

*Carnegie  
Corporation of  
New York*

*VOL. 3/NO. 3*

*Fall 2005*

# CARNEGIE Reporter

## Track II Diplomacy:

*Averting Disaster?*



In reading the article on the National Library of South Africa in this issue of the *Carnegie Reporter*, I found myself intrigued, on many levels, by the story of the Timbuktu Manuscripts. These thousands of documents—a wealth of scholarship dating back more than seven hundred years and currently housed in various archives and libraries in the city of Timbuktu in the African nation of Mali—speak to us across the centuries with unmistakable eloquence and import. They are a touchstone for many issues with perhaps surprising relevance to current-day events—even those that involve this foundation and the people and organizations, including other foundations, with which we work.

To begin with, it's important to note that since 1925, Africa has been the major geographic focus of the efforts of Carnegie

Corporation of New York to work with developing countries as they identify and then implement the policies and strategies that will advance the quality of life available to their citizens and to make the nations themselves full partners in the global marketplace of ideas, as well as economic opportunities. In recent years, the Corporation has focused its support



PHOTO BY ROBERT ADAM MAYER

## A Letter from the PRESIDENT

on three areas: Strengthening African Universities, Enhancing Women's Opportunities in Higher Education and Revitalizing Selected African Libraries. In these efforts, we have often partnered with the Ford, MacArthur and Rockefeller foundations, which along with Carnegie Corporation, comprise the Partnership to Strengthen Higher Education in Africa. (It should also be noted that a number of Scandinavian countries have been long-time supporters of advancing higher education in Africa.)

On September 16, joined by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the presidents of three African nations—John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana, Armando Guebuza of Mozambique and Mwai Kibaki of Kenya—Susan Berresford, President of the Ford Foundation, hosted an event at Ford that signaled the recommitment of the Partnership to its support of African higher education. Over the past five years, the foundations have invested more than \$150 million in higher education in six sub-Saharan African nations—Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda, with Kenya recently joining the effort. Jonathan Fanton, President of the MacArthur Foundation, Judith Rodin, President of the Rockefeller Foundation and myself were also present, as were representatives of several of the African universities that are our partners in this work along with other dignitaries and education leaders from the U.S. and Africa. We celebrated the success that has been achieved and looked toward the future as African universities, using programs and strategies designed by African educators for African students, go forward in preparing the next generation of African leaders. At the Ford Foundation gathering, two new members were also formally welcomed into the Partnership: the William and Flora Hewlett and Andrew W. Mellon foundations. Together, the six foundations have pledged to invest an additional \$200 million over the next five years to continue our support for African higher education.

Working with institutional partners has not always been easy. Foundations, like universities and corporations, have their

own culture, their own ways of doing things and their own goals and measures of success. The four original foundation partners don't necessarily concentrate their efforts in the same countries and may sometimes be working on very different projects with a range of different institutions that don't always meet each other's criteria for serving a particular foundation's mission or fit with the vision of its program staff who work closely with their African colleagues. And yet, because we all agreed on one thing—that education is the key to human development in every realm that contributes to the advancement of civilization, including social, political and intellectual progress—we were able to find common ground and to contribute to each other's efforts while continuing the individual work that was important to achieving each foundation's underlying goals and fulfilling its mission.

Which brings me back to the Timbuktu manuscripts because, like the renaissance taking place in African higher education, these documents are part of the story of Africa that is unknown to so many—the rich history, the commitment to not only oral traditions but also the written word, the respect for scholarship and the understanding of the importance of libraries and archives to serve as the generational engines that carry knowledge across the decades and across borders. Carnegie Corporation and its foundation partners take deep pride in being able to participate in many different aspects of African development, from the preservation of its history to its leap across the digital divide.

Examples of the range of work being supported include the scholarship of Beverly Mack, recipient of a 2000 Carnegie Corporation of New York Scholars award, who has been exploring pre-eighteenth century Muslim women's scholarship and social activism in West and North Africa. (Mack, incidentally, mentions the Timbuktu manuscripts in an article for *The Maghreb Review*<sup>1</sup>, noting, "As contemporary researchers in Timbuktu seek to preserve manuscripts that date back to the 13th century, they find a small portion of works by women, often in scholarly families...") On the other end of the spectrum, there is the Partnership support for the creation and development of a bandwidth consortium consisting of eleven universities in five African countries as well as the Association of African Universities that will allow consortium participants to purchase online Internet connectivity in bulk, and thus lower the price. (For a variety of reasons, including a lack of infrastructure and a reliance on satellites, African universities can pay more than 100 times the bandwidth price available to their counterparts in Europe and North America.) Increased and more reliable online access is critical to allowing universities across Africa to achieve many advances, including being integrated into the global academic community, doing research, publishing their own findings and helping students connect to their contemporaries in other countries.

And perhaps some of these teachers, students and their universities will participate in another of the great "unknown" projects already underway in Africa: the digitization of the Timbuktu Manuscripts, so that this wealth of information that, in the words of a 2003 Ford Foundation report, "may compel scholars to rewrite the history of Islam and of Africa," can be shared, via the Internet, with the rest of the world. Thus will the record of humanity be enriched—and what greater goal could any of us wish to have even a small part in working toward?

VARTAN GREGORIAN, *President*

<sup>1</sup> "Muslim women's educational activities in the Maghreb: investigating and redefining scholarship in Northern Nigeria and Morocco," *The Maghreb Review*, a quarterly journal on North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Islamic studies. Volume 29, Nos. 1-4, 2004.

# CARNEGIE Reporter

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Chinese Vice President Li Lanqing, left, plays table tennis with former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, right, at the Diaoyutal State Guesthouse in Beijing on Sunday, March 18, 2001, to mark the 30th anniversary of the historic "ping-pong diplomacy" in China-U.S. relations.

# Track II

## *Can "Unofficial" Talks*



PHOTO BY AP PHOTO/YAO DAWEI, XINHUA

## Defining TRACK II: Meet Joseph Montville

Gauging success is an elusive task.

Everyone knows it when they see it—but coming up with iron-clad methods to evaluate it, establishing metrics and measures, can be daunting.

Evaluating success in combat? Easy: the loser surrenders, withdraws or gives up something of value. Evaluating success at peacemaking? A far more complex equation. Creating a durable peace can only be judged in the context of history.

How about evaluating the success of an individual's life? Among the universally accepted standards are wealth, power and personal happiness. Yet, arguably, one of the most successful figures of the 20th century, Winston Churchill, came up short on all three of these. Churchill spent nearly his entire life in financial debt, the shank of his career as a scorned back-bencher in Parliament and struggled constantly with depression. What defines Churchill's remarkable life as a success are his accomplishments—a statesman of unique vision, an artist, journalist and author—realized only in the context of time.

Thus, accomplishment, as seen in the long view, may define success.

This brings us to consider the work of Joseph Montville, whose singular accomplishment—defining and spreading the gospel of what he dubbed “Track II diplomacy”—seems to gain a greater luster, a sense of success, with the passage of time.

A former State Department official, Montville served as a career Foreign Service officer in North Africa and the Middle East in the 1970s and 1980s before entering the specialized “Intelligence” branch back in Washington, D.C., a move that led him to an interesting observation, a groundbreaking reassessment of diplomatic endeavors based on “depth psychology,” which in part addresses the perceptions adversaries have of each other. This has defined his life's work as a peacemaker.

“My goal is to save lives,” says the 67-year-old Montville, whose idea of Track II is not some theoretical notion, but a very clear means to an end, to which he has assiduously applied his considerable talent and intellect.

Following the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Carter administration began a process of disengagement from Moscow, which only intensified in the years that followed with the Reagan administration's posture of severe confinement and strident diplomacy in dealing with “the evil empire.”

*M.J. Zuckerman is a Washington, DC-based veteran journalist, author, newspaper reporter and editor, who has written extensively about the intersection of technology, security, democracy and justice for more than 20 years.*



PHOTO BY TRACY EASON/SAG

Joseph Montville

# Diplomacy: *Avert Disaster?* by M.J. ZUCKERMAN

“There was a deep sense of frustration because a great many people felt you could not simply cut off communications with an adversary who had so many nuclear weapons and missiles aimed at you,” recalls Montville. “It was a time in which the survival instinct went beyond the normal tracks of state diplomacy to respond to this type of complication.”

Montville was among those looking for untested ways to engage reluctant adversaries—such as the Soviets and Americans or the Israelis and Arabs—in dialogue. His diplomatic background in Middle Eastern affairs naturally brought him to focus his efforts in that region. In 1979, working with the American Psychiatric Association Committee on Psychiatry and Foreign Affairs, Montville was instrumental in convening a series of “workshops” in the United States, Switzerland, Austria and Egypt, for which he recruited an international array of academics, retired military and intelligence officers and former cabinet members “who,” he says, “could command respect, primarily on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”

“The impact of these workshops was to establish some real theories,” Montville explains. “We worked with three concepts of depth psychology: The psychology of victimhood; the phenomenon of dehumanization—meaning, how one side degrades the humanity of the other side; and the inter-generational transmission of grievances, where having suffered great losses in the past to your tribe or nation becomes part of your identity. The central issue is having suffered traumatic loss,” Montville continues. “The sense of justice is deeply harmed and so the [group] psychology comes to be defined by a loss of faith, that the perpetrators are not being called to account, that the outside world doesn’t care.”

On the basis of these sessions, Montville was invited to an informal “brainstorming” session—the first of sev-

eral that were held at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California in 1980—to discuss continued engagement with the Soviet Union. Attendees included people from government, the business sector and even the arts. The first session started with everyone introducing themselves which, in Montville’s case, was still as a U.S. diplomat serving in the Foreign Service.

As Montville recalls, “I started by saying, ‘I suppose what I do could be called Track I diplomacy and what you’re doing here could be called Track II diplomacy, a concept to characterize unofficial initiatives aimed at fixing a conflict situation.’” He went on to describe “what I had learned about the limitations of formal diplomacy, government and politics, about being creative in problem solving ... the need for unofficial, informal, non-committal initiatives designed to establish dialogue and communication and to mobilize adversaries on both sides on how to solve a problem ... Formal diplomacy, Track I diplomacy, simply doesn’t have those toolkits.”

What Montville calls “unofficial, people-to-people diplomacy” some others refer to as “citizen diplomacy.” *The New York Times* typically refers to these efforts as “private foreign policy conferences.” The State Department uses “conference” or “seminar” but is careful to describe such interactions as “not negotiation.” One long-time Track II practitioner simply describes what he does as “practicing foreign policy without a license.”

The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, co-chaired by former Carnegie Corporation of New York president David Hamburg, completed a four-year study in December 1997, stating, among its key findings, that, “Track II diplomacy...is increasingly the strategy of choice for dealing with problems beyond the reach of official efforts. Indeed, some governments have found [non-governmental organizations] very useful in brokering

political agreements and supplementing government roles.”

Initially, however, “It was a controversial idea, that non-official people could get called into delicate, diplomatic work,” says Montville. Indeed, the idea was sufficiently controversial that, after the 1980 Esalen gathering, it took two more years before Montville’s ideas appeared as an article he co-authored for *Foreign Policy* magazine, in which he argued for recognition of and the need for Track II diplomacy.

The article explained that Track I efforts, which include “traditional ... policy statements by the President and Secretary of State or official visits and meetings” are frequently hamstrung, limited by formalities and complex posturing. For example, a Track I diplomat, wrote Montville, “cannot risk the chance that adversaries will misperceive reasonableness as a sign of weakness.” But, as he went on to say, “a second diplomatic track can therefore make its contribution as a supplement to the understandable shortcomings of official relations, especially in times of tension.”

As an example of Track II diplomacy taken in its broadest terms, Montville cited President Richard Nixon’s “ping-pong gambit,”\* as a way to warm the atmosphere for the formal “Track I diplomacy to pursue the dramatic opening to China.” However, more formally, he refined his definition of Track II as “An unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aims to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict. It must be understood that Track II diplomacy is in no way a substitute for official, formal Track I, government-to-government or leader-to-leader relationships. Rather, Track II activity is designed to assist official leaders by compensating for the constraints imposed in official Track I negotiations. Track II

\*In the spring of 1971, a time when relations between the U.S. and China were almost nonexistent, the American ping-pong team competing in the World Table Tennis Championship, which was being held in Japan, received an unexpected invitation from their Chinese colleagues to visit China and play a series of exhibition games there. This signaled a warming trend between the U.S. and China. President Nixon visited that nation in 1972, an event often heralded as one of the most important in the U.S.’s post-World-War II history.



PHOTO BY JERRY COOKE/CORBIS

**President Dwight D. Eisenhower (right) and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev (left) found unofficial ways to communicate during Cold War crises.**

diplomacy is a process that aims to help resolve or manage conflicts by exploring possible solutions out of the public view and without the requirements of formal negotiation or bargaining for advantage.”

Simply, Montville says: “The goal is to take the edge off resentments,” creating opportunities for Track I.

Typically, Track II diplomacy involves “workshops” sponsored by non-governmental organizations, attended by invited, interested individuals with influence in the adversarial governments. Attendees may include former top officials acting in an unofficial capacity, such as former President Jimmy Carter or former Secretary of Defense William Perry (currently a senior fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution), who have participated in talks with counterparts from North Korea. They may also include current officials acting in “an unofficial” capacity. Perry offers a simple, broad definition: “The dialogue between non-officials of nations designed to make

up the perceived shortcomings in the official dialogue.”

“It’s not about negotiations,” says Ronald Fisher, author of several books on Track II and Professor of International Peace and Conflict Resolution in the School of International Service at American University. “It’s about analysis, it’s about creating some options for the official folks going into Track I negotiations to work with.”

Fisher, like Montville, views Track II as a function of social psychology—that is, in peacemaking, recognizing the need to heal wounds as well as negotiate a formal treaty—while many of today’s leading Track II practitioners eschew the “touchy-feely” in favor of a “nuts-and-bolts” oriented goal.

In Fisher’s view, “We have to look at the human relationships of the parties in the conflict. We must open up communications, look at issues like mistrust, hostility and the effects of trauma if you want to actually resolve the conflict as opposed to just getting a peace agreement. Not that they’re not important: things like territory, control, these are central issues. But often, it’s the subjective factors that render the conflict more difficult to resolve.”

“I would call it social process sensitivity,” says Fisher. “It’s the principle of standing back and looking at your social interactions to try and figure out what the hell is going on.” But increasingly, the more dominant forms of Track II are those that deal more in policy issues and matters of political confrontation.

“The touchy-feely aspect doesn’t get me very far,” says Michael Krepon, Founding President of the Henry L. Stimson Center, a leading Track II practitioner in South Asia, working at tamping down nuclear-threat issues between Pakistan and India. “I want concrete ideas discussed. I want

seeds planted,” he explains, referring to his efforts to have South Asia’s nuclear powers work together to establish security, including securing their nuclear arsenals, a subject neither side willingly concedes is an issue. For example, he says, at Track II sessions in 2003-2004 with Pakistani and Indian representatives, “We entered into this discussion in a respectful way, through the use of a common enemy.”

Krepon’s imagined “common enemy” was “a nuclear terrorist that nobody could control. It could have been a Hindu rogue, or a Muslim rogue...so it’s a common threat, to all. Now what are the best practices, best ideas and best mechanisms that are out there to deal with this problem?”

Several authorities hasten to point out that Track II is a Western cultural phenomenon, “an egalitarian, democratic, process-oriented way of dealing with problems,” says Fisher, and may not function as well dealing with an authoritarian dictatorship, such as North Korea, where the slightest drift from the party line may be regarded as treason.

Indeed, while Chinese and North Korean representatives at Track II sessions are members of what are euphemistically called GO NGOs (government-operated non-governmental organizations), their American counterparts report a growing willingness by those Asian delegations to adapt to the candid nature of Track II workshops.

Track II talks frequently include current government officials from either or both sides to a conflict, who represent that they are acting in their capacity as private citizens, not as officials, permitting unusual freedom to float trial balloons or hear informal proposals. In these instances, the exercise is characterized as “Track 1½” although it is still understood to come under an expanded notion of Track II.

In many Track II or Track 1½ exercises there is the essential understanding that the attendees will return home to brief authorities, providing an informal, back-channel method for communications, while providing everyone involved

with an elegant protective layer of “plausible deniability.”

Hoping to jumpstart stalled nuclear non-proliferation talks with North Korea, the National Committee on American Foreign Policy (NCAFP), operating with a Carnegie Corporation of New York grant, convened two days of Track II talks in New York City in the summer of 2005, which included officials of the United States and North Korean representatives, all serving in “non-official roles.” (See sidebar.) These discussions mirrored the stalled multilateral talks with the six nations involved in the negotiations—the United States, China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea and Russia—each sending top officials.

Instrumental to this Track II effort were several important former officials, among them Henry Kissinger; former Under Secretary of State Arnold Kanter; former U.S. Ambassador to China J. Stapleton Roy; and Robert Scalapino, widely regarded as a premier Korea scholar. “These people all have gravitas and since they are not working for the government, they can stand back and give more candid assessments of what was going on,” says Stephen Del Rosso, Chair of the Corporation’s International Peace and Security Program, who attended the sessions. “Several of the policymakers, including those from Asian countries, noted how useful it was to have these experts there to set the framework for discussions and allow issues to be probed and questions to be raised that policymakers could run with or respond to.”

### **Evaluating Track II Success**

Donald Zagoria, Professor of Government at Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center and an NCAFP trustee, advances the idea that “Track II efforts can be particularly useful in what I would call the hard cases such as North Korea or Iran today...to facilitate U.S. communications with countries with which the U.S. [has] difficulty talking or understanding because of the lack of regular channels of communication.

And ... can help those countries [that] lack official dialogue with each other, as in the case of China and Taiwan, to better understand U.S. policies and perspectives as well as the policies of the other side.”

That is not to say that Track II is only efficacious when the going is tough. The process can also be useful when channels of communication are open. But in any case, says Zagoria, it must be “well timed, well organized and balanced in terms of participants who have access to key people in government.”

For that reason, Zagoria is a major proponent of Track 1½ because, he points out, it enables government officials, acting in “an unofficial capacity,” to present “personal views that are not necessarily authorized by government ... this allows for some degree of candor. It is crucial to have government officials in the room, so that during coffee breaks and other breaks they can talk to each other.”

While no one expects that a government official, even one acting “on a non-official” basis would stray too far from the official position, Zagoria notes that this role playing enables countries like North Korea “to dangle stuff,” to float trial balloons, “and we want to feed their dangling back to the U.S. government and to talk about it ourselves, and to prod them in certain directions.”

An important measure for evaluating Track II, then, is the level of achievement any session has in developing new ideas that are successfully transferred or transmitted back to policymakers for consideration at future Track I sessions.

“How do we measure success? How do we say that a Track II exercise is useful?” asks Terry Lautz, a Vice President at the Henry Luce Foundation, which is active in funding Track II exercises. “People in the private sector, people involved in Track II, have the luxury of taking the longer view. That’s enormously important in terms of creating a climate in which government then can consider other options, can think conceptually about other possibilities—might be will-

ing to take or consider risks that might not be possible in the day-to-day fray of the give-and-take of bureaucracy.”

Susan Shirk, Director of the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation at the University of California, San Diego, is conducting a formal evaluation of Track II programs. “We are viewing Track II multilateral dialogues and diplomacy in the Asia Pacific since 1990 as an experiment,” says Shirk. “And so the idea is to try to evaluate the results of that experiment. One goal is to have this be more than a religion: you know, ‘It feels good so it must be good.’ We need to be a little bit more rigorous about saying what [Track II] has accomplished and what it hasn’t.”

Shirk is uniquely qualified for this task having served as a Deputy Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific in the Clinton Administration and as the founder of North East Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD), a Track II program operating since 1993 and consisting of the same six nations engaged in the multilateral nuclear talks with North Korea.

Initially, at least, she says her analysis will focus on four areas:

- **Socialization:** The impact of Track II on the perceptions and attitudes of foreign policymakers, encouragement of more moderate views and dispelling of distrust.
- **Communication:** Building informal back channels that can be used in crises.
- **Policy Innovation:** Ideas arising in Track II being adopted in Track I.
- **Institution Building:** Track II dialogues influencing the creation of permanent institutions.

“Many of us who’ve spent time with the North Koreans who come to these dialogues are impressed with how smart they’re getting about these thing and how quickly,” says Shirk. “But what we don’t know is the communications link between them and the authoritative decision makers in Pyongyang.”

Indeed, governments are frequently openly hostile to Track II efforts. “You can never expect a government to welcome Track II,” says Ashton Carter,

Ford Foundation Professor of Science and International Affairs at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, who is also Perry's partner in Preventive Defense, a Stanford-Harvard coalition. "In certain circumstances the more enlightened among them may see that in the long run this is probably a good thing even though it's a nuisance in the short run. But it's just not in the nature of the things for the welcome mat to go out in these kinds of activities. And you have to be ready for a little bit of pushback from the government."

There are many reasons for this, ranging from petty resistance to sharing credit to justifiable fears that Track II could impede Track I efforts. For example, "You might legitimately argue that Track II efforts could literally dissuade North Korea from recognizing reality," says L. Gordon Flake, Executive Director of the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation, which is concerned with U.S.-Asia relations. "This applies across the board, but particularly in the case of North Korea," he says, "where you have a country and government that is genuinely [incapable of] discerning what is real communication."

Carter agrees that, "It takes real discipline to make sure you're not confusing people or undercutting government." Further, notes Michael Krepon of the Stimson Center, "Track II can't succeed when governments don't want it to succeed," but he argues that even in closed, totalitarian governments there are divisions among officials regarding the wisdom and utility of Track II exercises. Says Krepon, "It seems to me that Track II programs have real opportunities to make a positive difference when governments are divided. They help in the internal battles that governments invariably have in moving the ball in a positive direction."

