



# Different Ways of *Knowing*

Dr. Shana Sniffen (BF'13):  
Listener, Healer, Connector

ADDICTION:  
Out of the Shadows



PHILANTHROPY  
GROWS ITS OWN

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**ON THE COVER:** Dr. Shana Sniffen (BF'13) cares for Karen refugees from her office at HealthEast Clinic - Roselawn in Maplewood, Minn.

Photograph by **THOMAS STRAND**

ABOVE FROM LEFT: BEN RAGSDALE PHOTOGRAPHY, R.I.J. PHOTOGRAPHY, BRUCE SILCOX, HUNT-CAPTURE ON COVER: SHANA'S HAIR AND MAKEUP PROVIDED BY SHANNON DARSOW

ABOVE: COURTESY ART SHANTY PROJECTS

# Welcome

## Finding Common Ground

The last year has exposed and deepened divides in our country and our communities. It's not just having a close presidential election—we've had plenty of those. It's the level of vitriol, distrust and disdain evident in the campaigns and extending into the new year. For those of us at the Bush Foundation, it has reaffirmed our commitment to building understanding across differences. Every bit of political rhetoric that frames our challenges as "us vs. them" undermines the sense of "we" that is required to make progress. The more we understand the lived experiences of others, the more able we are to find and build on common ground.

The events of the past year also underscore the importance of community problem solving. Even as our political institutions are enveloped in drama and conflict, we see examples all around us of individuals and organizations coming together to get things done for their communities. We hope this issue of *bMag* reminds you—if you are in need of reminding—that there are good people doing good things every day. While we have serious social and political divides, we have extraordinary civic strengths, too. The future of our region depends on all of us working across our differences to make this place better for everyone. We're all in. I hope you are too. Thanks! 

Jen Ford Reedy,  
President



Archibald Bush and Edyth Bassler Bush, acrylic on paper, 2013  
ARTIST: Frank Gaard (BF '84) a Minneapolis-based painter who has made a bold mark in the Twin Cities arts community. He is known for his satire and pop culture commentary.



The Bush Foundation invests in great ideas and the people who power them in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geography.  
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EDITOR  
Venessa Fuentes

PRESIDENT  
Jen Ford Reedy

COMMUNITY NETWORK VICE PRESIDENT  
Duchesne Drew

COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM STAFF  
Dominick Washington,  
Shaylyn Bernhardt, Megan Forgrave,  
Katie Gleichman

PRODUCED BY GREENSPRING MEDIA



PUBLISHER  
Jamie Flaws

WRITERS  
Tammy Galvin, Aubrey Schield,  
Kyle Smelter, Lisa Marchand, Syl Jones,  
Morgan Mercer, Mo Perry

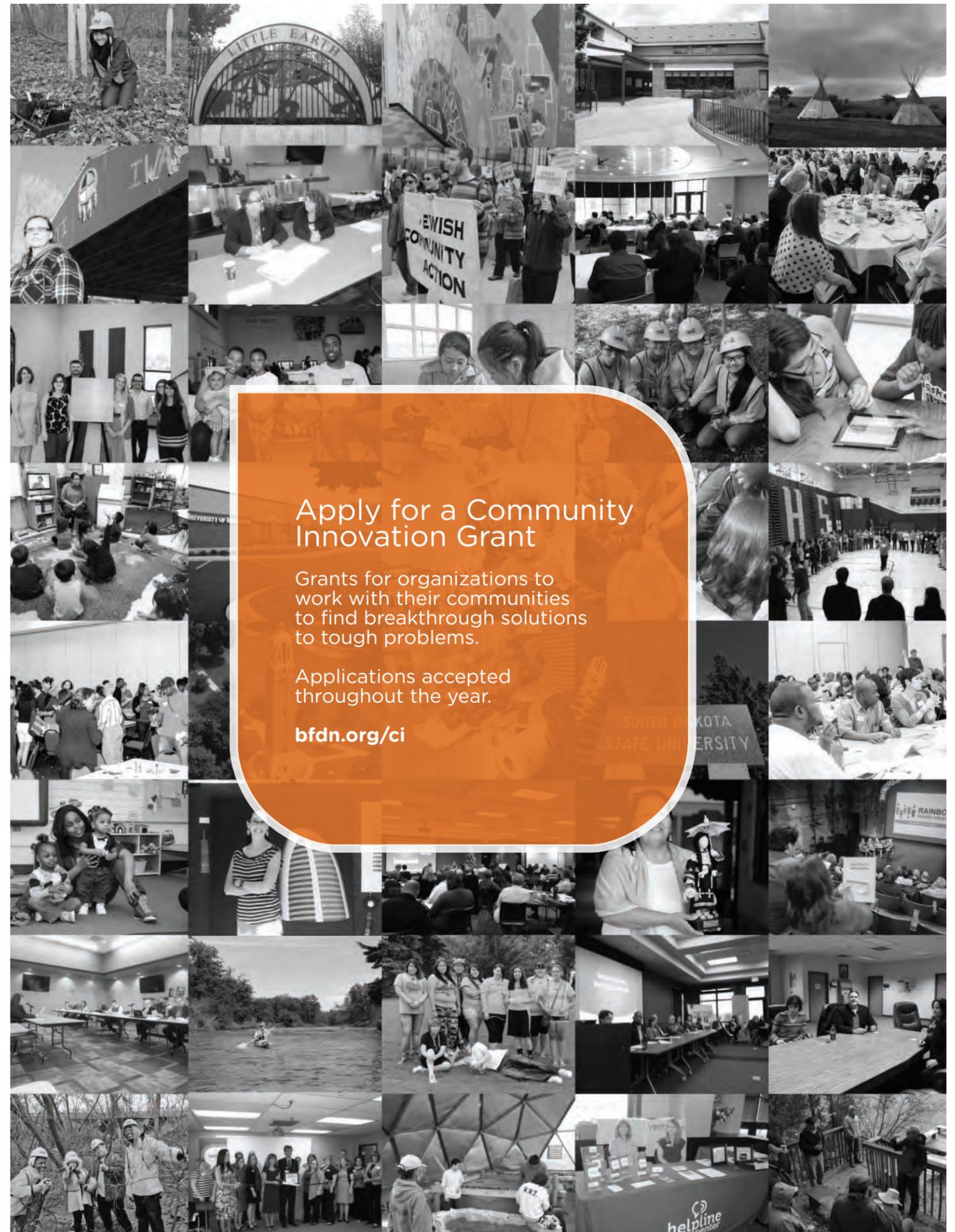
ART DIRECTOR  
Jamie Bankston

GRAPHIC DESIGNER  
Ben Hartzell

PRODUCTION PROJECT MANAGER  
Cindy Marking

PREPRESS  
Amanda Wadeson

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### Apply for a Community Innovation Grant

Grants for organizations to work with their communities to find breakthrough solutions to tough problems.

Applications accepted throughout the year.

[bfdn.org/ci](http://bfdn.org/ci)

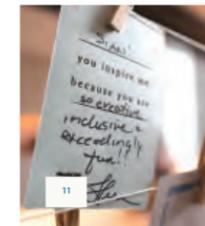
PHOTO: GLEN STUBBE/STAR TRIBUNE

# Connect

Building and strengthening connections between people working to make the region better for everyone.

## bushCONNECT

bushCONNECT 2016 brought together more than 1,000 people and, for the first time, added a second day of programming to help participants build skills. The Bush Foundation partnered with more than 40 organizations to create a set of events designed to inspire, equip and connect leaders from across the region.



PHOTOS R.J.L. PHOTOGRAPHY

### 1 • GETTIN' STARTED

Comedian, Author and "The Daily Show" Producer Baratunde Thurston kicked off bushCONNECT with a vibrant keynote.

### 2 • VERBAL ART

Spoken word artist Desdamona leads a Wilder Foundation workshop "Improvisation, Solidarity & Risk: Leadership Lessons from Jazz & Hip-Hop."

### 3 • MORE, MORE, MORE

For the first time this year, attendees could opt into a second day of off-site skill-building workshops, such as the one led by Rose McGee of Sweet Potato Comfort Pie: "A Catalyst for Caring and Building Community."

### 4 • PERSONAL PASSIONS

Attendees shared their passions with artists selected by Pollen, and walked away with their own personal Careercatures.

### 5 • IGNITION

Malik Bush shared his own story during an Ignite Talk "¿Who Do You See?: Update Your Visual Lexicon."

### 6 • LOTS OF LAUGHS

Attendees rounded out their bushCONNECT experience with a rousing trivia gameshow, hosted by FlipPhone.

### 7 • MOVING MOMENTS

Attendees had the unique opportunity to have intimate conversations with community leaders such as Lori Saroya, National Chapter Development Director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

### 8 • SOCIAL CHANGE

The Guthrie Theater presented a workshop led by Harry Waters, Jr., "Preparing for Action: A Practical Use of Theater for Social Change."

### 9 • POP-UP CONNECTIONS

Twin Cities writer and creative organizer Junauda Petrus (right) co-leads a "Hack the System with Community Solutions for Change" session with Emily Zimmer (left), Artistic Director of the Chicago Avenue Project at Pillsbury House Theatre.

### 10 • ISLAMIC SISTERHOOD

Bush Fellow Nausheena Hussain gave an Ignite Talk "RISE - Reviving the Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment."

### 11 • GRATEFULNESS

A ReadyGo letterpress project invited attendees to fill in the blanks and jot notes of gratitude to one another.

### 12 • BRAND MESSAGING

A second day of workshops allowed attendees to delve more deeply into topics with experts, such as Jabber Logic's popular session on "How to Improve Audience Engagement with Brand Messaging."

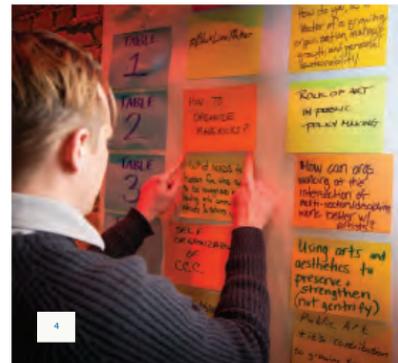
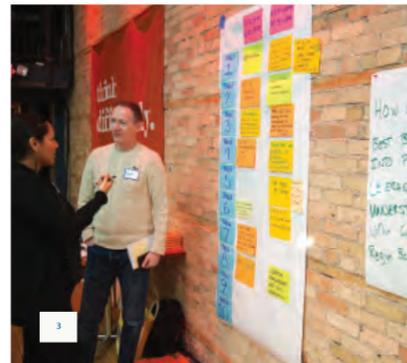
## Community Creativity Cohort

Arts leaders from across the region came together to help articulate the challenges and opportunities associated with their work. Their insights are helping to inform the Foundation's future work in Community Creativity.



**1 • ENGAGING ACT**  
Arts leaders participated in engaging activities led by local artists to get to know one another better before their work session.

**2 • GROUP CHAT**  
Diane Tran facilitates a group conversation.



**3 • Q&A**  
The big question: How can arts and culture best be integrated into public life and leveraged to bridge understanding across and within cultures to make the region better for everyone?

**4 • BRAINSTORMS**  
A participant further explored big questions in the arts community.

**5 • SOLVING PROBLEMS**  
Arts leaders brainstormed together about how the arts can play a role in community problem solving.



## Board Retreat

The Bush Foundation Board traveled to Rapid City, S.D., in May 2016 to learn more about the issues and work happening in the area and to meet the leaders making a real impact. This year, they'll do the same in Fargo, N.D.



**1 • PUBLIC ARTS**

The Bush Foundation Board went on a walking tour in Rapid City, S.D., during the 2016 Board Retreat. One of the stops was Art Alley, a public art project.

**2 • RAPID CITY RECEPTION**

The Bush Foundation Board and staff connected with leaders in South Dakota during a reception in Rapid City in May.

**3 • MEET AND GREET**

The Board took a walking tour and met with local business owners and grantees in Rapid City. Here, Board Vice Chair DeAnna Cummings (left) and Community Creativity Portfolio Director Erik Takeshita speak with Lori Pourier of First People's Fund, during a stop at Sage & Silver Americana, a Native American and western women's boutique.



TRAN BRUCESILOOX

PHOTOS JOHNNY SUNDY

## Creating a Space to Connect

The Bush Foundation sponsors events across the region where people share great ideas and build stronger networks.



### 1 • NONPROFIT ENGAGEMENT

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits engaged leaders at both its annual conference and a leadership conference last year to help build the capacity of those working at local nonprofits.

### 2 • EDTALKS

Dr. Keith Stanley Brooks presented at Minneapolis

EDTalks, a series of short, compelling talks and conversations on issues that affect public education and our young people.

### 3 • CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Bush Foundation staff checked out the PlaceMakers/Rochester Prototyping Festival, a year-long initiative focusing on creative

placemaking as a tool for economic regeneration and engagement in community building. Pictured here is Naaima Khan (right), a Ron McKinley Fellow on the Bush Foundation's Community Innovation Team, connecting with a community member.

DR. BROOKS: JEFF ACHEN

JENKINS: BEN RAGSDALE PHOTOGRAPHY

### 4+5 • EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Metropolitan Alliance of Connected Communities (MACC) focused on equity and inclusion at its 2016 Forum. At the daylong event, both the keynote and a panel of local leaders shared personal experiences leading change efforts at their organizations. Later, participants spent time sharing their own perspectives and experiences.

### 6 • TEDx

Bush Fellow Andrea Jenkins gave a talk on "Why I Wear Purple" at TEDxMinneapolis.

### 7 • INNOVATION EXPO

The Innovation Expo events in Rapid City and Sioux Falls connected entrepreneurs, investors, thought leaders, community ambassadors and others involved in the development of startup companies.

# Creating a Community Oasis

How Pillsbury United Communities uses human-centered design to plan a brand-new kind of grocery store in north Minneapolis

by MO PERRY



Pillsbury United Communities' (PUC) North Market project was born when the organization began examining why families in north Minneapolis seemed to ignore the Women, Infants and Children (better known as WIC) food-subsidy program. At the request of the State Health Department, PUC set out to boost participation in the program; no one dreamed the solution would take the form of a truly innovative grocery store.

"We set out to solve a much narrower problem," says PUC President and CEO Chanda Smith Baker. "But as we engaged community members in talking about access to healthy food, we began to think more broadly about what we could do as a solution."

The idea of a grocery store emerged at a time when PUC was thinking through a new strategic framework. "We knew we couldn't take our work to the next level unless we disrupted our current way of doing business," says Smith Baker. To that end, PUC Chief Innovation Officer Adair Mosely attended Stanford Institute of Design's "Design Thinking Bootcamp." Out of more than 100 participants, Mosely was the only one representing the nonprofit sector. "Human-centered design is

being used every day by the private sector to be more competitive and take big risks in the pursuit of innovative solutions," explained Mosely, "so why is the nonprofit sector not using the same tools and resources?"

Human-centered design process begins with learning how to empathize with the person (or "end user") whose problem you want to solve. In this case, the average resident of north Minneapolis is more likely to be obese and have a shorter life span than residents in other parts of the city. Smith Baker calls north Minneapolis one of the worst urban food deserts in the nation, pointing to the 30 convenience stores and single grocery store that serve its 67,000 community members. "As we went out and engaged those WIC users, we immersed ourselves in their day-to-day experience," says Mosely. "We understood what they valued."

The next phases of the human-centered design process involve using your empathy to define the scope of the problem and develop possible solutions. The best ideas are then manifested in a cost-effective prototype that can be tested with the end users before significant resources are dedicated to a full



One of PUC's design sessions aimed at developing design solutions that would make community members' lives easier in terms of carrying groceries, proximity to bus stations, and overall security and safety.

implementation. PUC used this process to develop, prototype and test its first idea—a mobile grocery store for WIC voucher recipients—before learning from the state that regulations would prevent its idea from being realized.

"At that point, we could have gone back to the old way of doing things," says Mosely, "and just offered a class for people on how to use their WIC vouchers." Instead, the team went back through the human-centered design process using a different question: "Is there something larger that we can solve in our community?" This time, they landed on a bigger idea: Open a full-service grocery store that combines wellness support, health services and education with a wide range of fresh and healthy foods in one accessible space.

PUC's full commitment to the human-centered design process made it a natural fit for the Bush Foundation's Community Innovation Grant program. Smith Baker and her team received a \$200,000 grant in 2016. "Good ideas don't just come out of nowhere," says Community Innovation Director Mandy Ellerton. "At the Bush Foundation, we look for processes that are collaborative and include the folks affected by the problem. We're really excited by the depth of PUC's community engagement with North Market."

While the whole brainstorm and design process for North Market benefited from intensive community involvement, PUC leveraged key organizational relationships with cross-sector partners to further broaden its impact. For example, North Memorial, which operates a hospital near the border of Robbinsdale and north Minneapolis, had been exploring ways to deepen its commitment to preventative and primary care in the neighborhood. As a tenant in the finished market, it will have a health clinic and offer nutrition and wellness counseling, in addition to medication management therapy geared toward supporting chronic-disease management.

"Our collaboration with North Market helps us align ourselves with the way healthcare is changing," says North Memorial Care Coordination Manager Emilie Hedlund, "It allows us to test an alternative model for community healthcare access." She notes that the status quo involves waiting for patients to come to a clinic or the hospital, often in a state of illness or health crisis. "We're excited to try this new way of engaging with the community, where we come to them, so we can address some of the social factors that are core to someone's health but

can be hard for us to tackle in clinic visits."

Local human-centered design firm bswing, a key partner from the business sector, has been instrumental in guiding PUC and North Memorial through the design process in a way that keeps the focus on the end user. "We're helping them get into the community and talk with community members to build engagement around their health needs," explains bswing CEO and Bush Foundation board member Jen Alstad. "We help bring the design concepts to life—what the health programming looks like, what services are delivered in the space, and how it all supports a new way of healthcare working with community."

Purchased in November 2016, the land and building that will house North Market is the site of a former Kowalski's grocery store. The project hopes to break ground summer of 2017, with a scheduled opening in the fall of 2017. It will feature 16,000 square feet of grocery retail space with an extra spacious and prominent fresh produce section; a community space for cooking classes, food demonstrations and product launch parties where local entrepreneurs can offer their products; and a health and wellness space staffed with physicians, pharmacists, community paramedics, a dietician and a nutritionist.

The market and wellness center will create 25 retail jobs that offer livable wages, and infuse the local economy with \$3.6 million in revenue each year. The aim is for the grocery store to be self-sustaining after a year of operations, while PUC will continue to support the health and wellness programming.

"There's a lot of interest in figuring out how to solve north Minneapolis' problems," says Smith Baker. "Because PUC has worked with the community for so long—we're invested in it; we have relationships here—they've really embraced this project. They're looking forward to having this asset near where they live and work."

