

the philanthropy

# Afterlife:

What Does A Career  
in Philanthropy Prepare You For?

BY LEE DRAPER

**T**he old adage, “When you leave philanthropy, you have received your last free meal,” implies that you will lose a position of prominence and become “ordinary” again when you leave the foundation world. Will former colleagues return your calls when you are no longer a grantmaker? Is grantmaking the pinnacle of a career in the nonprofit sector? What comes next? Is there life after philanthropy?

Perspectives have evolved over the last decade, with an increasing emphasis on professionalization and upward mobility in grantmaking. Fifteen years ago, it was rare for someone to have more than one job in the philanthropic sector. It was commonly felt that one shouldn't stay *too* long. Those who did the hiring in foundations preferred someone who previously had worked in nonprofit organizations or business; they often presumed that someone with a grantmaking background might be too removed or too rigid. Today, previous foundation experience is often perceived to be advantageous. It is not uncommon for people to work for two, three or even more grantmakers. In fact, many philanthropoids now aspire to such a career path.

However, following the terrorist attacks and recession in 2001, the grantmaking field constricted. Many grantmaking organizations downsized staff, froze unfilled positions or made dramatic changes to programs that led to staff departures.

Statistics from the Council on Foundations' *2003 Grantmakers Salary and Benefits Report* demonstrate that frequent turnover in foundations is not uncommon overall (13.3 percent). The report found that community and public foundations experience the most turnover, with staff staying an average of 13.8 and 16 years, respectively, in a position. At family and independent foundations, average staff tenures are 11 and 13 years, respectively. The study found that community foundation professional staff stay with their foundations an average of 11.4 years.

# Afterlife

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In this era of diminished assets and administrative budget reductions, a traditional pattern of turnover—coupled with a slower pace of foundation formation—has made the philanthropy job market tighter and far more competitive. In addition, when foundation staff pursue opportunities outside grantmaking, “prospective employers may not understand what people do in philanthropy or what skills they bring,” stated Sarah Lutman, former executive director of the Fleishhacker Foundation and senior program officer of the Bush Foundation. “It’s a little like Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*: ‘What am I fit for? What have you left me fit for?’”

What are the options? What happens to people who leave philanthropy? How does grantmaking prepare one for a next job? This article profiles individuals who have left the field, offering their candid reflections on the strengths and limitations of grantmaking positions in providing a framework for other ways to serve the public good. It also explores implications for staff development while in philanthropy.

### Common Choices

Two next steps—fund development and consulting—were common among grantmakers whose next job took them outside the sector. Transferring to “the other side of the table” and becoming a fundraising professional is a prevalent direction upon leaving philanthropy. Many nonprofit organizations believe that former grantmakers can bring their broad networks and a wealth of inside information with them, and thus, will have easy success in fundraising.

According to one interviewee, what may fuel some of this misperception is that “people who are in philanthropy oversell its ability [to build certain types of skills], creating expectations that are too high.”

In addition, “although you learn about effective program design and proposal writing from reading so many requests, you don’t [always] develop skills in relationship building as a grantmaker, and this is the essential component of effective fundraising,” stated Yolonda Richardson, former program officer for women’s health at the Carnegie Corporation. She is now president and CEO of the Centre for Development and Population Activities.

Becoming a consultant to foundations is also

a common post-philanthropy path. “Consulting was a natural outgrowth of my foundation work. I was used to working independently, to prioritizing and following through with minimal supervision,” said Karen Masaki, former program officer for culture and arts at the Hawai’i Community Foundation. She is now a partner in the consulting firm The Cultural + Planning Group.

For some, consulting is a way station while searching for a new institutional position. Or it creates an opportunity to stay in the philanthropic field despite a job loss. For others, it allows reduced hours and flexibility when needed (e.g., when starting a family or caring for loved one who is ill). Although consulting is a popular first move after leaving philanthropy, the majority of new consultants may not be able to sustain their practices for a year or longer, either because they generate insufficient business or due to the isolation or other qualities of the work.

### New Directions

For this article, I wanted to look beyond typical next steps and test a hypothesis. In philanthropy, we speak a lot about leadership, policy development, advocacy and innovation in nonprofits. So I wanted to see if we actually are stimulating professionals who leave our ranks to pursue opportunities to take on greater leadership, to develop public policy, to become stronger and more vocal advocates or to create new organizations or methodology for greater public benefit.

Interviews with 17 individuals who made transitions to impressive and meaningful positions outside philanthropy will be summarized here. Those individuals assumed posts in a wide range of organizations: nonprofits; advocacy groups; policy organizations; academia; think tanks; public agencies; and corporations (see “Interviewees,” page 27). Because they are more the exception than the rule, what enabled them to pursue these career choices? What suggestions do they have for those of us who continue working in philanthropy to prepare ourselves for future options most effectively?