For example, he notes, early in the 1980s when Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev proposed a ban on nuclear testing, the Reagan administration rejected the idea arguing, in part, that it was unenforceable, based on Pentagon opposition

to the idea. However, a number of NGOs approached the State Department, which favored the test ban, and obtained State Department licensing to install monitoring equipment at Soviet test sights, enabling them to demonstrate that a test ban could be verified. "That had a significant prodding effect, and an embarrassing effect," says Krepon. "Joint monitoring talks for test ban limitations began and the Congressional support for an end to nuclear testing grew."

Krepon offers a set of six "standards and conditions for success" in Track II, which he notes can be most effective when dealing with "divided governments":

■ First, the target country must be open to course correction or, at least, having doubts about its current course; countries that appear monolithic from the outside can still have internal debates.

■ Second, Track II initiatives can make a difference by "opening lines of communication when channels are closed or very constricted." This proved true in Cold War discussions on the missile-based Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) as well as in Middle East diplomacy.

■ Third, "Seeding specific ideas ... offering new inputs, impressions, ideas for consideration" to governments facing internal disagreements and other instabilities before they are ready to adopt them frequently germinates successfully.

■ Fourth, "by proposing and implementing symbolic gestures to help break impasses or soften official resistance within divided governments."

■ Fifth, "by gaining initial access to facilities that are closed to foreign governments."

■ Sixth, "when topics are too sensitive for official government interaction," NGOs frequently can open dialogue.

### **Success Stories**

"The father of Track II diplomacy," according to Joseph Montville, was President Dwight Eisenhower, who initiated a defining exercise in Track II diplomacy. Amid one of the most frigid episodes

of the Cold War, the 1960 Soviet downing of an American U-2 spy plane, as relations between the super powers steadily eroded, Eisenhower is reported to have remarked to Norman Cousins, the veteran editor of the *Saturday Review*, "I can't talk to the Soviets, but somebody better."

At Eisenhower's urging, Cousins, operating with a Ford Foundation grant, was able to convene leading U.S. and Soviet citizens, opening a nongovernmental channel with the Soviet Union in 1960, which led to a series of meetings known as the Dartmouth Conference, at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. Only after the collapse of the Soviet Union was it revealed that then-Premier Nikita Khrushchev approved his delegation's role in the talks.

The Dartmouth Conference Regional Conflicts Task Force continued to meet under the direction of Harold H. Saunders (see sidebar), a former top National Security Council official for Asian affairs and Gennady Chufirin of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The task force, created in 1981 by Saunders and co-directed until 1988 by Yevgeny Primakov, who became the Russian Prime Minister in 1991, chose as its primary post-Soviet goal to focus on newly independent Tajikistan, where a civil war threatened to disrupt stability throughout the region.

In what became known as the Inter-Tajik Dialogue, the Task Force succeeded in engaging representatives loyal to the Tajik government as well as opposition forces and maintain a peaceful co-existence through Track II discussions, a process that is widely credited with bringing a UN-mediated peace settlement, and continuing dialogue.

In another part of the world, Track II activities are credited with assisting in carrying reinforcing messages to PLO leaders during the Israeli-Palestinian Oslo Peace Accords process in 1993 and, at least in one set of talks (convened by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences), provided a back channel for discussions of the so-called "Gaza first" and "Gaza plus"

talks that identified the process of Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian territory, which has now begun.

There is less emphasis being placed on Israeli-Palestinian Track II efforts because, since Oslo, “The parameters of an agreement are there; now it’s up to the political powers that be and the Israeli and Palestinian communities to overcome the objections of their extremist minorities and put a deal in place,” says Jeffrey Boutwell, who was instrumental in those Track II sessions.

Today, Boutwell is the Executive Director of the Pugwash Conferences, which has been making important Track II strides toward resolving the Indian-Pakistani impasse over Kashmir. In 2004 and 2005, Pugwash convened Track II conferences involving Pakistani, Indian

and Kashmiri participants, which by itself represents an important development in the quest for continuing dialogue. The first step was a series of discussions, in which Pugwash Secretary General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino obtained approval from Pakistan and India to let Kashmiris from both sides of the line of control, together with senior Indian and Pakistani officials, engage in purely non-governmental Track II discussions aimed at finding ways to reduce violence in Kashmir.

“This is a process that will be hard to reverse now that it is underway,” says Boutwell. “Having given their approval for Kashmiris to meet for the first time in decades, the Indians or the Pakistanis would be sending a strong signal if they prevent such meetings in the future, because what they will be saying is, ‘We’re

no longer interested in improving the situation in Kashmir or of advancing Indian-Pakistani relations.’”

Unlike post-Cold War Western relations, which are framed by an elaborate architecture of institutions evolved from more than half a century of nuclear tensions and negotiations, Asia doesn’t have much experience in the power politics of mutually assured destruction. Increasingly, however, Shirk and others report that China’s interest in Track II exercises, for example, is bearing fruit. “When we first set up the NEACD, in 1993,” recalls Shirk, “I had more enthusiasm from the North Koreans than from the Chinese, who worried that any kind of multilateral process in Asia would end up pointing the finger at them because they were the big guys on the block and that every-

## *A Conversation with* HAROLD SAUNDERS

**H**arold “Hal” Saunders is a veteran high-ranking U.S. diplomat who participated in the 1978 Camp David Peace Accords involving U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and later co-chaired the Dartmouth Conference Regional Conflicts Task Force. Presently, he is president of the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue, which conducts dialogues designed to make constructive social change possible in international and domestic conflicts, ranging from the “Inter-Tajik Dialogue” addressing the Tajikistan civil war to racial conflicts on U.S. college campuses. “Sustained Dialogue” differs from Track II in a variety of ways, but their likenesses are greater than the differences; both are based on building peace through the use of non-official dialogue in workshops reliant on private donors. Following is a conversation with Saunders on the difficulty of demonstrating the value of his work to private foundations.

### *How do you demonstrate success to sources of funding?*

Any one of us who engages in this work lies awake at night saying, “Well, so what? What does this add up to?” Over the last 15 years ... a number of people in foundations wanted a numerical, objective, hard-results statement, a bottom-line kind of answer, and I have to say at the outset that I don’t know of a single social change process that lends itself to that kind of evaluation.

### *Aren’t there successful outcomes you can point to?*

Let me tell you what my first proposal was to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation in 1993 for the Tajik Dialogue. Other organizations may have said, “We are going to pull together people from the different factions in the Tajik Civil War and mediate a

peace agreement among them.” We didn’t say that. We didn’t figure we were smart enough to do that. The proposition to the Hewlett Foundation was: we want to see whether a group can form in the middle of a civil war to achieve the capacity to design a peace process for their own country. Now, by that measure, there was success at a number of different levels, because this group did that, they did it in the dialogue group, they did it in the peace negotiations, they did it later in the National Reconciliation Commission, they did it over a seven-year period. And they formed their own NGO in 2000 to promote democratic processes in Tajikistan. So they are still attempting to develop the capacity to design a peace process for their own country and they were participants in a number of successful achievements along that track, in what is now a twelve-year period.

### *So, can’t you take credit for those outcomes?*

This brings us to the second level of evaluation: how much credit can we really accept? In the first year of the dialogue, which met six times over twelve months, people from the government and a fragmented opposition met. These people played a role in formation of a united Tajik opposition which then made it possible for them to accept a UN invitation to UN-mediated peace talks and I can honestly say that that dialogue played a role in precipitating those negotiations; they came together at a time when others were not ready for the formal processes of media-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HETTERING FOUNDATION

body would gang up on them.” Instead, over the past decade, while engaging with NEACD and other Track II programs, younger foreign ministry officials realized that they could use these opportunities to signal their non-hostile intentions and make multilateral institutions serve their interests.

“As a result, they have developed a new security doctrine, which is promoting this kind of multilateral cooperation,” says Shirk, including creating a network of largely independent think tanks to support multilateral regional diplomacy. She adds, “Over the past decade, this has got to be the biggest success story in Track II.”

Ambassador Charles Kartman, a Special U.S. Envoy to the Korean Peace Talks, agrees with Shirk’s assessment: “Now that we’re at the evaluation stage

I’m asking myself, well, okay, what did that all add up to? And it’s a plus...multilateral institution building is one of the clear pluses. I don’t think that can be argued with.”

### **Gauging the Cost of Success**

“Our founder, Andrew Carnegie, was a Track II man himself,” says Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Indeed, Carnegie financed a 1910 European peace junket in which one of his heroes, recently retired President Theodore Roosevelt, would meet with his other hero, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, for a conference advancing Carnegie’s concept for a “League of Nations.” Carnegie’s biographer, Joseph Frazier Wall, writes: “This visit of Roosevelt to

the Kaiser could bring about the triumphant resolution of all he had worked for, written about, and dreamt for the past five years: Carnegie’s two heroes, at last meeting face to face, reaching agreement, and by that forcing Britain into line. ‘If any man can get the Emperor in accord for peace, you are that man,’ [Carnegie] wrote to Roosevelt. ‘He will go far to act in unison with you, of this I am sure. You are sympathetic souls.’”

Unfortunately, on May 6, 1910, just as the series of meetings was scheduled to get under way, news came from London of the death of King Edward VII. Protocol demanded a suspension of plans which had taken more than 18 months to formulate. Undaunted, little more than six months later, on his 75th birthday, Carnegie launched the Carnegie

tion and negotiation. They played a role in paving the way for that process. So, I can state that as a narrative fact. Can I claim responsibility for the Dialogue Group in precipitating the negotiations? No, I can’t do that because in any complicated political situation there are countless inputs. I was at Camp David with Jimmy Carter, Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat in 1978 and I don’t know that any one of us there could give you a definitive statement as to who deserves the credit for X, Y and Z in that.

### *But surely, that is a certified success?*

The point is that one has to remain focused on the large picture of what one is trying to accomplish...My experience in the Arab-Israeli peace process in the 1970s was that we created an open-ended political process. It was open-ended because we knew what we wanted to do in the next six-to-eight months, but we didn’t know what doors that would open. So if we had said in 1974, in a period of a five-year grant we will have an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, people would have laughed us out of town; they would have thought we were crazy, and yet that is what happened. Creating the process was the achievement; the outcome was not predictable. Yet “creating a process” would be seen as too vague an objective.

### *So, you are saying you can aim for a goal but don’t promise success?*

One needs to allow time and space for an open-ended process that produce results that go beyond anything you can imagine when you start the process. You can tell from the way I’m talking that I think evaluation has to be geared to fairly broad, substantive questions: what are we trying to do here; and after

a year we can ask, how are we doing? What has happened that is totally unexpected? What did not happen that was expected? Did we tackle the problem in an intelligent way? Was the process right? All kinds of questions are valid to examine and to examine every time we turn around. But we can’t always produce measurable results.

### *So what does all that add up to?*

I can say, we’re creating spaces where people can try to relate to each other differently and you’ll say “Hogwash, that’s a bunch of pap!” and funders would say it’s a bunch of pap. On the other hand, how do you change relationships between societies, between civilizations? Anybody got a pill people can swallow? No. Will people be able to negotiate away their fears? No. So we’re engaged in a process of change the likes of which are not too familiar to people who use conventional social science paradigms for understanding and judging things.

### *Do you consider your work more political art than political science?*

Oh, sure. There’s no science to this. I have conceptualized Sustained Dialogue as a five-stage process [establishing the] progression of experiences you have to go through to transform relationships. But you will never find one dialogue that is the same as another; you will never do any one of them in the exact same, slavish implementation of the five stages. So it certainly is not political science. I have a difficult time with the word “science” as in social science; it just isn’t. If you are going to deal with human beings, sure you can deal scientifically with certain parts of it but other parts, no; it just isn’t limited to science.

Endowment for International Peace with a \$10 million gift, charging the organization's trustees to "hasten the abolition of international war, the foulest blot upon our civilization."

Though today the Carnegie Endowment is one of the world's most important organizations "dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations" (as its mission states, in part), that may not have been the way it was viewed in

government," argues Leon Sigal, Director of the Northeast Asia Cooperative Security Project at the Social Science Research Council. "We have to think about the impact on other governments; we have to think of the impact on informed publics, on the press and on legislature." Sigal notes that foundations and funding agencies are, understandably, focused on results, on being able to find clear, quantifiable successes. But, he says, as in the case of North Korea "This is not simply about the North Korean nuclear issue. This is about the American relationship with Asia, and particularly, its presence in Northeast Asia and what the future of that relationship is."

The question of greater coordination and of avoiding stepping on toes is also an issue that foundations are concerned about, hoping to avoid duplication of efforts. However, as Krepon points out, it is frequently of value—particularly in tough cases—for the more resistant representatives to a dialogue to hear confirmation of a position from several voices.

In the administration of George H.W. Bush, the United States showed little willingness to engage with Mikhail Gorbachev. However, "The messages we were hearing in Track II from our Soviet counterparts were very different," says Krepon. "They were basically telling us, work with us, help us beat the old system." He adds, "We rarely know when the timing is right, except after the fact, so we need to be ready, we need to be positioned when the time is right. We are part of a process of reinforcement and repetition of messages that can lead to success. But governments work slowly and government workers tend to be risk averse; on the other hand, NGOs are impatient and they have little to lose by pushing the envelope."

For foundations and other funders of Track II activities, "It's a high-risk capital

investment" says Sigal—certainly not a sure thing, perhaps not even a very likely thing, but a very necessary move for those looking towards long-term investments that go beyond immediate results.

Track II fills important gaps in social psychology, it promotes and provokes ideas and widens the scope of discussion for current and potential future leaders in ways that simply are not possible in formal settings, such as bilateral negotiations.

It produces results in good times and hard times, most especially when there is a very rare type of person at the table, those who Krepon characterizes as "tight-rope walkers" —people like Gorbachev and Anwar Sadat who recognize the need to invest their political capital in high-risk ventures.

And sometimes the return-on-investment won't be realized for a generation—or more. But as a senior Congressional staffer noted, "In every Track II dialogue there is the possibility that one participant might be a Gorbachev-in-the-making."

In that connection, several Track II practitioners have noted that many of those engaged in hammering out the Oslo Peace Accords enjoyed a familiarity with those on the other side of the table from years of working together in Track II sessions. "Down the road you have to believe that we can change both sides," says Sigal. "The United States and [North Korea], for example, can change their relationship with one another. If they do, victory will have a thousand fathers."

Resolving relationships, identifying success and defining terms in Track II diplomacy is a long-standing source of frustration for Joseph Montville. "Track II involves so many disciplines" that putting labels on it or evaluating it "drives social scientists nuts," says Montville, who when he is asked to identify his field, says, "I call myself a political psychologist."

That important social psychology factor was clearly on display at the Corporation-sponsored Track II meetings with North Korea, according to several of those in attendance, who noted how infor-



PHOTO BY BETTMANN/CORBIS

**Andrew Carnegie tried to encourage Kaiser Wilhelm (left) and Theodore Roosevelt (right) to meet for talks aimed at preventing World War I.**

the early years of the 20th century. Says William Perry, "If you look at the [original] goal of Andrew Carnegie's endowment it's certainly possible to conclude that it was a failure because four or five years later, World War I started. Hardly a successful conclusion to [Carnegie's] effort."

Clearly, gauging success in this arena is really difficult, especially for funders like foundations, which continue to try to find indicators of success. Says Ronald Fisher, "Funders look for short-term results and that's just not realistic. Most of the successful interventions in this field involve a continuing series of interactions or workshops over time—sometimes ten years or more."

"We can't simply measure success by the direct impact on the United States

# The U.S. and North Korea: A Track II Meeting Brings Results

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, INC.



**Participants in the Carnegie Corporation-supported Track II meetings, June 30–July 1st, 2005.**

A great deal of credit for the resumption of official talks with North Korea this past summer goes to a “Track 1½” diplomatic session conducted in Manhattan on June 30 and July 1 and orchestrated by Donald Zagoria of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy (NCAFP). The two-day meeting received what in diplomatic circles can only be called rave reviews:

■ U.S. Special Envoy Joseph DeTrani wrote: “You truly played a decisive role in getting this process back in motion. Our sincere thanks.”

■ North Korea’s U.N. Ambassador Han Song-ryul wrote offering thanks for: “...setting up the DPRK [Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea]-U.S. confidential meetings, which provided [the] decisive breakthrough for the resumption of the nuclear six-party talks ... [and] for your project on Track 1½ diplomacy with which we could make big steps for the resolution of nuclear issues and better bilateral relations.”

But it was not a single session that yielded success. NCAFP, a Carnegie Corporation grantee, conducted similar sessions, in 2003 and 2004, that organizers now say provided important “confidence building.”

Nor was it a single organization that worked towards a renewal of talks. Several organizations, again, many of them Carnegie Corporation grantees, have maintained a steady flow of meetings, encouraging all parties to the talks to come together in the more informal settings of Track 1½ where both sides could let down their guard just enough to have what might be called “quality time,” during which they can glean some better understanding of the other’s needs and the perspectives that shape their positions.

An important aspect of the New York City session was to address the “social psychology” issues at stake, what some in this field refer to as the “psychology of victimhood” which can increase the level of “mistrust and hostility.”

In the case of North Korea, there were repeated references to “disturbing words” used by United States officials, especially Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice’s description of North Korea as “an outpost of tyranny,” which needed to be resolved.

“The North Koreans came to these talks seeking a retraction to Condi Rice’s ‘outpost

of tyranny’ statement or, more importantly, some assurances that the United States’ policy was not to try to topple the DPRK regime,” says Zagoria.

The sessions, conducted first at the Asia Society and the next day at Carnegie Corporation’s offices, drew an impressive list of unofficial American powerbrokers, representatives of South Korea, Japan, China and Russia, as well as top officials from the White House, National Security Council, State Department and Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The North Koreans sent representatives thought to be of equal stature.

The Americans and North Koreans were provided private quarters, where they met for less than two hours to discuss resumption of the six-party talks.

The State Department daily briefing of July 1 noted that “U.S. Special Envoy for Six-Party Talks Joseph DeTrani and our Korean Affairs Director Jim Foster are attending the conference in New York ... Yesterday in the context of the seminar, there was a contact between Mr. DeTrani and [North Korean foreign policy official] Mr. Li Gun—this was not a negotiation.”

Rather than “negotiation,” official Washington preferred to call the interaction “an overture,” which it would later characterize by saying “the atmosphere was constructive.”

During those private sessions, Zagoria says, “the North Koreans interpreted the statements by U.S. officials as reassurance that U.S. policy was to recognize the DPRK as a sovereign state. And the U.S. heard enough to be confident that the North Koreans were going to set a date for the resumption of the talks. And it was on this basis that U.S. and North Korean officials agreed to meet formally in Beijing to formally set the resumption of the talks.”

Or, in the words of a statement issued by the North Korean foreign ministry: “A special mention should be made of the fact that delegates of the DPRK Foreign Ministry and the U.S. Department of State met in New York from June 30 to July 1 and exhaustively negotiated the issue of providing the DPRK with a justification for returning to the six-party talks and reached a consensus of views on the matter in the main.” ■

mal interaction permitted each side to find a comfort level to address real or imagined slights, resolving what Montville calls “the psychology of victimhood.”

While that may sound like some kind of pop psychology, the value of Track II skill sets are the subject of a \$500 million, five-year U.S. Agency for International Development grant program being launched this year. According to an administration official, the grants would be “a worldwide mechanism for any of our USAID offices and bureaus, as well as the State Department and the U.S. Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization...providing a range of services, focusing on the themes of conflict, instability, fragility and extremism in regional crises.” Grants and contracts would go to NGOs as well as to for-profit groups “able to combine Track II skill sets with thematic expertise in other areas, such as land management, governance practices, etc.”

Montville hopes to take part in some of those projects. Meanwhile, he’s writing a history of Moslem Spain, exploring the commonality of the Sephardic Jewish community and Islamic community in an effort to find closure between the two. Similarly, he’s pursuing a program intended to resolve lingering hostilities from the U.S. Civil War, “transforming the polity of this country” through Track II workshops and dialogues to resolve generations of North-South resentments.

Whether you’re talking about individuals, married couples, sects or nations, he says, “The same rules of human psychology apply everywhere.” ■

# THE S



PHOTOS BY ROD TAYLOR

**Students lining up to enter the National Library of South Africa, Pretoria Campus.**

# NATIONAL LIBRARY

# of outh Africa

by  
KENNETH  
WALKER

*In South Africa, the National Library is emblematic of the extraordinary changes taking place in the nation.*

Many of the library professionals who are involved with the National Library of South Africa belie the stereotype of librarians as bland and unexcitable. Most exhibit an enthusiasm and passion that is rarely associated with those who are often considered to be staid and steady bookworms.

Take Melanie Geustyn, for example, who was recently appointed head of Special Collections at the National Library. "I'm very lucky to work here," she says. "I'm always surprised to discover the things I didn't know we had." Then there's 62-year-old Hafez Haffajee, the librarian at the University of Natal who was also involved in the commissions that established the new National Library. "If I had to live my life over again," he says, "I'd still be a librarian. It's been fun. I come to work every day with no idea what to expect. I might

have plans and meetings and then the phone will ring, and it's someone who needs something, so off I go. Being able to make that kind of contribution has meant a really fulfill-

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*Kenneth Walker, who currently runs Lion House Production, a South African strategic communications firm, has had a distinguished career as a journalist. In the U.S., he worked for ABC News, covering the White House as well as the U.S. Justice Department and also served as a foreign correspondent. Before that, for 13 years he reported for The Washington Star newspaper, which assigned him to South Africa in 1981 where his work earned several of the most prestigious awards in print journalism. In 1985 he won an Emmy for a series of reports he did on South Africa for the ABC news program Nightline.*

ing and good life. And now, with the National Library, we are at the beginning of something truly wonderful that includes rediscovering a large part of our history.”

