Supporting research to improve the lives of young people

William T. Grant Foundation 2007 Annual Report
The 2007 Annual Report reflects our continuing interest in the everyday social settings that influence youth, including schools, other youth-serving organizations, neighborhoods, and informal activities with family members and peers.

One focus of our work is improving the measurement of what matters in these settings for youth development. We need such measures to understand how the settings are functioning and how they respond to attempts to improve them. For example, can we measure what it is about some classrooms that causes them to improve student achievement? Is it possible to reliably capture why some youth programs are so successful? This year’s essay by Edward Seidman and the Senior Program Team describes our current thinking on such questions.

As a funder of research, we want grantee and staff efforts to lead to research evidence that productively influences policy and practice that affect youth. Given increasing support for high-quality, applied research in the social, health, and behavioral sciences, it is ironic that there is so little theorizing and research on how research evidence is used. It is a gap that we would like to help fill. This year’s second essay by Vivian Tseng and the Senior Program Team examines this topic.

Finally, this report provides some modest recognition for the many institutions and individuals who work with us to improve the lives of young people.

Robert C. Granger, Ed.D.
President
2007 Annual Report

Contents

4  Chair’s Report
6  Measuring Social Settings
12 Studying the Use of Research Evidence in Policy & Practice
20 Year in Review: 2007
23 Current Research Interests
24 Our Funding Opportunities
26 William T. Grant Scholars Program
31 Distinguished Fellows Program
32 Youth Service Improvement Grants
33 New and Active Grants in 2007
42 Reviewers
43 Staff
44 Board of Trustees
46 Index of Institutions
48 Index of Primary Investigators
49 Credits
Chair’s Report

During 2007, the William T. Grant Foundation worked to further several priorities while maintaining our rigorous grantmaking standards in several areas and in service of several pertinent research interests. These interests are challenging, require innovative approaches, and have the potential to increase positive youth outcomes. We were able to accomplish all this due to the strength of the Board and the Foundation’s staff.

In 2007, Foundation assets reached an all-time high, allowing us to devote additional funds to our grant programs and related staff activities. We continued to fund high-quality studies in line with our Current Research Interests and to work with our grantees post-award. Also in 2007, the Board welcomed Andrew Porter, dean of the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education and George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education, as our newest member. Dr. Porter brings to the Board his expertise in psychometrics, student assessment, and teaching.

Dr. Porter’s capabilities were particularly useful in discussions concerning our most recent and perhaps most challenging focus—improving social settings that influence youth. We have begun supporting promising work on making classrooms more productive—work that has generated tools for increasing the capacity of researchers to document and measure classroom improvements. We were pleased to forge a strong relationship with the Spencer Foundation around measuring “what matters” for students in classrooms, and this endeavor resulted in a joint Request for Proposals that was released in January 2008.

We are also increasingly focused on the use of research evidence. As a Foundation that primarily supports research, we felt we needed to increase our focus on understanding the processes and circumstances by which research evidence is used by program operators and policymakers. Our Senior Program Team is working to increase capacity in this area, and the Foundation is planning to release a relevant RFP in late 2008.

Cutting across all the areas of our grantmaking is an emphasis on producing evidence-based tools that can improve the effectiveness of practitioners’ work. Though historically the emphasis has been on research’s usefulness to policymaking, our sense is that there will be few new major policy initiatives in the coming years, and that research’s greatest impact will come from its ability to improve practice. Last year, our grantees and staff produced useful findings and tools, especially regarding the challenging issue of program quality, that are being used in California’s significant statewide expansion of after-school funding.

Finally, we reviewed and improved established programs, such as the William T. Grant Scholars and Youth Services Improvement Grants. We revised our brochures, RFPs, and funding guidelines, and expanded our dissemination in an effort to reach all appropriate researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and direct-service organizations who may be interested in our funding opportunities and our findings. We look forward to continuing the Foundation’s good work in 2008.

“Our sense is that . . . research’s greatest impact will come from its ability to improve practice.”

Gary Walker
Board Chair
February 2008
Measuring Social Settings

Why do some classrooms increase student achievement? How do some youth organizations achieve positive outcomes for high-risk adolescents? Why are some child welfare agencies more successful than others? And why are some families more capable of fostering the social and emotional development of youth? If certain classrooms, youth programs, child welfare agencies, and family environments are better for youth than others, how much of the difference is due to the setting’s allocation of resources or social processes? Can practitioners and policymakers intervene to change these settings in ways that help youth?

The William T. Grant Foundation’s funding programs are devoted to answering such questions. In order to understand how to improve youth settings, we first have to identify and measure the processes in these settings that lead to positive youth outcomes. This work is unfortunately constrained by the lack of good measures of youth settings. Stronger measures would help researchers in the field build better theory by improving our ability to assess how settings function, how setting functioning changes over time, and how setting functioning affects youth. Stronger measures would also increase our ability to detect whether interventions effectively improve settings. In the coming years, the Foundation’s grantmaking will continue to reflect our belief in the importance of developing strong measures.

Our Social Setting Framework
Understanding and improving how social settings impact youth is the focus of our research interests and grantmaking. We have articulated a social setting framework to facilitate our thinking on settings and the work of our grantees.¹

Families, peer networks, mentoring relationships, classrooms and schools, and youth-serving organizations function as dynamic social systems. Within these systems, we are interested in social processes, resources, and the arrangement of those resources. Social processes refers to transactions between two or more people or groups of people in a setting and can include social interactions, adult instructional and support practices with youth, roles for youth and adults in settings, norms and expectations, and distribution of decision-making power. Setting resources are the “inputs” into a setting, including economic (e.g., family income), physical (e.g., computers), temporal (e.g., time spent with youth), human (e.g., youth/teacher knowledge and skills), and social (e.g., social networks) resources. Arrangement of resources refers to how resources are organized and allocated in a setting (e.g., household ratio of children to adults).

While resources and the arrangement of resources can constrain or facilitate social processes in a setting, we think that social processes may be the key means by which social settings affect youth. We want to address issues involving the measurement of social processes, a relatively undeveloped area. We believe that cost-effective, reliable, and valid measures are essential to understanding and improving the functioning of social settings. We also think these measures should be user-friendly and easily employed by practitioners.

Empirical Questions in Measuring Social Settings
Researchers face difficult choices regarding which aspects of setting to measure. We believe these choices lie within three broad setting domains—resources, the arrangement of resources, and social processes. We are currently focusing on social processes because we believe that they are critical influences on how youth experience their settings, and the measurement of social processes has received the least attention and poses the greatest challenges. Eventually, we may apply similar efforts to developing an improved tool kit for measuring resources and the arrangement of resources.

Theory aids us in identifying the critical processes responsible for the way settings function and for setting effects on youth. For example, are normative expectations, organizational climate, teacher use of time, teacher practices, quality of teacher-student interactions, shared

decision-making among adults and youth, and peer relationships the key mechanisms by which we understand classroom functioning? If so, which should be assessed in a particular study? These theoretical issues are the foundation for the empirical questions that follow. Studies that address these empirical questions will provide helpful information for the development and implementation of better studies for understanding and improving settings.

Empirical questions

1. Since it is not feasible to assess a particular social process fully, how many instances should be sampled, at what intervals, and by how many raters? For example, how many observations or log reports on teacher-student interactions are necessary to achieve stable, accurate estimates of those interactions? In measuring social processes, errors of measurement occur. These errors may be due to differences among raters, random differences across samples of interactions, etc. To understand how to reduce errors to an acceptable level, researchers need to know how much error is due to raters and/or respondents, the particular segment that is rated, the day of the week, the time of day, and the activity occurring at the time of the rating. These sources of error can interact in various ways depending on the particular design of the study. Information regarding these various sources of error on different types of studies using several methods of measurement is needed.

2. Once the social process of interest has been theoretically determined, we can decide which measurement method and data source should be used to assess it: A critical empirical question is which method—behavioral observations, logs or diaries, surveys or semi-structured interviews, objective scores, or records—can reliably, accurately, and cost-effectively measure a particular social process? Is a single method and data source sufficient, or do we need several to adequately assess the social process? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each method, and do they vary by the social process of interest? For example, some argue that teacher reports can supply good information on how teachers organize instruction, how much time they spend on various instructional tasks, and what cognitive skills they emphasize. Others say that direct observation of classrooms may be needed to gain insight into the quality of interactions in the setting. The quality of social interactions may be essential in promoting pro-social norms, social and emotional regulation, and academic skills. Yet, others would argue the best culture of the settings is best understood through reports from the setting inhabitants. There is insufficient knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses with regard to these different methods and data sources for measuring social processes; comparative measurement development work is clearly needed.