### Reasons for Leaving

Despite the differences in the types of work they pursued after philanthropy, one characteristic—pivotal to their ability to transition to new roles—was common to everyone interviewed. Each one envisioned a grantmaking position as simply one episode in a larger career, as well as an aspect of

a deep personal mission. None saw philanthropy as better than the nonprofit or public sector work in which they had been engaged previously, and none considered it a capstone to their careers.

When asked what they missed most, a surprising majority said that the term did not accurately express their feelings. “It was a complete experience. One draws gratefully on what one gained, valuing the contributions, but there is no feeling of something missing or absent now,” stated John Orders, former program officer for the arts at The James Irvine Foundation and now a consultant to nonprofit organizations and grantmakers.

Joseph Brooks, who served for over seven years as program officer for neighborhood and community development at The San Francisco Foundation, saw his foundation position not as a pinnacle, but rather as a “necessary place on a much longer journey to equip myself to make change in the issues of economic equity.” He now serves as director for capacity building and civic engagement at PolicyLink.

John Passacantando, formerly executive director of the Florence and John Schumann Foundation and now executive director of Greenpeace USA, added, “I cherish the time I spent at the foundation. It was that time that shaped what I have done subsequently. However, I always love my existing job the best. ‘Pinnacle’ seems like there is no place to go but down.”

While greatly valuing their time in philanthropy, many eventually felt the need to be more active in their chosen field. They began to get frustrated with their role as a supporter and bystander for social change. “Although it was a privilege to be a grantmaker, I wanted to be closer to the product,” said Kathy Gilcrest, former vice president of The Ahmanson Foundation. “I had such respect for people doing the actual work. Philanthropy is a far step away from the real challenges on the ground.” She now serves as senior associate director of development at Stanford Medical Center.

Lutman recalled, “In grantmaking, one was constantly made aware of the number of people out there working to make their community a better place.” After more than 15 years in philanthropy at two foundations, she began questioning her purpose. Lutman eventually left for a more hands-on position—she’s now senior vice president of cultural programming and initiatives at Minnesota Public Radio.

Marie Young, former senior program manager in the children, families and communities program at The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, agreed, “I was always told by Packard that ‘it’s not your money and it’s not your program. Your role is just to facilitate the grantees’ work.’ I was ready to get back to more hands-on involvement in the work I love.” She is now the CEO of the affordable buildings for children initiative at the Low Income Investment Fund.

Others want a larger canvas and more tools to work with in order to achieve a direct impact. “I wanted the daily engagement, the intensity, and the opportunity to head an organization,” said Richardson.

Kimberly Belshé came from and returned to a career in the public sector. Having served under California Governor Pete Wilson for eight years, Belshé joined the James Irvine Foundation as a program director in 1999. “My work in the public sector led me to philanthropy, which I saw as another arena to advance important public purposes,” she explained. However, when Governor-elect Arnold Schwarzenegger asked her to become California’s Secretary of Health and Human Services last year, Belshé accepted. She felt the government position provided “greater influence to further the agenda to improve health and other issues.”

Trained as a visual artist, Christine Vincent spent nine years at the Ford Foundation (“a long tenure for a program officer at the Ford Foundation”). She left her position as deputy director for media, education, arts, and culture to become president of the Maine College of Art. She accepted the position in academia in order to educate and directly prepare a large segment of artists to tackle contemporary social issues and engage in artistic collaboration on a global scale: “I wanted to use my existing skills in new and different ways, to focus them on developing a particular institution and having a direct impact.”

Vincent thinks the exchange between philanthropy and work in the community is ideal: “The Ford Foundation has a policy of hiring people out of professional fields. There is the expectation that at some point you will return. As a result, you think about your grantmaking position in a different way.”

Learning how to work within the limitations of a grantmaking organization became frustrating to some after a while. Brooks wanted greater latitude to have an influence. He said, “I became

increasingly aware of the policy barriers nonprofits face in fulfilling their missions. Yet foundations were reluctant to engage in changing public policy, in organizing and advocacy.”

Passacantando felt a comparable desire to work on larger issues more forcefully. “I met and gained great admiration for environmental colleagues,” he said. “We were making gains in stopping pollution locally; now I wanted to try and get my arms around the global threats. We were facing threats of global warming, the endangerment of the oceans and forests worldwide. The environmental struggle is my generation’s ‘Great War’. As the issues became more enormous, I wanted to develop tactics and strategies to address them. I wanted in—to work in the trenches.”