The development of a unified National Library of South Africa is representative of one of those transformative beginnings that so many point to as indicative of the changes taking place in South Africa since the advent of democracy in 1994 after 50 years of legally entrenched segregation under the apartheid system, which was itself preceded by 400 years of colonialism. Carnegie Corporation of New York has been involved in supporting the National Library because, says Rookaya Bawa, program officer in the Corporation’s International Development Program, “In most countries in Africa, the National Library is the backbone of the public library service. Not only does it hold the cultural heritage of a nation but it also provides a gateway for that nation to intersect with the rest of the world. And in the best of all possible worlds, it is a gate that swings both ways—providing outward-bound global access to those who live in a particular country while inviting the rest of the world in, as well.”

### **The National Library of South Africa: Two Become One**

Until just before the end of the 20th century there were, in effect, two national libraries in South Africa. One, the South African Library, founded in Cape Town in 1818, is among the oldest libraries on the continent. The other was the State Library, founded in 1887 in Pretoria, South Africa’s capital.

The two institutions were amalgamated in November 1999 when they ceased to exist as separate entities and became, instead, the Cape Town and Pretoria campuses of the National Library of South Africa. The Pretoria

campus is undergoing a transformation of its own in the form of a new building that will soon be erected, providing much new and badly needed space in the form of thousands of square feet for books, reading rooms and other facilities, along with approximately 1,800 seats for library users, a great improvement over the library’s current capacity of 130. It’s so small, and demand for its resources is so great, that people often line up in the street outside, waiting to get in.

With its expansion plans in place, the National Library is also determined to collect and rediscover aspects of African literature as well as artifacts and other materials that were often marginalized under the colonial and apartheid governments, including works in indigenous languages. In cooperation with other African countries, South African librarians seem determined to assemble, in the words of one official, “an African collection the likes of which the world has never seen.”

South Africans are also working closely with other African governments in attempting to redefine libraries for a continent with rich oral traditions but often lacking the kind of in-depth, detailed and inclusive written histories that are the bedrock of library collections elsewhere. This redefinition would give libraries a central role in meeting the educational, health and developmental needs of African peoples.

One element of this vision involves the implementation of cutting-edge technology that, in addition to facilitating two-way global interactivity, will also help to bring library services to poor and rural areas that have been denied them in the past. This is critical, says Bawa, because “All communities in Africa deserve the best library services we can provide. In that way, we can help to nurture an interest in reading and learning.”

### **The Vision is the Mission**

John Tsebe is the man largely responsible for turning the vision of a new national library, with both national and global outreach, into reality. Tsebe, who has Masters’ degrees in library sci-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SOUTH AFRICA

**John K. Tsebe, National Librarian of South Africa.**

*In **coop**  
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ence from Syracuse University and in public administration from Harvard University, was appointed the first black South African National Librarian in March 2004.

Observed on almost any typical day, Tsebe moves like a man on a mis-

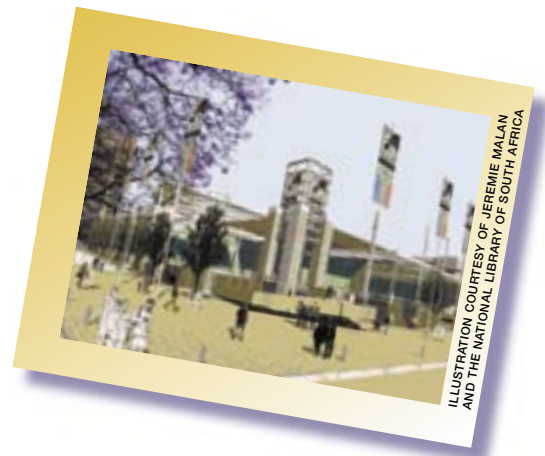
sion. He spends very little time in his office, racing throughout South Africa to boost local librarians and attend professional conferences. In his own country, Tsebe speaks before government committees in support of libraries and library funding but also travels outside of South Africa—including beyond the borders of the African continent—to forge partnerships with other libraries and staff. Some are critical of the travel calendar he keeps, but Tsebe argues that building relationships not only among library professionals but also among and between professional organizations in related fields is integral to the outreach ideals of the National Library. Says Tsebe, “The National Library must lead the way in revitalizing libraries in South Africa because libraries are essential to the nation’s socioeconomic development. Our view is that the more people read, the more they become enlightened, the more employable they are and the more jobs they can create.”

Tsebe acknowledges the difficulty of aiming so high in terms of what libraries can achieve, but he says, “If we suc-

ceed in South Africa, we can pave the way to encourage other African countries to follow the same path. What we want is to move towards being the most advanced library on the continent.”

leadership to a public library system in South Africa that has experienced the tug and pull of a nation that, more than a decade after the transition from apartheid to democracy, is transforming its culture, politics and institutions while at the same time trying to apportion its resources in the context of needs that include improvement and equitable access to vital services such as education, health care, and even water and sewage. Given those priorities, libraries don’t always come out on top. In fact, says National Library board chairperson Professor Rocky Ralebipi-Simela, “Today, only a fraction of the population even has access to libraries,” adding that many of the new black officials in South Africa’s provinces, which are responsible for their local libraries, are skeptical of the need. “When I go to provincial ministers and lobby for libraries,” she says, “they tell me, ‘You are the only person asking for libraries. Everybody else wants more schools or sports facilities.’”

Even so, the Corporation’s Rookaya Bawa, drawing on her previous experi-



**Artist's rendering of the planned new Pretoria campus of the National Library of South Africa.**

Dr. Graham Dominy, the National Archivist of South Africa, agrees, saying that he already detects a shift in attitudes about the need for libraries, primarily because of the demand from students. “Generally speaking,” he says, “any library you go into in South Africa is packed with people. There is a palpable thirst for information, for knowledge.” Bawa cites another reason that libraries and their resources are increasingly in demand. Youngsters flock to them, she says, “because, in many cases, students have nowhere else to study. Libraries have quiet space and lights, things they may not always have at home. Libraries, also, will often be the first place students see television and computers and be able to access the Internet. The library is indispensable to learning and development.”

#### **Positive Signs**

One goal of the National Library of South Africa is—by serving as a model and by creating interest in and excitement about a library’s ability to forge connections between people and nations, as well as to spur learning—to help build a constituency for libraries that, while rooted in popular support, also reaches into the policy realm. But to develop a library system that matches the needs of South Africa,

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ceed in South Africa, we can pave the way to encourage other African countries to follow the same path. What we want is to move towards being the most advanced library on the continent.”

Tsebe has spent much energy in his first year at the helm trying to provide

ence as head of the Provincial Library Service in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal, thinks officials can be persuaded to support libraries. “The more that library facilities are seen as essential to education,” she says, “the easier it is to raise money for them.”

says Graham Dominy, will cost many millions of dollars: expansion, improving technology, increasing access and adding resources are all expensive propositions. The government may not be inclined to contemplate that kind of investment right now but eventually, Dominy believes, the money will have to be found. “Many white South Africans can afford to get reading and entertainment material from private-sector sources,” he says, “but that is not the case in black communities where libraries are necessary to fill the great educational gaps that exist.”

Building a constituency for libraries has taken much of the time and energy of library officials like Tsebe and Ralebipi-Simela, and the task is mostly an uphill climb in a country where, out of a population of more than forty million, twelve million are functionally illiterate adults, half of whom can read or write almost nothing at all. Surveys also show staggering illiteracy among young school-age children. And the only book in most rural households is the occasional bible.

Still, there are hopeful signs of progress. For example, a project is underway that aims to involve each of South Africa’s approximately 1,200 public libraries in the creation of “reading spaces” in places like churches, after-hours classrooms or even private home. The reading spaces would lend books like regular libraries and also offer supervised places for children to study. A local community member would be trained to run each reading space, which would receive books from the main library.

One place where the development of reading spaces has already been embedded into municipal planning is the township of Mdantsane in South Africa’s Eastern Cape province. The second largest black township in the country, Mdantsane is currently served by

only one library, but the construction of a second is expected to begin in 2006, with ten satellite reading spaces to be created as part of the plan. A similar project was undertaken in the Northern Cape province, with Corporation support. Sunitha Vallabh, the provincial

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societies.”*

library director, says that the reading spaces became so popular that there was great demand to turn them into full-fledged, formal libraries.

Making sure that the torch gets passed to the next generation of skilled librarians is another way that Tsebe is attempting to build a culture of excellent libraries and librarianship in South Africa. As head of the National Library,

Tsebe has committed his institution to helping train not only the next cohort of librarians but also conservators and information technology specialists. One strategy for achieving that goal has involved engaging the help of South Africa’s professional library associations such as the Library Information Association of South Africa (LIASA).

Ujala Sathgool is the director of a Corporation-funded professional training project based at LIASA. Sathgool explains that the project will be officially launched in the fall of 2005 at the LIASA annual convention. There, LIASA members will receive training that ranges from improving interpersonal skills to the development of highly advanced communications information technology. In terms of professional training, overall, says Sathgool, “The challenge is to get people to think critically about training needs. In South Africa, that’s particularly difficult because, to a great extent, libraries were conceived as providing a recreational outlet. But the demand from students for our educational services and from schools that lack the resources has grown enormously. So we have to redefine libraries as no longer being primarily recreational facilities.”

On another front, in order to help create a culture of reading, writing and publishing—especially in indigenous languages—the National Library has helped to fund the Centre for the Book in Cape Town, which began operation in 1998. The Centre encourages writing in South Africa’s eleven official languages but has also promoted understanding and appreciation of the nation’s oral legacy through such means as holding conferences on praise singing, among the most important of the traditional African oral arts.

One of the National Library’s more ambitious projects—and one that is drawing increasing attention in

other parts of Africa—involves placing “information kiosks” in libraries that will provide easily accessible information on subjects such as poverty alleviation, the prevention and treatment of diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Other information will assist entrepreneurs in establishing and growing small businesses.

John Mayor, Information Technology Manager for the eThekweni Municipal Library in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, says that the kiosks have been a big hit. “We call these sites Centres of Excellence,” he explains. “They include computers in the library that have been modified to offer resources such as templates for creating resumes, which has proved to be quite popular. We also

started a free e-mail program. Once someone registers for it at one library, they can then sign on and get or send e-mail at all the other libraries in the municipality.”

These projects and services are all elements of the redefinition of libraries that many across Africa have called for. One of those who supports this concept is Professor Kingo Mchumbo, an expert on the role of information in national development and a professor of library science at the University of Namibia. Says Mchumbo, “African libraries were wrongly designed in the first place because they were modeled on the needs and behavior of people in developed Western societies. And, because they were built under colonial rule, their

structure and services presumed a level of literacy and a familiarity with printed material, along with a well-established information industry, that just does not exist across much of the continent.” He continues, “In my view, libraries must focus on the basic aspirations of Africans and help to meet survival needs. They must also provide information that improves agricultural production, helps people build better houses, and make use of government programs. And all that has to be in indigenous languages. Libraries also should look toward the free exchange of information: people to people, lectures, cultural activities, etc. The South Africans,” Mchumbo concludes, “are moving very well in these directions. They are helping to rede-



PHOTO BY AP PHOTO/BEN CURTIS

**Ancient Islamic manuscripts in Timbuktu.**

sign and reinvent the whole concept of libraries in Africa.”

### Timbuktu and Beyond

John Tsebe is quick to point out that while South Africa may be at the forefront of creating libraries meant to serve African needs and both promote and preserve African knowledge, the country hasn't been developing these concepts in isolation. Under the aegis of the National Library, Tsebe has initiated regular meetings among librarians across the continent to brainstorm ways to improve and upgrade their institutions. One such conference, held in May 2005, which the National Library helped to organize, was entitled, “From Papyrus to Print-Out: The Book in Africa,” and focused on an ambitious set of topics that ranged from the preservation of books and oral literature to the impact of information technology on book development and on literature.

But perhaps no undertaking better illustrates the continental vision that underpins the development of the National Library than the story of the Timbuktu manuscripts. These materials, some of which date back to the 13th century, are primarily housed in private collections in the city of Timbuktu, in Mali, and have been estimated to include some 300,000 texts. For hundreds of years, Timbuktu was a traditional center of Islamic learning and scholarship; works on law, theology and science, along with poetry, biographies, dictionaries, Qur'anic studies and other materials have already been catalogued. This treasure house of knowledge highlights the fact that Africa has a vital and deep-rooted written record of its culture and history that can stand beside its many oral traditions.

In 2001, during a state visit to Mali, South African president Thabo Mbeki offered his nation's help in

preserving the Timbuktu manuscripts. An international effort is now underway to build an environmentally stable library to house, preserve and digitize these materials, efforts that also aim at making them accessible to scholars across the globe. As part of this project, the National Library of South Africa has helped to train Malian conservators and worked with South African architects, engineers and builders who are involved in conceiving and constructing the new building.

In launching the project, President Mbeki hailed it as the start of “our challenge to reclaim and embrace the rich African heritage which we were denied for centuries by Eurocentric perspectives, colonial racism and racial domination.”

Reclaiming South Africa's “rich African heritage” is very high on the National Library's agenda in light of the long years of segregation that afflicted the country. Through centuries of colonialism and continuing on through apartheid, officials of South Africa's national library system were not focused on cataloguing and preserving literature, artifacts and other materials relating to the history of the nation's nonwhite population. In that



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*“All **commu**  
the best library services  
help to nurture an*

context, Mandla Hermanus, a program assistant at the National Library's Cape Town campus, explains that the choices made about library collections have far-reaching cultural, historical and social effects. “There is no such thing as neutrality,” Hermanus says. “Every decision made about what to keep and collect, what to display and highlight, or what to discard are all substantive, even political decisions that reflect power realities at any given point in time.” Until very recently, Hermanus says, these power realities included “the story of how one group of people were regarded as deserving of a particular status and the others would

be relegated to the background.”

But things are changing. Hermanus, for example—a young black professional—says he became interested in a career at the National Library when he realized the role it could play in redressing what he calls society’s disrespect of indigenous languages. “This work has helped me in taking my own Xhosa culture and language seriously,” he notes. “If you speak an indigenous language, even in the townships, people think you are either uneducated or not up with the times. You have to mix your Xhosa with a lot of English for people to think you are a learned person. I want to help change that and the National Library is a platform for me to be able to do so. If indigenous languages become respected in the National Library, they will be respected in the townships.”

Hermanus cites one example of the library’s historical marginalization of

Library campus in Cape Town, is also troubled by this question. “I’m surprised at the things I discover we didn’t know we had,” she says. “Manuscripts, diaries, a lot of handwritten letters. We even found some Sumerian cuneiform, which is one of the earliest forms of writing.” Geustyn has also come across other rare finds that are among the Library’s holdings, such as a letter from Moshweshwe (ca. 1787-1868), a South African king, thanking French Emperor Napoleon III for sending guns to fight the British and a voluminous collection of photographs of many of the other South African kings as well as chiefs of the Xhosa tribe who were confined in South Africa’s notorious Robben Island prison during the apartheid years. The library is also home to the first written dictionary of indigenous South African languages.

In addition to identifying and cata-

loguing important materials already in hand, the National Library staff have dedicated themselves to, as Professor Ralebipi-Simela puts it, “going backwards in order to go forwards.” What she means is making the effort to collect books and other materials by black South Africans that were published overseas by those who went into exile during the apartheid years or who simply could not have their work recognized at home.

It is unlikely that the library will miss cataloguing any publications in the future. Every book, magazine and newspaper publisher in South Africa is required by law to deposit copies of their products with the National Library in order to preserve the nation’s culture. Of course, that also means that the library could quickly run out of space—but that’s where technology comes in.

Library officials believe that much of what they hope to achieve depends upon information technology. Dr. Marthie de Kock is the Executive Head of Information Communications Technology for the National Library. She started as a librarian a quarter century ago and can recall the card catalogues that were then used to search for books on shelves. “But now,” she points out, “you can do everything online. You can search the collection not only in your local library but in any library in South Africa. And because of our inter-lending voucher program, you can borrow a book from any library in South Africa.” De Kock also has high hopes for digitization as a way of increasing access to books and knowledge. “Our vision,” she says, “is that one day, a reader will be able to click on a link online and read any book they want.” She says she is also working toward the day when all libraries across Africa will be able to link to each other and serve each other’s users. “The goal,” she explains, “is to make access to all the libraries seamless, no matter where you live on the continent. We want to get to a point where anybody in any village in Africa can log on over the Internet and tap into any kind of information they need.”

That idea may not be as far over the horizon as it would seem. A few years ago, John Perry Barlow, an American writer and thinker on computer connectivity who has often visited Africa noted that almost everywhere he went—though sometimes it took more effort than others—he was able to log onto the Internet. “Even,” he noted with satisfaction, “in Timbuktu.” ■

**nities** *in Africa deserve we can provide. In that way, we can interest in reading and learning.”*

black Africans: a long-forgotten collection of 19th century sketches of the first inhabitants of South Africa, the Khoi San people. “They were just sitting there, in a back room, being stored,” he says. “It was only when they were submitted to UNESCO and declared World Heritage Objects that they began to be properly catalogued and taken care of. What else is in the library that we don’t know about?” Hermanus wonders, pointing to the many uncatalogued holdings in the National Library’s store-rooms. “What other treasures deserve our attention?”

Melanie Geustyn, the Special Collections Librarian at the National

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by  
DANIEL AKST

# Nonprofit Journalism

## REMOVING THE PRESSURE OF THE

*When newsgathering isn't tied into company profits, does journalism—and the public—benefit?*

In the media cacophony that is New York, whoever heard of Gotham Gazette? Apparently lots of people. The web site, devoted to news of the city and its neighborhoods, gets more than 105,000 unique visitors per month. “In May [2005],” says Sara Stuart, Gotham’s director of marketing and communications, “when you Googled ‘New York City politics,’ Gotham Gazette was the first of 26 million results.”

National Public Radio (NPR), by contrast, is a household name. In the early 1980s it had only two million weekly listeners, but since then what was once the province of a band of self-selected cognoscenti has grown into nothing short of a mass phenomenon.

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*Daniel Akst is a writer in New York’s Hudson Valley.*

NPR now reports 26 million weekly listeners—a figure that has doubled in just the past decade. NPR programming reaches listeners on more than 780 independent public radio stations blanketing the country, not to mention on the Internet.

Gotham Gazette and NPR are both fast-growing media organizations, but they have something more interesting in common: they are both private, not-for-profit organizations. In fact, at a time of growing concern over whether quality journalism and high profit margins can continue to coexist in the traditional media, nonprofit journalism is flourishing.

From individual bloggers to influential public affairs magazines, from community newspapers to broadcasting outlets, nonprofit media are mul-

tiplied in number, increasing their audiences and stretching the boundaries of journalism itself. Thanks to the Internet, barriers to entry into the news business may well be lower than at any time since wandering minstrels carried news from place to place in verse. And while nonprofits can’t ignore markets any more than they can ignore budgets, a news organization that hopes only to break even can focus less on what will sell and more on the kinds of coverage it believes society needs. Thus, while for-profit broadcasters appear to have scaled back their commitment to news, NPR has been adding journalists and ramping up coverage.

Of course, profit and excellence in the media are hardly mutually exclusive. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *The Wall*



# BOTTOM LINE

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*Street Journal*, which deploy masses of relatively well-paid professional journalists and maintain the highest standards, are all profit-seeking enterprises that also produce enormous social good. Princeton University sociologist and Pulitzer Prize winner Paul Starr, in his 2004 study, *The Creation of the Media* (Basic Books), is clear-eyed about the role of profit in all this, observing that, in general, “Markets in liberal societies enrich the public sphere far more than they impoverish it.”

But in some situations the market mechanism—pressured by cultural, social and political changes—may not always be adequate, and some thoughtful people are suggesting that this is the case with respect to the profit-oriented media that dominate the American news landscape. The traditional postwar

mainstays of American news—the big three television networks and the many daily newspapers that provide most local coverage—seem to be caught in a dispiriting cycle of cutbacks and declining audiences that they lack the ability to break. At the same time, consolidation and the decline of family ownership have left media organizations subject to the same profit pressures as other publicly traded companies—despite the special mission media companies have always claimed for themselves. Under the circumstances, it’s fair to ask whether the news organizations of today—and tomorrow—are up to the task of sustaining the informed citizenry on which democracy depends.

“I think there is a fundamental role for nonprofit entities in our media system,” says Robert McChesney, a

University of Illinois communications professor who founded a nonprofit organization of his own ([freepress.org](http://freepress.org)) to advocate media reform. To critics like McChesney, the problem is a consequence of concentration and the obligations public companies of all kinds have to their shareholders. McChesney argues that the current system “is set up to maximize profit for a relative handful of large companies. The system works well for them, but it is a disaster for the communication needs of a healthy and self-governing society.”

James T. Hamilton, an economist and political scientist at Duke University whose works include *All the News That’s Fit to Sell: How the Market Transforms Information into News* (Princeton University Press, 2003), advocates outright nonprofit owner-

ship as one of several means to generate more hard news coverage. “One way to increase the attention reporters pay to politics and government is to shift the objectives of some owners away from profit maximization,” he writes. “A foundation concerned with the quantity and quality of public affairs coverage might decide to purchase or run a news outlet that emphasized hard news.”

Sometimes when markets fail, the path is clear for government intervention and in fact, some advocates of a greater role for nonprofits support changes in tax and other public policies to promote this form of media ownership. In other advanced nations, after all, government plays a much bigger role, particularly in funding public broadcasting. In America, by contrast, the federal government only provides about fifteen percent of what is spent on public broadcasting, an amount roughly matched by the states. McChesney, for one, believes the most cost-effective way for nonprofits to improve the media is by focusing on government policy. He cites as a precedent the original Carnegie Commission on Educational Television, underwritten by Carnegie Corporation of New York during the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson. The Commission’s landmark report led to the creation of the U.S. public broadcasting system in 1967.

