide organizations. It is anticipated that the results of these instruments will be helpful in assisting the Committee in its advocacy efforts with the educational institutions to encourage future developments in this area.

4. The Campus Compact Program

A new focus area which the Committee is considering is a national program of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) which promotes a public service ethic among students. Susan Schwartz, ECS's Assistant Director of Campus Compact, visited Michigan in December and again May 26, 1988, to discuss strategies about launching a Michigan program with the Presidents of Albion and Michigan State. CMF was represented at the latter meeting by Dottie Johnson. As a result of these meetings, President John DiBiaggio of Michigan State has agreed to have the office for a statewide Campus Compact on the MSU campus. Tentative plans call for building a coalition of at least five private and five public colleges and universities to form the nucleus of a statewide compact. The Kresge Foundation is willing to loan one of its staff members, Debra Wallace, on a part-time basis to facilitate this effort should the Michigan Compact need her expertise. The Committee will be evaluating whether or not there is an appropriate role for CMF in supporting this program as an advocate between the University and the community it is trying to serve.

5. Next Steps

It is anticipated that the Committee will meet again in September to study the results of the nonprofit service and grant making organizations' surveys, and to direct future actions. Chief among them will be encouraging the State's institutions of higher education to offer training opportunities for nonprofits, and working with funders to be supportive of such opportunities, should they arise.