Others felt that, over time, their positions had become somewhat predictable and less challenging. After seven years at the Irvine foundation, Orders confessed, “I feared I might be taking on what I disliked in some colleagues—a formulaic approach. In the first four years, 50 percent of my time was devoted to site visits. At the end, less than 10 percent was. This paralleled a shift away from problem solving and working together with nonprofit managers to address real issues in the field to a more corporate style of funding with preconceived notions of what is good and not good.”

Masaki concurred, “After 11 years, I felt that I’d impacted the kind of funding we were doing (capacity building). My intellectual capital was used up. The foundation needed new ideas and new perspectives, and I needed a more creative and fulfilling outlet.”

After over 15 years at the AT&T Foundation, lastly as executive director, Timothy McClimon wanted new opportunities for learning. Now executive director of the Second Stage Theatre in New York, he views his transition as about “the larger issues of whether the job is rewarding and are you learning? I will probably always be in the arts and hope to go in and out of nonprofits, corporate sector, philanthropy, and government in order to continue contributing to the field.”

In some ways, this passion to get back into the field and apply a fuller range of one’s talents to more challenging situations could be seen as a successful outcome of philanthropy. Indeed, those professionals deepened their commitment to their chosen fields while serving as grantmakers, and became increasingly inspired to leave philanthropy to assume more responsibility and leadership.



### **Perspective and Skills Gained in Philanthropy**

Individuals gained key skills and perspective in their grantmaking positions that they have found particularly valuable after departing from philanthropy.

#### ■ *Networks and Resources*

Most former grantmakers mentioned the wealth of resources available to them as the greatest benefit of their philanthropic positions. Access to leading scholars and contemporary research, frequent occasions to gather with colleagues and exchange ideas and information, professional training opportunities and broad professional networks greatly enhance the experience of grantmaking. This richness sets philanthropy apart from the reality of nonprofit work, where time and financial resources often are spread thin. The majority said that they missed the access to

these resources when they left philanthropy.

“I had access to a fantastic diversity of intellects,” said Passacantando. “The relationships necessarily change and I miss the level of contact I had when I worked at the foundation.”

Vincent concurred, “It was an enormous privilege to work in philanthropy because you have the opportunity to work with the leading minds in the field.”

Masaki misses “the intellectual stimulation, having that broad overview and feeling like I have my finger on the pulse of power.”

The financial resources available to grantmakers also enable them to engage in professional development and obtain knowledge not readily accessible to nonprofit leaders in their field of interest. “Foundations are information centers, huge repositories of communities, histories, and information. You hear about things *before* they happen,” explained Lutman. “Even though I now work in media, I have to work harder to get information, and I never get it as early as I used to.”

Keith Cruickshank, executive director of Kids In Sports, misses “all the gatherings, conferences, and trainings.” As a senior program officer at the Amateur Athletic Foundation, he found that “philanthropy does a great job at letting grantmakers know what is happening in the field and provides many types of opportunities to share information and strategies. Philanthropy is good at professional development.”

Belshé felt that “there is boundless time in philanthropy to think through and analyze the best solution possible. You are not confined by limited resources and can be self-indulgent because there is no pressure to act.”

“One of the most valuable gifts of the position at Irvine was the geometric expansion of relationships and networks, not only in California, where the foundation’s funding was focused, but nationally and in all disciplines of my field,” said Orders. “Contrary to common fears about leaving the field, many of these relationships endure as lifelong friendships, especially those with nonprofit leaders.”

The balance of power can shift, however, with former colleagues. McClimon was pleased at being included in some discussions with grantmakers, particularly by continuing to serve on the New York Regional Association of Grantmakers board. However, he was surprised at being shut out of some such conversations, though. “When you are no longer a grantmaker, you are some-

times no longer invited to participate,” he said. McClimon encountered some awkwardness when relationships changed from colleague to grant-seeker—or even grantee. But overall, most of his former colleagues “have been wonderful.”

#### ■ *Contextualization of Community Needs*

Almost everyone commented that philanthropy provided a greater understanding of their respective fields and related needs. It enabled them to step back and view issues within a fuller context than they had been able to previously in their careers. For example, Gilcrest “gained a broad perspective of the elements needed to have a strong community while working at the foundation. I learned about the acute needs of Los Angeles and the wide array of local efforts in the arts, education and civic engagement.”

Belshé’s grantmaking experience exposed her to an extensive array of issues and challenges facing California, as well as diverse strategies for addressing them.