3. Is it more effective to measure social processes in a concrete and behaviorally anchored fashion (low-inference) or in a more global and subjective manner (high-inference)? Initially, one might think that a low-inference method (i.e., concrete and behaviorally anchored) is always best. But this must be evaluated in terms of the reliability, validity, and meaningfulness of the measures and related costs. For example, using behavioral observations, one could try to determine a teacher’s attitude toward a group of students (e.g., boys) using high- or low-inference methods. For high-inference, one could rate the degree of emotional support in teacher-student interactions and for low, one could measure the amount of time a teacher continues to interact with a student before moving on to another topic or student. It is an empirical question as to which approach is more reliable, valid, and cost-effective. Similarly, teacher- or self-ratings of teacher’s and students’ performance and their subjective or concrete and behaviorally anchored items. A global observation may prove to be nearly as reliable and valid as a set of more labor-intensive micro observations. More information is needed about the differential utility of high-versus low-inference measurement of social processes across different methods.

4. Questions of data aggregation are relevant not only to individual reports, but to observations and administrative record data as well. For example, the aggregate of individual reports about a setting has often been employed as a setting measure. How, and in what form, can we best aggregate the responses of different respondents to determine which is the most accurate measure of the setting? And what does this average of the individual responses represent if there is heterogeneity among responses? Organizational behaviorists have demonstrated that intra-organizational member agreement is critical to tapping into a setting-level process. Heterogeneous responses may say more about the individuals in the setting than the setting itself. Far too little research has been directed to issues of in-group agreement among youth (or adults) within a setting and its implications for understanding setting-level phenomena.

The answers to these empirical questions can have major implications for the allocation of scarce resources. For example, if we learn that structured logs can accurately access family functioning, they may be preferable to a set of richer behavioral observation assessments because they are less expensive and intrusive.

The Emerging Work of Our Grantees

Several of our grantees are addressing the theoretical issues and empirical questions we’ve outlined. Some of these grantees are examining social processes, including the quality of interactions between adults and youth in classrooms and after-school settings. Others have chosen to study different social processes, specifically, normative expectations, organizational climate, and therapeutic practices and behaviors.

David Henry has postulated and demonstrated the powerful effects of classroom norms on students’ aggressive behavior. In a parallel fashion, he and his colleagues have developed the Youth Prosocial Norms Assessment (YPQA) to assess adult-youth interaction in after-school programs and its effect on youth. Both teams used these behavioral observation instruments in a number of studies, but were not sure how to optimize their data collection strategies. Using these data sets, Steve Raudenbush, Howard Bloom, and their colleagues demonstrated how to assess and effectively minimize measurement error due to differences among raters, segments, days, time of day, and the interactions of these sources of error in achieving adequate levels of reliability and the requisite power to detect setting-level differences in experimental studies of interventions. Raudenbush and Bloom called for more prospective studies of this issue to provide researchers with the knowledge needed to make informed choices and thereby achieve adequate reliability within reasonable budgetary constraints.

To further address adult-youth interaction questions, we have now funded three teams to improve the identification and measurement of adult-youth interactions in classrooms and youth organizations. Robert Pianta and his colleagues developed the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to assess teacher-student classroom interactions and their impact on youth. Charles Smith created the Youth Prosocial Norms Assessment (YPQA) to assess adult-youth interaction in after-school programs and its effect on youth. Both teams used these behavioral observation instruments in a number of studies, but were not sure how to optimize their data collection strategies. Using these data sets, Steve Raudenbush, Howard Bloom, and their colleagues demonstrated how to assess and effectively minimize measurement error due to differences among raters, segments, days, time of day, and the interactions of these sources of error in achieving adequate levels of reliability and the requisite power to detect setting-level differences in experimental studies of interventions. Raudenbush and Bloom called for more prospective studies of this issue to provide researchers with the knowledge needed to make informed choices and thereby achieve adequate reliability within reasonable budgetary constraints.
The Pianta team is conducting secondary analyses on several large data sets to address a number of practical research questions. How significant are rater effects for each approach to classroom observation, and how stable are ratings obtained by various methods for classroom assessment? Which times of year or day should observations take place? Is the time of day that assessment occurs affected by the type of activity being assessed at that time (math vs. English)? A variety of measurement methods and data sources are employed: time-sampled classroom observations by trained raters of teacher-student interactions (CLASS), observation of the amount of time spent on different subjects, and teacher-reported estimates of time spent on instruction in subjects and process ratings. Rater effects appear to vary depending on the method of observation. Preliminary results suggest that the rater effects are largest when made on individual process dimensions like positive climate, quality of feedback, and classroom chaos (CLASS); less when these dimensions are summed into higher-order and more global process dimensions of emotional support, instructional support, and classroom organization (CLASS); and the smallest when made on frequency counts such as basic skills, management, and displaying positive effect. On the other hand, frequency counts appear to be less sensitive to teachers’ behavior and more sensitive to fluctuations in classroom activities or time of day. It would appear that the CLASS more reliably measures student-student interaction and that frequency counts more reliably measure activities of staff-youth interactions.

The findings from this set of studies will provide information to aid future researchers who use behavioral observation methods to examine adult-youth interactions. Specifically, these findings will help researchers make more informed decisions on what measures to employ at what times and at what intervals in order to yield reliable and robust findings. More research of this nature will be needed, including studies with other constructs (e.g., teacher practices) and methods of measurement (e.g., structured logs). Given the social process of interest, what are the relative trade-offs in cost-efficiency and accuracy for different methods of measurement and different respondents or raters? Several of our current grantees are addressing this question, including the Pianta team. Their preliminary findings suggest that the CLASS observations, frequency counts, and teacher-reported ratings of teacher-student interactions produce different results. Several of the CLASS measures demonstrate sensitivity to changes in academic performance and behavioral outcomes. This suggests that even though the CLASS is more labor-intensive and costly than some of the other measurement methods, it may warrant the time and expense due to the accuracy it provides.

The Smith team is interested in ways to maximize cost-effectiveness using “reduced scale” methods. Working with the YPQA in after-school programs, they are using item-analysis techniques to choose a subset of ratings that provide the maximum amount of information. Reducing the number of ratings required by the YPQA will likely reduce the costs associated with this tool. They will subject their findings to a confirmatory factor analysis. Together, these two sets of analyses will allow them to improve the accuracy of measurement and reduce the costs of administering the YPQA.

Future Directions

We are interested in studies that examine the development and improvement of social processes in mentoring dyads, families, and peer networks, as well as in classrooms, after-school programs, and youth-serving organizations. In addressing any of the preceding or related questions on the measurement of social settings, we will consider supporting several different types of studies, as described below. In all of these types of studies, applicants should provide strong theoretical rationale for their focus on particular setting-level factors. In addition, applicants are expected to address specific issues of reliability, validity, and practical utility as well as the conceptual issues discussed previously. We encourage investigators interested in developing and/or improving measurement of social settings to submit a Letter of Inquiry for our field-initiated research grants.

1. New, stand-alone social setting measurement development studies. Here, studies may be initiated to develop and validate new measure(s) of social processes, resources, and the arrangement of those resources based on promising setting-level conceptual framework and pilot data.

2. Add-on studies of additional measurement development work to a study of social settings. For example, applicants could propose to add a behavioral observation measure to an ongoing experimental or longitudinal study that only includes youth and adult perceptions of social processes. Alternatively, add-on studies may improve existing measure(s) of social processes by strengthening the measures being used.

3. Further analysis of existing data to improve the measurement of settings. For example, studies of existing data from individuals may be re-conceptualized at a setting-level and re-analyzed to improve the quality of measurement at that level.

To hasten the accomplishment of part of our goal, we have, in collaboration with the Spencer Foundation, recently released an RFP on the development and improvement of measures of classroom quality, which is available for download on our website. It is aimed at the empirical measurement questions explicated above, with specific focus on classroom settings. We are interested in soliciting research proposals through the RFP with the Spencer Foundation and our field-initiated grants program. For further information, see our website at www.wtgrantfdn.org.