But there are times when markets fail and government can’t fill the gap, particularly in the wary and decentralized American tradition, which makes even modest government funding for the arts controversial, let alone the kind of national television tax that pays for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Often, in such circumstances, private, nonprofit organizations can step effectively into the breach—and the seeming marketplace shortfall in quality journalism may be just the kind of breach they can ably help to fill. A short-

age of quality television for kids was addressed in just this way when Carnegie Corporation commissioned the feasibility study (by Joan Ganz Cooney) that led to the birth of the children’s Television Workshop—creator of *Sesame Street*.

Nonprofits have succeeded in other complex, costly and socially critical ventures, including most notably higher education. America’s colleges and universities are decentralized, overwhelmingly not-for-profit, dependent on a mix of funding sources—and despite a little grade inflation, the envy of the world. What they supply is both vital and, with some rare exceptions, unavailable from profit-making businesses. In the media, “the nonprofit sector shows promise,” affirms University of North Carolina journalism professor Philip Meyer, who wrote a book called *The Vanishing Newspaper: Saving Journalism In The Information Age* (University of Missouri Press, 2004). He observes that, rather than being left entirely to a competitive marketplace, news coverage in this country has long been buttressed by various kinds of charitable or government benefits. McChesney points out that low postal rates, broadcast licenses, local cable monopolies and even the nature of copyright protections are among the many government policies that subsidize and shape the American media outside the free market system.

Nonprofits can also help fill an important coverage gap inherent in



AP PHOTO/SUSAN WALSH

**National Public Radio president Kevin Klose announcing a gift of over \$200 million to NPR from philanthropist Joan Kroc.**

the structure of America’s advertising-driven media business model. Since daily newspapers, for example, get four-fifths of their revenue from advertising, the places that need coverage most—places where people don’t have a lot of money—typically get it least. This is why newspapers in some places have dropped the names of their older, struggling host cities from their names—the better to follow their affluent readers to the suburbs. At the same time, papers “covering” entertainment, home design and restaurants have proliferated, all of them appealing to the affluent and many carrying nothing like

news. Nonprofit media could pay more attention to the Americans who don't shop or eat out quite so much.

The role of nonprofits in the media is being taken seriously enough that last year it was the subject of a symposium (co-moderated by James Hamilton) at Louisiana State University's Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, where discussion focused on five proposals:

- More media outlets should be operated by nonprofits, and government policy should support this.
- Foundations should subsidize information and analyses for journalists and for use in policy debates.
- The tax code and public policy generally should encourage individuals and families to own media companies.

not function, AP is a not-for-profit cooperative of its member publishers and broadcasters, whose fees support a global network of 3,700 staff members— some 2,500 of them journalists.

*The Christian Science Monitor*, meanwhile, has been publishing what a *Boston Globe* columnist called its “distinctive brand of nonhysterical journalism” on a nonprofit basis since 1908. Although down to just 59,000 subscribers and sorely tested by an unsuccessful TV venture, the paper has achieved great popularity on the Internet, where it gets 1.8 million individual users per month. Several local daily newspapers, including the *St. Petersburg Times*, the *Delaware State News* in Dover, and *The Day* in New London, Connecticut, are

Across the Atlantic, not-for-profit journalism has a long and honorable history. The BBC is perhaps the best known non-commercial brand in the business worldwide, but it's less well known outside the United Kingdom that *The Guardian*, a respected national daily newspaper of decidedly liberal bent, is owned by the nonprofit Scott Trust, which was established in 1936 both to avoid death taxes and to sustain the old *Manchester Guardian* as an independent newspaper.

The *Guardian* model is interesting because it doesn't rely on any philanthropy beyond the Scott family's initial generous act. Instead, *The Guardian* and its Sunday sister, *The Observer*, are sustained by a variety of business ventures including regional newspapers, radio outlets and a set of special interest publications. The latter include a highly profitable automotive weekly and the United Kingdom's leading automotive web site. Thus, while *The Guardian* and *The Observer* have lost money for the past two fiscal years, the Guardian Media Group (which owns the Scott Trust's various media operations) has finished in the black.

While other newspapers in Britain have shifted to a tabloid format to appeal to readers, Guardian Media is spending more than £100 million (over \$180 million) to relaunch the two national papers in a mid-size format because the editors opposed the rigid tabloid format. “There are times when both the Guardian and The Observer think it right to shout at their readers,” writes Scott Trust chair Liz Forgan. “But the world they seek to report on is a complex one full of loud and soft, long and short and good journalism needs flexibility to do its job properly. Only by re-pressing completely, in a new size which was compact but big enough to allow more than one tone of voice on the front page and through-

Sometimes, when markets fail, the path is clear for government intervention and some support changes in tax and other public policies to promote non-profit of media ownership.

■ Public policy should encourage partisan media outlets supported by interest groups or political parties.

■ The government should subsidize information about public affairs and the infrastructure to deliver it.

Such ideas are hardly mere academic fantasies. Nonprofits already deliver a lot more of our news than many people realize, and they have been doing so for a long time. The venerable Associated Press (AP) was founded in 1848 and now bills itself as “the largest and oldest news organization in the world.” A mainstay of American journalism without which much of the nation's media simply could

owned by nonprofits too. The New London paper has a bigger staff, higher salaries and more space for news than other papers of comparable size, according to a report last year in the *American Journalism Review*. A nonprofit organization called C-SPAN, meanwhile, has been giving cable television viewers unmediated access to Congressional debates and other government proceedings (as well as author talks, miscellaneous public affairs events and similarly meaty fare) since 1979. C-SPAN is funded by the cable television industry and, like AP, seeks neither profits nor government funding.

out the paper, could those journalistic ambitions be realized.”

By the standards of American newspaper companies, the Guardian Media Group’s pretax profits are modest: just three percent in the fiscal year ended April 3, 2005, nearly all of it attributable to asset sales. Pretax profits were seven percent in each of the two preceding years and two percent in 2002. In fiscal 2001 profits were a healthier fifteen percent, but much of this, too, was due to asset sales. Guardian Media Group chairman Paul Myners, writing in the company’s 2004 annual report, makes no bones about what he’s up to: “Our core objective is the protection of our national titles, *The Guardian*, *The Observer* and Guardian Unlimited [the Guardian’s heavily used web site]. All other activities are in pursuit of that core objective and exist as a store of value to enable us to pursue our primary objective.”

It’s important to remember that, like the few American newspapers owned by nonprofit organizations, the Trust was founded as the result of an extraordinary act of generosity and public-spiritedness by a member of the owning family. Such acts, unfortunately, are likely to remain rare, and thus the ownership structure of the *Guardian*, like that of the *St. Petersburg Times*, (which is owned by the nonprofit Poynter Institute), is unlikely to be widely emulated.

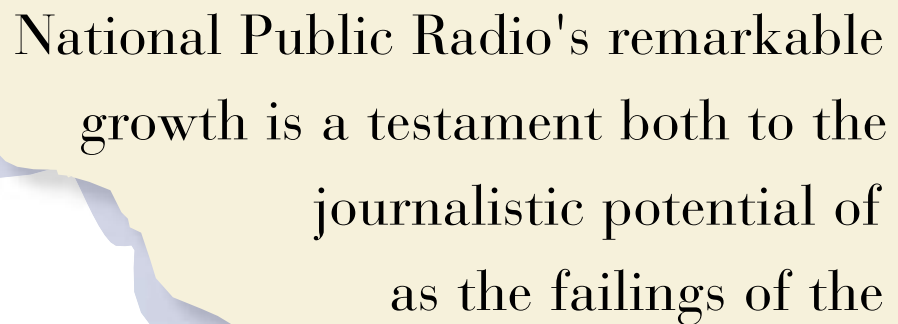
In this country, at least, the journalism of ideas is a nonprofit preserve of longstanding, even if such periodicals aren’t officially nonprofit charitable organizations under IRS rules. One that meets those requirements is *Harpers*, originally a business and now put out by the Harper’s Magazine Foundation. Other such publications limp along trying to finish in the black but subsidized by committed individual donors. Most of these magazines are small, but they have an outsized impact on pub-

lic opinion because of their influential readers, who include many journalists and academics.

*CommonWealth* magazine, for example, is quarterly publication of the nonpartisan Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC) and examines Bay State issues in depth. In 2002 it reported on relatively youthful state employees who manage to get themselves “fired” soon after they become eligible for pensions. “A review of pension records by *CommonWealth* reveals that more than 1,000 state employees have seized on a variety of special early-retirement provisions since 1990, with hundreds of them obtaining pensions for which they may not have been qualified,” the article said, singling

including banks, labor unions and law firms. For their money, says editor Robert Keough, they get to advertise in a respected medium targeted at some of the state’s most important people. But because there are so many such sponsors in such a broad range of fields distributed so widely across the political spectrum, the magazine hasn’t had to worry if one or two get mad about an article it publishes. Says Keough: “Being a nonprofit with a commitment to the improvement of civic life frees us from the lowest-common-denominator mentality that dominates commercial journalism today.”

Nonprofit status has proved especially suitable for the journalism of advocacy. It’s noteworthy that Princeton’s



## National Public Radio's remarkable growth is a testament both to the journalistic potential of as the failings of the

out some big name Massachusetts politicians in the process.

*CommonWealth* is sent to roughly 1,000 MassINC dues-paying members as well as 9,000 journalists, academics, public officials, business executives and other opinion leaders, many of whom it also brings together in public forums with politicians and other powerful Massachusetts figures. It’s thus able to affect public opinion despite a small circulation and a budget of just \$750,000 a year—and a business model based on seriousness rather than celebrity appeal. The trick is support from roughly 90 disparate sponsoring organizations,

Paul Starr, who knows as well as anyone the role profits have historically played in building strong news organizations, is a founder and co-editor of *The American Prospect*, a nonprofit liberal journal of ideas. Since its founding as a quarterly in 1990, it has grown into a monthly with a paid circulation of 55,000 as well as what it calls “a daily web magazine [www.prospect.org] with more than 300,000 monthly visitors.” *The American Prospect* was founded partly to counteract the intellectual dominance of conservative think tanks in Washington—which are themselves underwriting nonprofit journalism in



AP PHOTO/MATTHEW FEARN, PA

Thousands of BBC journalists, technicians and others went on a 24-hour strike on May 23, 2005 to protest planned job cuts.

respondent, Robert Siegel. It now has 36 bureaus worldwide, and its coverage of both the September 11th terrorist attacks and the war in Afghanistan won an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award, which recognizes excellence in journalism. (Since 9/11, NPR has established a system for breaking into the local broadcast time at many of its member stations, which wasn't possible before.) Three years ago, NPR opened a major production center in Culver City, California, near Los Angeles, and has also launched a training program for radio journalists to cultivate new talent.

The lack of investiga-

tive reporting is a longstanding criticism of NPR, and partly to address this, the organization hired former investigative journalist and *Baltimore Sun* editor William K. Marimow as one of its top editors. NPR president Kevin Klose insists NPR is doing investigative journalism and cited a report on the very day of our interview by national reporter Snigdha Prakash, who has dug into Merck's handling of its Vioxx painkilling medication, which has been linked to cardiovascular problems.

The size and demographics of NPR's audience suggest a major market malfunction. For example, 75 percent of its news listeners have household income of \$50,000 or more, and NPR listeners in general are fifty-eight percent college educated. NPR listeners also are more likely to own a computer and to have voted in an election than Americans in general. These are presumably the kind

## nonprofits as well marketplace.

the form of reports and newspaper op-ed articles by resident scholars and others. In fact, American newspapers took on their current nonpartisan, objective garb only when mass circulation became a profitable business goal, making it more lucrative to leave behind party affiliations and trade partisanship for appeal to a broad base of readers. To this day, despite critics on the left and the right, most for-profit news organizations insist that their journalism embodies fairness and objectivity.

The poster child for the role not-for-profits can play in doing serious journalism is National Public Radio,

a nonprofit since its founding in 1970 that has become the preeminent cultural and journalistic force in the lives of a large number of mostly well-educated Americans. NPR's remarkable growth is a testament both to the journalistic potential of nonprofits as well as the failings of the marketplace. NPR distributes more than 120 hours of original programming each week to independent radio stations across the country; its programming is also available on satellite radio, and NPR's *Morning Edition* is probably the nation's leading morning radio show—proving that lots of people want real journalism, especially if it's free.

While for-profit radio stations still deliver headlines, traffic and weather reports, NPR offers more breadth and greater depth—something it did not always have the resources to accomplish. Back in 1979, it had a single foreign cor-

of listeners prized by advertisers. So why hasn't the marketplace offered similar fare? It's as if the automakers never thought to manufacture Volvos.

Klose insists that the key to NPR's success is precisely that it is not commercial, and instead pursues a mission "to be of assistance to listeners in the act of citizenship." He adds: "The purpose of what we do is not creating an encounter in which we can sell them anything." McChesney argues that NPR's success stems in large part from commercial radio's abandonment of its public interest obligation, which fell by the wayside in the 1980s, as well as from the ownership consolidation and general homogenization of commercial radio that commenced in earnest in the late 1990s. These changes left the door wide open to local public radio stations, he says, as well as the NPR programming they carry. (A lot of additional public radio programming, including some from the BBC, is provided by yet another thriving nonprofit, Public Radio International, which is supported by a number of foundations. And there is growing competition in this field from Public Radio International and American Public Media, among others.)

The door has never opened as wide to public television news in this country. For one thing, McChesney notes, radio news is relatively cheap to produce while television news is expensive, requiring more people and equipment. And then there is the matter of politics, which looms larger in the literally and figuratively more visible medium of TV. Insulating public broadcasting from political influence was emphasized by the original Carnegie Commission when it did its work, and has been a tenet of the system since it was launched. But not long after, public television came under pressure from the Nixon administration for its coverage of Vietnam and Watergate. Politics became

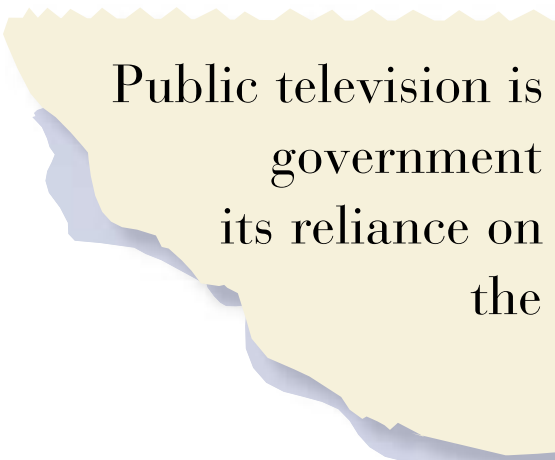
an issue more recently when Kenneth Y. Tomlinson, then chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, accused the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) of failing to achieve balance in its programming.

Public television is hamstrung, moreover, by a lack of secure, reliable government funding, which in turn has increased its reliance on corporate support—and therefore the programming preferences of corporate funders. The system's complicated structure hasn't helped either. What Congress actually funds is the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a nonprofit agency that exists to funnel federal money into public broadcasting—mostly to local stations. (The chairman of CPB is appointed by the White House.) PBS is a membership organization of 348 local TV stations, and doesn't itself produce programming. It distributes and promotes programming, though, and even provides some funding for programming, but actual programs are created by local stations such as WGBH in Boston, or by independent producers who must piece together backing from stations and corporate or philanthropic underwriters. This decentralized system may be characteristically American, but it's not designed to support a large newsgathering organization, even if it does result in such significant public affairs programming as *Frontline*, *POV* and *NOW*.

Yet public television's sole traditional news program—*The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*—is also its crown jewel. *NewsHour* reaches 98 percent of U.S. television households and is seen in Asia, Europe, Japan and Latin America. Despite the system's limitations, *NewsHour*, which has an annual budget of \$24 million, is watched by about 2.7 million people nightly and was ranked as the most credible, objective and influential TV news program in the country

in the Erdos & Morgan Opinion Leader survey. Like everyone else, it has found its way onto the Internet, where its web site averages more than a million unique visitors each week.

The contrast between American public broadcasting and the British Broadcasting Corporation is stark. Federal funding for public broadcasting is \$387 million in the current fiscal year, or about \$3.50 per household—in a nation where the average annual cable bill in 2003 (the latest year available from the FCC) was \$543.84. Now consider the situation across the pond. Funded by an annual television license fee of £126 (about \$220) per household, the BBC is a massive mul-



Public television is  
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timedia operation that spent roughly £400 million (about \$719 million) just on news in the most recent fiscal year it. It employs some 3,500 people in its worldwide news operations, including roughly 2,000 journalists. They staff 40 bureaus in every part of the globe, and the BBC is heard perhaps just as widely. Its World Service, which broadcasts in 40 languages, has an audience of 150 million people, the BBC says.

The British electorate supports its public broadcasting system despite the levy on televisions. A BBC survey last year found that eighty-one percent of respondents think "the Beeb" is worth the money—and many would pay more. Asked what they'd be willing to pay to

keep the BBC from shutting down, the average answer was roughly double what they are paying now. For evidence as to why this might be, consider the BBC's coverage of the recent terrorist attacks on the London transit system. *Baltimore Sun* television critic David Zurawik noted that CNN's coverage "featured a red logo emblazoned with the words: 'LONDON TERROR,'" and he quoted a CNN anchorwoman saying, "An eyewitness described utter pandemonium—bodies strewn around. ... People were screaming. ... They felt they were trapped like sardines essentially waiting to die." By contrast, Zurawik wrote, the BBC "provided a sense of stability even as the death toll climbed," offering

In all likelihood, NPR is as close as we'll come to a domestic version of the BBC—and government funding will be a relatively small part of the picture. In fact, NPR only gets about one percent of its budget directly from Uncle Sam, although local public radio stations, which get about thirteen percent of their funds from Washington, use some of this money to pay NPR for programming. But while public radio in this country gets by on relatively little government money, it benefits from having a diversified funding base. Local public radio stations get about a third of their money from listener contributions and another quarter from corporate and foundation grants.

well. NPR's Klose notes the contrast to for-profit radio: "Radio is completely finished as a reporting medium on the commercial side."

Unfortunately, the news about commercial news coverage generally is not good. The Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ), in its 2004 survey of the industry, "found that most sectors of the news media have seen clear cutbacks in newsgathering resources," according to Tom Rosenstiel and Amy Mitchell of the PEJ and Bill Kovach of the Committee of Concerned Journalists. The number of newspaper newsroom staffers shrunk by 2,000 between 2000 and 2004, a drop of 4 percent overall. Some major online news sites saw much deeper cuts, such as MSNBC, which cut around a quarter of its staff between 2001 and 2003. Radio newsroom staffing declined by 57 percent from 1994 to 2001. After an uptick in 1999, network staffing began to drop again in 2000. Since 1985 the number of network news correspondents has declined by 35 percent while the number of stories per reporter increased by 30 percent.

That same year, 2004, the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, in conjunction with PEJ, conducted a survey of 547 national and local journalists. Some 66 percent of national journalists said profit pressures were hurting journalistic quality (and, to point out that this is not just the usual newsroom grouching, only 41 percent held this view in 1995). Among local journalists, the figure had risen to 57 percent from 33 percent in the same period. Dan Gillmor, a former columnist for the *San Jose Mercury News* and lately an advocate of citizens' or grassroots journalism, may have summed up the worries when he said in an interview: "It's not at all clear, given the erosion of the business model the mass media are now suffering, that they will be able to afford—or their shareholders

hamstrung by a lack of secure, reliable funding, which in turn has increased corporate support—and therefore programming preferences of corporate funders.

an "oasis of relative calm" marked by "images of emergency workers restoring order." It should be noted, however, that there may be some problems ahead for this venerable broadcasting service. In the spring of 2005, the BBC announced plans to cut about 4,000 jobs from a workforce of about 21,000 to save some £355 million (about \$670 million)—approximately 10 percent of its annual expenditure—over the next three years. Commenting on these proposed cost-saving measures, BBC director Mark Thompson said that the television license fee will only survive as the main method of funding the BBC "if the public is convinced that the corporation is spending money wisely."

NPR has even established a foundation to raise an endowment for itself (PBS has more recently done likewise), and over the years has garnered funds from the Ford, Ahmanson and MacArthur foundations, among other sources. In 2003, it announced what has amounted to a \$230 million gift from the estate of Joan B. Kroc, the San Diego philanthropist and widow of McDonald's tycoon Ray Kroc. The Kroc gift has enabled NPR to hire more journalists and expand its news coverage, which now involves 350 full and part-time employees and an annual news budget of \$50 million. Local public radio stations provide news and public affairs programming of their own as

will permit—the kind of things I consider crucial in a democratic society.”

The trends in newspapers are particularly worrisome. Newspapers are the journalistic institutions providing the most extensive coverage, from small town papers right up through *USA Today*. They are the news organizations with the most boots on the ground. Their articles are longer, deeper and more extensively sourced than those of other media, and mostly self-generated. Paul Ginocchio, who analyzes media stocks at Deutsche Bank Securities, states flatly that: “Newspapers are the prime content providers for the modern news distribution machine.”

The newspaper industry remains quite profitable, but critics like Philip Meyer say this comes at the expense of spending on news. And the future doesn't look bright. Daily circulation, at about 55 million, has been stagnant for half a century—and “penetration” has been falling since the mid-1950s, at least. Back then, the industry sold 1.2 newspapers per household. Daily newspaper penetration today is hugely diminished, at roughly .5 newspapers per household. Worse yet, circulation has been falling in absolute terms since the mid-1980s. “I don't see any reasonable expectation this is going to change anytime soon,” says John Morton, a veteran industry analyst. Newspaper advertising, meanwhile, the industry's lifeblood, is under attack. Such Internet ventures as craigslist.org and monster.com are aggressively competing for the industry's prized classified ad business. And Wal-Mart, the nation's most successful retailer, has preferred to advertise by direct mail.