Many people within the health and wellness field have embraced North Market as well and are interested to see how the model moves forward. "There's potential for scaling this model to other communities, or presenting about how we arrived at this concept," says Smith Baker. Mosely agrees: "With North Market, we'll have a model that is scalable for rural and urban areas to deal with access to healthy foods, and the intersection of food and health overall. We'll have breakthroughs to offer, and by supporting this process, the Bush Foundation is helping us do just that." 

RENDERING AND PHOTOS COURTESY PUC



Dr. Shana Sniffen (BF'13)

PORTRAITS BY THOMAS STRAND

# Different Ways of *Knowing*

Listener, Healer, Connector

by SYL JONES

Shana Sniffen, M.D., a 2013 Bush Fellow, glides through the corridors of HealthEast Clinic – Roselawn in Maplewood, Minn., the very picture of confidence and comfort, chatting easily with patients and staff, navigating multiple layers of complexity as if they weren't even there.

**T**o the casual observer she seems so relaxed and poised that it might never occur to anyone that inside, she works hard to release the nagging perfectionism with which she contends. “A mantra I learned from my attending in the emergency room at medical school that I use daily is, ‘Your work does not need to be perfect, but it needs to be adequate, appropriate and to the best of your ability,’” says Sniffen.

Inherently honest and modest, Sniffen seldom speaks of herself as a leader or

creator. She talks about being a “connector” and “cultural translator,” but even those words don't flow easily from her mouth. She is very much aware that the work of crafting cross-cultural coalitions—the work she has spearheaded since 2013 with the Karen Organization of Minnesota (KOM) and its leadership—is nurtured by the milk of human kindness, leavened with a dash of humility and a pinch of indirect communication.

During a recent clinic visit with one of her patients, a woman who has just had

surgery, Sniffen leans forward, gently pats her arm and asks, “Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?” The musicality of her voice and the light in her eyes draw the patient in and, as Sniffen listens, it is easy to see why her patients keep coming back: Sniffen gives herself over to her patients.

Indeed, Sniffen notes that one of her continual challenges is finding time to NERS (pronounced “nurse”) her soul through regular Nutrition, Exercise, Reflection and Sleep.

HAIR AND MAKEUP: SHANNON DARSOW



Taking care of herself isn't something she squeezes in around the fringes of her life. In fact, it is vital to the work itself. Because, not only is Sniffen a highly sought-after family medicine physician at the Roselawn Clinic, she is also a co-founder and co-leader of the Karen Chemical Dependency Collaborative (KCDC), the first Karen-focused chemical dependency organization in the United States.

In her original Bush Fellowship application, Sniffen declared, "...I will build the foundation for the Collaborative Community Network for Karen refugees...the goal will be to find ways to share resources, avoid duplication of services or working at cross purposes, and empower refugee families."

From her original vision has come a vast network of individuals from the Karen community, law enforcement, the state health department, immigration, social services, healthcare, translation services, education and the faith community that provides support for about 12,000 Karen refugees, most of whom live in Saint Paul, Minn.

Many have found their way to Sniffen in her role as a primary care provider, advisor or collaborator who has worked tirelessly to support the largest population of Karen refugees outside of Burma, now called Myanmar, and Thailand.

The major focus of this larger network is now the KCDC project, which is designed to "center Karen voices" in the fight against chemical dependency within that community. Sniffen co-founded KCDC with Karen leaders, who identified culturally relevant treatment for harmful alcohol use as one of its most important needs.

The heart of this effort has been prodding Western medical and social service organizations to acknowledge there are different ways of knowing, and that the Karen community, despite its many needs, is in the best position to solve its problems.

### Who are the Karen People?

There were once more than 135 ethnic groups inside Burma before it was colonized by the British and then the Burmese military took control in 1962. One of those ethnic groups is the Karen people, many of whom were Christianized by Protestant missionaries in the 19th century.

In Burma, the Karen work primarily in rural communities as subsistence farmers growing rice or as hunters of animals and insects to feed their

families. They are expert botanists and use herbs and other natural substances as medicines. Karen villages are led by elected Headsmen; but within rural families, the work of running a household is divided equally between husband and wife. Households are multi-generational and often include grandparents as well as an average of three children per family.

The Karen ethnic minority fought on behalf of the British Army in Burma against the Japanese in World War II



Dr. Sniffen learning how to plant rice in Thailand. It was part of the Bush Fellowship trip she took to Thailand, Cambodia and Burma to learn about tropical medicine, visit the refugee camp, and learn about the Karen experience prior to resettlement.

PHOTO COURTESY DR. SNIFFEN

and, when Burma received its independence from Britain in 1948, the Karen people eagerly anticipated independence. Instead, they were abandoned by the British and eventually took up arms against the Burmese government in the Karen insurgency in 1949. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed over the past 68 years in one of the longest running civil wars in modern history.

Today more than 140,000 Karen people live in deplorable conditions along the Thai-Burma border in camps administered by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. Because some have been Christianized, they have garnered support from churches to make the long journey to the United States, Australia, Canada and England, among other nations.

Once they arrive, the Karen confront extreme cultural differences between life in the Burmese villages, the Thai refugee camps and swarming urban centers like Saint Paul. On top of these disorientations, many have spent years evading the Burmese military, walking hundreds of miles to camps, experiencing torture, rape, monsoons, the death of family members and other atrocities.

When they arrive in Saint Paul, most Karen refugees are immediately in debt because they must repay the cost of their airline tickets. They are forced to work in factories or other low-wage occupations before they have time to acclimate to life in the United States. Due to post-traumatic stress disorder from years on the run and confinement in the refugee camps, some turn to alcohol, drugs and domestic violence, which can lead to conflicts with law enforcement that re-traumatize them and break up families.

Commander Dave Kvam of the Maplewood Police Department said that the Karen people are, "independent, respectful and reserved. They seem simply to be people who want the opportunity to work, contribute, raise their kids and live their lives, not

dissimilar to the vast majority of folks, regardless of ethnicity."

But, like others who experience difficulty in life, some Karen refugees become chemically dependent. Ehtaw Dwee, KOM's first board president, co-founder of the KCDC and a Karen language interpreter, says he believes that alcohol in particular is killing his community.

"When I travel around the country as an interpreter, I see many sad stories affecting my people, and if you were in my shoes, you would understand what I mean: domestic violence, cheating on people, DUIs, family breakdown. This has to stop. We as a people must be more honest with the community and with ourselves. We need to admit that we have a problem and then get proper treatment. That is the purpose of the KCDC, and we must succeed."

While this trauma cycle is common among many groups, when Sniffen began public health screenings of new Karen refugees several years ago, she noticed that they exhibited an unusual combination of resilience, strength, humor and appreciation. She also realized that traditional Western social and medical systems are highly fragmented and that unless someone "connected the dots," with Karen voices leading the way, any effort to address alcohol and drug abuse would be doomed before it began.

"There are many examples of how the Karen people are self-organized, create structures, support systems and interventions for the problems in their community," says Sniffen. "It's just that mainstream providers do not often know about these grassroots efforts or that they look different. So, one of the strategies of KCDC is to try to uncover what these are and offer ways to be supportive and share resources."

Ehtahler Dee, a Karen refugee who works with KCDC, explains that when he first became involved in the project: "I saw that there was something about

**"WE ARE MOBILIZING TREATMENT THAT IS SPECIFIC TO A REFUGEE COMMUNITY AND TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE LANGUAGE, THE CULTURE AND THE TRAUMA. THERE'S A WHOLE GROUP OF PATIENTS THAT IS NOT BEING SERVED, AND WE'RE RIGHT ON THE CUSP OF MAKING THAT HAPPEN."**

—Dr. Sniffen



the traditional American treatment that is not right for the Karen people. I met with Dr. Sniffen who was talking to people about how to create a better approach, and I became the cultural liaison for KCDC and assisted in creating a curriculum specifically for the Karen community.”

“What I like about KCDC is that it feels like home, working here on a team with Americans who want to share with us,” Dee explains. “They let the community drive the approach, and I feel very comfortable working with American providers. Even though they have a higher education than us, they still make you feel like we can work together.”

In accord with this idea of sharing expertise across cultures and systems, Sniffen strives to create comprehensive programs *with* the Karen community, not for them. Her open, warm approach makes all the difference in the world.

“I think the fact that we have a successful community collaboration that’s bringing resources together is really helpful,” Sniffen said. “We are mobilizing treatment that is specific to a refugee community and takes into account the language, the culture and the trauma. There’s a whole group of patients that is not being served, and we’re right on the cusp of making that happen.”

She uses the term “on the cusp” for several reasons. First, the collaboration she is building is not yet complete. More must be done to break down cultural barriers, transform the various systems involved and provide appropriate treatment options for the Karen community. Also, KCDC, the centerpiece of Sniffen’s work, is in the midst of completing a second field test of its principles and concepts. No comprehensive study of its work has yet been attempted or published.

Finally, in ways that mirror the Karen people themselves, Shana Sniffen is reticent to talk about herself. She does

not want to be the center of attention. Yet, it is impossible to understand the intricate nature of the work she is doing without knowing her personal story.

### Beautiful Inside & Out

“Shana” is a Yiddish name meaning “beautiful.” Although she is not Jewish, nearly a quarter of a century ago Sniffen met a rabbi who told her that “Shana” has deep meaning and that a person needs to be beautiful inside and out to live up to his or her full depth.

The rabbi’s observation intimidated her. “I felt a little pressure at 23 years old that I might not be able to live up to its meaning, given I don’t have a lot of control over the outside,” she said. “But I can try my best for the inside beauty at least.”

The surname Sniffen comes from the Anglo-American part of her family. A Sniffen ancestor from New York sailed to Hawaii in the 1800s, married a Hawaiian woman and had 10 children. One of those children was Sniffen’s great-grandfather, who married a Hawaiian woman and had 17 children, including Sniffen’s grandfather. In turn, he married a Chinese woman who gave birth to four children, including Sniffen’s dad, who married a white woman.

Sniffen is therefore a product of interracial marriages dating back several generations and says that perhaps this background contributes to her perspective on what she calls “cultural bridging.”

“I grew up learning from my grandparents the importance of family connections, cultural pride, internal strength and taking care of others,” she said. “My Chinese grandmother instilled in me a sense of adventure, curiosity about people, and the importance of being able to laugh at myself.”

At California State University in Fresno, where she majored in Speech Communications and Rhetoric, Sniffen

received a grant to develop a cross-cultural student network to ease the tensions from racial violence on campus. Because her family wasn’t wealthy, she took various jobs in social services—with organizations that addressed homelessness, domestic violence and mental health issues—for nine years before attending medical school.

She had already decided that one day, she would work with underserved communities.

At the University of Washington

Medical School, Sniffen completed a certificate in Native American Health and worked in Zambia for six months on a collaborative research project on HIV/AIDS. She then moved to Minneapolis specifically to work with Hmong and African American patients.

In 2013, while facilitating the Karen Patient Advisory Committee for the Roselawn Clinic, Sniffen applied for a Bush Fellowship. She chose to assess the needs of the Karen community, learn about gaps and barriers in service

and explore ways that other communities built resources needed to assist refugees in transition.

Even from the beginning, Sniffen was thinking far beyond medical care and looking at a more comprehensive, culturally relevant safety net that would serve the Karen people. Her initial application included a vision of “creating a public website with a list of stakeholders and downloadable culturally competent and language appropriate resources.” (Recently, she



“...I WILL BUILD THE FOUNDATION FOR THE COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR KAREN REFUGEES... THE GOAL WILL BE TO FIND WAYS TO SHARE RESOURCES, AVOID DUPLICATION OF SERVICES OR WORKING AT CROSS PURPOSES, AND EMPOWER REFUGEE FAMILIES.”

—Excerpt from Dr. Sniffen’s 2013 Bush Fellowship application



Karen interpreter training on newly created glossary of mental health and addiction terminology created by KCDC and Karen leaders and facilitated in the Karen native language.

achieved this goal by launching a website known as “Toh Moo” pronounced “dtoh moo,” which means “bridging life.”)

Just before Sniffen applied for a Bush Fellowship, a treasured 20-year relationship came to an abrupt end and propelled her toward a personal and professional transformation. She wrote in her Fellowship application, “I still feel powerless at times being a single provider working one-on-one with families, when many of their struggles are due to larger social and systemic problems.”

In other words, Sniffen longed to go beyond the personal intimacies she shared with Karen patients in her clinic to create a broader healing network where simply inviting Karen refugees to participate would constitute a therapeutic intervention.

Three years later, while she may feel somewhat powerless in her battles to make multiple systems more responsive to refugee needs, Sniffen understands that she wields great power for her patients and within the Karen community. The genius of her approach is that

she uses her power by deflecting it—deploying it to unite disparate peoples around a common goal, affirming that different ways of knowing are useful because they are different, and that all ways of knowing are welcome in her world.

### The Karen Chemical Dependency Collaboration

With the help of the Bush Foundation, HealthEast Foundation, Medica Foundation, RF Bigelow Foundation, and the Saint Paul Foundation, Sniffen brought an incredibly diverse group of people together to examine the impact of not just medical or chemical dependency treatment methods but also the impact of the social determinants of health on the Karen community.

The sheer number of participants in the collaboration is mind boggling. Sniffen tries to ensure that at least 50 percent of the people in attendance at meetings are Karen, even going so far as to ask mainstream agency managers to bring their Karen staff or offering gift

cards to pay some interpreters to attend meetings to avoid lost wages as a barrier to participation. She believes that Karen voices must be heard and that solutions need to arise organically from an interplay between Karen people and the mainstream community.

Jennifer McCleary, a professor at Tulane University and a member of the KCDC who is designing a new, culturally relevant alcohol abuse curriculum, couldn't agree more.

“We have managed to create a team of people across multiple professional, cultural and linguistic backgrounds that functions as a resilient and flexible organism in the face of overwhelming uncertainty and upheaval. We have created a collaborative that is actively responding to harmful alcohol use in the Karen community. That is, I believe, the most important core of what we are doing.”

McCleary has worked with several Karen partners to create this new curriculum. Current treatment programs lack quality interpretation,

“WE HAVE MANAGED TO CREATE A TEAM OF PEOPLE ACROSS MULTIPLE PROFESSIONAL, CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS THAT FUNCTIONS AS A RESILIENT AND FLEXIBLE ORGANISM IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING UNCERTAINTY AND UPHEAVAL.”

—Jennifer McCleary, professor, Tulane University, and KCDC member

are not culturally relevant, and are difficult to navigate because of barriers like insurance, transportation and health literacy.

“This is the genesis of the KCDC,” McCleary explains. “We believe that programs need to be adapted systemwide to ensure that Karen people have access to needed treatment. One way we are responding to this need is through developing an outpatient group treatment program that is entirely organic to the Karen community.” The program is co-facilitated at the Roselawn Clinic by an American-born licensed clinical social worker

and a Karen leader who has also been trained in the refugee camps in Thailand to provide chemical health treatment.

One improvement outcome of the treatment redesign involves transforming the initial diagnostic assessment. Western diagnostic assessments are typically long and multi-layered with questions that are irrelevant or confusing for Karen people.

“Actually, the entire (Western) process is incongruent with information gathering in the Karen community,” McCleary contends. “One reason Karen people struggle with entering into

treatment is difficulty getting through the diagnostic assessment. With guidance from Karen community members, we have adapted the diagnostic assessment questions to be more culturally relevant and to use language that is more easily translatable. We have also cut the assessment into multiple pieces, and it is partially done by a Karen person, in Karen, in the patient's home.”

Of greater importance than the actual programming has been KCDC's approach and process, according to Sniffen. For example, the group's guiding principles are known as “The Six C's:” Collaborative, Community Driven,

### A HISTORY OF INVESTING IN HEALTH LEADERS

Throughout his life, Archie Bush invested in the ambitions of people with extraordinary potential. In both his personal philanthropy and as the first President of the Bush Foundation, he showed a particular interest in supporting people pursuing medical careers.

Since the original Bush Fellowship was established in 1964, we have continued to invest in medical professionals. For a time, we had a specific program dedicated to leaders in medicine, called the Bush Medical Fellowship.

Today, we can see the impact of those investments in just this small sample of the many past and current Bush Fellows working in health care:

**Mark Mishek (BF'85)** is a leader in the field of addiction recovery as CEO of the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

**Dennis Stevens (BF'91)** is a leader in the field of neonatology and the treatment of infants and young children with disabilities as the Medical Director of the Boekelheide Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Sanford Health

**Patricia Walker (BF'95)** is a global expert on tropical medicine as a University of Minnesota Professor and the Director of the HealthPartners Travel and Tropical Medicine Center

**Wilhelmina Tolbert Holder (BF'97)** is working to support the licensure of foreign-trained medical professionals in the United States as the Executive Director of the Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE), Inc.

**Jon Pryor (BF'04)** is driving innovation in hospital practice as CEO of the Hennepin County Medical Center

**Jon Hallberg (BF'06)** is educating Minnesotans across the state on medical issues as a radio expert and the Medical Director of the University of Minnesota Mill City Clinic

**Jennifer Almanza (BF'15)** is working to transform maternity health practices as a Registered Nurse at HealthPartners **IS SHE STILL AT HP???**

**Yuri Rafael Nakasato (BF'16)** is working to transform how medical systems do patient-centered care as a doctor at Sanford Health in Fargo

Venessa—can you confirm?



Culturally Response, Comprehensive, Capacity Building and Compassionate.

Other principles include valuing and prioritizing cultural indigenous strengths as equal to American concepts, and encouraging mainstream organizations to be more culturally adaptive, responsive and humble.

“In some ways, this is the essence for breaking down disparities,” says Sniffen.

Ehtaw Dwee also notes the importance of having many trained voices in the fight against alcohol and drug dependency.

“People may not listen to the doctor, but they listen to their pastor, so we train the pastor. Can you imagine how hard that is?” he asks. “The pastor is the person who tells you what to do. But we tell the pastor what to do.”

“We also want the probation departments to do a better job because my people who are convicted don’t understand what happens when they are arrested,” he continues. “They think, ‘Oh, I have been punished already, I am

done.’ But they have to follow up with rehabilitation. The probation officers need to let them know that the judge is not angry, he wants you to follow up.”

### Seeing Needs, Valuing People

In the end, Sniffen’s vision with KCDC is about creating a cross-cultural learning network.

“I would never have known when I started this project that training the interpreters or creating a Karen language glossary for mental health and addiction terms to have shared vocabulary for concepts and words that do not exist in the Karen language was necessary—without listening to the Karen leaders and interpreters,” she says.

Tonya Cook, a social work Ph.D. candidate at the University of Minnesota, is the program manager and program developer for KCDC as well as a founding member of KOM. She met the first wave of Karen refugees in Saint Paul in 2004 and has since developed deep friendships with members

of the community. She says that among the many things she learned from the Karen people is to look at life through the lens of community as opposed to an individualistic perspective.