Our current grantees have only begun to work on the key social setting measurement questions we have postulated, and most of the work has been in classrooms and after-school settings. We hope you will join us in taking up this challenge.

Edward Seidman, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President, Program with the Senior Program Team
Studying the Use of Research Evidence in Policy & Practice


This wide array of terms reflects the growing demand for researchers to produce research evidence that is useful for policymakers and practitioners, as well as for policymakers and practitioners to use research evidence in their work. The William T. Grant Foundation has had a long-standing interest in supporting research that can inform policy and practice affecting youth.

When we review our portfolio of grants over the last few years, we are pleased that our grantees have produced high-quality research evidence that is relevant for policymakers and practitioners. We are interested in understanding the use of research evidence in policymaking and practice affecting youth and how its use can be improved. We believe that strengthening this understanding can improve our efforts to promote the production of useful research evidence and support policymakers’ and practitioners’ use of it to improve the lives of youth in the U.S.

In this essay, we discuss the Foundation’s interest in generating more studies that focus on understanding the use of research evidence in policy and practice affecting youth and how to improve its use. We begin by defining what we mean by research evidence and use of research evidence, acknowledging that research evidence is only one of several forms of evidence important to policymakers and practitioners. Then we discuss reasons for studying the use of research evidence.

In the last section, we offer some early thoughts about fertile ground for future studies.

Defining Research Evidence and Use of Research Evidence

We define research evidence as empirical findings derived from systematic research methods and analyses, which includes descriptive and intervention studies, analyses of qualitative and quantitative data, evaluation studies, meta-analyses, and cost-effectiveness studies. We place particular value on research evidence that builds and/or tests theory. We are interested in how policymakers and practitioners make use of this different kinds of research evidence. There are also other types of evidence, such as data, practitioner knowledge, and expert opinions, and we are interested in how policymakers and practitioners define evidence and distinguish between and use different types of evidence.

We define policymakers as individuals working in policymaking or policy-implementing organizations or in organizations that support or influence them. We define practitioners as individuals in organizations providing services to youth or their families, or in organizations that support them. Throughout the essay, we refer to our interests in a range of policymakers and practitioners including but not limited to school district administrators, agency leaders, organizational decision-makers, federal, state and local policymakers; and intermediaries who translate and disseminate research evidence and broker relationships between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. Frontline staff, parents, and other adults in the community are also critical to youth development, but in studies of research use, we are interested in those practitioners whose roles or responsibilities include determining how and when research evidence is used by those who interact directly with youth.

When it comes to defining use of research evidence, people commonly think in instrumental terms: a policy or practice problem is identified and research evidence is sought out and used to decide upon a solution. Experience suggests that research is rarely used in such a clear-cut and linear way. Instead, research evidence comes to policymakers and practitioners through a variety of pathways, for a multitude of reasons, and is then used in a number of different ways. Furthermore, research evidence rarely offers a definitive answer to any policy or practice question, requiring instead that practitioners discern if the research evidence is relevant to their particular needs and judge whether they can use it given political, budgetary, and other constraints. Often, research evidence melds with all the other sources of information that inundate practitioners and policymakers, and it is difficult to isolate the determining factors in their decisions. In addition, practitioners or policymakers sometimes use research evidence unknowingly, as when a school district adopts a curriculum that is backed by research evidence of which the district is unaware.

In considering these complexities, we have found Carol H. Weiss, Sandra M. Nutley, and Huw T.O. Davies’ descriptions of different types of research use particularly helpful. Instrumental use occurs when research evidence is directly applied to decision-making. Conceptual use refers to situations in which research evidence influences or enlightens how policymakers and practitioners think about issues, problems, or potential solutions. Tactical use, also called political and symbolic use, occurs when research evidence is used to justify particular positions such as supporting a piece of legislation or challenging a reform effort. Imposed use refers to situations in which there are mandates to use research evidence, as when government funding requires that practitioners adopt programs backed by research evidence. Process use differs from the preceding terms; it does not refer to how research evidence is used but rather to what practitioners learn when they participate in conducting research. This list is not exhaustive, and these different uses of research evidence are not mutually exclusive. Research evidence can and often does serve multiple purposes.

We are interested in how research evidence is used when it is incorporated into tools, interventions, and organizational protocols, making it easier for practitioners to apply. When research evidence is incorporated into tools, practitioners do not need to read and review empirical studies and sometimes
may not know they are using research evidence. For example, we support work to improve measures of the quality of classrooms (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) and youth programs (Youth Program Quality Assessment). The items and scales in these measures reflect the teacher and staff practices that research evidence suggests are associated with positive youth outcomes. When school districts or after-school systems adopt these measures, practitioners do not need to read the research evidence on which they are based in order to make use of it. We also support studies testing the effectiveness of interventions meant to improve teacher and staff practices. The components of these interventions reflect theory and research evidence on strategies that improve practice. When these interventions become adopted and implemented as a routine part of schools or youth programs, practitioners do not need to review the research evidence supporting the interventions.

We are also interested in how organizations and systems may use of research evidence and in the social processes that influence its use, including how research evidence is accessed and interpreted via interactions with colleagues. Research use is too often seen as an individual-level process involving a decision-maker who seeks out, reads, and makes use of research. A narrow individual-level conceptualization decontextualizes the ways research evidence is accessed, interpreted, and used. Research frequently lands on the desks (or in the conversations) of policymakers and practitioners through their social networks and interactions. Policymakers acquire research through their communications with interest groups who interpret and distill research findings to support their advocacy positions. Practitioners use researchers’ support and make use of research evidence by talking with colleagues. How research evidence is used likely differs across various policy and practice contexts and across policymakers and practitioners with differing roles, working in a range of organizations. These social processes are also influenced by the technical methods researchers or intermediaries use to communicate and frame research evidence.

Why Study Use of Research Evidence?

As a research funder, the Foundation wants to understand how policymakers and practitioners use research evidence because it informs our staff efforts and funding to support more useful research. We currently support work to understand and improve youth settings such as families, peer groups, neighborhoods, schools, and youth-serving organizations in order to promote youth development. In the areas of after-school and education, for example, we fund descriptive research to identify staff practices that may promote youth development; measurement work to develop cost-effective, reliable, and valid assessments of staff practices; and experiments to test whether particular interventions can improve staff practices. Better understanding how after-school systems and school districts use research evidence should influence the research questions that are asked, resulting in evidence that addresses practice needs. Similarly, understanding how organizational structures, professional networks, communication strategies, and politics influence research use can shape how researchers interact with practitioners to design studies, interpret and communicate findings, and incorporate research evidence in practice.

A better understanding of research evidence use should enhance policy and practice. For example, federal and state policies have increased demands that practitioners use research evidence and data, but how have youth-serving systems and agencies responded to these demands? Why are some systems and agencies more successful than others at accessing and making use of research evidence? Studies on use of research evidence could, for example, inform how organizations use research to improve practice by codifying research evidence into organizational protocols.

Studying use of research evidence can also offer some conceptual clarity in a confusing policy arena. There is a significant difference between requiring that practitioners use data versus research evidence. Data, such as students’ test scores, provide information on how students are doing and how many students are meeting certain standards, but they do not provide information on how to improve scores. Research evidence on effective interventions can be more useful for understanding how to improve scores. Research can also clarify the types of research evidence that are most useful for addressing different policy and practice questions.

We are interested in studies that include a strong focus on potential users of research evidence, their contexts, and their interactions with researchers. These types of studies could provide much-needed information on how to produce more useful research and support its use by policymakers and practitioners. In recent years, the research community has directed more attention to strengthening research, with substantial attention to “what works” questions about the effectiveness of programs and practices. The Society for Prevention Research created a Standards of Evidence Committee that developed a set of criteria for efficacy, effectiveness, and dissemination. The National Research Council created a Committee on Scientific Principles for Education Research that authored a set of scientific principles. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention have defined standards for research evidence (and syntheses of it) to create “what works” lists of effective programs. These efforts have strengthened the production of rigorous research but have not focused on better understanding research users. There is little empirical understanding of how practitioners evaluate the relevance and usefulness of different kinds of research evidence to address the problems of
Fertile Ground for Future Studies

Despite the value of studying the use of research evidence, this topic has not received large or sustained attention. Gary Henry and Melvin Mark described the mid-1970s and 1980s as the golden age of studying research use. It was a time when researchers, including Carol Weiss, broke exciting theoretical and empirical ground in understanding how policymakers use research and the factors that influence their use. In recent years, there have been numerous writings about how research should be used in policy and practice, but comparatively little about how it is actually used. There have also been retrospective case studies describing instances wherein research appears to have been used in policy but few prospective studies that are useful for predicting future research use.