As newspapers lose readers, celebrity-oriented periodicals are experiencing surging subscriptions and newsstand sales as well as big increases in advertising pages. They are also attracting a wider variety of ads, suggesting more

mainstream acceptance. Meanwhile, says Steven Lagerfeld, editor of *The Wilson Quarterly*, which is published by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, ideas-oriented publications such as his are battling for attention from the same relatively small group of potential readers. “There's no demand for quality,” laments John R. MacArthur, president and publisher of Harper's.

But the appetite for escapism and schlock doesn't prove people don't want—or can't use—good journalism. “There is no shortage of historical studies showing a correlation between quality journalism and business suc-

cess,” writes Meyer, whose own work suggests that newspaper credibility is correlated with higher ad rates, and that higher staffing levels are linked to a slower decline in penetration. Paul Ginocchio, meanwhile, looked at 150 large newspaper markets and found, in the words of the Project for Excellence in Journalism 2005 report, *The State of the News Media*, “that papers recognized for superior news performance, like *The Washington Post*, the *Lexington Herald-Leader* and the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* had superior ‘brand power’—defined as circulation numbers and ad rates above expectations for their markets.” In other words, for newspapers, quality pays.

One area where news is clearly growing is the Internet, which has opened the door to a slew of other non-

profit media ventures that didn't exist before. New York's Gotham Gazette (gothamgazette.com) was started in 1999 with a grant from the Charles Revson Foundation and receives funding from the Rockefeller and New York Times foundations, among others. Besides offering a handy daily digest of New York City news stories appearing in other outlets, Gotham Gazette generates coverage of its own and publishes a policy magazine. It even posts translated articles from some of the city's foreign-language ethnic periodicals, and offers readers a database of articles relating to local political campaigns. Gotham Gazette is oper-

Internet ventures such as craigslist.com and monster.com are aggressively competing for the newspaper industry's prized classified ad business.

ated by the Citizens Union Foundation of the City of New York, a nonprofit research and education organization that sees itself as a watchdog of the public good. Gotham Gazette's annual budget is just \$550,000 a year.

How does such an operation keep itself going financially? Gotham Gazette editor Jonathan Mandell says that the organization, which initially focused on establishing itself and building up its coverage, is now focusing more on sustainability as well, and that means finding new sources of revenue. Twice last year, for example, it ran appeals asking readers for money, garnering a total of \$30,000, and Mandell says appeals this year will probably raise more. Gotham Gazette has also started offering classified and display ads, and is considering selling sponsorships for its popular



AP PHOTO/JEFF CHIU

**Craigslist.org CEO Jim Buckmaster (left) and founder Craig Newmark (right) outside the Craigslist office in San Francisco.**

e-mail newsletters, which offer potential advertisers the advantage of a highly targeted readership with a manifest interest in the topic at hand. “The Internet part of us in some ways is far more important than the nonprofit part of us,” Mandell observes, noting that many news sites on the web aren’t making a profit even if they wish they were.

Organizations such as Carnegie Corporation, the Reuters Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, meanwhile, have been funding a variety of media undertakings, from providing information that journalists can use to underwriting actual coverage. The Reuters Foundation, for example, has supported Voices of Iraq (<http://www.aswataliraq.info/>), a grassroots Iraqi news site that, with the help of \$800,000 from

the United Nations, plans to become an independent commercial news service. In this country, Carnegie Corporation is among the funders of the Center for Public Integrity, which conducts investigative reporting through a global network of journalists. Last year the Center’s inquiry into U.S. government contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan won the online version of the George Polk Award, an important journalistic honor. The Center posts the fruits of its labor at <http://www.publicintegrity.org>.

Or consider the list of recipients awarded \$12,000 each by the University of Maryland’s J-Lab: the Institute for Interactive Journalism, which is using a \$1 million grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to pay for its New Voices project. One was the Friends of the

Deerfield (New Hampshire) Library to start a web site with local news, opinion and photography. Another was the Mid-Columbia Centro Cultural in Hood River, Oregon to launch a weekly half-hour, bilingual news program on a low-power FM radio station, with training for community members to write scripts and edit audio. Yet another is a community news weblog in a poor, largely African American neighborhood of Chicago. One of the goals, says J-Lab executive director Jan Schaffer, is for the New Voices grant recipients “to develop various models of sustainability—from corporate sponsorships, to foundations, to advertising, to subscriptions, etc.”

“I doubt,” she adds, in a comment that might apply across the nonprofit media landscape, “that there will be one size that fits all.” ■

by ANNE FARRIS

# *New Immig* *in* New Places AMERICA'S GROWING "GLOBAL INTERIOR"

*Nashville, Tennessee is one of the many new destinations for immigrants to the U.S. Reaction to the city's newest residents may provide insight into similar situations across the country.*

Rauf Ary, a 42-year-old Kurdish refugee who fled his native Iran thirteen years ago, points to a sign in front of his Tara Market in Nashville, Tennessee that demonstrates a new direction for this mid-size southern city. "We have fresh Halal meat," the sign reads, conveying its message in three languages: English, Spanish and Arabic. Then he glances toward his neighbors' storefront signs: Inter-Asian Market, Gye Nyame West African Restaurant, Iglesia De Jesucristo Samaria and Istanbul Restaurant. "The world comes together here," Ary says. "Nashville is the cradle for human life."

This predominantly white city known for its country music, rhinestone cowboys and fried chicken and biscuits has suddenly morphed into a new Ellis Island emblematic of a demographic revolution occurring in a thick vein of territory running through the Midwest and Southern regions of America. The nation is experiencing the largest immigrant and refugee resettlement since the Industrial Revolution, and cities like Nashville—rather than the gateway cities of the past such as New York and Los Angeles—are the new, non-traditional settling grounds where foreign-born newcomers

find an abundance of jobs, housing, lower prices and, sometimes, friendlier receptions.

The growth has enriched the local culture and economy, but it has also challenged policymakers, businessmen and social service providers to successfully integrate the newcomers into a mutually beneficial community. As a result, Nashville, which has not grappled with this much racial and cultural integration since the civil rights movement fifty years ago, is exhibiting the same growing pains as an angst-ridden, awkward and sometimes troubled teenager entering adulthood. This ongoing transformation is a surprise to many because,

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*Anne Farris is a national freelance journalist based in Washington, D.C. who reports and writes about government and politics. Her work has appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch and The Arkansas Gazette. She has contributed to several books, including Blood Sport, and is the author of Test Pilot, a biography of Stanley H. Kaplan. She also reports for BBC Current Affairs and other English-based film documentary companies.*

# rants

Nashville ★



**Rauf Ary, a Kurdish refugee, in front of his meat market in Nashville, Tennessee.**

says Garrett Harper, research director at the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau, “Nashville had hardly changed from decade to decade.”

Confronted with a record-breaking and unprecedented influx of foreign-born individuals and families, the city has assembled businesses, government, religious and community organizations, along with philanthropic groups, to grapple with its new role as a global destination. It has made the city and region a national leader in superlatives: Tennessee was the first state to issue drivers’ licenses for documented and undocumented immigrants; Nashville is one of three American cities selected to participate in an experiment in public-private partnerships of immigrant and refugee integration primarily funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement; and the city housed one of five U.S. polling stations in America for Iraqi expatriate voters during the January 2005 Iraqi elections.

All of this has provoked an anti-immigrant backlash that is loud, proactive and downright ugly at times. Coalitions have been formed to control the growth of undocumented immigrants and talk show hosts are sounding the alarm about what they say is a “la reconquista,” or “reconquest” movement of Mexican immigrants ultimately aimed at returning parts of southwest America to Mexico. The heightened debate has left the Tennessee legislature struggling with numerous pieces of legislation that both protect and limit immigrants’ rights.

“Nashville now has a stake in the immigration debate in a way that it hadn’t before,” says Steven Camarota, research director at the Center for Immigration Studies. The city’s reaction to the large and sudden growth amidst the absence of a comprehensive national immigration policy has positioned Nashville as a model of dynamic

PHOTO BY ANNE FARRIS

and counterintuitive change in the transforming American landscape of immigrant and refugee resettlement.

### **The New American Frontier Takes Shape**

Nashville is a miniature version of a national phenomenon in which all of America is witnessing dramatic increases in immigrant and refugee populations. One-in-ten Americans is now foreign born, with a third arriving in the last decade. Unlike the white European immigrants who came to the U.S. at the beginning of the 20th century, today's immigrants are largely from Latin America. With increasingly relaxed national immigration standards to facilitate a growing need for inexpensive labor, workers have arrived in droves to find economic opportunities. Studies show that half of America's new workforce in the 1990s comprised immigrants, compared with only ten percent in the 1970s. Many are documented, but at least one-quarter of all foreign-born residents are here illegally, and many face persistent poverty, disenfranchisement and language barriers.

One of the most striking differences among today's immigrants and refugees is where they settle. Nashville is part of a new American frontier sometimes called the "global interior" that runs from Minnesota to Texas where immigrants and refugees have moved in unprecedented numbers since 1990. Of the nation's one hundred largest metropolitan areas, Nashville ranks first in the number of new immigrants arriving from 1991 to 1998 relative to the number of foreign-born counted there in 1990. Atlanta, Georgia is second and Louisville, Kentucky is third.

Nontraditional communities have also become a haven for Iranians and Iraqis after the Persian Gulf War and terrorist attacks, Somalis and Sudanese evading political turmoil, Russian Jews



PHOTO BY RYAN HEFFERNAN PHOTOGRAPHY

seeking religious tolerance and Bosnians escaping ethnic cleansing.

The administration of President Bill Clinton issued new directives that refugees be dispersed to all fifty states rather than concentrated in the traditional gateway communities where they had been settled in earlier times. While this policy continues to be followed, the communities receiving these newcomers have raised concerns that the influx will overtax local resources. For example, in 2002, after more than 1,000 Somalis had settled in Lewiston, Maine—population approximately 35,000—the mayor wrote an open letter to his city's new residents, asking that they discourage any more of their countrymen and women from coming to live in Lewiston because, he wrote, "Our city is maxed out financially, physically and emotionally." The Holyoke, Massachusetts city council also opposed resettling Somalis because the city didn't have enough money to educate and train them. Farmingville, a Long Island, New York community, has become a national flashpoint on immigrant issues because

**Somali immigrants in Lewistown, Maine, and Mexican day laborers on New York's Long Island have sparked controversy.**

it has been the scene of violence and confrontation centering around a large population of Latino day laborers, primarily Mexican. (It is estimated that starting in the late 1990s, as many as 1,500 immigrant workers—looking for employment in construction, landscaping and similar fields—came to Farmingville, a village of approximately 15,000 people.)

Tennessee's foreign-born population grew by 169 percent between 1990 and 2000, and the state ranks sixth in the nation in the rate of its foreign-born population's growth. It is the nation's fourth fastest growing state in Hispanic population. Within Tennessee, most of the newcomer population flocked to Nashville in Davidson County and seven other adjacent outlying counties of middle Tennessee. Today, one-in-

seven of Nashville's 570,000 residents is foreign-born.

Nashville's transformation was rapid. The foreign-born population grew by 203 percent between 1990 and 2000, almost four times as fast as the national average. Researchers assert that the rates are actually much higher because large numbers of undocumented immigrants are not counted by the census. By 2020, the Hispanic population in greater Nashville is projected to double.

Frank Sharry, executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based National Immigration Forum, said immigrants are drawn to Nashville because of its

Latin American immigrants. The U.S. Department of State worked closely with three religiously affiliated charities to relocate refugees to Nashville; as a result, the city also has significant concentrations of Middle Easterners, Europeans and Africans. In fact, Nashville has one of the nation's largest groups of Kurdish refugees, approximately 7,000.

The agenda of a recent meeting of the Nashville Task Force on Refugees and Immigrants, a coalition of immigrant and refugee service organizations located in Middle Tennessee, reflected the area's diversity. The meeting included presentations on cultural resettlement issues faced by Somali refugees; a "Walk-As-One" 5K fundraising event to celebrate diversity; a Kurdish

and American community project to support Tennessee soldiers serving in Iraq; and advice on helping foreign-born individuals with limited English proficiency to understand cut-backs in the state Medicaid health care program.

Unlike previous generations,

today's immigrants and refugees simultaneously maintain cultural, political, economic and social ties to two or more societies. And one of their greatest challenges is integrating not only with the American culture, but also with the multiple cultures of other newcomers.

"I didn't know which city in America was bad or good to raise my family, but I had a cousin who lived in Nashville and I used his address as a contact," says Tahir Hussain, president of the Nashville Kurdish Forum, who arrived from Iraq in 1997 to work first in a plastic factory and then for the

public health department. "Initially, I came with no choice but I decided to stay here for several reasons—there's a good job market and the quality of life is affordable. Three-fourths of the Kurds here own their own homes. There's less traffic and it's a religious city. That's a factor because it's a trusting community with family values and less of the Western society atmosphere. People feel safe raising a family here."

Nashville is perfectly suited to be a receiving community and a model for study, says Dan B. Cornfield, a Vanderbilt University sociology professor and acting director of the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies. "This is a Tocquevillian paradise," Cornfield says, conjuring the spirit of Alexis de Tocqueville, who wrote, in his 1835 landmark book, *Democracy in America*, about how citizens' associations played a critical role in preserving and strengthening the young United States of America. "We have a long tradition of a vibrant not-for-profit community in Tennessee," notes Cornfield. "There's a reason it's called the 'Volunteer State.'"

The greater metropolitan area has 813 private and public social service providers, 18 colleges and universities, a highly developed network of social service providers, a history of racial integration, and a shockingly low two percent unemployment rate even while the general population increased twenty percent during the 1990s.

Nashville has traditionally had a strong economic base. It is home to major corporations, including Hospital Corporation of America, the largest health care company in the world, and 200 other health care companies that manage half the nation's for-profit hospitals. Often dubbed the "Athens of the South" (it even has a life-size replica of the Parthenon in its city park) because of its historic dedication to fine arts and higher education, "Nashville was never



PHOTO BY SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

reputation for "jobs, nice people, low crime and good schools. Immigrants want the same things we do." Not only did the growth occur quickly—almost half of the foreign born arrived in Nashville after 1995—but the newcomers are vastly diversified. Latin Americans, mainly from Mexico, comprise 40 percent of the immigrants. *El Enlace Latino*, the Nashville Hispanic yellow pages, reaches more than 200,000 Hispanic and Latino customers in twelve counties surrounding Nashville.

But the foreign-born population in greater Nashville is not exclusively

deep south in its political culture,” Cornfield declares. He has more to say about what makes Nashville both a magnet for newcomers and a rich source of information about their effects on a community, pointing out that the city’s robust service economy, progressive government, highly developed community of nonprofit social service providers and advocates, renowned place in the history of the civil rights movement and pioneering efforts in racial-ethnic integration affords researchers and policymakers abundant opportunities to study and devise creative community-building policies to address the

In 2001, Stuart wrote an exposé about immigrants in his hometown. “A vague disquiet hovers beneath the surface of our thoughts, causing even the most well-meaning of longtime residents to question our collective ability—and our will—to move the city up a notch, to transform it into an equitable, vibrant, multiethnic and productive 21st century community,” Stuart wrote. “Are we prepared—mentally, socially, politically, educationally, economically—to transform ourselves into a community of independent citizens, or even a reasonably progressive and productive small city attuned to

expanded its legendary Grand Ole Opry to include an entertainment division and a chain of hotels and resorts, including the 2,884-room Opryland Hotel in Nashville, houses its foreign-born workers at smaller, off-site hotels and provides English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) classes. One large Nashville construction company reports that one-fourth of its employees are Hispanic and a meatpacking plant near Nashville reports that 40 percent of its 1,600 employees are from foreign countries and speak 13 different languages.

“Employers were saying, ‘I need

“This is a **rapid-fire** change,” says Reginald Stuart, a journalist and Nashville native, “and southern towns don’t change fast. They’re being **pushed** and pushed.”

conflicts and complexities that accompany rapid globalization “Nashville is an important case in point of a city for which immigration is recent and intercultural group relations are complex,” Cornfield notes. “The foreign-born and immigrant population is cross-heterogeneous. They face a variety of needs.”

### **Struggling With Change**

It is against this textured backdrop that Nashville—a politically “blue city” in a “red state” that has always perceived itself as more progressive, less parochial and even superior to other southern cities—embarked on a new and different challenge of becoming a multiethnic community.

Rising to the challenge has not happened without conflict and controversy. “This is a rapid-fire change,” says Reginald Stuart, a journalist and Nashville native, “and southern towns don’t change fast. They’re being pushed and pushed.”

cross-cultural strengths, like Seattle or Portland?”

While the answer is unclear, a city still struggling with black and white racial issues is also learning how to cope with new strains of diversity. Among the first group in Nashville to feel the convergence of immigrants and refugees were local businessmen who were readily employing the droves of newcomers arriving in the city looking for jobs.

During the 1990s, the metropolitan area added 260,000 jobs, mainly due to the establishment of Nissan, Saturn and Dell manufacturing plants, and employers were overjoyed to tap into the abundant supply of immigrants and refugees—even if they didn’t speak English—to work in factories, on construction sites and in restaurants and stores. Nashville-based Gaylord Entertainment, America’s fastest-growing specialty lodging and entertainment company, which has

workers even if they don’t speak English,” says Garrett Harper, who was research director at the Nashville Chamber of Commerce before joining the Visitors Bureau. “Employers welcomed the foreign-born and whether the employers were good entities or exploiters, they’d say that having this workforce was a good thing for Nashville. There was the idea that everyone was a winner, and the foreign-born weren’t considered a great burden. Even if there wasn’t always a welcoming, there also wasn’t anything negative.” Some business leaders even suggested that the economy and population growth would have faltered if not for the foreign-born workers who took jobs unfilled by Americans.

But the immigrant workers also brought problems with them: poverty, illegal status and language barriers all took their toll when these newcomers arrived on Nashville’s doorstep. Currently, eighteen percent of the

foreign-born population in Nashville lives below the federal poverty level (\$17,050 for a family of four in 2000), almost double the rate for the total city population. Almost half of the foreign-born population speaks limited

“Intensive Survival Spanish for Law Enforcement.” But the course costs \$120 and provides only limited skills, and there are complaints that officers are often ineffective in working with the foreign-born community because of language barriers. In 2000, Hispanics staged a protest when two local policemen inadvertently gunned down a Korean merchant who was attempting to foil a pair of armed robbers.

City leaders, especially businessmen, realized that the city was undergoing major cultural, social and civic changes and called for help. Garrett Harper was working at the Chamber of Commerce in 2000 when he became the principal architect of a request to the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement for a \$375,000 grant to undertake a three-year pilot venture called “Building the New American Community (BNAC) Initiative.”

Nashville was one of three cities, including Lowell, Massachusetts and Portland, Oregon chosen in 2001 to receive the grant and become an experimental integration site. The initiative stemmed from the absence of a national immigrant policy that might otherwise help governments and civil society unaccustomed to the influx of newcomers to respond in a positive manner.

The BNAC Initiative is a joint project of five national organizations: the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Urban Institute, the

National Immigration Forum, the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center and the Migration Policy Institute. It was primarily funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement and received additional funding from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Carnegie Corporation of New York also provided support to the National Immigration Forum, the Migration Policy Institute and the National Conference of State Legislatures for their work on BNAC. Says Geri Mannion, chair of the Corporation’s Strengthening U.S. Democracy program, “It is important, in the Corporation’s view, to develop *immigrant* policies aimed at integrating newcomers into our national life—not just *immigration* policies dealing with who can come here and who can’t, and in what numbers—because helping newcomers to become full participants in our democracy will help us keep our nation vibrant and strong.”

Demetrios Papademetriou, president of the Migration Policy Institute in Washington, D.C., says smaller cities like Nashville are discovering that public-private partnerships are vital to integrating the increasing numbers of immigrants.

Under BNAC, the Nashville New American Coalition (NNAC), an alliance of businesses, social service agencies and immigrant and refugee activist rights groups, was formed to integrate the foreign born into the political, social and economic life of the city. NNAC, sponsored by the Nashville Chamber of Commerce and sixteen organizations representing immigrants and refugees, specifically identified the workplace as the key arena for integration and focused on involving the entire community—not just immigrants and refugees—in the integration process.

“Immigrant integration is not just a one-way process,” says Ann Morse,



PHOTO BY ANNE FARRIS

**Theresa Harmon, a spokeswoman for the Tennesseans for Responsible Immigration Policies (TRIP).**

English. Three-fourths are not citizens and, therefore, are civically isolated and politically disenfranchised. The public school superintendent, a Cuban refugee, has increased the number of ESL classes for a student body that speaks 80 different languages. But the increases cannot keep pace with the demand, and the number of classes and teachers is woefully lacking.

The police department began hiring Hispanic officers in the 1990s and now offers an online course entitled

program director of the Immigrant Policy Project for the National Conference of State Legislatures and BNAC program manager. “What this project proved is that integration is a complex, multifaceted, long-term process that involves an entire community including employers, schools, neighborhoods, places of worship and government agencies. Nashville was unique because of the commitment from the business community, but it reflects a national trend. Most businesses recognize we’re running out of workers.”