“I have taken as a personal motto the idea of seeing needs, which I learned from the Karen people,” Cook says. “When people’s basic human needs are not being met because of poverty, you don’t have to wait for them to ask—you can see they need food, you can see they need a job, you can see they need warm winter gloves. If you have something, just give it.”

She has also learned from the Karen that it is more important to value people over money or possessions and that the word “help” means different things to Karen people than to those in the dominant U.S. culture.

“As one Karen woman astutely pointed out, in dominant U.S. culture, ‘help’ means ‘I will help you to help yourself.’ In Karen culture, ‘help’ means ‘I will throw myself in front of you.’

As I understand it, she was saying something like she would stand in front of a bullet for you. She would sacrifice herself for you,” explains Cook. “Indeed, I see that type of sacrifice displayed by Karen people every day. When a family is new to the United States and they don’t have enough for rent this month, they tell a friend and they get ‘help.’”

Sniffen’s greatest achievement may be that she has fully embraced the very difficult work of moving past linguistic and cultural differences by respecting and valuing those differences. She has navigated the stages of leadership from individual practitioner to event planner and finally to “bridge and guide.”

As she continues this journey with her many professional partners, Sniffen says that the term “leader” feels too self-important “given how mutually collaborative this work is.”

In reflecting on what she has accomplished and how much more there is to do, Sniffen wrote the following note:

“I came up with this statement today as a summary of my philosophy: While I try to accept things that I cannot change, I also try to change the things that I cannot accept.”

Over a century ago, the physician William Osler noted that, “The good physician treats the disease; the great physician treats the patient who has the disease.”

In this case, Sniffen is engaged in the deepest kind of co-production of healthcare services, involving patients in their own diagnosis, treatment and follow up. To some extent, the work she is doing to reform healthcare systems envisions the system itself as part of the disease process. That system will never be healed unless all stakeholders are fully engaged and respected. She is showing us how to do just that.

By Osler’s definition or any other, Dr. Shana Sniffen is indeed a good and a great physician. 



Co-Directors of KCDC: Ehtaw Dwee, Dr. Shana Sniffen, Paw Wah Toe

“WHILE I TRY TO ACCEPT THINGS THAT I CANNOT CHANGE, I ALSO TRY TO CHANGE THE THINGS THAT I CANNOT ACCEPT.”

--Dr. Sniffen

PHOTO COURTESY DR. SNIFFEN



 Visit [bmag.bushfoundation.org](http://bmag.bushfoundation.org) to read more about Ehtaw Dwee’s personal journey to becoming the first board president of the Karen Organization of Minnesota and co-director of KCDC. While visiting the website read about how Dr. Sniffen uses her trauma-informed approach to working with patients and how Commander David Kvam ensures the Maplewood Police Department’s involvement in the KCDC.

## About the Author

Syl Jones breathes life into narrative medicine with his telling of the Shana Sniffen and Karen refugee story. A 2014 Bush Fellow, Jones has spent much of his career at the intersection of storytelling and healthcare. These overlapping interests make him a natural fit for the field of narrative medicine, which he has dedicated the term of his fellowship to exploring, most recently as a Resident Fellow in Narrative Health at Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC).



**Narrative Medicine: A medical approach that utilizes people's narratives in clinical practice, research and education as a way to promote healing.**

“As I look back, narrative medicine has been part of my life since I was a kid. When I was a young boy in the late 1960s, my mother worked as a nurse at the Shriners Burn Institute in Cincinnati. She would bring home these uniforms that were different colors. She said kids respond better to pastels—the color white scared a lot of them, because it reminded them of ghosts. So I was learning about the inner relationship of child patients with their caregivers, and the stories the caregivers carried just by virtue of what they wore and what they said. I got to know some of those kids, and it helped both me and them. I felt a sense of mission.

“I always knew I was a storyteller. I started writing professionally at 14 for the city newspaper of Cincinnati—I knew it was a gift I'd been given. I didn't know there was a relationship between stories and health until much later. I graduated from Augsburg College and went to work for *Modern Medicine Magazine* as an investigative reporter. Working there taught me a medical vocabulary and taught me to love medicine and healthcare. Later I opened my own consulting firm, and was simultaneously working as a playwright (I've had more than 60 plays produced).

“I was driving one day and I heard the words ‘narrative medicine’ on National Public Radio. I almost ran off the road, thinking, ‘What is this thing I haven't heard of that sounds like what I do?’ I read about it, and talked to a friend who had applied for a Bush Fellowship years ago. She encouraged me to go for it. It was daunting to think about all these people applying for just a few slots, but I was on fire with this idea about how narrative medicine can change the way healthcare is practiced. Now I know how prescient I was: The importance of stories has risen to the fore in healthcare, and outside of it as well.

“I participated in a series of seminar programs on narrative medicine at Columbia University, where the focus is on physician-facing narrative medicine—increasing their ability to become narratively competent, to absorb and work with the stories they hear during patient encounters. Textual analysis of literature helps physicians better relate to patients and their families, and become better attuned to the emotional nuance in a patient's presentation of their own story. Reading, reflecting and writing about people and their situations helps you become a better caregiver.

“Patient-facing narrative medicine has to do with teaching patients how to tell their own stories, how to best communicate to a healthcare worker what your situation is, and how to help co-produce your health. Health cannot be outsourced. Healthcare services can be performed by workers who collaborate with you to provide care you want and need and that you're able to use. In a safety-net hospital like HCMC, one of the needs we have is to work with patients to help them understand their own stories and intervene in their own health narrative.

“Illness unfolds like a story. It has a beginning, middle and an end—it runs its course. Either you get well after a certain period of time, or you don't, but either way at some point it ends. You go to the doctor to intervene in your health narrative. Once you understand that, you can do things on your own to change your illness narrative. Think about how empowering that is to a person.

“My background in narrative medicine helped me tell the story about Dr. Sniffen and the Karen Chemical Dependency Project. I realized Dr. Sniffen was a lot like the refugees she works with in that she had her own reticence, even in having a story done about her. There is a match between her affect and the people she's working with. The story about the meaning of her name is true in that she is a beautiful person inside and out, and her grace and charm is real. She's authentic all the time. That reticence is born of her deep respect for the community she's working with and her desire to be collaborative and not top-down. I had a transcript of her working with a patient, and I could see the gentle nature of her interactions with her patients. She draws them out in such a nuanced way, I was kind of amazed.

“Without the Bush Fellowship, I would not have been able to pursue narrative medicine as a discipline. It's made me a stronger and more connected leader. I got to know so many practitioners of narrative medicine all over the world and see how they're using it, and I became more determined to create my own platform for it. I could have gone to school and learned the traditional approaches, but I learned what I need to know to do my own thing based on these techniques. I didn't fall into a slot. I'm making it work at a level-one trauma center and safety-net hospital in a big city. Having the guts to do that comes directly from being a Fellow and having that support.”

PHOTO BRUCE STILOX

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Face It TOGETHER Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder Kevin Kirby

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHAD HÖLDER

# Bringing Addiction OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Face It TOGETHER is changing hearts and minds, and transforming the way communities treat addiction

by MO PERRY

**M**ore than 20 million Americans over the age of 12 suffer from addiction. The rate of death from drug overdoses has tripled over the past 20 years, and the financial toll from addiction is staggering: more than \$400 billion annually in healthcare costs and lost productivity. A mere 7 percent of first-time clients of treatment programs get well, and the average addiction sufferer undergoes treatment between four and seven times. Clearly, traditional treatment models and the status quo aren't enough.

Face It TOGETHER, a nonprofit based in Sioux Falls, S.D., aims to change that. A recipient of the 2014 Bush Prize for Community Innovation and a 2016 Bush Community Innovation Grant, the organization works across a wide range of community sectors—including businesses, faith congregations, healthcare service providers and more. It aims to transform the way addiction is perceived and addressed, using an innovative

combination of data, cross-sector collaboration, chronic disease treatment models and community education.

Walking into Face It TOGETHER's national headquarters in downtown Sioux Falls, you could be forgiven for thinking you were in Silicon Valley. The space is airy and bright, with hardwood floors, exposed brick walls, and transparent meeting rooms boasting floor-to-ceiling whiteboards. Aspiration and innovation permeate the atmosphere. "We were social entrepreneurs before we knew that such a thing existed," says Face It TOGETHER CEO and co-founder Kevin Kirby. "We're a bunch of entrepreneurs, using business tools—systems

More than 20 million Americans over the age of 12 suffer from addiction.

thinking and logic—to solve a social problem. We help communities frame questions and work collaboratively on effective solutions."

Collaboration, inclusiveness and resourcefulness are the three main elements the Bush Foundation looks for in applicants for the Bush

Prize. A collaborative, communal approach distinguished Face It TOGETHER from its genesis in 2008 and 2009. Back then representatives from the local business community, the criminal justice system, healthcare providers and other stakeholders participated in a series of town hall meetings over the course of seven months to discuss the problem of drug and alcohol addiction. Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls grew out of those meetings, with a mission to reach into workplaces, schools, media and other influential community sectors to change hearts and minds about addiction.

"We asked ourselves back in the deep think tank days, who has a financial stake in solving this problem?" explains Kirby. "Clearly, there are quantifiable costs and repercussions in the employer community, in healthcare systems, in the criminal justice system. There are enough sectors with a financial stake in solving this problem that they're going to [be motivated to] find a sustainable solution." Breaking down the silos between these sectors to foster innovative, collaborative solutions underpins the philosophy of the organization.



**“WE’RE TRYING TO WORK THROUGH A MASSIVE TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE PROCESS THAT MANY PEOPLE MIGHT BLANCH AT.”**

—David Whitesock,  
Face It TOGETHER  
Chief Data Officer

Chief Operating Officer Jim Sturdevant calls changing the status quo in addiction treatment and recovery the biggest transformational leadership challenge in the world, equating its magnitude and urgency to the Civil Rights movement. Chief Data Officer David Whitesock, a 2015 Bush Fellow, agrees: “We’re trying to work through a massive transformational change process that many people might blanch at. When you look at [all the interconnected contributing factors, such as] mass incarceration, failed health systems, people who can’t get work or can’t get housing, the depth of the problem is mind-blowing.”

Because the root causes and ripple effects of addiction are myriad, reaching into every facet of private, civic and work life, the solution needs to be equally expansive. “Only one thing needs to change in the community to solve this problem,” says Kirby. “And that’s everything. Every sector needs to be a part of the solution and remove the shroud of stigma, silence and shame around addiction. Every sector needs to change what it does.”

### Getting Down to Business

Employers are the first community members Face It TOGETHER calls to the table when it expands into a new town. According to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, 70 percent of people battling addiction are employed, and costs of addiction to businesses are significant: an estimated 500 million lost workdays annually, plus higher healthcare costs, turnover and work-related injuries. From a bottom-line perspective alone, supporting addiction recovery is good business.

Through its Workplace Initiative, Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls has partnered with more than 30 area employers to change workplace cultures around the issue of addiction. “At my job, if I reveal that I have cancer, I’m likely going to get a cake auction, casseroles delivered to my home, and people volunteering to walk my dog,” says Kirby. “But if they find out that

you have addiction, traditionally [the response is that] you get fired. Come on.” The Workplace Initiative aims to remove barriers by seeking help for addicted people by mitigating that fear of punishment, and shifting the culture to one of support, encouragement, and understanding.

For an annual investment of about \$40 per employee, Face It TOGETHER works with businesses to deliberately shift their processes, policies and workplace culture to align with a commitment to supporting addiction recovery, in addition to providing all of their employees with access to addiction recovery resources.

One of the first businesses to sign on to the Workplace Initiative was Raven Industries, a diversified technology firm on the banks of the Big Sioux River in downtown Sioux Falls. Dan Rykhus, Raven’s president and CEO (and a board member of Face It TOGETHER), explains that the company had been involved in some worksite wellness initiatives, and as they started to examine what diseases are especially hard for team members to deal with, addiction emerged as particularly burdensome.

“We needed a way to help team members suffering from addiction in a meaningful way. We wanted to take the shame out of it and encourage more people to take action,” says Rykhus. I have a background with addiction personally and with my family—it killed my brother—so I have a lot of insight into the damage it can cause.” Rykhus says that caring about employees’ health and wellbeing should not be a distinguishing feature for any company. “That should be table stakes. How could you come to any other conclusion? It’s the most logical, caring thing to do. The health of the company correlates with the health of its team members.” In the six years that Raven Industries has participated in the Workplace Initiative, about 40 of their 800 employees have found their way to Face It TOGETHER, and 11 entered some kind of treatment program.

## SHARING RECOVERY

### 2015 Bush Fellow David Whitesock’s journey through addiction and life changing work with Face It TOGETHER

David Whitesock had been in remission from an addiction to alcohol for about two years when a professor at the University of South Dakota encouraged him to go to law school and become a public defender. The professor, Sandy McKeown, saw great potential in Whitesock because of his unrelenting work ethic and, perhaps even more so, his compassion for others.

It’s readily apparent in talking to Whitesock, chief data officer at Face It TOGETHER, that his empathy for others’ journeys is deeply rooted in his own struggles with addiction. Whitesock, a 2015 Bush Fellow, grew up in Grand Forks, N.D. As a young adult, he became addicted to alcohol and was plagued by mental illness. In 2005, he was working as a broadcaster for a radio station in Winner, a small, secluded town in the south-central part of the state, when he received his fifth DUI. The fifth conviction made Whitesock a felon. The sentencing, he says, was a turning point in his life. The judge tasked with his case challenged Whitesock to take ownership of his life and get the help he needed: “You own each day, you own the direction you are going, and you have to do the work,” he recalls the judge saying.

After getting treatment and ultimately going into remission, Whitesock pursued his undergraduate degree in history at the University of South Dakota, where McKeown would challenge him to become a lawyer.

“David had a level of compassion that I would really like to see in members of our bar,” recalls McKeown. “His life experiences, although exceptionally difficult, have given him the ability to really connect with other people at the place where they are. That’s a very rare thing to find.”

Whitesock went on to earn his law degree, but becoming a lawyer would prove much more complicated. As someone with several DUI convictions, including a felony charge, passing the state bar exam alone wouldn’t allow Whitesock to practice law; he also would need special approval from the State Board of Bar Examiners. That would be a long process, but Whitesock’s resilience would serve him well.

Working closely with his lawyer and McKeown, Whitesock was given “conditional admission” to practice law in South Dakota in 2013. The approval involved 13 conditions, which required that he abstain from alcohol and controlled substances, attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, attend counseling sessions, and submit a quarterly report of his compliance with the conditions, among other things. He also was required to attend a four-hour hearing, in which McKeown and Whitesock



David Whitesock (BF’15)

educated the Board of Bar Examiners about addiction. The hearing proved to the Board Whitesock’s recovery and fitness to practice law based on his “good moral standing.”

Still, Whitesock waited one year after the hearing to receive the Board’s approval. In the meantime, he joined the Face It TOGETHER staff and discovered his true calling: working to change the way communities support people with the disease of addiction.

Whitesock had found his calling at Face It TOGETHER, but he still wanted to achieve full admission to the bar. It was granted in 2016, a full 10 years after his mentor encouraged him to become a lawyer. Over those years, he found a different way to help others battling addiction.

“When I was struggling, I didn’t get the sense that I could get help from other people,” he says. “To be a part of that change in the world is really special.” —Aubrey Schield

Groomer's Choice, a supplier of pet grooming supplies to pet salons nationwide, was another early adopter of the Workplace Initiative. Shortly before implementing it, three Groomer's Choice employees resigned in a span of six months, all because of addiction-related issues. "We didn't do anything to help them," says Tim Ryan, vice president of marketing and sales for Groomer's Choice. "They found their way out of the company, and we couldn't do anything. Addiction was an issue for us, and we had no idea what to do."

Participating in the Workplace Initiative was a clear, proactive way to begin to address that issue. From a metrics perspective, it was a no-brainer. "We believe it costs about \$4,000 to turn over the lowest-paid position in our company," says Ryan. For \$2,000 (50 employees at \$40 each), Groomer's

Choice would receive a 2:1 return on investment if the initiative helped them retain even one employee struggling with addiction and get them well.

Since implementing the initiative in 2014, the company is aware of three team members who have taken advantage of the recovery resources at Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls. One employee, Jon Giblin, continues to actively participate in peer-to-peer coaching with recovery coach Dave Jansa. "I was hanging on with my claws to my job," says Giblin. "I would come in two hours late and reeking. I could have been fired multiple times." But it took a DUI and court-ordered alcoholism treatment for Giblin to be ready to make a change.

"When I started at Groomer's Choice, they gave us the Face It TOGETHER info, and it had Dave's contact information. I had thought about calling quite a

few times before the DUI, but I continued on my way," explains Giblin. "I was in [the court-ordered] treatment around Christmas, and I had a real tester of a day at work. I was going to go to the bar, but instead, I called Dave." Giblin and Jansa have had a standing meeting every week since then. "It really hit me that the treatment I was going through was what the court wanted me to do, but Face It was something I wanted to do and held me more accountable."

### A Guiding Hand

Peer-to-peer recovery coaching is an integral part of Face It TOGETHER's approach to helping addicted (or "sick") people get well. While court-ordered treatment programs are often designed to be one-size-fits-all lectures or classes, peer coaching allows for a more tailored approach. "Dave has a lot of the same experiences as me, so [his coaching] is more personal," explains Giblin. "I like the one-on-one attention that helps me with different aspects of my life. Treatment is by the book, 'This is how you gotta do it.' But Dave is seeing the bigger picture and helping me figure out the little things." (Giblin gives the example of Jansa helping him figure out that if he opts for non-alcoholic beer or water instead of soda while playing darts with his buddies, his game won't suffer from caffeine-induced shakiness—a hard-won lesson from Jansa's own time on the golf course, and just the kind of detail the newly sober too often have to navigate alone.)

Like the traditional 12-step program sponsor model, peer recovery coaching centers on one-on-one relationships between a newly sober individual and one with some experience under his or her belt. But with anonymity and discretion being a core feature of most 12-step programs (along with the lack of an organizational budget for promotion), they can sometimes lack the visibility required to actively attract people who may need help and to combat shame and the idea that addiction is inherently something stigmatized.

The 12-step model is also only one among several available for addiction recovery, and while it's a perfect fit for some, it's not the right choice for everyone. "Alcoholics Anonymous has saved millions of lives," says Kirby. "It's a sacred organization to many people. I wouldn't be alive but for AA. Sponsors help people work the 12 steps, but the emerging field of recovery coaching provides everything else that people suffering from a chronic disease could use on the bumpy journey of recovery."

Face It TOGETHER's recovery coaches serve as an independent, judgement-free clearinghouse of the resources available in any given community, connecting people with a whole range of options, from SMART recovery to counseling to AA, in addition to housing and employment assistance. Recovery coaches also have rigid metrics for performance, with periodic evaluation of outcomes an integral part of the process, and they undergo formal training designed to help them be powerful allies on the road to recovery.