There is fertile ground for expanding studies on the use of research evidence. We are focusing on domestic research, but there is important work being conducted in Europe and Canada. We draw heavily on the review done by Sandra M. Nutley, Richard Spoth, and their respective colleagues have been testing whether community coalitions and implementation support can influence adoption and implementation of evidence-based programs. Patti Chamberlain and her colleagues John Reid and Hendricks Brown are conducting a cluster-randomized trial to test whether providing implementation support through community development teams impacts county adoption of Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care, an evidence-based intervention. This winter, our Foundation awarded their colleagues Larry Palinkas and John Landsever a grant to conduct an embedded study of the process of agency adoption of the program. They plan to examine how the networks of social service agencies influence the choices to adopt an evidence-based program. Of particular interest is increasing understanding of how opinion leaders and organizational culture and climate affect adoption. Semi-structured interviews and surveys will be used to collect data on the structure of the social networks and how the networks influence the ways practitioners understand research evidence. These data will be supplemented by participant observations that allow for a less-intrusive and more process-focused examination of program adoption.

Adoption of evidence-based programs and practices is a problem for policymakers and educators. Researchers often have experiential wisdom about the long list of forces that influence decision making. This is more pronounced under the influence of research evidence because they must convince practitioners to participate in their studies and adopt evidence-based programs or practices. This experiential wisdom may be useful for developing hypotheses and research questions for systematic study. The field would benefit from studies that build on our theoretical knowledge of how agency characteristics, social networks, political and community contexts, and budgetary constraints influence adoption of evidence-based programs and practices. How do these forces affect practitioners’ views of these programs, the research evidence behind them, and their usefulness for solving local problems? Across agencies, how do social networks influence practitioners’ access to and interpretation of research evidence? Within agencies, how do organizational contexts and role responsibilities influence the ways practitioners use research evidence? What are the conditions that facilitate productive use of research evidence?

School district decision-making. Some education policy researchers are interested in research use at the school district level and the influence of research evidence on school district policy. For example, they propose that organizational capacity to collect and interpret data for ongoing decision-making and organizational norms encouraging the use of evidence are important forces that affect evidence use.

Future studies might build upon this review by testing some of these propositions at a larger scale. For example, studies that sample multiple districts that vary in theoretically important ways and employ strong organizational measures might test how district resources, structures, and social processes are related to the use of research evidence. What makes some districts more successful at accessing and using research evidence to address local problems? Across agencies, how do social networks influence practitioners’ access to and interpretation of research evidence? Within agencies, how do organizational contexts and role responsibilities influence the ways practitioners use research evidence? What are the conditions that facilitate productive use of research evidence?

School district decision-making. Some education policy researchers are interested in research use at the school district level and the influence of research evidence on school district policy. For example, they propose that organizational capacity to collect and interpret data for ongoing decision-making and organizational norms encouraging the use of evidence are important forces that affect evidence use.

Future studies might build upon this review by testing some of these propositions at a larger scale. For example, studies that sample multiple districts that vary in theoretically important ways and employ strong organizational measures might test how district resources, structures, and social processes are related to the use of research evidence. What makes some districts more successful at accessing and using research evidence to address local problems? Across agencies, how do social networks influence practitioners’ access to and interpretation of research evidence? Within agencies, how do organizational contexts and role responsibilities influence the ways practitioners use research evidence? What are the conditions that facilitate productive use of research evidence?

School district decision-making. Some education policy researchers are interested in research use at the school district level and the influence of research evidence on school district policy. For example, they propose that organizational capacity to collect and interpret data for ongoing decision-making and organizational norms encouraging the use of evidence are important forces that affect evidence use.

Future studies might build upon this review by testing some of these propositions at a larger scale. For example, studies that sample multiple districts that vary in theoretically important ways and employ strong organizational measures might test how district resources, structures, and social processes are related to the use of research evidence. What makes some districts more successful at accessing and using research evidence to address local problems? Across agencies, how do social networks influence practitioners’ access to and interpretation of research evidence? Within agencies, how do organizational contexts and role responsibilities influence the ways practitioners use research evidence? What are the conditions that facilitate productive use of research evidence?
how research use differed depending upon on the nature and extent of research on issues, how issues got on the policy agenda, how quickly issues traveled through the policy process, and the strength of organized interests invested in the policy outcomes. Research and researchers are rarely influential in shaping final policy actions, but research may have the greatest opportunity to be of conceptual use during the early agenda-setting stage. Later, as policy deliberation intensifies, research may become increasingly used in tactical ways to support positions that have been staked out.

Kingdon and Rich’s work did not address policies for youth per se, but nonetheless suggests useful direction for future studies. Rich and Kingdon developed their theoretical frameworks by comparing various policy areas. Kingdon initially studied health and transportation in the late 1970s. Rich compared specific policy debates on telecommunication and health care reform in the 1990s and tax cuts in 2001. Future studies on research use in policy that affects youth might test the theoretical propositions developed in their work and other case studies and involve further hypothesis-generating work to unearth new insights. It would be useful to understand what happens to research evidence as it is interpreted, packaged, distributed, and used at each stage of the policy process. What role do researchers, other experts, lobbyists, news organizations, and other policymakers play at these different stages? How are different types of research evidence used? Rich and Kingdon’s work also focused on federal and policymaking stages. Future work might examine research use during policy implementation and in state policy.

The Role of Intermediaries. Across all of the above areas (adoption of evidence-based programs, school district decision-making, use of research in policymaking), there is a diverse group of intermediary organizations and individuals who broker research evidence and relationships between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. Intermediaries differ in their organizational missions, constituencies, target audiences, brokering activities, and interest in different types and quality of research evidence. Important intermediaries include advocacy groups; membership associations for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers; think tanks; news organizations; and funders. Intermediaries often play a significant role in interpreting, packaging, and distributing research evidence for policymakers and practitioners. Intermediaries can be the primary means by which legislative staff and agency directors acquire research. They also provide forums that bring together researchers and policymakers or researchers and practitioners around particular topics.

Given their central role in research use, intermediaries should receive more focused attention in future studies. How do intermediary organizations differ in their brokering roles? What factors predict their use of varying definitions of evidence? What happens to research evidence as it is brokered by various intermediaries? Why are some intermediaries more successful than others at brokering research evidence or relationships? What are the conditions that facilitate successful brokering?

Other Questions and Methods. We have reviewed a few areas of inquiry for future empirical studies, but undoubtedly a range of important research questions will continue to arise as the field advances. For example, there is much to be learned about how research agendas are shaped by policy and practice. How and when do policy priorities and the problems of practice influence the research community and their production and dissemination of research? We also could learn from research comparing different strategies for ensuring research evidence is used. What are the mechanisms by which various research and policy (or research and practice) partnerships are successful at producing and then making use of research evidence? What conditions facilitate the success of partnerships?

To address the variety of important research questions, studies should include a range of methods and context expertise. Researchers might draw upon methods such as social network analyses, observations, and document analyses to augment the more commonly used interviews and surveys that rely on individual policymakers and practitioners to accurately report their access to and use of research evidence. It may be useful to build project teams that include investigators with expertise in particular user communities and the different types and quality of research evidence relevant for users. More broadly, researchers studying the use of research evidence may benefit from discussions across different fields. We have covered disparate areas of research that focus on different parts of the puzzle of how research is used in policy and practice writ large, but there are likely ways that these disparate bodies of work can sharpen and inform one another.

Looking Ahead

We have provided our early thoughts on studying the use of research evidence in policy and practice that affect youth. Undoubtedly, we have much more to learn. This is an important area of inquiry and one in which we want to support more empirical work. We will spend the next two years further exploring whether our investments can help build a sustainable and useful field of study. As part of this process, we will be talking with scholars, funders, and influential policymakers and practitioners. Our Distinguished Fellows are learning more about how to improve research so that it is useful for policy and practice and how to improve policy and practice by demanding and using rigorous research. We intend to continue sharing our thinking and additional resources as they develop. We invite readers to treat this essay as a springboard for further discussion with us. In addition, we encourage interested applicants to propose studies of research use via our field-initiated and Scholars Program funding mechanisms. Please visit our website, www.wtgrantfdn.org for descriptions of those funding opportunities.