NNAC worked in four areas: business development, citizen and civic participation, research and leadership and capacity building. Nashville Metro Social Services and the Tennessee Department of Human Resources was also involved in the project. The organization’s community-building efforts included immigrant voter education, recertification for foreign-trained professionals, leadership training and youth development. NNAC also provided technical and management assistance to community immigrant and refugee organizations such as Kurdish Human Rights Watch, the Somali Community Center of Nashville, the Nashville Egyptian Community, the Sudanese Humanitarian Organization, the International Lao-American Organization and Iraqi House. The city now has two Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.

“Nashville leaders welcomed and organized them, then immigrant leaders continued the process,” says State Representative Robert W. Briley, the Democratic Majority Floor Leader and grandson of a former Nashville mayor who spearheaded the consolidation of the Nashville and Davidson County governments in 1963. Briley represents neighborhoods in Nashville where about 20 percent of his constituents are foreign born.

NNAC placed added emphasis on reaching out to employers, who had lit-

tle experience with immigrant workers, to teach them about different social and cultural practices that could affect the workplace. It also published two brochures: *How Employers Can Expand and Diversify Their Workforce* and *Guidebook for Employers of International Workers*.

NNAC also helped immigrants and refugees to navigate the complex, bureaucratic process of gaining proper credentials and licenses to pursue jobs and addressed challenges facing foreign-trained professionals in gaining U.S. certification by identifying barriers and by raising the issue with state legislators and the governor’s staff.

“Nashville is the only community I know in the United States where the Chamber of Commerce and the business community have stepped up and said ‘Let’s make this work,’” says Frank Sharry of the National Immigration Forum.

Another of NNAC’s initiatives, the “Board Bank,” prepared refugee and immigrant leaders to participate on boards and commissions of local government and nonprofit organizations. Tahir Hussain of the National Kurdish Forum and a member of the Board Bank, now serves on the board of the local public broadcasting television station and is a graduate of Leadership Nashville, a 30-year-old initiative to train leaders.

“NNAC allowed us to build relationships with the Nashville leaders,” Hussain says. “Still, if I said everything was perfect in Nashville, that would not be accurate. Sometimes we have to be aggressive and fight for our rights. But once we start talking, we are allowed to be part of the city and we feel connected to the mainstream.” Hussain is also participating in a networking project called The Davidson Group, first created in 1980 to address black-white racial tensions, that matches Nashville

mentors with individuals from racial and ethnic minorities.

### Ongoing Debates

Tahir Hussain hopes that one day a Kurd can be elected to the city council or state legislature and it may take a high-profile political move like that to help some Nashville natives completely grasp and understand the change afoot in their city. Although immigrants



PHOTO BY ANNE FARRIS

**State Rep. Robert W. Briley represents neighborhoods in Nashville where about 20 percent of his constituents are foreign born.**

and refugees have a strong and pervasive presence in Nashville working as teachers, construction workers, doctors, parking lot attendants, businessmen, landscapers and housekeepers, among other professions, the general public still does not seem to fully grasp the sheer numbers and diversity of the city’s new residents even though, for example, the city has three Spanish radio stations, along with three Spanish and one Chinese newspaper.

That seemed particularly true in May 2001 when Tennessee became the first state in the nation to allow immigrants, both documented and undocumented, to receive a driver’s license. With that single piece of legislation, immigrants suddenly became a water-

cooler topic in Nashville because the city was instantly tagged as a welcoming haven with an open-door policy for foreigners. Efforts began almost immediately to repeal the law when grumbling increased about lengthy lines at driver test centers and immigrants using the license as formal identification.

Public reaction to the new law birthed two new vibrant, yet opposing grassroots movements—one to limit the flow of undocumented immigrants and

Locke says. “It’s a win-win deal for the employers and illegal aliens, and a losing deal for everyone else. We’re subsidizing many legal immigrants as well.”

The immigration control argument has been fueled by two local talk radio hosts including Phil Valentine, who ran unsuccessfully for Congress and published a book advocating conservative values with a chapter entitled, “Illegal Immigration is Dangerous to This Country.” Valentine recently

putrid real quick. There’s a lot of ignorance that they are taking away jobs and influencing our heritage. It’s a new form of racism,” adds Briley, who at 39, is barely old enough to remember when Nashville was one of the first cities to integrate its lunch counters and high schools. “It’s politically acceptable to be racist against immigrants in some parts of this city even when it’s not politically acceptable to be racist against blacks, or at least not openly,” he concludes.

“Nashville is the only community I know in the United States where the Chamber of Commerce and the business community have **stepped up** and said ‘Let’s make this work,’” says Frank Sharry of the National Immigration Forum.

another to help integrate newcomers into society. Each group was as zealously driven as the other and the immigrant and refugee debate in Nashville became loud and, at times, vicious.

One group voicing opposition to ongoing immigration is Tennesseans for Immigration Control, whose spokeswoman is Donna Locke. “Tennessee is on the road to bankruptcy because of massive, out-of-control immigration and because of the magnet for illegal aliens that Tennessee has made itself,” says Locke, adding her view that pro-immigrant groups that help newcomers after their arrival, along with the money and resources dedicated to their assistance, attract large concentrations of immigrants to the South.

“We’re getting illegals directly from their countries of origin, and we’re getting illegals from other states because of the driving privileges that Tennessee offers, because of a free or nearly free health-care program that Tennessee citizens are paying to provide and because of employers willing to hire illegal aliens,”

aired his show live from Washington, D.C. as Congress debated a law that forbids undocumented immigrants from receiving drivers’ licenses and he regularly features guests like U.S. Representative Marsha Blackburn, a Tennessee Republican who was elected on an immigration-control platform.

One topic leading the talk show agenda is the recent national attention garnered by a county judge in a town near Nashville who ordered a Hispanic mother to learn English or relinquish custody of her 11-year-old daughter. The judge has since retracted his original order, but the case, centered in a largely white suburban town where the number of Hispanics has doubled in the last four years, carries all the overt ramifications of cultural misunderstandings.

The fevered pitch of the immigration debate has some established Nashville natives cringing. “It’s anti-immigration to a degree that is frightening to me,” says Representative Briley. “Once that debate starts, it becomes

Theresa Harmon is a spokeswoman for Tennesseans for Responsible Immigration Policies (TRIP), which she says was formed in reaction to the state’s issuance of drivers’ licenses, which she calls “our de facto national ID,” and “a passport to legitimacy.” Harmon counters the charge of racism in regard to immigrants, saying, “It doesn’t have anything to do with racism. What gives anyone a right to break our laws? Meaning, what is unclear about the word ‘illegal’? What we’re seeing is a Balkanization of our laws. Immigrants keep their culture and language, stay in an enclave and do not assimilate. They need to fit into our culture and not make us fit into theirs. We didn’t make these concessions for immigrants in the past. Why should we make them now?”

“Everyone says we need immigrant workers for the economy,” Harmon continues. “If that were true, California would have the greatest economy in the world and we all see that’s not the case. When do you say enough is enough? Americans are the most generous

people on earth, but they want it to be up to them as far as when and where.”

Harmon was reared in a white middle-class Nashville neighborhood south of the downtown where many of the foreign born have congregated and where Rauf Ary operates his market. “This looks nothing like the Nashville I grew up in,” Harmon says. “All the signs are in Spanish. There is no English spoken here. We need to do something about this.”

Three years ago, she moved her mother out of the neighborhood and sold her childhood home. “Despite what you hear, blacks and whites have gotten along here,” she says. “But now the illegals are taking over the jobs that belong to blacks and legal Mexicans. I’m seeing white and black flight when Hispanics move into the neighborhoods.”

### **Toward a National Policy on Immigrants?**

While local groups have formed to limit immigrant migration, other coalitions were created to strengthen immigrant and refugee rights (a pattern that is being repeated in other communities, as well as nationally). One group, the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC), was established to stave off a repeal to the driver’s license law. “There was a backlash to the law, but it helped push our group forward. Since then, it’s made us more organized,” says David Lubell, who moved to Nashville from his native New York to become TIRRC state coordinator. He said the organization does not believe immigrants should be undocumented citizens and endorses a comprehensive national immigration policy to address the documentation and other needs of immigrants.

The driver’s license law, however, was revised in 2004 and the new version makes Tennessee the first of two

states, including Utah, with a two-tiered system of issuing two different drivers’ permits—one for legal citizens and another certificate for driving for undocumented citizens. The certificate cannot be used for identification. Because in 2005 Congress passed the Real ID Act, which requires states to issue drivers’ licenses only to legal citizens, other states are looking at Tennessee’s system as an example of future facilitation and structure. A number of governors, however, including Vermont’s Republican governor, Jim Douglas, have voiced concerns about the bureaucracy that the Real ID Act may end up creating, and the

**“This looks nothing like the Nashville I grew up in,” says Theresa Harmon.**

fact that it may impose an unfunded federal mandate on the states.

During this year’s legislative session, Tennessee delegates have considered a slew of bills that both limit and expand immigrants’ rights and benefits. Five bills, endorsed by Harmon and TRIP, would require driver’s license exams to be given only in English, prohibit undocumented immigrants from receiving state social services, require state employees to report undocumented workers to federal authorities, prohibit immigrants from possessing handguns and repeal the driver’s certificate. Four other bills, endorsed by Lubell and TIRRC, would extend the drivers’ certificate duration, give legal immigrants more access to drivers’ licenses and increase funding for ESL teachers in public schools.

Tennessee’s active calendar of divisive legislation dealing with immigrants exemplifies how state and local governments are struggling to chart their own course through these troubled waters in the absence of an overarch-

ing national policy on immigrant integration. Many in the general public are also concerned about these issues: a national survey of likely voters released in March 2005 showed overwhelming and intense support for bipartisan federal legislation that would allow foreigners and undocumented immigrants to obtain work permits and earn their way to citizenship.

While opposing amnesty for undocumented workers, President George W. Bush has said that immigrants and refugees should be allowed to obtain legal work permits. Building on that idea, a bipartisan coalition of U.S. senators, led by Edward M. Kennedy and John

McCain, have introduced legislation that, among other provisions, would create a pathway to earned legalization for many undocumented immigrants.

In response to the growing awareness and demand for a unified national policy on immigrants, the Migration Policy Institute has convened a bipartisan task force of leaders and experts concerned with and affected by immigrants. “While the United States, with its immigration heritage, has long been a world leader in welcoming and integrating newcomers, there is a growing gap today between our official immigration policies and realities on the ground,” the Institute’s task force statement proclaims. “Immigration issues are complex with wide-ranging consequences that span individual rights, the rule of law, the way our cities and labor markets operate, American competitiveness, national security and the unique character of the United States in the world.”

“Immigration issues are also controversial and little consensus exists on

key policy questions,” the statement continues. “Part of the explanation for this controversy and political division owes to the fact that immigration policy debates are often poorly informed, polarized and narrow. The ambition of this task force is to inform and broaden those debates.”

The need for adopting national policies is clear to many, including David Lubbell of TIRRC. He says, “It’s

ity and to determine how to better ease the transition for Nashville’s foreign-born arrivals. The mayor plans to use the study in a performance audit of the city/county Social Services Department to improve the level of services to foreign-born residents.

“The fact that the local government commissioned this study shows that they are concerned with understanding the perspective of the immigrants and the social service providers,” says Dan Cornfield of Vanderbilt University, the study’s principal investigator.

The study, which surveyed 64 social service organizations and conducted 16 focus groups of 137 immigrants, found that a majority of social service providers operated from outside the immigrant community and offered services mainly in English. The study also compared services to those in Atlanta, Charlotte and Memphis and recommended that Nashville adopt some of the best practices found in those cities such as Charlotte’s establishment of a Mayor’s Advisory Board on immigrant issues.

Today, Nashville is a handbook for the nation, an index of mistakes and gains. It is certainly a much more exotic and cosmopolitan city, an eclectic collection of international food, art and entertainment. Three Hispanic-themed films were featured in this year’s Nashville Film Festival. Austin Peay State University opened a Hispanic Cultural Center this year and an exhibit at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts includes the star-spangled couture of Mexican-native designer Manuel. The country music duo Big and Rich has incorporated bilingual rap into their musical repertoire.

But a poll conducted by Middle Tennessee State University in 2002 indicated that negative feelings about

immigrants and refugees are increasing in middle Tennessee. Hispanics are making life worse, according to forty-one percent of those surveyed, compared with twenty-eight percent in 1998. Negative reactions to Middle Easterners were reported by thirty-nine percent of respondents, while fifteen percent said the same about Asians. Seventy-four percent of those surveyed believed that U.S. immigration policy is “too open.”

Steven Camarota of the Center for Immigration Studies says Nashville’s reactions to the immigrant and refugee influx is an indicator of the mood in the rest of the nation. “Nationally, there’s always a divide between public opinion and the elite opinion,” he says, “and that’s the case in Nashville and other cities. The mayor, the businessmen and the preacher of the Presbyterian church may have one reaction to their arrival, but the local union president may say another thing.”

So as Nashville is forced to confront a critical crossroads in its history, the perennial question nags: Will the “Tocquevillian paradise” teeter as state budgets are pinched and social service demands increase? Can the city’s economy sustain and tolerate an open-gate policy? Will it provide a blueprint for national immigration reform? Can the city become a truly diverse compendium of mixed races and cultures?

The answer is still unfolding before the eyes of those witnessing history in the making. One of them is Carolyn McKenzie, the mother of a Tennessee soldier in Iraq who was unaware of the large presence of Kurdish refugees until the January polling stations were opened in Nashville. More than 3,700 people voted there. “This is not a normal Nashville kind of thing,” she said. “I think it’s divine intervention. We’re blessed to have them and to be able to have this opportunity.” ■

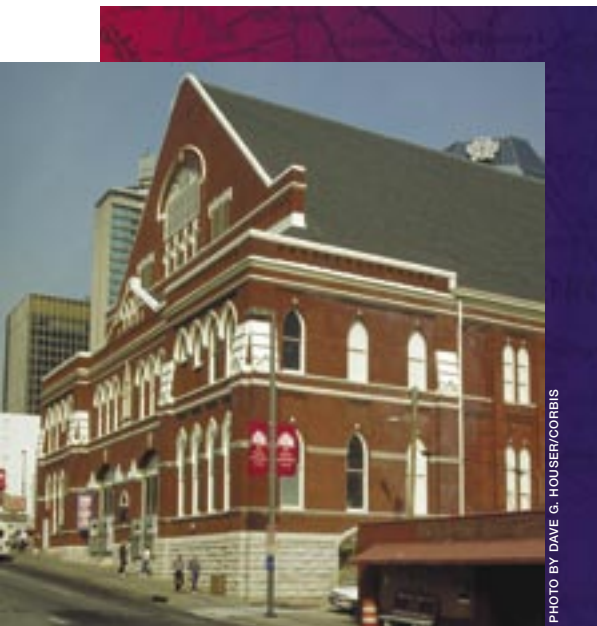


PHOTO BY DAVE G. HOUSER/CORBIS

**Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, former home of the Grand Ole Opry.**

a myth that if Tennessee passes laws to prevent immigrants from coming here then the state won't be affected by this national phenomenon. To throw out all immigrants is not humane, not feasible and it's not going to happen. What we need are federal guidelines.”

In the meantime, Nashville continues to seek the guidance and information it needs to address the immigrant influx in lieu of a national directive. In January 2005, a team of college and university researchers commissioned by Nashville/Davidson County mayor Bill Purcell released a year-long study to assess the city’s social service capac-

# CAREER

“V”



# AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION:

It's Not Just

Occupational

Education”  
Anymore

by LUCY HOOD

*Blending academics, career training and technology leads to an educational experience that's light-years away from the “home ec” and “shop” classes of past generations.*

## **East Ridge High School**

Jesse Henson is a quiet student, the type who easily falls through the cracks. He doesn't cause trouble, doesn't skip school, and he doesn't call attention to himself. For years, he's shown up—first at McBride Elementary School in Chattanooga, then East Ridge Middle School and now at East Ridge High School—and all that time, year after year, he consistently brought home failing grades. He studied, he said, and he tried to do the work, but his grades were so low that no one ever believed him. It wasn't until he entered the Construction Academy at East Ridge at the beginning of his junior year that his grades started to improve, and now he credits the program with dramatically changing his life. “I used to make 40s and 50s,” he said, ultimately squeaking by

in most of his classes with a barely passing grade, “and now my lowest grade is a 78.”

Henson is one of 14 students in Denise Hearn's Construction English class, where she's foregone Shakespeare and other works of literature in exchange for technical reading, instruction manuals, office memos, and other forms of reading and writing that her students are likely to use on the job as designers, contractors or welders. “I love literature,” she

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*Lucy Hood is a freelance writer living in Washington, DC. She has written extensively about education for the past nine years, winning state, national and international awards for her reporting. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, she also worked as a correspondent in Mexico and Central America.*

says, “and I’d love for the kids to have a passion for it. But they don’t.” What they do have is a need to learn practical skills that are relevant to their daily lives, so that’s what she teaches, and the results, she said, have been dramatic. “I get more class discussion with these students than I ever did with most of my other classes.”



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SCHOOLS FOR A NEW SOCIETY

tems around the country. Chattanooga is an SNS site; its East Ridge High School was the first campus in the Chattanooga school system to create a career academy—a school within a school that combines rigorous academics with vocational education. Twelve of Chattanooga’s seventeen high schools now have one or more career academies, and each new academy breeds a new group of converts, people like Hearn who have become true believers in this new educa-

brought the largely African American population of Chattanooga city schools and the largely white population of Hamilton County schools together under one superintendent. Since then, East Ridge has become more diverse. Of the 900 students who attended last year, more than a fifth, or twenty-two percent, was African American, and eight percent were English language learners representing seventeen nationalities. But Dedmon, who retired in May, said there are still reminders—often in the form of Confederate flags displayed in front of

## Vocational education caters to students at the education an option for

Hearn, who teaches English and social studies, was the kind of teacher who stood up in front of the classroom and lectured. “On a regular basis,” she says, “kids were telling me this is boring.” But she didn’t want to deviate from the way she had been doing things for twenty years, she didn’t want to leave her comfort zone and she was resistant to the changes that came when East Ridge High School implemented the Career Construction Academy three years ago as part of Carnegie Corporation of New York’s *Schools for a New Society* (SNS) initiative, which is designed to foster large-scale change in urban schools. With additional support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the five-year initiative—which emphasizes the idea that in order to improve education for all students, entire school districts must reinvent the way they deliver education—is providing \$60 million to seven school sys-



**Felicia Lee, student in East Ridge High School's Construction Academy.**

tional hybrid where a thesaurus and a welding torch go hand in hand.

East Ridge was an unlikely place to start a reform effort of any kind. Not all that long ago, the student population was almost exclusively white, and the surrounding community had a reputation for discriminating against minorities, says former principal Cheri Dedmon. That was before the 1996 merger that

neighborhood homes—that the school and the community it serves did not appear to be fertile ground for change.

Even so, change has come, not only in the form of racial and ethnic diversity, but also in the form of academic diversity, and that change is attributable in large part to a man named Ron Tanner, president of Chattanooga-based C&I General Contractors. Tanner is also active at the national level in fostering workforce development programs for the Association of General Contractors (AGC), and he was looking for a way to expand the pool of qualified electricians, plumbers, carpenters and bricklayers when he approached Hamilton County School administrators four years ago. He wanted them to know that there are well-paying jobs for high school graduates in the construction

trade, but the work is hard, and they require strong academic skills. “You talk to anybody who is going to hire someone,” he says, “and almost everyone is going to say, ‘I want them to be able to solve problems and to be able to communicate.’” And so it was that Tanner and Dedmon started to talk. Initially, with each clinging to his or her respective form of jargon, Dedmon said, the talks progressed very slowly. “It took a long time to realize we wanted the same thing,” she said. In the end, they created what has become an award-

practical skills he’s learning in his vocational classes. And, he knows that “if I want to take vocational classes, I have to uphold my end here in the academics.” Collins plans to graduate in December, and when he does, he intends to go to a technical college, maybe join the U.S. Navy. He’s intrigued, he says, by the idea of underwater construction—upgrading bridges and deep-sea oilrigs.

Another student of the Construction Academy at East Ridge is Felicia Lee, who also feels that the real-life-oriented classes have given her both an academic

Chattanooga was once located at a critical juncture on the Western and Atlantic Railroad, and for decades it thrived as a railroad hub connecting East to West. Surrounded by mountains rich with coal and iron, it was also a thriving industrial town, and its reliance primarily on industry and to a lesser extent the railroad carried it through good times and bad—post-war revivals and the Great Depression—up until the 1960s. By then, the train had been eclipsed by the automobile, and the city’s industrial and manufacturing base had dwindled to a fraction of its former self, leaving behind a stream of contaminants that in 1969 earned Chattanooga the dubious honor of being the most polluted city in the nation. The city acted quickly to clean up the environment, but it continued to face economic woes, and with the onset of the Civil Rights movement, racial tensions ran high. Since the early 1990s, however, there’s been a renaissance of sorts in Chattanooga, one that includes a revival of the city’s downtown area, an expansion of the service sector and efforts have been made to bridge the gap between the city’s black and white populations.

Against this backdrop, city and county leaders voted in 1996 to merge the two school systems serving students in the city of Chattanooga and surrounding Hamilton County, and Superintendent Jesse Register was lured away from his job at the Iredell-Statesville schools in North Carolina to run the new school district known as Hamilton County Schools. “They were two 20,000-student school systems,” he said, “one urban and high poverty, the other suburban and middle class.” One was also largely African American and the other largely white, and Register inherited a pending desegregation complaint from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights demanding that he integrate the schools.

—in many ways—no longer  
bottom end of the  
spectrum... it has become  
all students.

winning vocational program that does just what both of them wanted to begin with: it prepares students for the workforce, it prepares them for apprenticeships and it prepares them for college.