Terri Brown is the Lead Recovery Coach for Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls, responsible for onboarding other coaches in addition to maintaining her own roster of clients. She has been in recovery for more than 18 years and, knowing the importance of building trust, showing empathy, and modeling a hopeful vision of what's

"...THE TREATMENT I WAS GOING THROUGH WAS WHAT THE COURT WANTED ME TO DO, BUT FACE IT WAS SOMETHING I WANTED TO DO."

—Jon Giblin



Groomer's Choice Jon Giblin (left) and Tim Ryan

possible, she shares her story freely with those at earlier stages of their recovery journeys.

"I understand recovery and how it works because of what I went through," says Brown. When a new client comes to the Sioux Falls recovery center, the team works with him or her to determine which coach will be the best fit. Each of the three full-time coaches has a unique history that helps him or her connect with members of various

demographics. Jansa is described as the 'white-collar guy,' who also excels with families. Mike Landon, a Vietnam veteran, works well with older men and members of the military, while Brown connects easily with women who have a history of sexual trauma and people who have been incarcerated.

As Face It TOGETHER continues to expand to other markets that must assemble and train their own coaches, Brown stresses the importance of having a diverse team. "You need people who are super empathetic and who have a host of things under their belts," she explains. "If you've never been incarcerated or experienced trauma, it might be harder to relate [to people who have been]. You want someone who has lived that life. I think the more raw a person is, the more they've been through, the better candidate they are to be a recovery coach."

Recovery coaching is 100 percent free of charge for everyone in the community, whether they're affiliated with one of the Workplace Initiative companies or not, and regardless of whether it's themselves or a loved one struggling with addiction. Face It TOGETHER



Recovery Coach Dave Jansa

JANSA COURTESY FACE IT TOGETHER





Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls  
Lead Recovery Coach Terri Brown



Face It TOGETHER  
Recovery Center

“WE WANT TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL GOOD. WE WANT TO SHOW THEM, ‘YOU ARE WORTH THIS; YOU DESERVE TO BE IN AN ENVIRONMENT THAT’S BRIGHT, AIRY AND CHEERFUL, VERSUS DINGY, DARK AND SHABBY.’”

—Terri Brown, Face It TOGETHER  
Lead Recovery Coach

is committed to connecting people to addiction recovery resources without adding a financial burden to their plates. And it does so in a modern, bright space with a high degree of visibility and pride of place. “We want to make people feel good,” says Brown. “We want to show them, ‘You are worth this; you deserve to be in an environment that’s bright, airy and cheerful, versus dingy, dark and shabby.’ This Sioux Falls

recovery center is the pilot, and we’re setting the tone for everyone else.”

#### Gotta Have Faith

While the nationwide Face It TOGETHER affiliates have all implemented their own Workplace Initiatives and partnered with various stakeholders in their own communities, Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls is pioneering another

initiative that the others will soon be able to look to as a model. The new initiative, Communities Facing Addiction, partners faith communities with Face It TOGETHER to shift how addiction is perceived and addressed within congregations.

Reverend Bill Tesch, Director of Evangelical Mission for the South Dakota Synod, has been instrumental in Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls’ outreach into the faith community. He also serves on the FIT-SF board. Part of Tesch’s work involves gathering with other denominations and community organizations at a “mission strategy table” to listen for what God is calling the community to work on. “We happened to be dwelling with some of the gospels where Jesus counteracts the shame and stigma people are living with because of some illness or infirmity,” explains Tesch. He describes a story

from the gospels about a woman who has had a flow of blood for 12 years and has been totally shunned by her community. “She’s very deep in shame, but Jesus acknowledges her and lifts her up, not only providing physical healing but also counteracting that stigma and shame. There are a lot of parallels with that and the way we experience addiction in our communities.”

Tesch explains that gospel story as a wakeup call around the way faith communities have been complicit in stigmatizing people with the disease of addiction as weak or deficient. “If you had a kidney disease and you knew I thought that was a moral failing on your part, you wouldn’t be very forthcoming about seeking help with that,” says Tesch. “Partnering with Face It TOGETHER is an opportunity to see a real shift in our congregation and offer greater hospitality to addiction sufferers and their families.”

BROWN COURTESY FACE IT TOGETHER

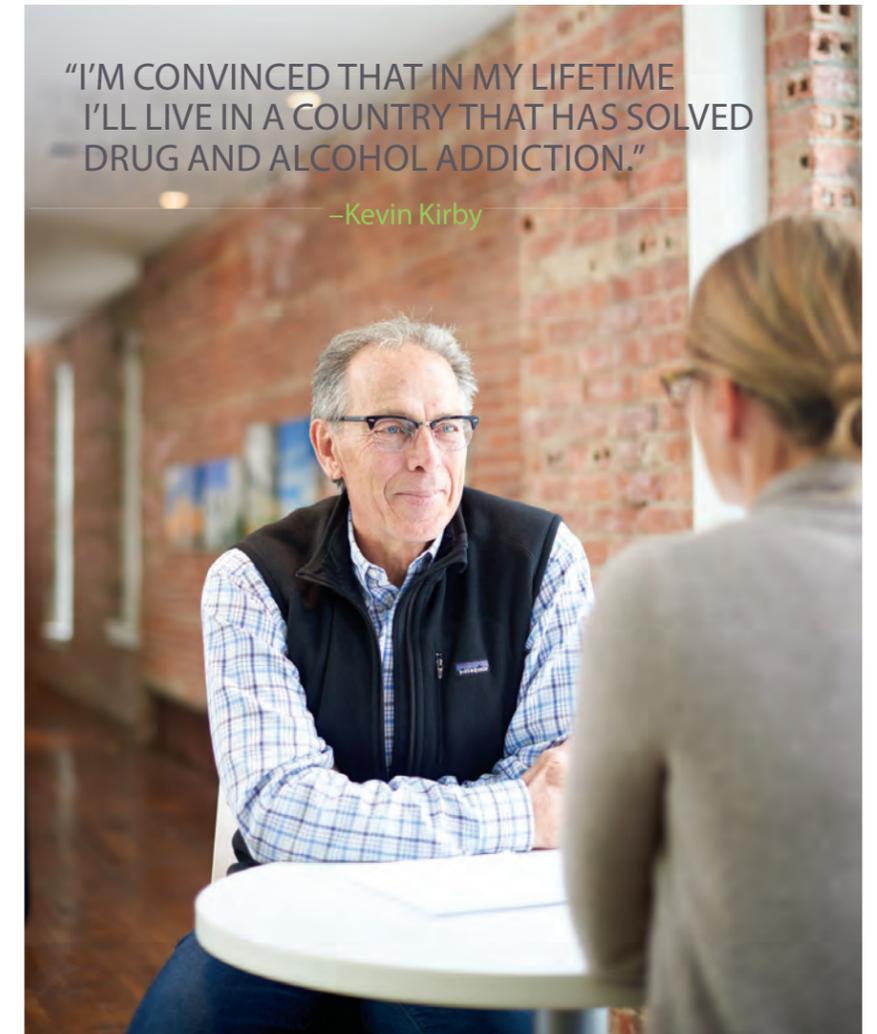
Communities Facing Addiction is currently being piloted with eight congregations in the Sioux Falls area. The initiative incorporates education about the disease of addiction with scriptures and sermons throughout the year, reinforcing a message of support and compassionate understanding. Around 40 recovery advocates have been trained across the eight congregations to be soft landing spaces where community members of the same faith can go for resources and a warm welcome.

#### Measure By Measure

One of the most critical elements of Face It TOGETHER’s approach is a firm commitment to data, metrics and evaluation—an area where they’re setting a new national standard within the field of addiction treatment and recovery. In March 2014, Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls launched

#### Bush and Chemical Dependency Treatment

A famous teetotaler who never allowed a penny of 3M money to be spent on alcohol, Archibald Bush was a generous supporter of Minnesota’s early recovery movement. One example of his commitment was his role in establishing Granville House, a transitional care facility for women with alcoholism, in Saint Paul in 1963. Under Archie’s leadership, the Bush Foundation purchased the property, funded its start-up costs, and actively collaborated with other public and private institutions to establish the residence. Chemical dependency research, treatment and rehabilitation remained a priority within the Foundation’s human services grants for many years. We think Archie would be glad that today the Bush Foundation is supporting the work of Face It TOGETHER and investing in Bush Fellows like Whitesock who are continuing to advance the field.



“I’M CONVINCED THAT IN MY LIFETIME I’LL LIVE IN A COUNTRY THAT HAS SOLVED DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION.”

—Kevin Kirby

the Addiction Wellness Evaluation Program, which measures an individual’s wellness outcomes and factors that sustain wellness. A key component of the evaluation program is the Recovery Capital Index (RCI) score, which provides a comprehensive baseline on which to gauge each person’s progress and tailor their treatment and support.

Each Face It TOGETHER client takes the RCI survey every six weeks. It consists of 68 questions across three domains—personal, social and cultural capital—that aim to gauge everything from general health, employment and nutrition to family support, sense of purpose, sense of community and access to healthcare. The RCI is scored

on a scale of one to 100, with the individual score reflecting a person’s current circumstances, and the changing score over time becomes a way to track overall wellbeing, taking into account many more factors than the simple presence or absence of substance abuse.

The evaluation program uses a customized technology platform, Axis, that links with survey instruments to help individuals and care providers better understand a sufferer’s progress toward wellness. Data and results can be linked with healthcare provider efforts to measure the efficacy of clinic and treatment initiatives, offering for the first time the ability to capture outcomes across an entire continuum

of care for the disease of addiction.

The effectiveness of Face It TOGETHER’s initiatives across all of its locations is also rigorously evaluated through the use of awareness surveys deployed before and throughout implementation. These surveys measure perceptions and attitudes toward addiction, looking, for instance, at whether community members view it as a moral failing. “These surveys give us a baseline of what people are thinking about addiction and how that awareness changes through intentional culture shifts,” says Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls Executive Director Monique Johnson.

The evidence and data that resulted from Face It TOGETHER’s

commitment to measuring outcomes was critical to its winning the prestigious and competitive Bush Prize in 2014. Bilal Alkatout, Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation, explains, “Face It TOGETHER won the Bush Prize in recognition of its accomplishments in Sioux Falls. They could demonstrate that they changed the status quo and that their leadership was inclusive and collaborative.” The Foundation then encouraged Face It TOGETHER to apply for the Community Innovation Grant, which they were awarded in 2016, to scale their proven process to other communities. “It’s going to look slightly different in every community,” says Alkatout,

“and that’s going to be the next level of the problem solving process for them.”

Today Face It TOGETHER operates affiliates in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Bemidji, Fargo, Bismarck and Sioux Falls, with Denver coming soon. “We don’t spend time with a map on the wall, charting our next affiliates,” says CEO Kirby.

Kirby’s vision is to eventually expand Face It TOGETHER to every population center in the United States.

“I’m convinced that in my lifetime I’ll live in a country that has solved drug and alcohol addiction,” he says, pointing to how over the past 30 years breast cancer has come out of the shadows to become a major part of our culture and dialogue. “Sports teams wear pink, and people support that cause in a big and vocal way. Support and visibility need to happen at the community level. Every population center needs something like our Recovery Center.”

Visit [bmag.bushfoundation.org](http://bmag.bushfoundation.org) to read about one woman’s personal journey from addiction to recovery working with Face It TOGETHER Sioux Falls.



Sue Hakes (in green) and the Friday Breakfast Club

# Small Towns, Big Potential

Decreasing civic engagement rates in rural communities persuade foundations and small towns to reevaluate how they tap into the next generation of leaders

by MORGAN MERCER

PORTRAITS BY ACKERMAN + GRUBER

With a bowl of oatmeal in front of her, Sue Hakes settled in at a table in a downtown Grand Marais, Minn., cafe. That Friday morning, two friends joined her in what would soon become a standing weekly date. The trio dubbed themselves the Friday Breakfast Club, and for the next four years a rotating cast of women joined them at the table to encourage each other to step out of their comfort zones and into the public light.

Hosting informal breakfast meetings to discuss local issues seemed like a great place for Hakes to begin her mission: Increase the number of women involved in civic leadership roles. Not once, but twice, Hakes unseated an incumbent in a bid for local office, first as the mayor of Grand Marais, and then as a Cook County commissioner two years later.

“When you talk about keeping leadership positions filled, sometimes people just need to be asked or encouraged to take a risk,” says Hakes, a 2014 Bush Fellow who started the breakfast meetings while working as Cook County’s commissioner. “People need to know they’re not alone to find the courage to make an intervention into a system that needs changing.”

Rural areas in Minnesota could use the help, too. During the November 2016 election, more than 35 communities across the state did not have a mayoral candidate listed on the ballot. In fact, slots for more than 250 city and township positions went empty statewide. While the numbers forecast a bleak outlook for rural towns, many throughout greater Minnesota see something different.

“When you hear about positions going empty or low voter turnout, what we see is a space for people to rise together,” says Anita Patel, the leadership programs director at the Bush Foundation. “In order for our communities to thrive, we need people who feel confident in their voice, who feel connected to the possibility that exists within their community and who feel like they have the skills to act on their ideas.”

To reverse this leadership drought, the region needs to actively develop the next crop of rural citizens. The question now becomes: How do you unleash the untapped potential in rural communities?

## A New Look For Rural Leaders

For 20 years, Dave Smiglewski was the youngest city council member in Granite Falls, Minn. In 1979, the 26-year-old began his tenure, but it wasn’t until he turned 46 that a member three years his junior finally joined.

By that time, Smiglewski had already become the town’s mayor, and felt relieved to find another person his age willing to serve on the council.

“If we don’t teach people there’s a certain amount of joy and fun doing this, then we’ll continue to see a drop off in people’s involvement in their community,” says Smiglewski, who grew up in Granite Falls and moved back after college. “We can’t afford that.”

He doesn’t believe fewer people are interested in participating in their communities, but that more factors hold them back from doing so. Smiglewski wants to develop sustainable models of leadership that are more inclusive, less daunting and encourage new faces to discover the joys of public office. That’s why the mayor of more than 15 years applied for, and won, a Bush Fellowship in 2016.

For rural communities, the demand for leaders is nearly three times greater than in urban centers, says Ben Winchester, a senior research fellow at the University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality. Small towns need to enlist nearly one in 16 people to fill public or nonprofit roles, while areas like the Twin Cities only need about 1 in 51 people.

Winchester, who plans to publish an overview of his research in the spring of 2017, says these numbers are a conservative estimate, though. He based them on the minimum number of people the IRS requires a board of directors to appoint—three. On average, most nonprofits select 13 people to serve. Despite that opportunity, the Blandin Foundation saw a 12 percent decline over the last three years among rural Minnesotans opting into positions with city government, youth sports or local nonprofits.

For many, a lack of engagement

**ARCHIE AND GRANITE FALLS**  
**Archibald Bush**  
**knew that a person's leadership potential could not be measured by the population of their hometown.**

Born and raised in Granite Falls, a small farming community in west central Minnesota, Archie dropped out of school in eighth grade to work on the family farm. He often told people that he probably would have stayed there if it wasn't for his chronic hay fever.

Instead, with \$25 in his pocket, he left Granite Falls to pursue his fortune in Duluth, Minn. There, he worked as a laborer during the day, went to school at night and eventually landed a job with a little company that made industrial sandpaper.

Together with William McKnight, Archie would help transform that little company, known as Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing, into one of the largest and most innovative companies in the world: 3M.

Archie eventually rose to become the company's executive chairman. In 1953, he and his wife, Edyth, took \$200 million worth of company stock accumulated during his career and used it to establish the Bush Foundation.

Today, the Foundation invests in people with extraordinary potential to make a big impact in communities large and small.

comes down to time and money. More often than not people under 40 focus on developing their careers or starting a family. Add in the stress of a new socioeconomic climate, increasingly high student loan debt and two working parents, and there's little free time left at the end of the day. The tense political climate doesn't help, either.

"We've devalued community involvement or civic service. Our campaigns, particularly our national ones, have become so distasteful that it poisons people from the idea of being involved," Smiglewski says. "They just want to turn it off and forget about it. It hardens people to the idea, and they become cynical."

As cultural norms shift, models of engagement need to evolve, too. While millennials and younger generations aren't more opposed to participating in their communities than past generations, their values and expectations around how they want to engage with the world are new.

"Many of the systems we have when it comes to serving in public office or similar roles are highly structured and not necessarily flexible," says Michelle Kiley, the community development

specialist at the Initiative Foundation. "Communities are living organisms that are forever in flux. We need to continually hit refresh and say, 'What does our community look like today, and what are the needs?'"

For the first time, many small towns are also experiencing a visible demographic change in the residents who call them home. Take the community of Long Prairie, Minn.—for the past six years the kids in the incoming kindergarten classes have predominantly spoken Spanish at home. Or Saint Cloud, Minn., where the East African population is flourishing. That's a radical shift in racial diversity that demands new systems of engagement.

"To sustain thriving economies and communities, this has to become a very inclusive and welcoming region," says Don Hickman, the vice president for community and workforce development at the Initiative Foundation. "Everyone has gifts, passions, experiences and a network. We're helping people see they have what it takes to be this generation's next leader."

In 2015, the Bush Foundation awarded the Initiative Foundation a grant to launch its Emerging Leaders program.



Granite Falls Mayor Dave Smiglewski leads a group of "Super Hero" kids as they become the first to officially cross the historic and newly rehabilitated footbridge that spans the Minnesota River in downtown Granite Falls on October 2, 2015.

SMIGLEWSKI GRANITE FALLS ADVOCATE TRIBUNE

Each of the 38 participants committed to one of three options: Run for public office, start a business, or serve on a local nonprofit board. For Hickman and Kiley, the nearly yearlong project allowed them to respond to the demographic renewal in their area by taking a closer look at what people of color and leaders under 35 need—networks of peer support, intergenerational learning and increased opportunities for mentorship. By the end of the program, the cohort invested nearly 1,000 hours of service across several communities.

The importance of building relationships to cultivate small town leaders often isolated by geography isn't lost on Kathy Annette, a lifelong resident of rural Minnesota and president of the Blandin Foundation. Since 1985, Blandin has hosted weeklong retreats that equip leaders with the tools they need to make change in their community.

The Blandin Community Leadership Program (BCLP) brings 26 residents together to live and learn for seven days. For Annette, who also serves on the Bush Foundation Board of Trustees, the real payoff is building relationships between participants who then support each other long after the week concludes. Since its inception, BCLP has worked across 600 communities, 11 reservations and with 7,000 individuals.

"The community tends to turn to the same people again and again," says Annette, who is an alumnus of the first Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program (BRCLP) cohort in 2001. "What we have to do is spread that leadership around more."