Vivian Tseng, Ph.D.
Program Officer
with the Senior Program Team

“A range of important research questions will continue to arise as the field advances.”

In addition to Vivian Tseng, the Senior Program Team includes Foundation President Robert C. Granger; Senior Vice President, Program Edward Seidman; and the Senior Program Associates Rebecca A. Maynard, Thomas S. Weisner, and Brian L. Wilcox.
Philanthropy makes a difference. The good work done in the early-20th century by noted philanthropists including Carnegie and Rockefeller has left a lasting impact, and not only on the nonprofit sector. Today we are witnessing a resurgence of philanthropic giving. We live in a time in which philanthropy has become an increasingly important element of the U.S. economy and, I believe, of society in general. There are now approximately 75,000 foundations in the United States and 13,000 in New York State. Together, we support the work of charitable institutions, researchers, doctors, teachers, and others whose efforts contribute to the benefit of our communities and our world.

In recent years, those of us who dedicate our careers to the nonprofit sector have been joined by a new body of philanthropists. According to the Chronicle of Philanthropy, the top 50 donors gave an average of $150 million each in 2007, totaling approximately $7.5 billion. The unprecedented generosity of these wealthy donors is certainly worthy of the media attention it has received. However, the real story is the proliferation of donors large and small. The increasing participation of average individuals in the philanthropic effort is striking when compared to even a decade ago. According to Giving USA, charitable giving by individuals reached an estimated $222.89 billion in 2006, and individual giving has risen an average of 5.0 percent per year for the past ten years. The current generation of young people is more willing to volunteer their time than previous generations; educational institutions of various levels around the country have made philanthropic efforts part of their curricula; and “giving groups” have become the new book clubs. This increase in both monetary giving and volunteerism signifies a growing philanthropic consciousness. It gives credence to the idea that philanthropy is necessary and important and thus expected of active, responsible citizens. Without these efforts, only a small portion of worthwhile programs would receive funding needed for them to fulfill their missions.

This renewed focus on philanthropy gives nonprofits new reserves of strength and power. As the potential of the sector grows with the addition of more private donors and a willing volunteer force, we gain a tremendous ability to more effectively influence our economy, our lives, and our world. We in the sector must work diligently to assure the impact is positive, inclusive, accountable, collaborative, and transparent. The resources this surge in giving has provided nonprofits present us with challenges, but also with great opportunity. Last year I wrote that “History Makes a Comeback.” This year, the remarkable growth of nonprofits and charitable giving continues.

How Did We Do?
The William T. Grant Foundation is well-positioned to take advantage of the increasing influence wielded by nonprofits. The performance of our investment portfolio in 2007 slowed slightly from its pace in 2006, but it exceeded our benchmarks. At the end of 2007, our portfolio (40 managers, 28 funds) totaled $325 million and returned 12.2 percent for the year, compared to our benchmark of 10.6 percent. (See Figure 1 for performance trends and other financial data, 2003–2007.) Our asset allocation at December 31, 2007 (December 31 is provided for comparison) can be found in Figure 2. Strategic rebalancing of our portfolio to take advantage of market opportunities has been our key tactic, and it has served us well.

We owe our success to our Finance and Investment Committee members, who devoted an extraordinary amount of time and effort—they regularly meet more than 20 times a year—to the task of managing the Foundation’s portfolio. Their conscientious work has proven fruitful: our portfolio continues to outperform peer organizations. According to the Trust Universe Comparison Services (TUCS) report, our annual performance for 2007 placed 7th out of a universe of 359 master trusts with assets of less than $500 million. (Master trusts are defined as organizations whose assets are managed by more than one investment manager.) The same report shows that we placed first in both 2005 and 2006. The same TUCS report shows that among foundations and endowment funds reporting to them (a universe of 126), we placed 19th in 2007. Without the Committee’s acumen and dedication, our ability to make meaningful grants would be greatly diminished.
What We Did

The Foundation continues to assess our infrastructure in search of opportunities to improve productivity and effectiveness. In 2007, we hired a respected independent consultant to audit our information technology—hardware, software, security, budgets, and plans. Though our information technology was found to be in good shape, we intend to implement some of the consultant’s useful recommendations. We began replacing all staff workstations in 2007 and will complete the process in early 2008. Restructuring help desk operations and outsourcing some routine functions will make the best use of our staff’s time, allowing them to focus on more ambitious projects.

There are few projects more ambitious and central to our grantmaking than our online EasyGrants system, which automates the administration of our grantmaking from Letters of Inquiry to grant closure. Though fully implemented two years ago, we continue to execute improvements and changes in response to our evolving programmatic needs.

Finally, I am very pleased to report that as a result of negotiations with our landlord during the last quarter of 2007, we have signed a 10-year lease extension for our office space. Now that we have assured our physical location in New York for the next decade, we can concentrate fully on maintaining our strategic position in the burgeoning philanthropic movement. We hope that you find our prospects in the coming years as exciting as we do.

Lawrence D. Moreland, M.B.A.
Vice President for Finance and Administration
and Assistant Treasurer

Current Research Interests

The William T. Grant Foundation supports research to understand and improve the everyday settings of youth ages 8 to 25 in the United States. Social settings are defined as the social environments in which youth experience daily life. These settings include environments with clear boundaries such as classrooms, schools, and youth-serving organizations and environments with less prescribed boundaries such as neighborhoods or other settings in which youth interact with peers, family members, and other adults. At their best, these settings embed youth within a network of engaging activities; ample resources; meaningful relationships with adults and peers; and opportunities for academic, social, emotional, and identity development.

We support research that enhances our understanding of: (1) how settings work, how they affect youth development, and how they can be improved; and (2) when, how, and under what conditions research evidence is used in policy and practice that affect youth, and how its use can be improved.

Examples of research questions that fit our interests

- How do instructional practices in classrooms affect racial achievement gaps?
- How do welfare policies affect family processes and, in turn, youth well-being?
- Do activities in a youth organization have different influences on engagement for youth of varying ethnicities?
- Can a professional development intervention improve staff relationships with youth in after-school programs?
- What factors influence the reliability and validity of observational measures of family functioning?
- How do service agency directors’ social networks influence their access to and use of research evidence?
- What are the mechanisms by which some organizations are more effective than others in brokering research evidence for policymakers and practitioners?

Applicants and other interested parties should visit our website (www.wtgrantfoundation.org) for more information on our research interests in social settings and use of research evidence and resources related to conducting research on these topics.
Our Funding Opportunities

The Foundation’s funding opportunities include research grants, fellowships, and service improvement grants for direct-service organizations. All of our grants fit our Current Research Interests, which emphasize understanding and improving everyday youth settings such as families, peer groups, schools, youth-serving organizations, and neighborhoods. A setting of particular interest to the Foundation is after-school programs. Our Action Topic—improving the quality of after-school programs—drives some of our research grantmaking and all of our support for advocacy.

Research
Our research grants are both field-initiated and solicited through Requests for Proposals (RFPs). Our field-initiated grants support high-quality research; Letters of Inquiry are accepted three times each year and grants are awarded at our October and March Board meetings. The RFP for Intervention Research, initially issued in 2005, is designed to improve youth-serving organizations and build a greater capacity for the field of intervention research focused on such organizations. This RFP has been revised and released annually for three years and awards made at the June Board meeting. In 2008 the Foundation is releasing more RFPs that reflect our growing interest in measurement development and the use of research.

Fellowships
We offer two programs for early- and mid-career professionals. The William T. Grant Scholars Program supports promising early-career scholars from different disciplines who have demonstrated success in conducting high-quality research and are seeking to further develop their expertise. The Distinguished Fellows Program supports mid-career influential researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. The program gives researchers the opportunity to immerse themselves in practice or policy settings and conversely gives influential mid-career practitioners and policymakers the opportunity to work in research settings.

Service Improvement
The Youth Service Improvement Grants (YSIG) program supports activities conducted by community-based organizations in the New York metropolitan area to improve the quality of services for young people ages 8 to 25. These are the only grants we offer for direct-service organizations.