As for student Zac Collins, he wanted none of the above. He simply wanted to be out of school. He’d failed the fourth and seventh grades, and being “out” of school for him meant dropping out. And that’s what he would have done, he says, if it hadn’t been for the Construction Academy. “I would’ve gotten my GED, if anything,” says Collins who admits that he’s made mistakes in life. He failed the fourth and seventh grades, he says, because he was lazy, but he also has a very genuine dislike for academics. “I don’t like school,” he explains. But he does like the hands-on work of welding, carpentry and other

boost and a vision of her future—she hopes to become an architect. Of her experiences in the Construction Academy she says, “When you have things you get to work with hands on, it makes you more interested and excited about going to class.” Felicia, who struggled through the earlier grades of school, adds that before she entered the Construction Academy, “I didn’t care, I didn’t want to go to school, I didn’t want to learn. But now, I feel that I’ve progressed a lot.”

### **Chattanooga**

Founded on a bend in the Tennessee River, Chattanooga is located in the southeastern part of the state. A little farther south, and Chattanooga would be the fourth largest city in Georgia instead of the fourth largest city in Tennessee.

Hence one of his first reform efforts was the creation of a pupil assignment plan that included the creation of 15 magnet schools aimed at drawing white and black students across their traditional boundary lines. “It was either that or busing,” he said, “and [busing] didn’t make sense with the landscape, the rivers and the mountains.”

Since then, Hamilton County school administrators have implemented several initiatives to improve the quality of their schools and facilitate a merger that still—nearly ten years later—encounters undercurrents of resistance. “There are still people in this county,” Register said, “who would like to see it run the way it used to be.” But he must contend with the reality at hand, and to do that he’s recently adopted a two-pronged approach. One, he convinced the school board to implement a unified diploma, becoming one of the few public school systems in the country to do away with a more traditional three-tiered system that puts the college-bound kids on one path, vocational kids on another and a third group of kids on a track that’s somewhere in-between. Beginning with last year’s entering freshman, all high school students in Chattanooga and its suburbs will be prepared to enter college when they finish high school.

The second part of Register’s most recent reform effort is a multimillion-dollar overhaul of all seventeen high schools. So far the price tag is an estimated \$20 million, including \$8 million from Carnegie Corporation’s SNS initiative. In Chattanooga, a key component of the SNS work is vocational education—a term that harks back to the days of “home ec” and auto shop. Today, vocational education is much more sophisticated and educators refer to it as career and technology education, or CTE. “We had two vocational high schools,” Register says, adding, “The biggest problem was that they

were inaccessible, and we didn’t think we had a very good idea of what career and technology education should look like.” The two vocational schools were created in the late 1960s, and they became dumping grounds for kids who struggled with academics. They also removed students from what educator Valerie Copeland Rutledge calls “all the regular parts of school.” Rutledge taught in Hamilton county schools for twenty years before she became director of the Teacher Preparation Academy at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and she saw firsthand how the vocational program used to work. “It created a divide,” she said. Voc ed students could not participate in the gamut of school-wide activities that define the high school experience—student body elections, pep rallies, etc. “When all of these things were going on,” she says, “they were at vocational school or on the bus going to vocational school.”

Register and his staff now have a much better sense of what career and technology education should look like. It should take the form of a career academy, meaning it should be a small school setting, and it should foster a sense of belonging for students who might otherwise feel lost on a large sprawling campus. The academy should offer classes in all core subject areas as well as a range of career-oriented options, and it should have strong ties to the business community, much like East Ridge does with the AGC of East Tennessee. In addition, school administrators require that each academy be designed to attract students who reflect the demographics and academic achievement of the school as a whole to ensure that it doesn’t cater to a skewed number of students from any given race, ethnicity, or any particular rung on the grading scale. Beyond these parameters, however, it’s up to the individual school to determine what kind of academy it

wants, how many it wants and the timetable for creating each one. East Ridge is moving slowly and deliberately with two academies—one for ninth graders and the Construction Academy. But Central High School opted for a much faster track. It started with one ninth-grade academy in the 2003-2004 school year and added three more theme-based academies last year. For the current school year, there will be a total of twenty-seven academies—including seven ninth grade academies—at twelve of the county’s seventeen high schools.

### **Beyond Chattanooga**

The academy concept is part of a new trend in vocational education, one that responds to the demand for higher academic standards and the changing needs of a modern-day workforce. And it is similar in some ways to the trend that initially brought vocational education into the classroom at the turn of the 20th century, when there were widespread concerns that America’s youth was not prepared for the Industrial Revolution. At the time, apprenticeships were the norm and schools focused on the teaching of academic subjects and moral and civic values. “Learning the technical skills of a particular occupation still occurred on the job, not in the classroom,” write Norton Grubb and Marvin Lazerson in their 2004 book, *The Education Gospel* (Harvard University Press, 2004). That began to change, the authors say, with the convergence of three key developments: a precipitous drop in the youth labor movement, the declining use of apprenticeships and the Industrial Revolution itself. By mid-century, vocational education had become a crucial component of the comprehensive American high school. In fact, the authors note, “It created the comprehensive high school,” which, in the years following World War II, was “the citadel of American democracy, defending the



**What students sometimes need most is to learn practical skills that are relevant to their daily lives.**

American way of life and expressing the triumph of education.”

But in recent years, “the high school has lost its luster,” argue Grubb and Lazerson, and vocational education has been losing ground to the push for higher standards, which began in 1983 when the National Commission on Excellence in Education released the report *A Nation at Risk*. The report famously warned that deteriorating standards were leading to a “rising tide of mediocrity” in American education, and ever since, policymakers have made academic standards a top priority. In their effort to help young Americans become more successful students who are better prepared to participate in an increasingly knowledge-based economy, politicians and educators have implemented the use of accountability measures and standardized tests, initially on a piecemeal basis and later, with the No Child Left

Behind Act of 2001, as nationwide policy. But critics like Grubb and Lazerson say that crucial aspects of a high school education—including vocational education—have been overlooked by the dual strategies of testing and accountability.

Some efforts to upgrade vocational education were far enough along that they simply adapted to the onset of standards-based reform, says Betsy Brand, director of the Washington, DC-based Youth Policy Forum. While educators focused almost exclusively on language and math, however, many vocational education programs floundered. “There are only so many hours in the day,” Brand explains. “But people have kind of gotten over this big hump of standards,” she notes. “We realize we have to change instruction, because that’s what it really comes down to, and we could use a lot of the approaches of CTE to improve instruction and to

make it more relevant and meaningful to kids.” In short, educators are beginning to see how vocational education can help—not hinder—their efforts to improve test scores and graduation rates. Brand calls it a “reemergence.” Gene Bottoms of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), calls it an “awakening.” Either way, it’s a renewed effort—at least in some places—to make vocational education a key component of high school reform.

“Quality CTE can play a major role for some youngsters,” Bottoms says. “It can help them see the reason for taking more demanding academics. It gives them a way to see a goal through high school. And, increasingly, it’s a way to link together high school and postsecondary studies.” Bottoms is the director of a high school reform program called High Schools That Work (HSTW), a SREB initiative. Launched in 1987, it urges high schools to follow 10 key principles, including a commitment to vocational education and high academic standards. It also calls on teachers and administrators to keep score—not only by analyzing student performance data, but also by way of extensive teacher and student surveys. “One of the important things about the HSTW model,” says Betty Jordan of the West Virginia Department of Education, “is that it encourages folks to use multiple sources of data to make decisions.” The student survey alone asks—among other things—about the kinds of courses students are taking, how much reading is involved, if they stand in front of class to make presentations and if vocational teachers incorporate math skills in their lesson plans. West Virginia adopted the SREB format as its official blueprint for high school reform in the mid 1990s, and ever since there’s been a gradual improvement in test scores and graduation rates. “We’re really making an impact on school culture,” Jordan says.

High Schools That Work is one of several models that have evolved in the past ten-to-twenty years to upgrade vocational education for a 21st century society. Career academies, much like the ones in Chattanooga, are another. And a third is known as pathways. The pathways approach, which is not affiliated with any particular organization, calls on students to follow a career path—or a major—while they're in high school. In Oregon, where pathways are used extensively throughout the state, the process begins in the freshman and sophomore years. That's when "rich career information is given to students so they can get a handle on the idea that some day 'I might have to work,'" says Jim Schoelkopf of the Oregon Department of Education. At the end of their sophomore year, students select a career major to pursue for the next two years. They may pick from six career areas (such as Arts and Communications or Business and Management), and the goal is to provide students with enough information and enough firsthand experience to help them make wise decisions when they graduate. "They may find they don't want to do something" Schoelkopf said, "and that's learning. Let's give them an early exposure, but not track them."

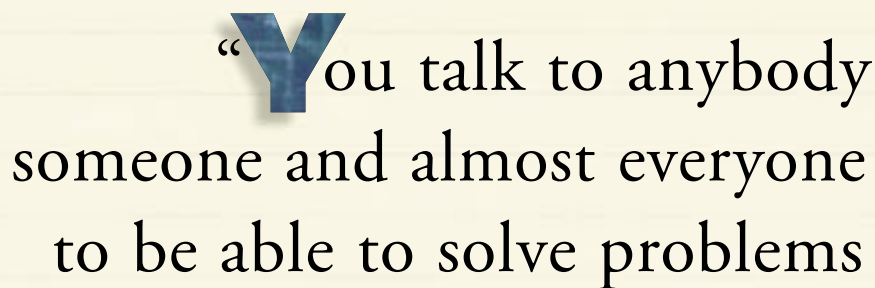
Regardless of the approach—be it High Schools That Work, career academies or pathways—there are two common themes in this new form of career and technology education. One is an emphasis on academic standards and the other is a much broader definition of vocation, one that includes a vast array of courses that teach kids how to become nurses, doctors, architects, builders, teachers, dentists, marketing executives and veterinarians. Vocational education—in many places—no longer caters to students at the bottom end of the education spectrum, says Constancia Warren, senior program officer and

director of Carnegie Corporation's Urban High School Initiatives. In these places, it has become an option for all students. "This is for a broader range of kids than most people think," Warren said. "And it's important that it be for a broader range of kids. Some very bright students cannot connect to more traditional instruction and some supposedly not-very-bright students may discover new talents and a sense of purpose in these schools."

### Central High School

Eric Summer will be a senior at Central High School when classes resume this fall, and it wouldn't be the

academies. One is Math, Technology and Science, which includes coursework in three pathways—engineering, environmental science and allied health; another is the Humanities, Fine Arts and Communications Academy, which includes courses in fine arts, journalism, public relations, creative writing and criminal justice; and the third is Technology, Communications and Business, which offers classes in marketing, information technology, finance and accounting. In addition, all three vocational academies provide classes in the core subject areas, but math, English, science and history often have a career focus.



“You talk to anybody  
someone and almost everyone  
to be able to solve problems

least bit surprising if he was the first one through the door when the first bell rang on August 15. "I've never in my life wanted to end my break and be in school," he said. "I almost don't want my summer break to start. I want to go straight into senior year." Summers is enrolled in the humanities academy at Central, where each circular wing of the 36-year-old building now has an academy that caters either to the ninth grade or one of three vocational themes. It started with a ninth grade academy two years ago, and going on the idea that what's good for the ninth grade is good for everybody, the school went to wall-to-wall academies last year. Now, students in 10th, 11th and 12th grades may choose between three career-oriented

The biggest difference for Summer, once a withdrawn, lackluster student, was the sense of belonging provided by the academy, and the astute eye of English teacher James Pinon, who knew how to reach Summer, draw him out and tap into his strengths. "You're not just a number anymore," says Summer, who last year was the junior class president. A staunch Republican, Summer now has plans to study law and become a politician. Another entering senior who has found a calling in Central's career academies is Nathan Newton. "I really want to own my own company," he says: a landscaping business, "probably here in Chattanooga." The inspiration for Newton's entrepreneurial spirit stems from his classes in the business

academy, where he credits three teachers in particular for encouraging him to participate not only in class, but in various clubs and competitions. Last year, for example, he was vice president of Future Business Leaders of America and president of Distributive Education Clubs of America. "Before we were just a number," Newton says. "Now, in business school, we're all associates."

Central High School had 1,060 kids last year. Of those, thirty-nine percent were recipients of free or reduced-price lunch, forty percent were African American and sixty percent white. But just as important was the geographic breakdown: fifty percent suburban,

istrators and the vast majority of teachers at Central, but a mere two years ago during the year-long planning phase, that was not the case. High school teachers tend to work independently, explains Finley King, lead teacher at Central's business academy. They're not known for working together, he says, and they're not used to being accountable to each other in a team-like setting. So, "you start moving classrooms, and you get some disgruntled teachers." One of those was Ora Moore,

flourished. She now teaches English 10, 11 and 12, each with a business spin. When she teaches Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, for example, she emphasizes the entrepreneurial roles of the two leading women in the play. For writing assignments that call for comparisons and contrasts, she asks her students to go



PHOTO BY MECKY/GETTY IMAGES

## who is going to hire is going to say, I want them and to communicate.”

twenty percent rural and thirty percent urban. Just ten years ago Central was suburban and rural, but not urban, and it catered to a largely white student body. It's one of the places where some people would like to go back in time to the days when there were two distinct school systems and bringing the two worlds together has not always been an easy task. But one of the things that has helped create a sense of belonging is the academy concept, and one of the most immediate payoffs has been a dramatic drop in discipline problems. In the first semester of the 2003-2004 school year, there were 342 suspensions; during the first semester of last year, there were 142.

The benefits of going to wall-to-wall academies now seem obvious to admin-

who had been teaching in Chattanooga schools for thirty-six years. She could not envision moving into the leaky portable building where she now teaches English to business academy students. For most of her career, she'd been teaching sophomore English, and she had absolutely no desire to change. The humanities academy with a focus on language arts, she thought, would have been acceptable, but she almost quit when she was assigned to the business academy. "It was very disconcerting to me," she says, comparing it to being stranded in the Tennessee River. "I don't like water, and I don't know how to swim," she explains. "And I didn't know if I was going to drown or not."

Moore did not drown. In fact, she

shopping and to create a visual and oral presentation examining the pros and cons of two similar products. And her 10th graders practice their writing skills with business letters and office memos. "Kids do like it," she says, "and it does help them." As for Moore herself, she's gone from skeptic to advocate in one short year. She likes the cohesive and cooperative nature of the business academy faculty, and, ironically, she likes her newfound freedom. Since she's the only English teacher in the academy, she pretty much develops her own curriculum. Even the portable classroom has its perks. "If we do away with the leaking roof and the ants," she says, "it's kind of nice to be away from the noise of the big house." ■

# Recent Events

## Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the Future of Journalism Education is Launched

Three years ago, the Corporation began a dialogue with various deans of journalism schools to see how America's major research universities could improve journalism curricula and thus challenge both students and the news industry at this pivotal time of change for American journalism. Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation, asked five journalism leaders at America's most prestigious universities (see below) to develop a vision for journalism education in the 21st century. Gregorian created a partnership with Hodding Carter, president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation,

one of America's leading foundations focused on journalism, so that both philanthropic institutions could contribute their expertise and experience to the more than \$6 million undertaking, which is called the Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the Future of Journalism Education.

The Carnegie-Knight Initiative involves three distinct efforts:

1. **Curriculum Enrichment** that will integrate the schools of journalism more deeply into the life of the university.
2. **News 21 Incubators:** annual national investigative reporting projects overseen by campus professors and distributed nationally through both traditional and innovative media.
3. **The Carnegie-Knight Task**

**Force**, focusing on research and creating a platform for educators to speak on policy and journalism education issues.

On May 26, 2005, the initiative was formally launched at the Corporation's offices, with a press event and luncheon discussion attended by Gregorian, Carter, and the five journalism deans and director along with representatives of the participating universities. More information about the initiative can be found on the Corporation's web site at <http://www.carnegie.org/sub/program/initiative.html>.

In June, Gregorian hosted a reception at the Corporation for ten students from the schools involved in the initiative who had been chosen to participate in a lead-off program for the effort: a one-time summer institute at ABC News, designed to provide the students with the opportunity to experience and observe all the constellations of the ABC Network from *World News Tonight* to ABC Radio to ABC.com. As part of the institute, the students were also trained in ABC News ethics and procedures and on new digital equipment that permits both taping and editing of news material.

In August, the Corporation announced that five additional journalism schools at major research universities had been asked to submit proposals for curriculum enrichment aimed at revitalizing journalism education. Those schools are the College of Journalism and Communications, University of Florida; Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland; Missouri School of Journalism, University of Missouri; S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University; and the School of Communication, University of Texas at Austin.



PHOTO BY EVEROD NELSON

**Vartan Gregorian, President of Carnegie Corporation of New York, greets students participating in the Summer Institute at ABC News.**

Commenting on the scope and intent of the Carnegie-Knight Initiative, Vartan Gregorian said, "Schools of journalism at exemplary American research universities, where the academic disciplines still coexist, are positioned to draw upon the full intellectual and educational resources of the university environment to help produce the skilled, responsible, expert, knowledgeable and highly proficient journalism leaders that our society—indeed the world—has need of, especially in these complex and challenging times. Our democracy depends on journalism to keep its institutions challenged and responsive to the public's needs, and the quality of the profession demands the best a university can offer."

## 2005 Academic Leadership Awards

Support for higher education has a long history at Carnegie Corporation of New York. In particular, the Corporation has traditionally recognized the importance of leadership in fostering curricular, administrative and social change on American campuses. Back in 1959, under the presidency of educational visionary John Gardner, the grants program sought to be "as responsive as possible to the expressed concerns of college and university leaders" and to "lend itself to the kinds of giving which will strengthen the



PHOTO BY EVEROD NELSON

**Left to Right, Bottom: Ellen Katz, Trustee, Northwestern University; Vartan Gregorian, President, Carnegie Corporation of New York; Hodding Carter III, President and CEO, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Left to Right, Top: Alan Brinkley, Provost, Columbia University; David Klatell, Vice Dean, Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University; Don McQuade, Vice Chancellor, University of California at Berkeley; Max Nikias, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Southern California; Orville Schell, Dean, Graduate School of Journalism, University of California at Berkeley; Geoffrey Cowan, Dean, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Southern California; Loren Ghiglione, Dean, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University; John Haigh, Executive Dean, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; Alex Jones, Director, Joan Shorenstein Center for Press, Politics and Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; Eric Newton, Director of Journalism Initiatives, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; Merrill Brown, National Editorial Director and Coordinator, News 21; Susan King, Vice President, Carnegie Corporation of New York and National Coordinator, Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the Future of Journalism Education.**

institution in terms which the president considers necessary.”

In March 2005, the Corporation demonstrated a renewed commitment to this core goal by presenting its inaugural Academic Leadership Awards to three outstanding university presidents: Jared L. Cohon of Carnegie Mellon University, Henry S. Bienen of Northwestern University and Don M. Randel of the University of Chicago. (Randel will assume the presidency of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in July 2006). These leaders have been recognized for achievements in higher education that lift an institution from the ordinary to the exemplary, energizing not only the campus but also the larger community, engaging all in a broad sense of reform, purpose and commitment. Each honoree will receive \$500,000 to be used for their academic priorities. More than an award, this is an investment intended to further Carnegie Corporation’s long-standing goals for higher education by affording each president, in Gardner’s words, “money to do the things for which he could not get money elsewhere.”

For the past several years, the Corporation’s president and program officers have visited universities across the nation to obtain firsthand knowledge of their work. And they’ve seen, time after time, how engaged leadership sets a university apart. “These academic leaders have been articulate voices in defense of liberal arts, robust undergraduate education, the university’s role in K-12 education and commitment to their cities and communities,” said president Vartan Gregorian in making the awards. “All three have demonstrated the fact that true leadership is much more than effective management. They all believe in a tradition of academic excellence and

have proven that presidential leadership and faculty quality are the critical elements that distinguish one university from another.”

### **University-Level Education for Women in the Developing World: Questions for Public Policy—A Carnegie Challenge Paper is Launched**

In the developing nations of Africa, there is a growing understanding that women have an important role to play in helping their countries become full and active participants in the global community, including the worldwide economic marketplace. Still, there has been little documentation or research that articulates how individuals, communities and society are benefited when women in development become doctors, lawyers, professors and senior civil servants.

In order to encourage an international dialogue about ways to increase access to higher education for women in Africa and promote a research agenda that will document its benefits, Carnegie Corporation of New York recently released a Challenge Paper entitled *University-Level Education for*

*Women in the Developing World: Questions for Public Policy*, which explores relevant issues such as cost, cultural barriers and political will. To launch the report, the Corporation provided support to the Washington, D.C.-based Women’s Foreign Policy Group to host a roundtable discussion with leading experts on women and higher education that focused on the importance of university-level education for women in development. Participants included Edith Ssempala, the Ugandan Ambassador to the United States; Mary Kanya, the Swaziland Ambassador to the U.S.; and Barbara Herz, author of the Carnegie Challenge Paper. Audience members who joined in the discussion were a cross-section of national and international representatives from the foreign policy, educational, nonprofit, government and diplomatic communities.

“Education is, obviously, today, the foundation for women’s empowerment,” said Edith Ssempala. “It bridges the inequality gap between women and men. I know for sure that, personally [without higher education], I would not be addressing you now. I would not be in Washington. I

don’t know even where I would be: maybe in a remote village somewhere.”

Mary Kanya raised the issue of HIV/AIDS and the impact that it is having on all levels of education in sub-Saharan Africa, since it is now the leading cause of death in the region. “For example,” she said, because of AIDS-related factors such as children being removed from school to care for ill parents and family members, orphanhood, and even children not living long enough to complete their schooling, “in the Central African Republic and Swaziland, school enrollment is reported to have fallen by 20-36 percent.”