Oftentimes, bringing new leaders into the fold is as easy as asking them. According to the Blandin Foundation's Rural Pulse survey, one in four people say they've never been invited to serve in a leadership role. Yet for many, it's the key to getting involved. The Blandin Foundation puts that missing practice into action when it recruits for its programs. In each community, the foundation partners with local organizations and businesses to find leaders



Nevada Littlewolf

**"THIS IS A MUCH DIFFERENT CONCEPT THAN THE TRADITIONAL 'LEADERSHIP PIPELINE' THAT SHOOTS PEOPLE IN AT ONE END AND SPITS THEM OUT SOMEWHERE ELSE."**

—Nevada Littlewolf (BF'16)

flying under the radar. It also relies on alumni, elders and other community members to nominate those they think should participate. That recognition allows people who never considered themselves leaders to see their own potential.

**Tackling Rural Isolation**

Once word got out that Nevada Littlewolf was considering a run for city council in Virginia, Minn., her phone didn't stop ringing. That was 2007 and she was 31 years old. Littlewolf grew up in town hanging around

the women who staffed Paul Wellstone's office where her sister interned. When she mentioned her interest in public office, those same women organized a phone chain and wouldn't let her off the hook. Each called to encourage her to put her name on the ballot, but also to talk through the worries and concerns she had about holding a public office.

"Knowing there were people who wanted me there and who committed to support me made a difference," says Littlewolf, who was awarded a Bush Fellowship in 2016. "I kept looking for

a candidate to file who would represent me, and no one did. On the last day you could file, I decided I had to be the person to represent my community.”

When residents elected her 10 years ago, Littlewolf not only became the council’s youngest member, but its first female and Anishinaabe member, too. Littlewolf credits part of her success to The White House Project and its debate boot camp—an experience that not only improved her public speaking, but also plugged her into a space where women excited about civic engagement gathered together. She took a job working for the organization and began running the same boot camp she first attended. When the White House Project left Minnesota in 2012, she founded her own nonprofit to continue the work she started.

Littlewolf sees an opportunity in rural communities to build stronger networks of support that will prepare new leaders to step up as older members transition out of public roles. Her nonprofit, Rural American Indigenous Leadership (RAIL), focuses on developing leadership models that help rural and indigenous women—who are historically underrepresented in government—to tap into their potential.

A month after the 2016 presidential election, RAIL held a Friday night meeting to give local women a chance to decompress after the results of the race and to decide how they could move forward. By the end of the evening, three women committed to apply for the Human Rights Commission in Virginia, positions that had gone unfilled for two years.

“This is changing the way women look at themselves as leaders,” says Littlewolf. “Like a rail system, we are transporting women to where they need to go. We can bring as many as we need to, and they don’t need to get on or off at the same stop. This is a much different concept than the traditional ‘leadership pipeline’ that shoots people in at one end and spits them out somewhere else.”



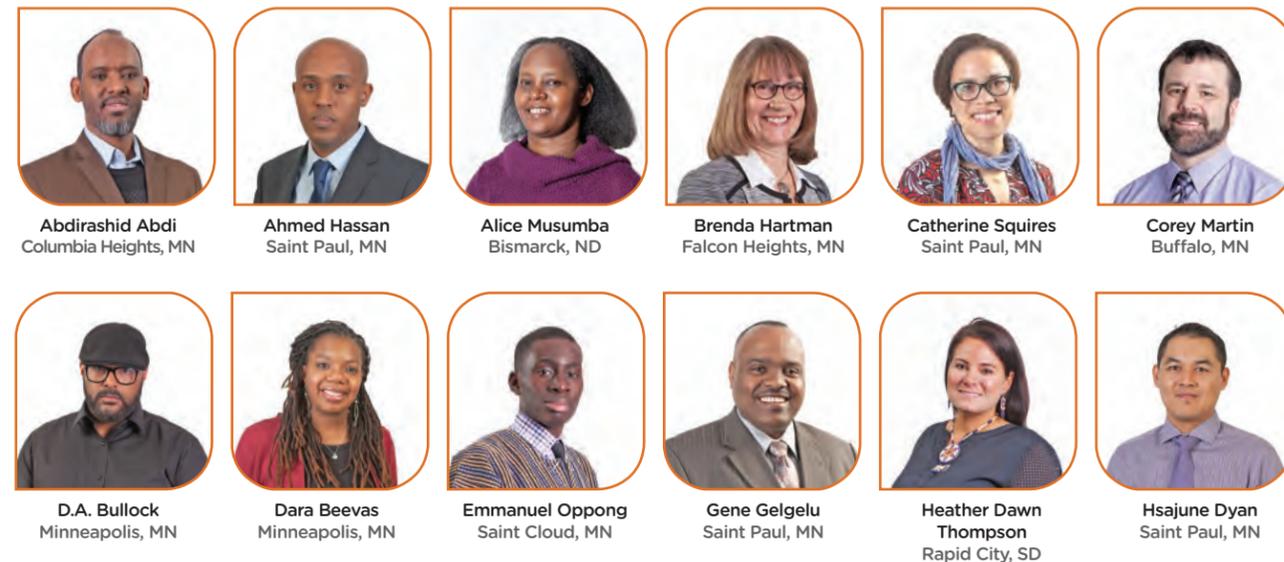
Sue Hakes

For Sue Hakes, relationships like these prepared her for local government, and then helped her battle feelings of isolation when she got there. After the former Cook County commissioner first decided to run for mayoral office in 2008, she took a boot camp class with Littlewolf. That support helped her win. Now, she pays it forward. Through the Friday Breakfast Club, she has emboldened two women to run for, and win, seats as county commissioner and county board chair in Cook County. Her group even lobbied and passed a school referendum to give more than 150

students free or reduced-price lunch. In the face of declining civic participation, it’s people like Hakes that the Bush Foundation counts on to reverse the trend.

“Deep investment in an individual stretches that person’s belief in what’s possible both for them and their communities. These investments help individuals spark new ideas and weave global models to solve local issues,” says Anita Patel, who coaches Bush Fellows. “Rural communities have a vibrancy that comes from connectedness. When one person provides the spark, they can often inspire others in unexpected ways.”

Visit [bmag.bushfoundation.org](http://bmag.bushfoundation.org) to meet recent Bush Fellows who are heeding the call for civic leadership.



Abdirashid Abdi  
Columbia Heights, MN

Ahmed Hassan  
Saint Paul, MN

Alice Musumba  
Bismarck, ND

Brenda Hartman  
Falcon Heights, MN

Catherine Squires  
Saint Paul, MN

Corey Martin  
Buffalo, MN

D.A. Bullock  
Minneapolis, MN

Dara Beevas  
Minneapolis, MN

Emmanuel Oppong  
Saint Cloud, MN

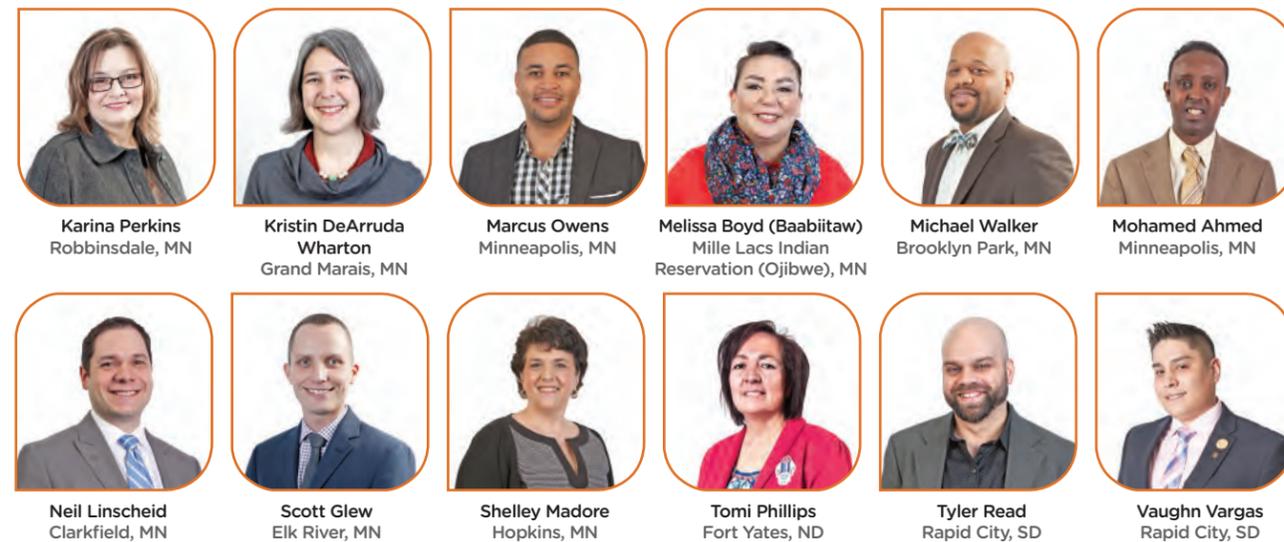
Gene Gelgelu  
Saint Paul, MN

Heather Dawn Thompson  
Rapid City, SD

Hsajune Dyan  
Saint Paul, MN

## Congratulations to the 2017 Bush Fellows

A Bush Fellowship is recognition of extraordinary achievement and a bet on extraordinary potential. Fellows are awarded up to \$100,000 to invest in their leadership development.



Karina Perkins  
Robbinsdale, MN

Kristin DeArruda Wharton  
Grand Marais, MN

Marcus Owens  
Minneapolis, MN

Melissa Boyd (Baabitaw)  
Mille Lacs Indian Reservation (Ojibwe), MN

Michael Walker  
Brooklyn Park, MN

Mohamed Ahmed  
Minneapolis, MN

Neil Linscheid  
Clarkfield, MN

Scott Glew  
Elk River, MN

Shelley Madore  
Hopkins, MN

Tomi Phillips  
Fort Yates, ND

Tyler Read  
Rapid City, SD

Vaughn Vargas  
Rapid City, SD

Applications accepted on August 15 and close on September 14, 2017.

[bfdn.org/bfp](http://bfdn.org/bfp)





# PHILANTHROPY Grows its Own

Concerned with racial equity in philanthropic leadership, a group of foundations is using a unique fellowship program to diversify the field

by MORGAN MERCER

When Minneapolis North High School student Brian Cole was killed in 2006, it marked the beginning of a summer plagued by gun violence that took the lives of nearly 15 other teenagers across the city. At that time, Jesse Ross worked as the associate area director for the Minneapolis branch of Young Life, and many of the victims were kids he saw on a regular basis. Cole, an innocent bystander, was killed in a drive-by gang shooting when the bullet that hit him in the arm traveled up to his neck.

“To have a kid like Brian get shot and killed over some senseless violence just hurts. Those kids live with me,” says Ross, a father of two. “I remember their birthdays and their houses when I drive by on the commute. I can never forget that stuff.”

Now as a Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellow, Ross works as a policy associate with The Minneapolis Foundation and leads efforts to prevent youth violence. Every day he draws from his experience as someone who grew up, worked in and still lives in north Minneapolis to inform his work.

Yet Ross isn’t exactly the person you’d typically expect to see in philanthropy: He doesn’t have policy experience, he has never worked at a foundation, and he’s African American, but that’s exactly the point. Philanthropic leaders in Minnesota have long recognized the field lacks diversity, especially when it comes to leaders of color and Native leaders. In an effort to change this, the Bush Foundation and the Minnesota Council on Foundations (MCF) launched the Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellowship in 2013 and introduced its first cohort of Fellows the following year.

PHOTOS ACKERMAN + GRUBER

“If we have the same set of people with the same set of identities, perspectives and ideas who are making decisions, we might not be making decisions that lift entire communities,” says Alfonso Wenker, the vice president at MCF who helped design the fellowship.

The program places Fellows in full-time positions at participating host foundation sites. Fellows learn how to do the work, and are instrumental in bringing projects to fruition across the Twin Cities and in greater Minnesota. Injecting new voices into an organization gives emerging leaders job experience that will be crucial to their future success. It also infuses fresh ideas, perspectives and experiences into the field. In short, Fellows like Ross make the work better when they show up.

“When I was on the ground, I was directly involved with young people who were shot, doing the shooting, locked up in the system, or wanting something better,” says Ross. “I have family in that life, but somehow I made it out. It’s my responsibility to figure out how to help.”

## Redesigning The System

Long before Jen Ford Reedy took the reins as president at the Bush Foundation in 2012, she worked as a program officer in a rotating position set aside for graduate students at Chicago’s Field Foundation. That experience introduced her to the local community and to the world of philanthropy. She decided that if she ever ran a foundation, she would find a way to create a similar experience for emerging leaders.

Prior to joining the Bush Foundation, Reedy was a strategy consultant at McKinsey and a senior executive at Minnesota Philanthropy Partners. This experience helped her understand how low staff turnover and insulated networks made it hard for new people to break into the system—especially leaders of color and Native leaders. To design the fellowship program, she hired the exact person she hoped it would attract: Wenker.

“I had this reputation in philanthropy as being a young, gay person of color who was constantly asking questions about who was involved and why,” recalls Wenker, who first met Reedy when he



Catherine Gray and Jesse Ross

worked on the Minnesotans United for All Families campaign.

In 2013, the Bush Foundation officially hired Wenker to develop a fellowship program that would usher leaders of color and Native leaders into the field. To make headway toward a solution, Wenker knew he needed to disrupt traditional networks by placing Fellows directly into the structure of an organization with full-time jobs.

“If we adhere to the assumption that philanthropy is an important lever of change, then we need more people from more communities who know how to pull that lever,” says Wenker. “When we do, they will be able to inform what change looks like, how decisions are made, how partnerships are built and how resources are deployed.”

Halfway through 2013, the Bush Foundation put out a call to find its first round of applicants. Wenker planned to hire a cohort of four Fellows to work in various roles within the Foundation itself. However as word spread about the program, Wenker found his work hit a nerve with several foundations that were asking similar questions.

As the potential of the fellowship program expanded beyond the Foundation, Reedy and Wenker knew the program would gain even greater traction by working with MCF and its new president, Trista Harris, who shared the same ambition to diversify the individuals working in philanthropy. As the first round of Fellows kicked off their inaugural year in January 2014, Wenker joined MCF as a staff member to manage the program there.

“In talking with Trista, it became clear that [MCF’s] strategy was no longer going to be to point at the disparity in our field, but to do something about it,” says Wenker.

While most fellowships only last a year or two, the McKinley Fellowship lasts three years. Wenker felt three years gave Fellows enough time to build a substantive portfolio of work.

Throughout their experience, Fellows work with career coaches, meet

**“THE GREATER  
THE DIVERSITY  
IS AROUND  
YOUR TABLE, THE  
BETTER YOUR  
DECISIONS ARE  
LIKELY TO BE.”**

—Jen Ford Reedy



Alfonso Wenker  
and Trista Harris

together monthly, learn about grant making processes, and receive a yearly budget to invest in their own professional development. After all, it’s not just about infusing new energy into the field, but about equipping a new crop of leaders with the tools, resources and networks they need to find success.

By 2016, the number of Fellows and alumni grew—from four to 16—and the program now has eight foundation hosts that provide full-time staff jobs for Fellows.

“The greater the diversity is around your table, the better your decisions are likely to be. That’s true no matter what you do,” says Reedy, whose foundation has worked with 10 Fellows. “However when the decisions you’re trying to make are about positive community change, the more diverse life and community experience you have in the room when making a decision really matters.”

### Writing A New Conversation

Picking up the phone, Jesse Ross dialed his brother’s number. While Ross spent the past decade working with youth-based nonprofits, his younger brother took a different path toward a life of gang violence. Despite their differences, Ross still calls his brother for advice.

“Although I may not agree with his

lifestyle, I can’t stop my work because he’s the person I think about when I’m trying to figure out, ‘Does this program work?’” says Ross, who went to Minneapolis’ DeLaSalle High School. “I’m not just analyzing this work from a systems view. I’m from Minneapolis. I’ve lived it. Only when I find something that would get my little brother out, do I know we have something that could work.”

Ross joined The Minneapolis Foundation as a McKinley Fellow in 2016, and within his first year became the lead on president R. T. Rybak’s special interest project focused on youth violence prevention. As an African American male who grew up in Minneapolis’ north side, Ross brings real-life experience and expertise to the new undertaking. For Catherine Gray, the manager of the McKinley Fellowship program at the Foundation, that kind of inclusion is the hallmark of good philanthropy.

“We are sitting at a time where we have the opportunity, and increasingly the will, to be able to address some of the challenges to make this place a better place for everyone to live,” says Gray, the director of impact strategy in civic engagement at The Minneapolis Foundation. “For that to happen, it’s all hands on deck. You don’t have a few people making this a better place to

live for everyone. You have everyone involved in mapping that out and holding ourselves accountable.”

Ross is the second Fellow to work at The Minneapolis Foundation. During the Fellowship, Gray guides Ross through a three-year commitment that prepares him for a role in philanthropy, or to take the next step in his career, whatever that may be. Beyond equipping individual leaders, though, Gray sees an even wider ripple of success that stems from the Fellowship.

Since its inception, eight host sites have signed on for the program in an effort to diversify talent in their organizations. Those commitments triggered a wider conversation in philanthropy throughout the state. Foundations can no longer claim they lack qualified candidates of color and Native candidates in job searches when the Fellowship represents a tangible solution to that problem.

The evolving dialogue and work in Minnesota serves as a framework that drives the philanthropic sector forward in communities outside of the state, too. When the Seattle-based organization, Philanthropy Northwest, wanted to explore diversity, inclusion and equity, it looked to the Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellowship. In 2015, it launched its own near-replica version of the program called the Momentum Fellowship.

The partners behind the Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellowship lead by example. As they continue to do that and expand their reach throughout Minnesota, Gray can only imagine what the landscape of philanthropy leadership will look like in the future.

“This program is challenging philanthropy and giving it an opportunity to recalibrate the system,” says Gray. “I see an openness and willingness to look in the mirror and say, ‘What can we do better?’”

Visit [bmag.bushfoundation.org](http://bmag.bushfoundation.org) to read about the namesake behind the Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellowship.