A setting of particular interest to the Foundation is after-school programs.
This past year marked the 25th anniversary of the William T. Grant Scholars Program. Since 1982, we have funded 129 early-career researchers. Formerly known as the Faculty Scholars Program, the award was first established to fill a gap in federal funding for social, health, and behavioral science research and has since helped launch the careers of many well-known scholars, who have had significant impact on youth research, public policy, and practice.

A Scholar award supports the pursuit of a five-year research plan that will significantly expand researcher’s expertise in different disciplines, methods, and/or content areas. Each Scholar must prepare a mentoring plan that will connect them with senior researchers in their field, allowing them the opportunity to develop new skills with the support of those mentors. The Foundation also organizes meetings to further strengthen Scholars’ professional development and encourage collaboration and conversation. The Scholars are trained across a broad range of social, behavioral, and health sciences, and their studies inform theory and policy or practice for understanding and improving youth settings.

Four to six William T. Grant Scholars are selected each year by a committee of experts from different fields in a process separate from the Foundation’s other grantmaking. Each Scholar receives an award of $350,000 distributed over five years. Awards are made to the applicant’s institution, providing support of $70,000 per year.

Applications for 2009 awards are due on or before July 9, 2008. A brochure outlining the criteria, required documents, and application procedures is available on our website, www.wtgrantfoundation.org. You may also request a hard copy. Please direct your request to info@wtgrantfdn.org.

2007 Awards

William T. Grant Scholar: Clark McKown, Ph.D.
Mentee: Michael Strambler, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Fellow
Institution: University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Clinical and Community Psychology

William T. Grant Scholar: Laura Rameo, Ph.D.
Mentee: Rebeca Mireles Rios, Doctoral student in Education
Institution: University of California, Santa Barbara, School of Education

William T. Grant Scholar: Renee Spencer, Ed.D.
Mentee: Antonette Basualdo-Delmonico, Doctoral student in Sociology and Social Work
Institution: Boston University, School of Social Work and Sociology Department

In 2005, the William T. Grant Foundation began a pilot project to support selected William T. Grant Scholars in mentoring junior researchers of color. In 2007, we instituted the initiative as an ongoing part of the Scholar Program. The awards are $60,000 and the mentorships last for two years.

These supplements reflect the Foundation’s dedication to both fostering our Scholars’ mentoring skills and increasing the number of people of color represented at higher levels of the career ladder in research. We hope that the mentors will become better attuned to the career development challenges disproportionately faced by their junior colleagues of color, as well as assist the junior researchers in improving their skills and creating valuable networks.

Eligibility is restricted to William T. Grant Scholars who are in the first to third years of the five-year Scholars program at the time of the application; junior researchers must be full-time doctoral students or postdoctoral fellows. Scholars and junior researchers collaborate to create a career development and mentorship plan. Applications are screened for the quality of the proposed plan and research projects, and the promise of the junior researcher for a career in research.

Above: Foundation staff, Scholars, Selection Committee members, and guests at the 2007 Scholars Retreat, held in Snowbird, Utah.
The William T. Grant Distinguished Fellows Program for mid-career researchers, policymakers, and practitioners began in 2004 and reflects our focus on increasing the supply of, demand for, and use of high-quality research in the service of improved youth outcomes. We believe that the lives of youth will improve if high-quality research shapes the policies and practices that affect them. In order for this to occur, researchers must understand the questions and problems that concern policymakers and practitioners, as well as the daily activities and incentives of people working in those roles. Similarly, we believe that high-quality research will not be produced and used to any significant degree unless policymakers and practitioners understand what constitutes high-quality research and demand it. The Fellows program gives researchers the opportunity to immerse themselves in practice or policy settings and allows practitioners and policymakers to work and be mentored in research settings. Each Fellow partners with at least one host organization that acts as the Fellowship site, giving them hands-on experience and providing access to mentors and networks in the research or policy/practice fields. Fellows will build new skills and insights that they can apply to their principal work.

Each Fellow receives up to $175,000 for the total duration of the Fellowship, which ranges from six months to two years, depending on the proposed design. The fourth group of Distinguished Fellows will be awarded in November 2008.

The program provides researchers with a year-round network of colleagues and a home away from home, with a dedicated site that serves as the Fellowship site. Each Fellow partners with at least one host organization that acts as the Fellowship site, giving them hands-on experience and access to mentors and networks in the research or policy/practice fields. Fellows will build new skills and insights that they can apply to their principal work.
Youth Service Improvement Grants

In 2000, the Foundation established a grant program to provide general support for youth services in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. For the next six years, we awarded grants of $3,000 to $6,000 to a diverse array of organizations, supporting a wide range of activities and services for youth. In 2006, we reconsidered the direction of this program. Most of our grantmaking supports research meant to understand and improve youth settings, and youth program staff told us that there are relatively few sources of funding for program improvement. For these reasons, we decided to rethink the program.

The new Youth Service Improvement Grants (YSIG) program supports activities meant to improve the quality of youth services at the point where staff and youth interact. We are targeting mid-size organizations in the New York metropolitan area that have developed a stable operating budget, but have few resources for improvements. At a maximum of $25,000, the YSIG grants are five times the level funded under the former program. We hope that by awarding a smaller number of larger grants for program improvement, we will be more useful to the organizations we seek to assist.

The YSIG program is unique among the Foundation’s funding opportunities. It is the only program dedicated to funding direct-service agencies and the only one administered fully by Foundation staff. All non-senior staff members are eligible to join the YSIG Committee, which reviews proposals and makes grant recommendations to senior officers, who give final approval for grant awards.

We announced the first cycle of the Youth Service Improvement Grants program in the fall of 2006 and made the first 12 awards in 2007. In 2008, we plan to continue refining the program and communicating its goals in order to receive strong proposals and fund the improvement of additional youth-serving organizations.

New and Active Grants in 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>William T. Grant Scholars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyday Experiences, Physiological Stress, and the Emergence of Affective Disorders over the Transition to Early Adulthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Adam, Ph.D. Northwestern University $320,000, 2004–2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic Status, Stress, and Asthma in Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edith Chen, Ph.D. University of British Columbia $310,000, 2003–2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education as a Developmental Phenomenon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Crosnoe, Ph.D. University of Texas at Austin $320,000, 2004–2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Emotions in Parent-Child Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Diamond, Ph.D. University of Utah $380,000, 2004–2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathways to Freedom: How Young People Create a Life After Incarceration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikki Jones, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Barbara $350,000, 2007–2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of Parental Job Loss for Adolescents’ School Performance and Educational Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel Kalil, Ph.D. University of Chicago $300,000, 2002–2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving to Opportunity and Youth Well-Being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Kling, Ph.D. The Brookings Institution $300,000, 2002–2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition to Adulthood Among Youth with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie Leiter, Ph.D. Simmons College $340,000, 2006–2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of Grandparents in the Lives of Adolescent Grandchildren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Dunifon, Ph.D. Cornell University $330,000, 2005–2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage and Parenthood in the Lives of Adolescents and Young Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina Gibson-Davis, Ph.D. Duke University $350,000, 2007–2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Body Electric (and Print): Mass Media, Physical Identity, and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Harrison, Ph.D. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign $300,000, 2002–2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-State Alliances and Their Impact on Youth Health and Well-Being: An International Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Heuveline, Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles $310,000, 2003–2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Diversity and Literacy Development: Increasing Opportunities to Learn in Urban Middle Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonie Lesaux, Ph.D. Harvard University $350,000, 2007–2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Influences on Adolescent Development: Timing, Gender, and Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tama Leventhal, Ph.D. Tufts University $330,000, 2005–2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Strategies for Homeless Youth’s Reductions in HIV Risk Acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marguerita Lightfoot, Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles $310,000, 2003–2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social and Developmental Ecology of Academic Inequity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark McKown, Ph.D. Rush University and Medical Center $330,000, 2005–2010 $60,000, 2007–2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Role of Community-Based Organizations in Conducive to Learning Environments: The Determinants of Mexican-Origin Adolescents’ Participation in Organized Activities: The Role of Culture, Settings, and the Individual

Distinguished Fellows

The Prevention of School Violence: Creating Environments That are Safe and Conducive to Learning

The Role of Culture, Setting, and the Individual

- Sandra Simpkins, Ph.D.
- Arizona State University
- $350,000, 2007–2012

Understanding the Mentoring Process: A Longitudinal Study of Mentoring Relationships between Adolescents and Adults

- Renee Spencer, Ed.D.
- Boston University
- $330,000, 2005–2010
- $60,000, 2007–2009