Barbara Herz, the economist who wrote the Challenge Paper, said, “We know that education is the single best way to accelerate a shift to smaller, healthier, better-educated families, and at the secondary level, the evidence for that is very strong. We also know that education empowers women. But, unfortunately, we don’t yet have the research evidence to make this case at the university level, and we don’t have the evidence on the broader social benefits. We can all see it and we believe it, but we need documented research results so that governments and international agencies will be prompted to invest more heavily in higher education for women in countries where they might need it the most.” She added, “Gender-fair women’s higher education can contribute not only to the transformation of women’s lives but also to the advancement of society itself.”

Copies of *University-Level Education for Women in the Developing World: Questions for Public Policy* can be downloaded from the Corporation’s web site at [http://www.carnegie.org/pdf/wom\\_edu\\_dev\\_world.pdf](http://www.carnegie.org/pdf/wom_edu_dev_world.pdf).



PHOTO BY RODNEY CHOICE

**From Left to Right: Susan King, Vice President, Public Affairs, Carnegie Corporation of New York; Patricia Ellis, Executive Director, Women’s Foreign Policy Group; Edith Ssempala, Uganda’s Ambassador to the U.S.; Mary Kanya, Swaziland’s Ambassador to the U.S.; and Barbara Herz, author of the Carnegie Challenge Paper.**

# Foundation Round up



## Aging Baby Boomers Concerned About Future Health and Financial Security

A new report by the Commonwealth Foundation asserts that almost seven-in-ten (69 percent) of all Americans between the ages of 50 and 70 support the idea of paying one percent of their wage earnings to a Medicare health account to help pay for long-term care services or uncovered health care expenses when they retire.

The report, *Will You Still Need Me? The Health and Financial Security of Older Americans*, is based on a survey of older adults about their health and financial concerns. The study found that a majority worried that their retirement income and savings will be inadequate for living and health care costs after they quit working. Almost half (48 percent) of older Americans have retirement savings of less than \$50,000. Nearly two-in-five (38 percent) have retirement savings of less than \$25,000.

The study also found that a strong majority of those from age 50 to 64 would like to participate in Medicare before they turn 65. Among wage earners between 50 and 64 years of age with incomes between \$25,000 and \$39,000, 31 percent indicated they were uninsured or had been without coverage at some point since turning fifty.

For more information, go to [www.cmwf.org](http://www.cmwf.org).

[www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com)

## Database of Public School Information Now Available Online

A new web site—[SchoolMatters.com](http://SchoolMatters.com)—provides free statistical data and analyses about public schools, districts and state education systems. It includes information about student achievement at the national and state levels and financial data for every school district along with student demographics such as class size and teacher qualifications.

The online database, the largest searchable collection of public education performance, was developed in response to the education community's need for an impartial and transparent analysis of American educational data. By making the information publicly available, educators and policymakers will be able to identify and track promising trends in school reform as well as compare state and national data. Equally important, parents will be able to compare information about local school districts with demographically similar school districts across the country.

[SchoolMatters.com](http://SchoolMatters.com) is a program of the National Education Data Partnership (NEDP), a collaborative effort of the Council of Chief State School Officers, Standard & Poors' School Evaluation Services and the Center for Educational Leadership and Technology Corporation. NEDP is supported by The Broad and Bill & Melinda Gates foundations.

For more information, go to [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com).



## Diversity Within the Academy Continues to be an Issue

According to a recent report from The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation called *Diversity and the Ph.D.*, African Americans and Hispanics remain significantly underrepresented in the highest echelons of the academic community.

While the two groups combined account for 32 percent of all American citizens in the typical age range of Ph.D. candidates (25-40), only 11 percent received doctoral degrees in 2003, the most recent year for which figures were available.

The latest information comes from a study of nationwide programs that seek to recruit and retain students of color in American doctoral programs. Researchers identified critical impediments to the success of these programs, including recent court challenges to affirmative action, reduced fellowship support and limited communication between the programs.

"We still have a great expertise gap in the United States," noted Robert Weisbuch, past president of Woodrow Wilson and a contributor to the report. "Our next generation of college students will include dramatically more students of color, but their teachers will remain overwhelmingly white."

The study was created through the foundation's Responsive Ph.D. initiative and received support from the Atlantic Philanthropies and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In fall 2005, the Responsive Ph.D., a consortium of 20 national research universities, will

release an overarching report on best practices and innovations in doctoral education that was supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Henry Luce Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts and Carnegie Corporation.

For more information, go to [www.woodrow.org](http://www.woodrow.org).



## Election Experts Offer Recommendations for Voting Reform

A working group of election law scholars and voting reform experts has released a series of practical recommendations for election reform in a report called *Balancing Access and Integrity: The Report of the Century Foundation Working Group on State Implementation of Election Reform*.

The report, presented at the 2005 annual meeting of the National Association of Secretaries of State, is intended to help state legislators and election officials improve voting procedures in time for the 2006 and 2008 elections. The goal of the working group is to ensure accuracy and integrity in the voting process and to guarantee that all eligible voters will be able to cast ballots and have their votes counted.

While the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 addressed some of the issues surrounding the flawed 2000 election, the Century Foundation's working group found that ambiguities and inconsistencies in election laws and procedures continue to exist and may cause problems in the future.

With the view that most election reform must be implemented at the state level, there is little chance of further imminent

action from Congress, and with HAVA mandating that many of the reforms be implemented by the end of this year, the working group looked at practical ways to solve the problems that HAVA may have inadvertently created.

The report suggests improvements for each phase of the voting process, including voter registration, provisional ballots, felon purges and testing and certification of voting systems. Chief among the recommendations is the necessity for establishing clear rules and procedures that can be easily understood by the voters and election workers.

For more information about the election reform recommendations, go to [www.reformelections.org](http://www.reformelections.org) or [www.tcf.org](http://www.tcf.org).

## INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

### Freeman Foundation Gives \$1.75 Million for Education in Tsunami-Affected Regions

The Institute of International Education (IIE), a world leader in international exchange, received a donation of \$1.75 million from the Freeman Foundation to support rebuilding educational resources in tsunami-affected areas of Thailand and in Aceh, Indonesia.

In Thailand, IIE/Southeast Asia will work with the Rajapranugroh Foundation and the Somdet Phra Thep's Charity Fund to reconstruct schools destroyed by the December 2005 tsunami and provide educational services to displaced students. In Aceh, IIE's partner organization, The Indonesian International Education Foundation (IIEF) will work with the Sampoerna Foundation to rebuild schools and to help high school students prepare for the national university entrance examination.

"Along with the rest of the world, the Freeman Foundation and its trustees have been immensely shocked and distressed at the havoc and loss of life in the countries of Southeast Asia that have resulted from this tsunami" said Houghton Freeman, Chairman of the Freeman Foundation. "As the Freeman Foundation's main mission is in the educational field, we feel it most appropriate that we do what we can to help alleviate some of the problems created in Southeast Thailand and in Aceh's educational sector by this terrible act of nature."

Sampoerna Foundation Chief Operations Officer Elan Merdy agreed. "We need to make sure that Aceh's children do not lose their right to a formal education because of the catastrophe that devastated their land. They have lost their homes; let us not have them lose their future, too. We need to work with other domestic and international organizations to restore Aceh's educational sector."

The Freeman Foundation is a U.S. private philanthropic organization that aims to improve understanding and to strengthen ties between the United States and the countries of the Pacific Rim.

For more information, go to [www.iie.org](http://www.iie.org).



### New Survey Probes America's Foreign Policy Concerns

Public Agenda, a nonprofit organization that conducts non-partisan public policy research,

has teamed up with *Foreign Affairs*, one of America's most influential publications on international relations, to create the new Public Agenda Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index. The Index will regularly explore the public's perceptions of America's role in the world on a wide range of issues. Unlike other surveys, the Index looks past the ups and downs of daily events and explores the public's underlying beliefs about America's role in the world, strategies for addressing foreign policy challenges and key concerns about the direction of U.S. international relations.

Results from the first Index find Americans worried about issues surrounding the United States' relationship with the Islamic world. Seventy-five percent of the country is concerned about losing trust and friendship abroad and growing hatred of America in Muslim countries; two-thirds feel the world has a negative view of the United States. More telling, one-in-ten actually used the word "bully" or "bullying," without prompting, to describe how America is viewed from abroad.

Asked to rank American security priorities, three-quarters give the United States a "C" grade or lower in protecting our borders. The report also mentions another important issue on people's minds—illegal immigration and the protection of American jobs—and includes a special note that the latter two problems are nearing a point where the public's concerns will be too strong to be ignored.

More information about the survey results and methodology are available at [www.publicagenda.org](http://www.publicagenda.org) or [www.foreignaffairs.org](http://www.foreignaffairs.org).



### Nonprofit Joins with Biotech Industry to Fight Neglected Diseases

Right now, less than 10 percent of health funding goes toward finding cures for the diseases that account for 90 percent of the world's disease burden. BIO Ventures for Global Health (BVGH), a nonprofit organization established in 2004, aims to change this by eliminating funding, market and information barriers that have in the past prevented biotechnology companies from investing in research for cures.

The new initiative stems from a \$5.4 million grant by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation that will help BVGH launch a series of business cases to assess and build market opportunities for the neglected diseases. Many biotechnology companies lack the capacity to evaluate developing world markets. BVGH will fill this void by developing new models for emerging markets that can be used by the industry. Its first effort will be to evaluate the market opportunity for tuberculosis vaccines.

BVGH is a nonprofit organization founded in 2004 by the Biotechnology Industry Organization with support from the Gates and Rockefeller foundations. It seeks to narrow the gap between biotechnology's great promise and the unmet health needs of the developing world.

For more information, go to [www.bvgh.org](http://www.bvgh.org).

# THE BackPage

*Pat Mitchell brings the perspective and experience of a distinguished three-decade career as a journalist, producer, and teacher to her leadership as president and CEO of PBS. During her five year tenure, PBS has strengthened the public service media mission to become the #1 most trusted source of news and information, #1 choice of America's teachers for multimedia content, #1 among parents of preschoolers for programs that focus on reading and school readiness, and in a recent Roper Poll, named the most trusted national institution in the country.*



On the day he signed the Public Broadcasting Act that would eventually lead to the creation of PBS and NPR, President Lyndon Johnson looked across a media landscape that had been described as a “vast wasteland” just a few years before, and issued a challenge. Pointing to what he called the “miracles of communication,” the challenge, the president said, “Was not making miracles . . . but whether those miracles could be managed for the public good.”

While it was an important challenge for the three-network, just-gone-color broadcasting world of 1968, Johnson's question is even more relevant today.

As we move through the fast evolving technological changes that will ultimately move us away from a linear network, analog broadcast-

ing world to the anywhere, anytime digital world of the future, the question remains: is the point of all this merely to find better and flashier ways to entertain, amuse, and distract ourselves? Is the promise just to be able to watch *American Idol* on our cell phones, download the latest episode of *SUV Riders from Hell* and catch up on the latest *O'Reilly Factor* on our Blackberries? Or is there a wider purpose to the media miracles of the digital age?

At PBS, we believe that the promises of the digital future are too powerful not to be used or managed to realize their fullest potential for the

age miracles for the public good.

That original vision has been realized in ways beyond anything John Gardner or Lyndon Johnson imagined. PBS and its 348 member stations touch the lives of citizens in countless ways. Seventy percent of American households tune in to watch our award-winning programs at some point every week, with an audience on any given night—even in this 500 channel universe—that is twice as large as our nearest cable competitors, including HBO. Our programming is complemented by PBS.org, which is the third most visited .org web site in the world,

sibilities of extending these new technologies to serve the public good.

## Why Not?

For instance, we wonder: why not use digital technology to help meet the growing educational needs in this country, such as the need to strengthen early childhood literacy and school readiness; the need to close learning gaps in math and science; and the need to train teachers in the use of new technologies so they can make full use of these innovative tools to better engage today's students who are multi-tasking and text-messaging their way through

## The Digital Future Initiative: PBS Envisions Tomorrow

by  
PAT MITCHELL  
President & CEO  
Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)

public good. It is a vision of broadcast media that has always been shared by Carnegie Corporation of New York. After all, it was Carnegie Corporation President John Gardner who created the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television back in the early 1960s to conduct a landmark study of how to improve public broadcasting, eventually proposing the creation of the Corporation for Public Television to expand federal funding of public television.

Based on Gardner's vision and Carnegie Corporation's work, PBS was created not to be a media business, but a not-for-profit media service—a public/private partnership, unique in this country's media landscape, supported in large part by the volunteer contributions of citizens writing checks. Our purpose is not to sell to the public. Our mission and purpose is to serve the public—in Lyndon Johnson's words, to man-

with learners of all ages visiting more than one million times a day to view 175,000 pages of content. And, as a result of 35 years of putting children and education first, PBS is also the top choice of American teachers for video in the classroom and a leading source of online lesson plans—not to mention the source through which more than two million Americans have received their GEDs.

Little wonder that when the American people were recently asked which institutions they trust by the Roper Public Affairs and Media Survey, Americans named PBS as their most trusted national institution—for the second year in a row.

Like every other media enterprise and every consumer of media, our imaginations race when we consider the possibilities for creativity and innovation that new digital technologies offer for our broadcasting. But our imaginations also race at the pos-

classes? Why not use the new digital technology to create a massive content library with educational value for learners of all ages, accessible to them anytime, anywhere and in the format most useful to them?

Who is in a better position to be the curators and creators of that library than PBS—with our long history in education, and with a national network of stations serving every community in every state?

We also wonder: why not use this technology to create a trusted public health information network that can be accessed anywhere and anytime, that will answer questions an aging America has on issues like diabetes, Alzheimer's, or the medication that has just been prescribed to us? And who is in a better position to create such a network than PBS—which already has the widest partnership among health professionals in America—thanks, in large part, to

programs like *The Forgetting*, about Alzheimer's disease, in which we asked local PBS stations to partner with health professionals in their community, resulting in a program with an impact exponentially greater than the broadcast alone, touching nearly 100 million Americans.

We also wonder: in this post-9/11 world of uncertainty in every community, why not develop that same technology to serve as a national emergency information network for officials and citizens that can provide first-responder instructions, evacuation routes and direct links to emergency care institutions in the event of natural or terrorist disaster? Who is capable of providing more reliable information than the organization already seen as the most trusted public institution in America?

We also wonder: has there ever been a greater need for a more informed and engaged citizenry to understand how complex global issues affect us all than there is today? Why not use the digital, mobile, virtual, personal world of the media of the future to also build highly engaged communities around the important work of strengthening the democratic values of this country as we attempt to export such values abroad? Is there any institution more respected as a balanced voice of public opinion than PBS? Every year, Corporation for Public Broadcasting surveys find that an overwhelming majority of Americans from all political affiliations perceive PBS as balanced, welcoming to liberal viewpoints, conservative viewpoints and everything in-between welcome. Who better to use digital media to boost civil society than the organization America trusts to moderate presidential debates?

For every commercial media company in America today, the obvious answer to the question, *Why not?* is because it doesn't pay, because the business model of commercial media demands that the programs they fund get ratings and make a profit. But with our unique

mission, our decades of experience and accomplishment, our leadership position both on the air and online, our vital presence in communities across America and our longstanding relationships with national and local institutions of all kinds—in addition to the trust we enjoy among the American people—PBS is uniquely poised today, not only to harness the power of these new media technologies to serve more people, but to act, in many ways, as the digital heart of America.

It is going to take a larger sense of our own vision to reconstitute ourselves from public broadcasting to public service media. But I believe so much in the potential of PBS and its member stations to use the transformative potential of digital technology to create positive change for the future that I have committed my last year as president of PBS to spreading this message and building this platform.

### **The Digital Future Initiative**

To help us envision this future and create a blueprint for new services, PBS has put together a small group of business and policy leaders called the Digital Future Initiative (DFI). Funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the DFI is led by former Netscape Chairman Jim Barksdale and former FCC Chairman Reed Hundt, and includes colleagues from member stations, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, National Public Radio and the Association of Public Television Stations.

By the spring of 2006, the panel will issue a report that will be the beginning of a national dialogue about how the assets of public broadcasting can be fully optimized to connect with the needs of citizens of all ages in every community. The real strength of the Digital Future Initiative is that it is not the start of a whole new future for PBS, but rather a continuation of the kind of

work we have underway in communities across America today and the unique contributions and skills for which PBS is most valued and known.

### **A Need for New Resources**

But if PBS and its member stations are going to be able to pursue this innovative vision for the future, we are going to need to find new resources, which is the greatest challenge to public television in America today. To put it in stark terms, PBS has about the same amount to invest in our entire national program service, from *Frontline* to *Nova* to *Mystery!* to *Nature* and 2,000 other hours, as HBO spends to promote—not produce, but promote—*The Sopranos*.

In the United Kingdom, British citizens pay an annual license fee on their televisions of more than \$200 to support the BBC. In Japan, it's \$240 per household. In America, we pay \$1 per person, per year for public television. All together, federal dollars account for about 15 percent of the funding for the public television system. The rest comes from significant support from foundations, corporations and "viewers like you." For every dollar of public money PBS invests, we leverage another three or four times that amount in private money.

So, the question remains, as we face this digital future: are we, as a democracy, dependent upon informed and engaged communities, willing to commit additional resources to ensure a vibrant and viable independent public service media enterprise now and in the future? The American people have already spoken on the issue: 82 percent of Americans who were asked rank PBS as the best value for their tax dollars, second only to national defense, and most agreed we need more funding, not less.

With public funding, PBS and its member stations are the best-posi-

tioned media enterprise to not only succeed in the digital future, but to lead it. Eighty-nine percent of our stations have already converted at least their transmission facilities to digital, in anticipation of the federal mandate for conversion by 2007. But we need help to convert the rest. When the DFI report is released, it will also include alternative models for public funding that could ensure PBS' future for years to come.

### **The Meaning of Democracy**

When Lyndon Johnson issued his challenge in 1968, public broadcasting found its reason for being in the so-called "scarcity rationale." Simply put, that means there is only so much of the analog spectrum, and since the airwaves belong to the public in the first place, some of the spectrum should be set aside for the public—which is how public media was born. But now that we're moving away from the finite analog spectrum to a seemingly infinite digital universe, the scarcity argument is gone. But if scarcity no longer applies, here is something that still does: democracy.

The basic idea of democracy is that the public should rule. In a neighborhood, we might debate and decide issues in a meeting, but often we'll also use a newsletter. In a country of nearly 300 million people, we need that "newsletter"—in the form of media that can reach, and be used, by a far-flung people. In a democracy, the public needs its own media, media it can use to get reliable information, media it can use to consider and shape its own identity.

It's not just about using media to sell something or promote something. It's about using the power of our public airwaves to educate, to inform and to inspire, while giving all of our citizens the opportunity to know more, to achieve more and be more. There is no better use for the modern miracles of communication than that. ■

CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK  
437 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Phone: (212) 371-3200

Fax: (212) 754-4073

Web site: [www.carnegie.org](http://www.carnegie.org)

**Vice President, Public Affairs:**

Susan Robinson King

**Editor, Director, Publications**

**and Public Affairs:** Eleanor Lerman

**Associate Editor; Photo Editor:** Aimée Sisco

**Editor/Writer:** Karen Theroux

**Foundation Roundup Editor:** Grace Walters

**Coordinator of Dissemination and**

**Media Programs:** Ambika Kapur

**Researcher:** Ronald Sexton

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Carnegie Corporation of New York is a philanthropic foundation created by Andrew Carnegie in 1911 to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding among the people of the United States. Subsequently, its charter was amended to permit the use of funds for the same purposes in certain countries that are or have been members of the British overseas Commonwealth. The goal of the *Carnegie Reporter* is to be a hub of ideas and a forum for dialogue about the work of foundations.

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# 2005 Andrew Carnegie Medals of Philanthropy

On October 4, 2005 six international philanthropists received the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy in the Debating Chamber of Scotland's Parliament at Holyrood, Edinburgh. This is a fitting moment in history for the United Kingdom-based Carnegie Trusts to host the presentation in Scotland, where Andrew Carnegie was born. The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, The Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust and The Carnegie Hero Fund Trust are all preparing to relocate to Pittencrieff Park, the "paradise of childhood" Carnegie purchased for the town of Dunfermline, his birthplace, in 1903.

The Carnegie foundations in Britain and Ireland view co-location on a single site as an important part of their strategy to confront the philanthropic challenges of the 21st century. Coming together offers greater opportunities for synergy among the foundations, maximizing funding benefits for the people of Scotland, Great Britain and Ireland. "This is a unique opportunity to celebrate the co-location decision with colleagues from around the world, highlighting the important place that Dunfermline and Carnegie have in the world of modern philanthropy," explained Carnegie's great-grandson, William Thomson CBE.

"The Andrew Carnegie Medals of Philanthropy are presented every two years to honor leaders who understand how modern philanthropy plays a critical role in building and sustaining our democratic institutions," said Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation of New York. In 1901, when Andrew Carnegie sold his steel empire, he made \$480 million (worth more than \$10 billion today) and began his career in philanthropy. The Andrew Carnegie Medals of Philanthropy were established in 2001 to mark the centennial of Carnegie's philanthropic beginnings. At this millennial turning point, the 22 institutions Carnegie created also came together to rededicate themselves to the individual missions Andrew Carnegie charged them with and to renew their shared vision of his goal "to do real and permanent good in this world."

Recognized worldwide for their vision, commitment and generosity, this year's honorees are: His Highness, the Aga Khan; Anna Southall, Chair of the Barrow Cadbury Trust, on behalf of the Cadbury family; Eleanor Hewlett Gimon, on behalf of the Hewlett family; Susan Packard Orr on behalf of the Packard family; Sir Tom Farmer, founder of Kwik-Fit; and Agnes Gund, president emerita of the New York Museum of Modern Art.



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