PHOTO: T.J. TURNER

## RON MCKINLEY PHILANTHROPY FELLOWS

**Bilal Alkatout**  
*Started: 2015*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation

**Carly Bad Heart Bull\***  
*Started: 2014*  
Fellowship role: Education Associate at the Bush Foundation  
Currently: Native Nations Activities Manager at the Bush Foundation

**Kristell Caballero Saucedo**  
*Started: 2017*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation

**Sareoun Earm**  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Leadership Programs Associate at the Bush Foundation

**Violeta Hernandez Espinosa\***  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Program Associate at the Blandin Foundation  
Currently: Legislation and Policy Liaison at the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs

**Venessa Fuentes\***  
*Started: 2014*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation  
Currently: Communications Program Manager at the Bush Foundation

**Takara Henegar**  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Program Associate at The Saint Paul Foundation

**Aya Johnson**  
*Started: 2015*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation

**Allison Johnson Heist**  
*Started: 2015*  
Fellowship role: Giving Project Associate at Headwaters Foundation for Justice

**Naaima Khan**  
*Started: 2015*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation

**Lulete Mola**  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Policy and Community Engagement Manager at Greater Twin Cities United Way

**Awale Osman**  
*Started: 2017*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation

**Patrice Relerford\***  
*Started: 2015*  
Fellowship role: Policy and Civic Engagement Associate at The Minneapolis Foundation  
Currently: Director of Impact Strategy in Education at The Minneapolis Foundation

**Jesse Ross**  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Policy and Civic Engagement Associate at The Minneapolis Foundation

**Dameun Strange\***  
*Started: 2014*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation  
Currently: Executive Director at the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association

**Bruce Thao**  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Program Associate at the F.R. Bigelow Foundation

**Katie Troyer**  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Employee Engagement Associate at Medtronic Philanthropy

**Avi Viswanathan\***  
*Started: 2015*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation  
Currently: Program Director at Nexus Community Partners Institute for Community Engagement

**Coya White Hat Artichoker\***  
*Started: 2014*  
Fellowship role: Community Innovation Associate at the Bush Foundation  
Currently: Consultant

**Chao Yang**  
*Started: 2016*  
Fellowship role: Community Engagement Associate at Medtronic Philanthropy

\* Alumni

# Redefining Art's Role in Shaping Communities

ArtPlace America is at the forefront of a national movement to put art and artists at the center of community development

by MO PERRY

Author Jane Jacobs, one of the earliest advocates of the concept of human-centered placemaking, wrote in her seminal text “The Death and Life of Great American Cities,” “Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” In its definition of creative placemaking, the National Endowment for the Arts built on Jacobs’ premise by emphasizing the potential of “partners from public, private, not-for-profit and community sectors to strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, tribe, city or region around arts and cultural activities.”

With the creation of the Community Creativity Cohort in 2015, the Bush Foundation formally recognized the power and potential of artists partnering with various community sectors to animate and rejuvenate spaces, structures and streetscapes; improve public

safety; strengthen local businesses; and unite diverse groups and interests. In 2016, the Bush Foundation doubled down on its support of art and culture as a core sector of community planning and development by committing to a significant multi-year investment in ArtPlace America, a national leader in advancing the role of art in community development and problem-solving.

ArtPlace America is a 10-year collaboration (launched in 2011 and due to phase out in 2021) among a number of foundations, federal agencies and financial institutions to strengthen the social, physical and economic fabric of communities by positioning arts and culture as a core sector of community planning and development. In short, ArtPlace is founded on the belief that we should stop asking what communities can do for the arts, and start asking what the arts can do for our communities.



ART SHANTY PROJECTS RUSSELL PHOTO STUDIO



Art Shanty Projects



ArtPlace has had strong roots in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geography from its genesis, with both the McKnight and Knight Foundations as founding partners. It has funded more than two dozen projects across this region since 2011 (ranging from the planting of “defiant gardens” in Fargo-Moorhead to the creation of a cultural arts market in Minneapolis’ American Indian Cultural Corridor). The Bush Foundation’s five-year \$2.5 million investment is instrumental to the four new regional projects that are receiving support from ArtPlace’s National Creative Placemaking Fund in 2017.

“Bush has given us an amazing five-year commitment,” says ArtPlace Executive Director Jamie Bennett. “They’ll be with us to our end of days. It has really enhanced our ability to invest in projects in this region. As with all funding partners, we want to learn from the Bush Foundation’s commitment to the region and connect those conversations

with the national conversation around creative problem-solving.”

Art Shanty Projects was one of the local projects awarded an ArtPlace National Creative Placemaking grant in 2016, receiving \$100,000 over two years for programming their artist-led mid-winter festival on the frozen surface of White Bear Lake in Minnesota—a community space that is part gallery and part artist residency. Among the goals of the project is diversifying the White Bear Lake visitor population, building on

**“WE WERE USING THE ARTS AS A FULCRUM FOR TRANSFORMATION IN THAT COMMUNITY.”**

—Dawn Bentley,  
Art Shanty Projects  
Executive Director

strategic city initiatives, and improving economic fortitude by attracting a new array of visitors to the community.

In her application for the grant, Art Shanty Projects Executive Director Dawn Bentley highlighted the project’s impressive community impact in 2014, when 11,300 people visited the art shanties over the course of the installation. “The historically low White Bear Lake water levels were economically depressing the area, so to have more than 11,000 people come to White Bear Lake and spend money in bars and restaurants—and increase gross sales by as much as 30 percent during the toughest time of year for these downtown businesses—was a really big deal,” says Bentley. “We were using the arts as a fulcrum for transformation in that community.”

The \$100,000 two-year grant (in combination with other funding sources) represents a 250 percent budget increase over 2015 for Art Shanty Projects. “One of the things that got us excited about Art Shanty Projects was that it was so rooted in place,” says Bennett. “We loved the notion of connecting with that local tradition of ice fishing and all the ways people trick out their ice houses, and using it as an opportunity to connect artists with that lake-based activity, and connect the lake activity with main street activity to make White Bear Lake a year-round destination.”

Of the 25 projects that ArtPlace has funded in the region, 24 received support from their National Creative Placemaking Fund. The Southwest



Learning and giving back to their community at the Worthington Youth Career Camp sponsored by Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership



Laura Ingalls Wilder mural in Walnut Grove and dedication ceremony held on July 4th, 2012

Minnesota Housing Partnership (SWMHP) represents the only ArtPlace investment in the Bush region from ArtPlace’s Community Development Investment (CDI) program. CDI is dedicated to providing substantial, multi-year support to place-based non-governmental organizations with a community planning and development mission that have not previously incorporated arts and culture strategies into their core work.

SWMHP, one of only six projects nationwide participating in the CDI program, received a \$3 million grant over the course of three years to support its work in housing preservation and development across 30 rural counties in Minnesota. “As is true across a majority of rural America, demographics are changing,” says Bennett. “Walnut Grove, Minn. [one of the communities served by SWMHP] was the birthplace of Laura Ingalls Wilder. It has traditionally been all white, but the population is now 40 percent Hmong immigrants.” With such different cultures coming into contact, SWMHP is interested in how arts and culture can enable these rural communities to

simultaneously celebrate their heritage and welcome their future.

Bennett points to a mural in Walnut Grove that provides a powerful (and literal) illustration of the power of art to build those cultural bridges. A Hmong family purchased a food market in downtown Walnut Grove that boasted a colorful mural of Laura Ingalls Wilder, and in 2012, the community hired a local artist to update the mural—now Ms. Wilder proudly stands arm in arm with a Hmong elder. SWMHP is taking advantage of the support from ArtPlace (in addition to partnering with St. Paul- and Minneapolis-based Springboard for the Arts and Intermedia Arts) to do cultural asset mapping and work on deepening and expanding opportunities for those kinds of community-artist collaborations across the 30 rural counties they serve. “We’re helping SWMHP explore how they support creative thinking and practices in their own region,” explains

Springboard for the Arts Executive Director Laura Zabel. “In a region as diverse and big as southwestern Minnesota, it’s about figuring out a mechanism for them to develop those relationships with artists.”

Ultimately the goal of ArtPlace’s work is not to enable a handful of specific projects, but to build capacity in artists, arts organizations and non-arts organizations to collaborate on solving community problems. “Art and culture have the capacity to inspire, but also to help us create change,” says Bush Foundation Community Creativity Portfolio Director Erik Takeshita. “Beyond being beautiful and moving, it can be a vital resource in creating change in the community. It’s less about the product and more about the process—how does it happen, who is involved, who’s driving the work? It’s about building a sense of agency and that network of relationships that lasts beyond that particular project.”

Visit [bmag.bushfoundation.org](http://bmag.bushfoundation.org) to view the current and previous ArtPlace grant recipients and read about Springboard for the Arts’ Hinge Arts At The Kirkbride artist residency program in the former Fergus Falls State Hospital.

ART SHANTY PROJECTS COURTESY OF ARTPLACE AMERICA. BELOW COURTESY OF SWMHP

MURALS GREGORY R. WIMMER

# By The Numbers

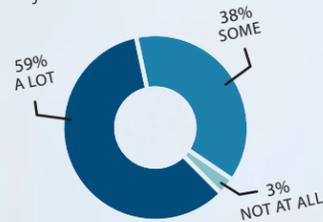
## IN 2013, WE MADE SOME BIG CHANGES TO THE BUSH FELLOWSHIP.

One of our objectives was to make sure we are getting the best and most diverse possible pool of applicants. Between 2013 and 2017, applications have increased 378% to 639. Half of the applicants identify as People of Color and Native People.

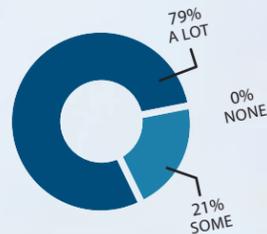
We also wanted to make sure the process of applying was rewarding—no matter the outcome. Anonymous surveys of declined applicants suggest this is working! We're proud of what we've accomplished over the past four years, and we'll keep working to make the experience better for everyone.

### How much did the process of applying for a Bush Fellowship in 2016 help you:

Develop strategies for building your leadership skills?



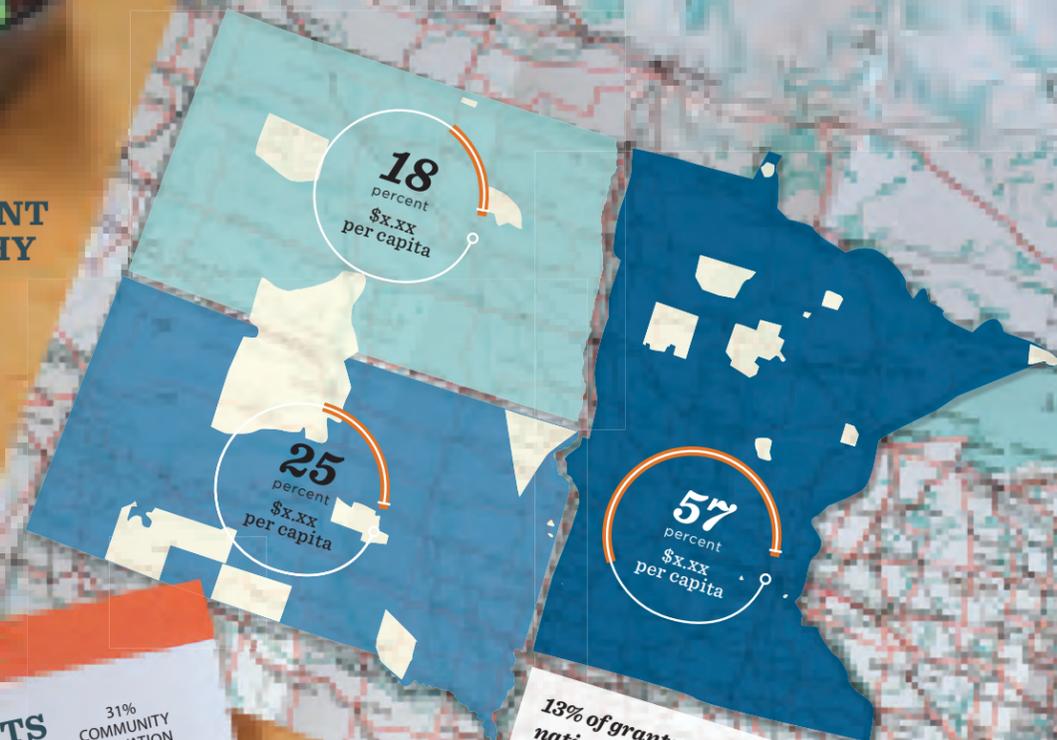
Increase your beliefs about what you can accomplish?



## GRANT PAYMENT BY GEOGRAPHY

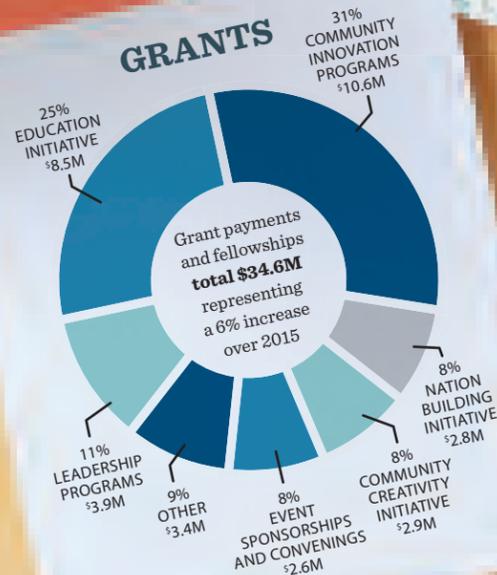
percent of total payout

- NORTH DAKOTA
- SOUTH DAKOTA
- MINNESOTA
- NATIVE NATIONS



13% of grants went to Native nations across all 3 states.

## GRANTS



# 62%

OF 2016 GRANT PAYMENTS INTENDED TO ADVANCE RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY

# 72%

OF 2016 GRANT PAYMENT DECISIONS MADE THROUGH OPEN AND COMPETITIVE PROCESS

## \$885 million in assets (as of 12/31/2016)

including investments in equity, fixed income and real assets



photo by TERRY BRENNAN



# Leadership Lessons

Five questions people ask themselves before they become highly effective leaders

by ANITA PATEL, Leadership Programs Director

Leadership means different things to different people. It is no surprise then that there are so many different approaches to leadership. And for each approach, it seems, there are tons of books, trainings and conferences available to anyone who wants to become a more effective leader.

This is not a bad thing. The fact is that no single leadership approach will always be effective in every situation or community. And there is no single leadership style or philosophy that can make everyone a better leader. Having a wide range of leadership styles and philosophies helps us make more positive change in our world.

That is why the Bush Fellowship is so flexible. Fellows are not required to pursue a particular path to build their leadership skills. Instead, they have the freedom to determine what they need to learn or experience to become a more effective leader. But with so many different options, choosing the right path can be daunting.

In my role as director of the Bush Foundation's Leadership Program, I have the great fortune to work with people from all walks of life who want to become more effective leaders. No matter who I speak with, I always say that before deciding what to do, it is important to ask yourself the following five questions.

## WHY YOU?

Before you decide *what* to do to be a more effective leader, it is important to know *why* you want to become a more effective leader. Being clear about your motives, as well as the experience and skills you offer, is an important first step in creating a plan to improve your leadership skills.

## WHO ELSE?

Effective leaders work with and through others to achieve their goals. Giving thought to the people who you can begin to learn from, who can support your work, and who you need to inspire to create positive change in your community will go a long way to identify the right leadership development path for you.

## HOW WELL DO YOU WORK WITH OTHERS?

One of the most important parts of leadership is working with people whose backgrounds, experiences and perspectives are different than your own. Taking time to honestly reflect on ways you can be better at working across differences will help you be a more inclusive and equitable leader.

## WHAT WILL IT MEAN?

Often what keeps good leaders from being great is the ability to recognize the difference between intention and impact. Understanding how your intentions align with your impact will help you adapt your approach and create change that benefits everyone.

## HOW WILL YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF?

All the work you put into becoming a more effective leader won't amount to much if you don't take care of yourself. To quote writer and civil rights activist Audre Lorde, "caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it's self-preservation." Honor the investment you make in yourself by taking care of yourself. 

## Lessons Learned Along the Way

### BUSH FELLOWS SHARE INSIGHTS FROM THEIR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

The Bush Fellowship provides people with an opportunity to pursue the experiences and education they need to become more effective leaders. Every six months during their Fellowship, we ask Fellows to reflect on their experience and share key insights that we share with the community through Learning Logs. Here are some highlights:

 Read more at [bushfoundation.org/Learning/Fellows](http://bushfoundation.org/Learning/Fellows)



Collectively, through discourse and communion, we seek paths to better tomorrows that seem both painfully distant and tantalizingly near. To understand your leadership potential, you must travel a winding road through our own soulscape.

ADAM PERRY June 2016



Transformational leadership is about understanding that each and every interaction I have as a leader is impacted by the way I frame the interaction in my mind...my goals, motivations, fears, triggers are at constant play...unless I'm conscious of them and committed to remaining present, coherent and authentic.

TAWANNA BLACK May 2015



Going through this process (learning to take care of myself) is probably one of the biggest wake up calls for me in prioritizing our personal needs by taking care of ourselves mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally because it is only ourselves who will be able to know what we need to keep doing the work we do and without a foundation to carry us it's hard to keep moving forward with helping others.

KEVIN KILLER May 2016



This year taught me a lot about the need to navigate spaces and professional relationships differently than I ever thought before. Yes, I knew I was a woman, and this brought a need to navigate differently, and yes, I was a black woman so this brought an additional need to navigate differently, but I never thought of my white side bringing a need to navigate differently.

LATASHA GANDY May 2016



What I've learned thus far is that leadership is expressed in many different ways and can be found in all people if the conditions are right. Leading is about knowing how to walk alongside, encouraging from behind, going up ahead when necessary, being grounded in the values that drive your leadership, asking questions and being open to finding solutions through shared learning and co-creation.

ELENA GARDER January 2016

PHOTOS: BRUCE SILCOX



BOARD MEMBER Q&A

**Who is Tracey Zepher?**

Get to know Bush Foundation Board Member Tracey Zepher

**WHERE WERE YOU BORN?**

I was born on the Cheyenne River Sioux Indian Reservation in western South Dakota, and other than my three years of law school I've lived in the area my whole life. My mother was a full blood Lakota Sioux woman, and my dad is of Norwegian descent. His family homesteaded on the reservation and that's how their families came together. You hear this a lot, but I feel like I truly grew up with two different worlds: the Lakota way of living and also the non-Native way of living because my parents were from two vastly different worlds.

**CAN YOU SHARE ABOUT YOUR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL PATH?**

Right out of high school I went to college and got a business administration and accounting degree. At the time I wanted to move back to the reservation (I actually wanted to be an engineer but there wasn't too much demand), so I decided to get a degree that could be put to better use. I worked as a banker and auditor for five years and then got kind of cynical of the world. I ran into a couple experiences as a banker that made me think, "I need to be doing more with helping Native people navigate through the non-Native world." I decided to go to law school at Yale University. It was a complete eye opener. Living in sheltered South Dakota, no lawyers in my family, it was an opportunity of a lifetime to go out there and stand alongside so many other people from different cultures. It made me realize that we are all different but we're all equal, and we need to acknowledge that within each other.

Currently I work for a firm in Rapid City, S.D. We work with entities like tribal governments and tribal colleges. I love it because it's not just lawyering in the traditional sense—it's really about nation building. And that's where my work intersected with the Bush Foundation. In 2008, the Bush Foundation started an initiative to help tribes rebuild themselves. I was a member of the first cohort of the Native Nation Rebuilders program.

Growing up I had the Indian world and the non-Indian world very much imprinted on me, and I feel like I haven't drifted too far from that.

**WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?**

My two children. I have a 13-year-old son and a 3-year-old little boy. Those are my two biggest accomplishments; my two biggest legacies that I'm very proud of. Beyond that, getting my education and going to Yale for my law degree. I was the first in my family to get a bachelor's degree and then to go to graduate school. I think the creator put me in this place, and coming from my parents I feel I've been given a great opportunity to bring those two worlds together. There's a lot more work that needs to be done, but I feel like I've thoroughly enjoyed being able to contribute.

**WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOUR LIFE THE MOST?**

My grandmas—Grandma Red Bird and Grandma Frame. They shaped who I am today in their own particular way. Both of them emphasized the importance of education and family, which are my touchstones. Also my dad, who is a mechanic, has taught me to be pretty self-sufficient—if my car breaks down I'm pretty well set (laughs).

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE QUOTE?**

"Trouble no man in their belief, respect them, but also demand that they respect yours." I think about that a lot in my career, especially in this heated political environment. If we're ever going to work together, we have to acknowledge and respect the different views that we have, and at the same time make sure that we are getting the respect that we deserve.

TRACEY ZEPHER BRUCESILCOX

**BUSH FELLOWS & ALUM NEWS**



The National Women's History Month Project honored Sister Mary Madonna



Ashton (BF'76) in a public ceremony in Washington, D.C. Ashton was one of 16 influential leaders who were recognized in the March 2016 event.

Sylvia Bartley (BF'14) will serve as the coordinator of economic development partnerships at Medtronic in 2017. She will help boost employment for African Americans, particularly in north Minneapolis and the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.

The Walker Art Center commissioned Frank Big Bear (BF'86,



BF'98, Enduring Vision Award winner) to create an ambitious piece of art. Multiverse #10 is a 50-foot-long collage that debuted in November 2016 as part of the Walker's campus renovation project in Minneapolis. Big Bear's work is the first in what will become an annual series of commissions from the museum.

Tawanna Black (BF'14) was recognized as one of the Top 25 Disruptive Leaders working to improve economic outcomes for low-income people in America by Living Cities in 2016. The year-long fellowship gave her the coaching, workshops and network to further grow her leadership practice.

ILLUSTRATIONS ALLEGRA LOCKSTADT

FELLOWSHIP: 40 YEARS OUT

**Sister Kathleen Bierne**



Sister Kathleen Bierne (BF'77) has never shied away from a challenge. As a teenager growing up in rural South Dakota, Bierne knew that attending college was an absolute must because of her interest in education. Despite the fact that her family didn't have the means, she scraped together enough money selling chicken eggs and set off to earn a degree at South Dakota State University.

After a year at SDSU, she moved on to Presentation College for its two-year teaching degree. Steeped in Catholic tradition, Presentation College regularly welcomed sisters from local congregations to teach certain courses. The Catholic sisters offered Bierne such immeasurable mentorship that she decided to enter a life of devotion to her faith.

Shortly after graduating from Presentation College, Bierne led the parent education program at the Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls. During her time there, she started a preschool, which ignited a lifelong passion for working with parents. She soon realized she would need to learn more if she was going to fully commit herself to this work.

Bierne used her 1977 Bush Fellowship to attend an intensive course in parent education and child development at Brigham Young University (BYU), which possessed one of the leading programs in the field at the time.

Here she was, a Catholic sister about to enter a primarily Mormon community at the university named for one of the most prominent leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Indeed, the Fellowship thrust her well beyond what was familiar—an experience Bierne now finds invaluable.

"The most important and long-term experience was being inserted into another culture," she explains. "Going to Brigham Young, I was a Catholic sister in a Mormon environment. I was the minority. I experienced being a minority for the first time, and it was very formative for me."

After completing the program at BYU, Bierne brought her new levels of expertise to the Archdiocese of Saint Paul, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rapid City, the Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls and other organizations in the region over the next 15 years. She influenced many people during five-year stints at each location, sharing her insights on child development and rearing.

Bierne has also remained active with Presentation Sisters throughout her entire career, working on social justice campaigns and organizing a volunteer group from the community. "I find the interaction between others who are trying to work for the common good very inspiring," she explains. Most recently, she lobbied with a fellow sister in Pierre, S.D., to address legislation that would negatively impact people experiencing poverty.

Bierne has accomplished much over the course of her 58 years with Presentation Sisters. And in some ways she sees the Bush Foundation as the catalyst for that work. "When I look back on my experience with the Bush Fellowship," she reminisces, "it was the impetus that helped me step out of my comfort zone."

FELLOWSHIP: 35 YEARS OUT  
**Dan Klassen**



Dan Klassen (BF'82) wanted to go into university administration. In fact, that's exactly what he intended to use his Bush Fellowship for in 1982. His fellowship, it turned out, opened new doors and opened his mind to new possibilities—and set the tone for a remarkable career.

After being awarded the Fellowship, Klassen packed up for the summer and headed to the College Management Program at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pa. He was the director of educational research and the director of the Academic Computer Center at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn.

It was the early '80s, the cusp of a computer software revolution. At the time, Klassen also worked part-time with the Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium developing learning games for children.

With ideas swirling around in his head, he used a few free days during the Carnegie program to visit New York City. He called five companies, including Reader's Digest and various textbook publishers, hoping one of them would show interest in entering the digital world.

Every one of them said yes to at least one idea. But Klassen ended up working directly with Scholastic, the world's largest publisher of children's books and K-12 textbooks.

After finishing his studies at Carnegie, he returned to Minnesota. He immediately launched his own business, Information Technology Design Associates, and developed software with Scholastic for several years. (He founded two more game software companies after that.) Despite the career change, the knowledge he gained at Carnegie Mellon remained useful. Many of the topics they covered were just what you needed to run a business.

"You don't necessarily have to feel like you're locked into what you're going into at the start of the Fellowship," Klassen says. "Usually you are so busy working and don't have a lot of time to think about what's next. When you get away like that, you get some time to think, which is invaluable."

Klassen spent the rest of his career developing learning games for children, and eventually for aging adults with Alzheimer's. He currently serves as the principal investigator on Memory Matters, a federally funded mobile game app project that supports Alzheimer's patients.

"The games don't improve memory loss, but the patients open up and talk about things. It's a way to increase communication skills on the part of the person with dementia or memory loss to reconnect with their past and remember the good things that happened to them when they were younger," Klassen explains.

Product testing will continue at assisted living facilities across the Twin Cities well into 2018, and Klassen will continue to be involved at every stage.

After a lifelong career steered largely by his 1982 Bush Fellowship and a life-altering weekend trip to New York City, what comes next is unclear; he is technically retired, after all.

Eyenga Bokamba (BF'06) became the executive director at Intermedia Arts in early 2016. The artist and educator brings a strong track record of leadership and passion for arts-based civic engagement to her new role at the Minneapolis nonprofit.



Mary Ellen Childs (BF'89 and BF'99) received a Discovery Grant through OPERA America. The composer is working on a full-length opera about three women in aviation history, "On Beyond." The advocacy organization launched the



Discovery Grant opportunity to intentionally support and uplift works by female artists.

Dr. Janice Cooper (BF'99) was presented with a Boston University Beyond Health Award—the school's highest honor. Cooper's work supports adults, children and adolescents across Liberia who need better access to quality mental healthcare.

Ariah Fine (BF'13) paired up with artist D. A. Bullock (BF'17) to create work that was included in "This Is Our City," an interactive visual art exhibit featuring five teams of local government workers and community-based artists. The exhibit was debuted at Intermedia Arts in May 2016 as part of its Creative Citymaking initiative, which promotes economic and racial equity in Minneapolis.

Author and essayist Laura Flynn (BF'09) will lead intensive writing workshops and craft seminars for a cohort of emerging writers as part of the Loft Literary Center's flagship Mentor Series in Poetry and Creative Prose. After her creative nonfiction residency, Flynn will give a public reading with selected members of the cohort in the Loft's performance hall in Minneapolis.

Trista Harris (BF'15) was named to The Chronicle of Philanthropy's first-ever 40 Under 40 list. The president of the Minnesota Council on Foundations is known nationally as a philanthropic futurist. She is also a passionate advocate for new leaders in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.



The Sanford Health Foundation hired Ty Hegland (BF'15) as executive director of its Fargo, N.D., region in 2016. Hegland will support work at the fundraising arm for Sanford Health, the nation's largest rural, not-for-profit, integrated health system.

Duluth, Minn. poet Louis Jenkins (BF'79 and BF'84) collaborated with British actor and director Mark Rylance to produce NICE FISH, a co-medic play, based on Louis' poetry that tells the story of two men who have gone ice fishing on the last day of the season. The play will have its London premier at the Harold Pinter Theatre in November 2017 following a successful Off-Broadway run in 2016.

FELLOWSHIP: 30 YEARS OUT  
**Rajiv Tandon**



It all began when Rajiv Tandon (BF'87) was teaching production management at the University of Minnesota and he was asked to work with a student's budding company over the summer. That summer turned into 18 years and the company in question became quite successful. So successful, in fact, that it left Tandon with a thirst to better understand the concept of start-ups.

"I was feeling that I needed to understand this concept of innovation, and who better to learn from in terms of innovation than entrepreneurs," he says.

To achieve this, Tandon used his Bush Fellowship to enroll at the University of Minnesota. The only catch? The university didn't have a doctoral program in entrepreneurship at the time. Undaunted, Tandon went to the Board of Regents and created his own.

"To work on my doctoral dissertation, I studied 300 start-up ventures—half successful, half failures," he explains. "That dissertation really was the very first doctoral dissertation in the field of entrepreneurship at the University of Minnesota and might have been one of the first in the country."

The Fellowship not only helped him finish the dissertation, it also established him as one of the foremost experts in the field of entrepreneurship. Since completing the program 30 years ago, Tandon developed and implemented the entrepreneurship program at the University of St. Thomas, built three different companies, and is now back at the University of St. Thomas as an executive fellow.

In addition, Tandon launched Rocket Network, a community of leaders of fast growing enterprises, entrepreneurs and students. These individuals share a singular focus: to build stronger companies by helping current and future entrepreneurs navigate uncharted waters.

"The Rocket Network aspires to combine conceptual frameworks with practical experience to help entrepreneurs," Tandon explains. "All of this is offered to entrepreneurs at no charge. It is my way of giving back to society."

This inspiration to give back stems from a history of exceptionally few start-ups in Minnesota, and Tandon's desire to help change that. "We can talk about it, we can go to seminars about it, but then we need to do something about it," he says. "That is what I am working on."

But how does one go from thinking about it to putting it into practice? According to Tandon, by exploring, taking risks, thinking as big as we can, and most importantly, not being afraid to fail. Tandon believes this level of freedom is what makes a Bush Fellowship so special, and something he touches on every year when he is called to speak to current Bush Fellows.

"I tell them to feel free to break every rule they know of because the Fellowships allow them to do that. The ability to explore, take risks and fail with really no consequence is such a fantastic and rare opportunity," he advises. "Just follow your passion and all of the things that interest you whether they make sense to anyone or not because sooner or later they will." Indeed.

FELLOWSHIP: 25 YEARS OUT  
**Pam Costain**



It's hard to believe, but just two short decades ago, "globalization" was a relatively new phenomenon—a mere concept that Pam Costain (BF'92) set out to understand when she applied for her Bush Fellowship.

"People were just beginning to talk about globalization," Costain explains. "Because I was working with an organization that was globally focused, I wanted to take a year off to study what globalization meant economically, socially and culturally."

To achieve this, Costain used her Bush Fellowship to enroll at the University of Minnesota and complete a program focused on studying globalization in both political science and public policy. What she learned in the classroom, however, was what she found to be least helpful.

"Sitting in a formal classroom with political scientists was my way to pursue my interests, but it was not the most effective learning environment," Costain recalls. "The most important part of my fellowship was the ability to step back from work, and have time to reflect and think about where the world was going."

The subsequent soul-searching that the Fellowship afforded reinforced Costain's understanding of what it means to be a leader in local communities and in global organizations. Regardless of entity, Costain believes that change happens from the bottom up. "I am a huge believer in grassroots community-based leadership," she says. "I always operate from the assumption that solutions exist within communities of people, and that it is in their coming together to mutually solve a problem that they are able to do so."

The connections, knowledge and confidence attained during her Fellowship propelled Costain to where she is today. In her 25 years since becoming a Bush Fellow, her focus turned from globalization to a professional career in public education. "In 2007, Costain was elected to the school board for the Minneapolis Public Schools and seated as its chair. In 2010, she left to become president and CEO of AchieveMpls, an organization dedicated to ensuring career and college readiness for students and young adults. She retired from that position in 2016, and is currently working as an independent consultant with Nonviolent Peaceforce, an international advocacy and peace nonprofit, mapping out violence reduction strategies related to the pipeline struggle in North Dakota.

The wealth of experience gleaned from her Fellowship propelled Costain to become much more intentional with her leadership. "I have tried to develop a leadership style in myself that really promotes the leadership of other people," she explains. "In so doing, I feel I have become a very intentional builder of a new generation of leaders."

It is a leadership style that was passed on to her from those who came before, and a style she hopes to pass on to the future leaders of communities throughout the world. "The interconnection of the world is such that you do good work wherever you are, and it will flow locally, and it will flow globally," she says. "We are, more than ever before, one world."

Adrian C. Louis (BF'90 and BF'01) received the Lena-Miles Wever Todd Poetry Prize for his newest collection, *Random Exorcisms*. Published by Pleiades Press in 2016, the collection features poems covering "a broad range of subjects, including Facebook, zombies, horror movies, petty grievances, real grief and pure political outrage."

Dr. Thomas Peacock's (BF'85) most recent book, *The Tao of Nookomis*, was published by North Star Press in May 2016. The collection of 12 short stories are inspired in part by traditional Ojibwe culture, and reflect the Duluth, Minn.-based writer's childhood growing up at Fond du Lac Reservation.

Walter Piehl (BF'08 and Enduring Vision Award Winner) received a Golden Award from the Minot State University Alumni Association in September 2015. It is the highest award given by the association and recognizes Piehl's distinguished leadership and career as a visual artist.

Tea Rozman Clark (BF'15) published a collection of personal essays by students from Wellstone International High School in Minneapolis, about their experience moving to the United States. *Green Card Youth Voices: Immigration Stories from a Minneapolis High School* received the Gold Medal Award for "Best Multicultural Non Fiction Chapter Book" from the Moonbeam Children's Book Awards.



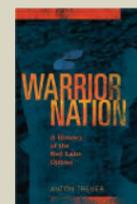
Karen Sherman (BF'09) was named a Hodder Fellow by The Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University. The Fellowship will allow the award-winning choreographer to refine a current project and create new work during the 2016-2017 academic year.



Michael J. Strand (BF'14) led ceramics workshops for veterans and their family members as part of "Project Unpack: Telling Stories, Creating Community," a collaboration between North Dakota State University and several community partners, including North Dakota Veteran Affairs. Film, poetry and some of the pieces made during Strand's workshops were displayed at the Rourke Art Gallery and Museum.



Anton Treuer's (BF'08) *Warrior Nation: A History of the Red Lake Ojibwe* (Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2015), earned a 2016 Award of Merit from the American Association of State and Local History. The award establishes and encourages standards of excellence in the collection, preservation and interpretation of state and local history.



NEWS continued on page 60

FELLOWSHIP: 20 YEARS OUT  
**Rebecca Petersen**



Rebecca Petersen (BF'97) has long believed that arts organizations can have an enormous impact on the communities they serve. She has spent the bulk of her career proving that notion; it was a Bush Fellowship that started her leadership journey.

Prior to her Fellowship, Petersen was involved in a \$1.2 million campaign to reinstate Fergus Falls, Minn.'s Orpheum Theatre as "A Center for the Arts." Over the course of the campaign, the Orpheum received a grant from the Bush Foundation, piquing Petersen's interest in its work.

With the Fergus Falls project behind her, Petersen applied for a Bush Fellowship. She wanted to study two performing arts groups and how each incorporated educational programming into their respective work. One program was at the Ordway Center for Performing Arts in Saint Paul; the other at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts in Burlington, Vt. Her initial goal was to adopt similar best practices into new programming for the Fergus Falls School District. However, after receiving feedback and connections gleaned from the Bush Foundation, Petersen changed directions.

Thanks to the flexibility a Bush Fellowship affords, Petersen adjusted her original plan and began shadowing Artspace. The nonprofit supported artists by providing places where they can live and work. Over the course of three years, Petersen spent time with Artspace in Seattle, Minneapolis and Saint Paul and worked on various projects.

Through the experience, Petersen saw how different arts organizations operated and learned how her work as an arts administrator could have great impact on any community of which she was a member. "My work with the Bush Foundation helped me see the value that arts organizations have on communities at a grassroots level," she explained.

As the Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra's executive director for the past six years, Petersen's Fellowship experience continues to influence her. "The symphony orchestra world is really challenging right now," she explains, adding that the audience base for classical ensembles is dwindling across the board.

In response to this decline, community orchestras like hers are finding ways to engage new audience members—in a word, she says, they are exercising "flexibility," a skill Petersen became very comfortable with during her Fellowship.

Petersen says the Fellowship gave her the courage to take on new things. She recalls donning a wolf costume for a performance of "Peter and the Wolf." "Someone commented that I was so brave," Petersen says. "I laughed and said, 'I run a community orchestra—it comes with the job.'"

Thinking back on her Fellowship, Petersen is both humbled and encouraged by the immense possibility inherent in the program. She advises current and future Bush Fellows to redefine what is possible and think beyond the readily accessible.

"What is actually possible?" she challenges. "Until you reach beyond what's tangible, the impossible just isn't possible."

FELLOWSHIP: 15 YEARS OUT  
*Sandy Spieler*

Sandy Spieler (BAF'02) wears many hats. A professional artist, Spieler works through several mediums, including paint, clay, stage performance and more, and serves as a leader in various arts organizations in the Twin Cities. Of her many titles, though, the most important is her role as a perpetual student.

In 1986, support from the Bush Artist Fellowship program allowed Spieler to build a foundation for her artistry. At the time, she had no formal training or education in the field, and she lacked the resources she needed to establish her craft.

"I had this inner sense of what I wanted to do, but I couldn't quite coalesce it," Spieler says of her experience as a young artist. "With the support from the Bush Foundation I felt like the earth was underneath my feet."

When she applied for a Bush Fellowship in 2002, Spieler was more established as an artist, but she remained weary and felt a need to "go to the well and take a long drink."

The Fellowship allowed her to travel to England and earn a master's degree in cultural performance from Bristol University. At the time, Spieler was intrigued by all forms of expression, so the course was a perfect fit for her inquisitive mind.

During her time in England, Spieler discovered that her work—whatever medium it manifests in—is largely built around a singular topic. She gives the example of water as a theme that has been central to her work for years.

"In general, my work has always been content driven," she explains.

"I'll take on investigations of things that I just have little inklings of, and sometimes it grows into something massive."