Child, Family, and Youth Policymaking from Behind the Scenes

- Rob Geen, M.P.P.
- Duke University
- $320,000, 2004–2009

Developing and Disseminating Effective Interventions for Depression and Anxiety in Youth

- V. Robin Weisinger, Ph.D.
- San Diego State University
- $320,000, 2004–2009

Intergenerational Influences on Men’s Transitions to Adulthood

- Kevin Roy, Ph.D.
- University of Maryland
- $340,000, 2006–2011

- Martha Holleman, M.A.
- Baltimore’s Campaign for Children and Youth
- $178,725, 2006–2008

Transforming the Child Welfare System to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth Whose Parents Have Mental Illness

- Joanne Nicholson, Ph.D.
- University of Massachusetts Medical School
- $212,657, 2005–2008

Making the Case for Extending Foster Care and Transition Services Beyond Age 18

- Robin Nixon, M.Ed.
- National Foster Care Coalition

Policy and Service Delivery for Youth in Probation, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Services

- Abram Rosenblatt, Ph.D.
- University of California, San Francisco

Bridging Domains: The Intersection of Child and Youth Health and Well-Being and Public Policy

- Lauren Smith, M.D.
- Boston University School of Medicine
- $175,000, 2005–2007

- Keith Hefner
- Youth Communication
- New York
- $25,000, 2007–2008

Designing Systems to Support Learning and Teaching Grounded in Evidence-Based Practices

- Constance Yowell, Ph.D.
- University of Chicago
- $197,001, 2005–2008

Volunteer Enhancement

- Liz Hofman
- Free Arts NYC
- $25,000, 2007–2008

- Marcia Jacobowitz
- Dancewave, Inc.
- $25,000, 2007

- Kids in Control
- Port Chester
- $25,000, 2007–2009

- Anthony Smith
- Horticultural Society of New York
- $25,000, 2007–2008

- Adolescents as Resources in School-Based Prevention
- Emily Ozer, Ph.D.
- University of California, Berkeley
- $340,000, 2006–2011

- Kevin Roy, Ph.D.
- University of Maryland
- $340,000, 2006–2011

Barriers in the Pathway to Adulthood: The Role of Discrimination in the Lives of Young Disadvantaged Men

- Devah Pager, Ph.D.
- Princeton University
- $340,000, 2006–2011

Religion’s Role in the Shaping of Self-Image, Aspirations, and Achievement in Youth

- Lisa D. Pearce, Ph.D.
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- $330,000, 2005–2010

Adolescence to Adulthood in Chicago Neighborhoods

- Sean Reardon, Ed.D.
- Stanford University
- $300,000, 2002–2007
- $60,000, 2006–2008

Designing Contextually Relevant Workshops to Enhance Latina Mother-Daughter Communication about Sexual Topics

- Laura Romo, Ph.D.
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- $340,000, 2006–2011
- $60,000, 2007–2009

Peers and Neighborhood Influences on Youth and Adolescent Development

- Jacob Vigdor, Ph.D.
- Duke University
- $320,000, 2004–2009

Advancing Evidence-Based Reforms in Federal Programs Affecting Youth

- Deborah Gorman-Smith, Ph.D.
- University of Illinois at Chicago

Improving Conditions of Children and Youth in Distressed Urban Areas: National Framework, Local Experience

- Martha Holleman, M.A.
- Baltimore’s Campaign for Children and Youth
- $178,725, 2006–2008

Youth Mentoring Programs: An Experimental Examination of the Effects of Maternal Depression on Children and Youth

- Pamela Morris, Ph.D.
- MDRC
- $320,000, 2004–2009
- $175,000, 2005–2007
- $175,000, 2007–2008

- Los Angeles Children’s Museum
- $25,000, 2007–2008
- $25,000, 2007–2008

- Brooklyn Children’s Museum’s “Museum Team”
- $197,199, 2007–2009

- Tamera Coyne-Smith, Ph.D.
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- $196,917, 2007–2009

- Martha Holleman, M.A.
- Baltimore’s Campaign for Children and Youth
- $178,725, 2006–2008
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Dissemination of Positive Youth Development Findings</td>
<td>Loyola University Chicago</td>
<td>$350,001</td>
<td>2006–2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Raising the Visibility of Children and Youth Issues</td>
<td>M.S.W. Every Child Matters Education Fund Research</td>
<td>$300,000, 2006–2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Coverage of Youth-Related Issues on NPR</td>
<td>$25,000, 2006–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Using Research to Inform the Policy Process to Enhance the Quality of After-School Programs</td>
<td>$25,000, 2006–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Advancing Quality After-School Programs</td>
<td>$2,500, 2007–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Expanding Research Findings to National After-School Association</td>
<td>$150,000, 2007–2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Communicating Research Findings to National After-School Association Conference</td>
<td>$3,500, 2006–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Heritage Youth Development Findings</td>
<td>$25,000, 2006–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Making Public Policy</td>
<td>$5,000, 2007–2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Anthony Biglan, Ph.D. Society for Prevention Research</td>
<td>$5,000, 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Book on Diminishing the Gap Between Knowledge Producers and Consumers in Making Public Policy</td>
<td>$350,019, 2006–2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Karen Bognoschneider, Ph.D.</td>
<td>$25,000, 2006–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Will Power to Youth Jon Gossett, M.A. American Public Media</td>
<td>$25,000, 2006–2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Rebecca Levine Coley, Ph.D. Boston College</td>
<td>$180,690, 2003–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Cynthia Garcia Coll, Ph.D. Amy Marks, Ph.D. Brown University</td>
<td>$350,000, 2006–2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Outcomes for Former Foster Youth During the Transition to Independence</td>
<td>$341,083, 2004–2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Children's Emotional Competence: Pathway to Mental Health? Susanne Denham, Ph.D. George Mason University</td>
<td>$300,000, 2002–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All of our major grants and fellowships are reviewed by a select group of researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and experts in a number of disciplines relevant to our grantmaking. The advice we receive from our peer reviewers ensures the high quality of our grants and aids us in doing our best to advance policy and practice. We thank the following people for their service in 2007.

Joseph Allen  
Richard Arum  
Scott Gest  
Kathryn Grant  
Denis Gray  
Diane Hughes  
Aleta Huston  
Brian Jacob  
Robin Jarrett  
Clifford Johnson  
Sara Rimm-Kaufman  
Jane Knitzer  
Jill Korbin  
Joe Kosciew  
Reed Larson  
Bonnie Leadbeater  
Mark Lipsey  
Velma McBride Murry  
Sara McLeanahan  
Charles Michelopoulos  
Elizabeth Mojé  
Pamela Morris  
Edward Mulvey  
Katherine Newman  
Jeannie Oakes  
Janet Oh  
D. Wayne Osgood  
P. David Pearson  
Sara Pedersen  
Robert Pianta  
Andrew Porter  
Sean Reardon  
John Reid  
N. Dickon Reppucci  
Melissa Roderick  
Robert Roese  
Howard Rolston  
Mark Roosa  
Abraham Rosenblatt  
Mary Jane Rotheram-Borus  
Karen Rudolph  
Timothy Smeeding  
Charles Smith  
Mark Soler  
Scott South  
Gary Stangler  
Morgan Sullivan  
Megan Sweeney  
David Takeuchi  
Jeremy Travis  
M. Belinda Tucker  
Michael Wald  
Carol Weiss  
Dawn Wilson  
Laura Winterfield  
Sharlene Wolchik  
Kenneth Wong  
Carol Worthman  
Hirokazu Yoshikawa

Sharon Brewster  
Grants Coordinator, Officers’ Discretionary Funds

Sarah Diaz  
Research Assistant

Gabrielle Dibarce  
Administrative Assistant: Finance and Administration

Joseph Ferra  
Senior Accountant

Robert C. Granger, Ed.D.  
President  
Officer of the Foundation

Edward Seidman, Ph.D.  
Senior Vice President, Program Officer of the Foundation

Robert Roeser  
Assistant to the President

Kathryn Grant  
Communications Associate

James Lui  
Human Resources/Finance Associate II

Vivian Tseng, Ph.D.  
Program Officer

Irene Williams  
Grants Coordinator, William T. Grant Scholars Program

Julie Wong  
Coordinator, New Project Development

Seated, left to right: Damisela Taveras, Yvette Marksman, Vivian Tseng, Linda Rosano, Robert C. Granger, McPhail Simon, Rebecca A. Maynard, Brian L. Wilcox, Julie Wong, Thomas S. Weisner, Krishna F. Knabe, Joseph Ferra, Shannon Flasch, M.P.A. Coordinator, New Project Development  