Perhaps the perfect example of Spieler's creative process is the annual MayDay Parade and Festival, an artistic celebration put on by Minneapolis' In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre, which Spieler co-founded and where she currently serves as an artistic director. On the first Sunday in May, MayDay brings people from the community together around a theme, creating hand-built puppets, costumes, performances and more, to present a grandiose artistic expression in response to the chosen theme.

In addition to her dedication to MayDay and In the Heart of the Beast, Spieler is internationally recognized by organizations and artists. In fact, she received the McKnight Foundation's Distinguished Artist Award in 2014.

"I accepted that award humbly, and I know that all along the way the people who have walked with me and who have supported me deserve the thanks," Spieler says. "One of those thanks belongs to the Bush Foundation for supporting artists, and for supporting an artist like me."



FELLOWSHIP: 10 YEARS OUT  
*Phyllis May-Machunda*

Phyllis May-Machunda (BF'07) knows the value of persistence. She took a 20-year step away from pursuing a doctorate in folklore and ethnomusicology, and used her Bush Fellowship to earn her degree.

The professor of American Multicultural Studies at Minnesota State University-Moorhead (MSUM) began her career as a folklorist with the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. During the 1980s, May-Machunda interviewed dozens of African-American cheerleaders to understand the undocumented history of the sport. Her fieldwork provided insight into what she called a tradition of resistance to segregation in schools.

She put her dissertation work on hold in 1987 when she gave birth to her daughter, who was born prematurely with several health complications. May-Machunda and her family then moved to Minnesota. She began teaching at MSUM, where her colleagues told her about the Bush Foundation. She received a Fellowship in 2007 and took a sabbatical. May-Machunda planned to finally finish her dissertation.

"The Bush Fellowship allowed me to take care of myself as a scholar, which is what I had intended my career to be," she said. "I think, as a result, it solidified my standing professionally and allowed me to realize the potential I had."

May-Machunda continues to establish herself as a voice of folklore and social justice. She recently reinstated a 2001 anti-racism initiative at MSUM, which led to a

training of university staff members. Shortly after that, faculty from across the campus came together to transform their curriculum using a racial equity lens.

She received the 2014 Moorhead Human Rights Commission Award which was presented at the American Association of Colleges and Universities' Diversity Conference. She was also elected to the Executive Board of the American Folklore Society. May-Machunda began collaborating with the Minnesota Humanity Center on the Absent Narrative Project, where she bridges communications between new Americans and teachers in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

"There's so much that needs to be done to make things better for humanity. I think if you care and invest in that opportunity, then the Bush Foundation opens doors for you to do more," May-Machunda said.

She is now back on sabbatical in Washington, D.C. at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. She has been awarded a post-doctorate fellowship and plans to expand on her dissertation and turn it into a book.

"I learned persistence. You don't give up on your dreams when you face challenges," May-Machunda said. "It may take you a long time, but if you remain true to your dreams, you can achieve them."



STAFF, BOARD & COMMITTEE MEMBER NEWS



Stephanie Andrews was named a Presidio Institute Cross Sector Leadership Fellow in 2016. The year-long fellowship gave her the coaching, workshops and network to further grow her leadership practice.

Carly Bad Heart Bull was hired to be the Bush Foundation's first Native Nations Activities Manager.

Bad Heart Bull will help effectively serve Native nations and Native communities across all programs and strategic initiatives. She initially joined the Foundation's education team in 2014 as a Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellow.

Tim Clark left the Foundation's Investment Committee in February 2017. He served on the committee for five years, leveraging his expertise in global investing and financial services. Clark is president and CEO of TreeHouse, a faith-based mentoring organization that supports the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of teens.

Board Member DeAnna Cummings (BF'07), executive director of Juxtaposition Arts, has been selected to be a fellow at the DeVos Institute of Arts Management in Washington, D.C. Cummings is one of 13 executives from six countries chosen from more than 450 applicants.



Duchesne Drew was selected to be part of the 2017 Council on Foundations' Career Pathways program. The year-long leadership development opportunity aims to increase the numbers of professionals from diverse backgrounds who serve in senior and executive philanthropic positions.

Two Bush Foundation Board Members ended their service in February 2017. Jan Malcolm served for 12 years. She held a number of leadership positions, including serving as Board Chair. Wendy Nelson served for seven years. Her many contributions included serving as the Board Vice Chair. We are grateful to them both!

Venessa Fuentes and Dameun Strange were named 2016 Aspen Scholars. They joined a group of 300 national and global leaders who were recognized for their ability to transform ideas into action. As special guests at the Aspen Ideas Festival, the two participated in a week's worth of cross-sector discussions, panels and workshops.

Dameun Strange became executive director at the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association in late 2016. Strange, an artist and community developer, was part of the Minnesota Council on Foundations' inaugural Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellowship; he served on the Community Innovation Program team for three years.



Avi Viswanathan became program director for Nexus' Institute for Community Engagement in November 2016. He leads work that develops the Institute into a

vital center for the learning and practice of community engagement, both locally and nationally. Viswanathan, who served on the Foundation's Community Innovation Program team, joins the growing circle of Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellow alums.

IN MEMORIAM

John Archabal, who led the Bush Fellowship Program from 1973 to 2009, passed away in December 2016. He helped thousands of people advance their leadership development practice across the region. Additionally, he was an instrumental force in the Foundation's education work. Archabal was 74.

FELLOWSHIP: FIVE YEARS OUT  
**Zahra Aljabri**



Zahra Aljabri's (BF'12) conviction is clear in everything she does: Alleviate social justice issues within her Muslim American community.

Though her professional career began in the media and entertainment industry, Aljabri's passion for reconciliation led her to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) in Minnesota in 2010. She was the organization's first full-time employee.

She was also busy working on Muslim Buddy, a nonprofit she launched with her husband. The organization provides services and training to Muslim groups that need support connecting with their community members.

Through these experiences, Aljabri observed community challenges and challenges across nonprofit governance structures. A nonprofit's hierarchical model didn't lend itself to Muslim American constituents' needs—sometimes it made matters worse. Aljabri asked herself how an organization could become more open to her community.

Receiving the Bush Fellowship at such a critical time in her career gave Aljabri an opportunity to study alternative governance structures and implement a better model through Muslim Buddy. "We were finding dynamic ways to do more than just a survey," Aljabri explains. "We had community conversations to get more people involved."

Aljabri saw how changing an organization's structure could help it have greater social impact. She also shared her learning at CAIR-MN, which was working with many different subgroups within the Muslim community.

Though bound by certain commonalities, each subgroup has its own individual circumstances and needs. Aljabri and her team at CAIR successfully served each of those subgroups. Today CAIR-MN has grown considerably, reaching even more people throughout the state with outposts in Rochester and Saint Cloud.

Aljabri's most recent endeavor, Mode-sty, is an online store for women seeking modest fashion styles. She was inspired by young Somali American girls who wanted to respect their culture while simultaneously expressing themselves through fashion.

"(Fashion) can be a visual showcase to state that, 'I am a part of this community even though I may have a different background, religious system or culture that I am bringing to the community,'" Aljabri says.

While her initial goal with Mode-sty was to provide more fashion options to Muslim women in the United States, women of many different faith backgrounds have flocked to the website. In a way, the company has turned into an interfaith endeavor, bringing women with different beliefs together around a common interest.

"Start at a more basic, more common element so you can really have a chance to appreciate that our theological differences can be enumerated," she says. "Everything else—the common human experience—is so much greater."

Mode-sty serves as an example of Aljabri's strong conviction that people have much more in common than they may initially think—an idea that is perhaps more relevant in the world today than it has ever been.

NEWS continued from page 57

Darlene Walsler (BF'06) was appointed executive director of the Saint Paul Riverfront Corp. in June 2016. Walsler previously served as the Bottineau Light Rail Transit Community Works Program Manager at Hennepin County; and as vice president of real estate development firm McCormack Baron Salazar Inc.



Dwayne Wilcox (BF'06), a self-taught artist whose work has been widely exhibited, showcased his 3D paper sculptures in a 2016 solo exhibition. "Cut & Paste" was hosted at the Dahl Arts Center in Rapid City, S.D., and captured Wilcox's sense of craftsmanship.



Sheri Wilner (BF'07) joined the faculty of Boston College as the Rev. J. Donald Monan Professor in Theatre Arts. She will teach two courses and stage one of her own works, "Kingdom City," during her year-long appointment.



STAFF AS OF MARCH 31, 2017; ALL OTHER LISTS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2016.

**Bush Foundation Board of Directors**

- Jennifer Alstad
- Dr. Kathleen Annette
- Paul Batcheller
- DeAnna Cummings **1**
- Anthony Heredia
- Curtis W. Johnson
- Dr. Eric J. Jolly
- Jan K. Malcolm
- Pamela Moret, Chair **5**
- Wendy M. Nelson
- Michael Solberg
- Irving Weiser
- Tracey Zephier **2**

**Non-Board Investment Committee Advisor**

- Timothy Clark

**Bush Foundation Staff**

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- Amy Anderson
- Stephanie Andrews
- Maggie Arzdorf-Schubbe **1,3**
- Carly Bad Heart Bull **6**
- Allison Barmann
- Maya Beecham
- Shaylyn Bernhardt
- Eileen Briggs **2,6**
- Kristell Caballero Saucedo **4,6**
- Chrissie Carver
- Justin Christy
- Erin Dirksen
- Duchesne Drew
- Saroeun Earm **4**
- Mandy Ellerton
- Megan Forgrave

- Venessa Fuentes
- Katie Gleichman
- Elli Haerter
- Yong Her
- Sharon Hollingsworth
- Aya Johnson **4**
- Greg Keane
- Naaima Khan **4**
- Kelly Kleppe
- Gao Lee **6**
- Kent Linder **6**
- Molly Matheson Gruen
- Beth Norris
- Kallie O'Hara **6**
- John Otterlei
- Erica Orton **6**
- Awale Osman **4,6**
- Anita Patel
- Jen Ford Reedy
- Erik Takeshita **1**
- Kia Vang
- Beth Villaume
- Kristina Ward
- Dominick Washington
- Nancy Weidler
- Kayla Yang-Best

**Bush Fellows Selection Panel**

- Calvin Allen
- Joseph Bartmann
- Susan Bass Roberts
- Deborah Benedict
- Duane Benson
- Daniel Bergin **1**
- Lori Brown **2**

- Clay Cudmore
- Tane Danger **1**
- Luz Maria Frias
- José González
- Allison Johnson Heist
- Matt Kilian
- Abdirizak Mahboub **1**
- Anne McFarland
- Neeraj Mehta
- Pamela Moret **5**
- Kathy Mouacheupao **1**
- Lois Schmidt
- Darrell Shoemaker
- Connie Sprynczynatyk
- Michael Strand **1**
- Pamela Teaney Thomas **1**
- Terri Thao

**Bush Prize Selection Panel – Minnesota**

- Mayuli Bales
- Tawanna Black **1**
- Kyle Erickson
- Irene Fernando
- Kevin Goodno
- Curtis W. Johnson **5**
- Jason Sole **1**

**Bush Prize Selection Panel – South Dakota**

- Malcom Chapman **1**
- Ivan Sorbel
- Jim Speirs
- Ross Tschetter
- Diana VanderWoude
- Sheila S. Woodward

**North Dakota Advisory Committee, includes Bush Prize Selection Panel – North Dakota**

- Rod Backman
- Twyla Baker-Demaray **2**
- Lori Brown **2**
- Kristi Hall-Jiran
- Chuck Hoge
- Mary Massad
- Zachary Packineau
- Thomas D. Shorma
- Eric Trueblood
- Jessie Veeder

**South Dakota Advisory Committee**

- Malcom Chapman **1**
- Tanya Fiddler
- Toby Morris
- Jane Rasmussen
- Ivan Sorbel
- Ira Taken Alive
- Ross Tschetter
- Diana VanderWoude
- Sheila S. Woodward

**Legend**

- 1** Bush Fellow
- 2** Native Nation Rebuilder
- 3** Consultant
- 4** Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellow
- 5** Foundation Board Member
- 6** New Foundation Staff Member

PHOTO: BRUCE SILCOX



Q&A  
**Makram El-Amin**

Makram El-Amin, a 2014 Bush Fellow and the resident Imam of Masjid An-Nur in north Minneapolis, marked his 20th anniversary of leading the mosque in 2016. Over the years, El-Amin has grown the size and diversity of his congregation. While it has remained predominantly African American, the mosque has become home to a sizeable number of East Africans, Arabs and other Muslims of different cultural backgrounds. Beyond creating an environment that serves the needs of diverse segments of his community, El-Amin has dedicated himself to building ties to religious leaders of various faiths. Those friendships have brought comfort to El-Amin and his flock as anti-Muslim sentiments, rhetoric and violence have risen.

**IT MAKES YOU FEEL CONNECTED TO THE LARGER COMMUNITY?**  
Yes. I long for the day when Islam is not an anomaly. I long for a day when it's not strange... when it becomes such a part of the fabric of what we do. I mean, Catholic Charities serves everybody. We know what gave birth to Catholic Charities; it's in the name. But it's so synonymous with society that it's the norm. It's normal to go there and get your needs met. We want to be normal like that. We want to be seen as normal in that way. That "Oh, Muslims live in this neighborhood? Crime's going to be down over here. It's going to be safe around here. Property values are going to go up. Why? Because they feel obligated to God to take care of whatever is in their surroundings." We want to be normal like that.

**WHY DO YOU INVEST TIME IN INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIPS?**  
Why do we spend time with our friends? Why do we get together and have breakfast once a month? Why do we have coffee together? It's because we value one another and we add to each other. And in these days and times we live in right now... I got a text asking "How are you doing?" A friend was just checking on me. That's what friends do. They didn't do it for public relations. It's just "How are you doing, man? How's your family? Call me. I haven't heard from you." One of my dear friends, Carla, asked, "Do we need to come and surround the mosque during prayer time and make sure you guys are OK, in light of the [recent deadly attack on a mosque] in Canada? They're just so ready to do what friends do. It's what you would want in any relationship that's meaningful. That in your time of need, to have that call that says, "I'm with you. Unequivocally. I'm with you. You tell me what you need." That does something for the human spirit.

**WHAT HAS BEEN THE LASTING EFFECT OF THE FELLOWSHIP?**  
Self-care. I don't come into the office every day. I work from home more. I have a couple of nice coffee shops that I get lost in sometimes. Because once I'm here [at the mosque], it's game on. And it provides a little head space, a little space to think and to perceive and just to interact. It's amazing the conversation you'll strike up in a coffee shop with a person you don't know. I've had phenomenal interactions that way. It never ceases to amaze me. I go home, I tell my wife, "Today was something. Guess what happened to me?" But I think having some time away, intentionally, during the fellowship really made me see how I could benefit if I just worked this in. — *Duchesne Drew*

PHOTO JOHN NOLTNER PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO BRUCE SILCOX



Do the most possible good for the community.

Archibald and Edyth Bush established the Foundation in 1953. They left few restrictions. It is up to the Bush Board and Staff to figure out how to use Archie and Edyth's resources to do the most possible good for the community.

Today, the Bush Foundation invests in great ideas and the people who power them in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the geography. We work to inspire and support creative problem solving—within and across sectors—to make our region better for everyone.

Broadly speaking, we do this in a few ways:

We invest in people and organizations working on any issue that is important in their communities. These investments are made through our Community Innovation and Leadership Programs. Grants and Fellowships are awarded through competitive processes open to all eligible people and organizations in the region.

We also invest in efforts to address

specific issues that we believe are a priority for the region. We manage these investments through our strategic initiatives—Community Creativity, Education, Native Nation Building and Social Business Ventures. Each initiative makes a handful of large investments annually to accomplish a goal.

We also support organizations that help create and sustain an environment for our programs and initiatives to be successful. Ecosystem Grants sustain organizations that create unique and significant value for the individuals and organizations we support.

Through communications and convenings, we share engaging stories about our investments; and create and support events that inspire, equip and connect people across the region we serve.

The Bush Foundation has seen much change since 1953. But the thing that has always been the same is our commitment to do the most possible good with the resources Archie and Edyth left to the region.

THINK BIGGER. THINK DIFFERENTLY.

# Sun Yung Shin Visits Coffee House Press

Sun Yung Shin (BAF'07) reignites her passion for the power of independent publishing whenever she visits Coffee House Press. Located in an historic building in Northeast Minneapolis, Minn., the award-winning nonprofit is known for lifting up work by Native writers and writers of color—including three of Shin's own books. "They took a chance on me," Shin jokes. Indeed, Coffee House, a member of the Bush Foundation's 2015 Community Creativity Cohort, takes risks as a modern-day publisher. Like Shin, it realizes how important it is to find new ways to engage the community beyond the printed page.

"We need 'The Beloved Community!'" says Shin, invoking the philosophy of justice and nonviolence made popular by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The idea is that a beloved community is built on justice, and should be achieved through a philosophy and methodology of nonviolence. "The ultimate end of violence," King explains, "is to defeat the opponent. The ultimate end of nonviolence is to win the friendship of the opponent."

Shin works fiercely to win these kinds of less familiar friendships because she knows they will lead to something different, something better. She was born in Seoul, South Korea, and raised by adoptive parents in Chicago before moving to the Twin Cities in 1992; she is an expert connector. "Relationships are very important," she smiles, "We all need to be more critically engaged."

If you ask her about her time as a Bush Fellow, Shin beams. She took a year off from teaching high schoolers to dream about what it meant for her to be a writer and to produce new work. "The Fellowship elevated my definition of what a cultural worker is and the role we play in communities. I understood how we must reflect our own values. Since then I continue to push myself, to give back to my community and to be outward-facing."

Think of Shin as a great mashup of artist, strategist, counselor and dreamer. She speaks with honesty and urgency to readers through her three Coffee House Press titles, two anthologies she edited and her bilingual book for children. She hosts events that encourage Minnesotans to push through their discomfort so they can have real conversations about race, identity or the meaning of home. She teaches in college classrooms as much as she does in community spaces. She also recognizes her own need to read such books, attend such events, and learn as much as she can along the way. All of this work brings her Beloved Community closer into focus every day. — *Venessa Fuentes*



photo by HUNT+CAPTURE



## Congratulations to Cohort 8 of Native Nation Rebuilders

The Native Nation Rebuilders Program is a leadership development opportunity for regional tribal citizens who have a passion for learning about innovative governance practices.



Applications for Cohort 9 will be accepted in the summer of 2017. The Native Nation Rebuilders program is a partnership between the Native Governance Center and the Bush Foundation. Visit [www.nativegov.org](http://www.nativegov.org) for more details.

PHOTOS REBECCA STRATTON





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101 Fifth Street East, Suite 2400 | Saint Paul, MN 55101 | 651-227-0891 | [bMag@BushFoundation.org](mailto:bMag@BushFoundation.org) | [BushFoundation.org](http://BushFoundation.org)