Former Staff  
Shannon Flasch, M.P.A. Coordinator, New Project Development  

Susan Zuckerman  
Communications Associate

Our Board of Trustees is a diverse group of scholars, practitioners, and investment professionals who provide executive oversight for the corporation; appoint and evaluate the president and trustees; and set the parameters for our grantmaking, finances, and the direction of the Foundation. Four committees inform most of the Board’s executive, programmatic, and financial decisions: Executive, Program, Finance and Investment, and Audit and Budget. The Executive Committee recommends annual priorities for the Foundation and the staff officers, reviews the performance of the president and trustees, recommends the appointment of officers and trustees, and recommends the levels of staff officer compensation. The Program Committee advises the Board on the Foundation’s programmatic direction, makes recommendations to the Board regarding the appropriation of funds for grants, and reviews the execution of our programmatic and communication activities. The Finance and Investment Committee supervises the investment of the Foundation’s endowment funds and makes recommendations to the Board on investment and spending policies. The Audit and Budget Committee reviews management’s annual budget proposal, makes recommendations to the Board about the budget’s approval, and monitors expenditures throughout the year. The members of this committee oversee the Foundation’s annual audit and annually recommend the appointment of a pension plan provider and independent audit firm.

All committees are appointed annually, along with the chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary. The full Board meets four times a year.

Our Board of Trustees is a diverse group of scholars, practitioners, and investment professionals who provide executive oversight for the corporation; appoint and evaluate the president and trustees; and set the parameters for our grantmaking, finances, and the direction of the Foundation. Four committees inform most of the Board’s executive, programmatic, and financial decisions: Executive, Program, Finance and Investment, and Audit and Budget. The Executive Committee recommends annual priorities for the Foundation and the staff officers, reviews the performance of the president and trustees, recommends the appointment of officers and trustees, and recommends the levels of staff officer compensation. The Program Committee advises the Board on the Foundation’s programmatic direction, makes recommendations to the Board regarding the appropriation of funds for grants, and reviews the execution of our programmatic and communication activities. The Finance and Investment Committee supervises the investment of the Foundation’s endowment funds and makes recommendations to the Board on investment and spending policies. The Audit and Budget Committee reviews management’s annual budget proposal, makes recommendations to the Board about the budget’s approval, and monitors expenditures throughout the year. The members of this committee oversee the Foundation’s annual audit and annually recommend the appointment of a pension plan provider and independent audit firm.
Index of Institutions

Afterschool Alliance 36
American Public Media 37
American Youth Policy Forum 36
American Youth Work Center 36, 34, 39
Arizona State University 36
Baruch College 41
Bay Area Partnership 41
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America 27, 28, 37
Boston College 31, 35
Boston University School of Medicine 27, 34
Boston University 27, 33
British Columbia, University of 27, 33
Brookings Institution, The 35
Brooklyn Botanic Garden 35
Brooklyn Children's Museum 35
Brooklyn College Community Partnership 37
Brown University 27, 34
California, University of, Berkeley 27, 34, 38
California, University of, Davis 27, 34
California, University of, Los Angeles 31, 35
California, University of, San Francisco 27, 28, 33, 34
California, University of, Santa Barbara 27, 31, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41
Chicago, University of 31, 34, 37
Child Trends Incorporated 35
Clark University 38
Colorado, University of 38, 40
Columbia University 27, 33, 38
Cornell University 27, 33, 38
Council for Excellence in Government 35
Dancewave, Inc. 40
Developmental Studies Center 27, 35, 34
Duke University 36
EdBoost Education Corporation 36
Education Sector 36
Every Child Matters Education Fund 36
Family ReEntry 41
Fordham University 35
Free Arts NYC 37
George Mason University 38
George Washington University 39
Georgia, University of 39
Grantmakers for Education 27, 33, 40
Harvard University 40
High/Scope Educational Research Foundation 40
Higher Achievement Program 40
Horticultural Society of New York 28, 31, 34, 36, 38, 41
Illinois, University of, at Chicago 27, 33, 34
Illinois, University of, at Urbana-Champaign 41
Impact Strategies, Inc. 39
Indiana University 41
International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development 27, 34, 41
Johns Hopkins University 40
Learning Point Associates 27, 34
MDRC 27, 14
Maryland, University of 31, 35
Massachusetts, University of, Medical School 31
Massachusetts, University of, Boston 37
Memphis, University of 37
Mental Health Association of New York 38
Michigan State University 38, 40
Michigan, University of, 38, 40
Minnesota, University of 38, 41
Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility 37
National Academies, The 37
National Academy of Sciences 37
National Afterschool Association 31, 35
National Foster Care Coalition 36
National Public Radio 36
NEKIA Center for Knowledge Use 36
New York Regional Association of Grantmakers 37
New York University 31, 34, 36, 40
North Carolina, University of, at Chapel Hill 27, 33, 40
Northwestern University 40
Notre Dame, University of 35
Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow 40
Pennsylvania State University 35
Port Chester Carver Center 27, 34, 38
Princeton University 36
Public Health Institute 40
Public/Private Ventures 38
Rochester, University of 37
Rockefeller University 27, 35
Rush University Medical Center 31, 35
Safe and Sound: Baltimore's Campaign for Children and Youth 27, 34
San Diego State University 27, 35
Simmons College 35
Society for Prevention Research 41
Society for Research in Child Development 41
Society for Research on Adolescence 36
Southern California, University of 27, 34, 37
Stanford University 35
Staten Island Children's Museum 37
Teachers College, Columbia University 39
Temple University 41
Tennessee, University of, Knoxville 27, 35, 38
Texas, University of, at Austin 27, 33, 38
Tufts University 27, 35
Utah, University of 39, 41
Virginia, University of 40
Washington, University of 37
Wisconsin, University of, Madison 37
Wichita State University 37, 39
Yale University 35
Youth Communication New York 40
The photographs in this Annual Report were taken at the following two organizations, which are recent recipients of the Foundation’s Youth Service Improvement Grants. We would like to thank them for allowing us to photograph their programs for use in this publication.

Dancewave
Since its inception in 1985, Dancewave has created dance education and performance programs that are both challenging and artistically substantial, and which address young people’s needs for individual achievement and group identity. Dancewave’s broad range of programs include: three professionally oriented performance training programs for youth ages 10 to 18 who are exposed to the works of renowned modern dance choreographers; beginner through advanced classes offered five days a week; a three-week summer program offering a full spectrum of dance classes and performance for youth ages 5 to 18; an annual citywide and community event that celebrates diversity through the performing talents of young people in dance, music, and theater; and arts in education programs serving NYC public schools.

As a YSIG grantee, Dancewave will attempt to improve their curriculum to better reflect diversity of student age, ability, and interest. They will offer faculty training for their after-school program, and develop a handbook to define school procedures in order to run their programs effectively and consistently. Special thanks to Diane Jacobowitz, artistic and executive director: Reghan Sybrowsky, manager of programs; and Maya Berry, director of education. For more information, visit www.dancewave.org

The Staten Island Children’s Museum
In addition to their thematic interactive exhibits, The Staten Island Children’s Museum is home to a variety of public children’s programs. Activities include daily Story Time and Feeding Time (for the live animals who live at the museum), as well as arts and crafts workshops, a weekly cooking class, and school readiness activities for toddlers, including a bilingual (Spanish-English) program, which is also offered to children who are new English learners in the local library of an immigrant community. The museum hosts school visits, birthday parties, and a number of special seasonal events.

The museum will use their YSIG grant to make improvements to their Constructive Mood Management Program, a mentoring program that trains high school interns to work with elementary school students on conflict resolution and anger management. The improved program will offer more extensive training for the interns, develop a curriculum manual, create an evaluation plan for the program, and provide stipends for outstanding interns who return for a second year to help train the new group. Special thanks to Dina Rosenthal, executive director; Marjorie Waxman, assistant director; Sarah Martino, assistant editor; Sarah Martino, assistant editor; Nicholas Smith Design + Illustration; and intern coordinator. For more information, visit www.statenislandkids.org.