June Zeitlin, who served as director of the gender and institutional change project at the Ford Foundation, said, “I came to the foundation with a history of working on women’s rights in the United States. Ford opened my horizons and gave me a worldwide perspective. Philanthropy is a unique vantage point at the center of a lot of activities. You see the interrelationships between various efforts and problems and learn to hone strategy.” This global and holistic perspective enhances her efforts as the executive director of Women’s Environment and Development Organization.

Young added, “Although I had previously worked in the same field in which the Packard foundation made grants—early childhood development—I gained an understanding of broader issues, such things as child welfare and youth development. I had access to cutting edge research and a bird’s eye view of the leading initiatives in the field. I learned how to advance a field broadly.”

#### ■ *Enhancing Analytical Skills*

The grantmaking process strengthened the analytical skills of many interviewees. “I used to be a corporate lawyer, and I thought my analytical skills were pretty good. But philanthropy definitely honed them,” said Richardson. “I now put in play lessons learned about making critical judgment calls, especially about how to use resources strategically.”

Former program director at The California Wellness Foundation Frances Jemmott values

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her sharpened analytical skills: “On a daily basis in grantmaking, one needs to read rigorously, understand multiple levels, interpret, recommend, justify and defend. I am better able to synthesize ideas and, interestingly, have gained a more intuitive approach to complex problems.” (She is now managing director of Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education.)

Orders learned to “apply a systemic perspective and see things in a more layered, deep, and holistic way, where I didn’t have that view or vocabulary as fully before.”

Brooks added, “It enhanced my problem solving skills. The ability to distinguish things that don’t work and why, to be attuned to nuances and offer constructive criticism, grew out of evaluating grant requests.”

#### ■ **Communication**

Grantmaking increases one’s ability to communicate effectively with diverse people. Deborah Wilkerson, whose first job after graduate school was as a research associate at The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, said, “I learned how to be diplomatic, how to listen, how to relate to many different types of people and how to present myself in a variety of professional settings.” She now works as the associate director of clinical affairs at Barr Research (a subsidiary of Barr Pharmaceuticals, Inc.) and employs those lessons in communicating complex information to a broad range of stakeholders.

Grantmakers are often thrust into a position of representing their institution and its interests or decisions in a variety of charged situations, where audiences have heightened expectations and agendas. Masaki said, “I learned about planning and facilitating meetings and making them dynamic. I learned how to get input from the community, to elicit and utilize diverse viewpoints and deal with difficult issues in a public context.”

While serving as a program officer and later as the associate director at the San Diego Community Foundation, Jeff Hale “learned how to communicate well and work closely with elite or wealthy populations.” This training has greatly enhanced his effectiveness in a joint appointment as the director of external relations and director of Liberal Studies at Oregon State University.

#### **Limitations of Philanthropic Positions**

On the other hand, many skills and experiences essential to nonprofit leadership and management

positions were found to be underdeveloped in philanthropy. Those perceived deficiencies presented downsides to a long-term engagement in philanthropy.

#### ■ **Lack of Management/Financial Skills**

Unless they held the top executive position in their foundation, most of those interviewed had little experience managing a staff and resources. Grantmaking requires skills in coordinating and evaluating information, often tasks that are performed in isolation.

The challenge of being responsible for the survival of a nonprofit was something McClimon sought in a new position. As a nonprofit executive director, he “really had to learn how to manage the life and death issues of bottom-line profit and loss, making payroll, and managing the cash flow of the organization.” Mastery was more difficult than McClimon envisioned; he realized that an understanding of ongoing financial management issues was a weak area in his skill set.

Passacantando agreed, “I needed to learn management, budgeting and financial accounting on a more complex scale than I was exposed to in foundation work.” He also found that “there is the need to deliver tangible results more rapidly.”

According to Gilcrest, “Contrary to what is spoken about, there was not a lot of planning in foundation work, whereas these skills are essential to ongoing decision-making from a nonprofit perspective.”

A number of interviewees noted that they did not learn much about board development and donor education while working in philanthropy. “Grantmaking doesn’t teach one how to connect individuals and donors to the mission of an organization,” said Vincent. “Being a former foundation officer is valuable in that I know how organized philanthropies operate, but it is only part of what is required in the fund development field.”

Hale expanded on that idea, “Philanthropy is as much about the philanthropist as about grantmaking. The role of foundation work is not just to do a board’s bidding, but also to give something back to donors, to give them a connection to a shared humanity and a growing understanding of the meaning of grants. We missed the boat in foundation work and did not learn valuable lessons about deepening the engagement of donors and boards.”

#### ■ **Theoretical Understanding/Practical Misunderstanding**

Grantmakers have the opportunity to work



closely with many nonprofits and see their daily struggles. From this perspective, it may seem relatively easy to make the transition from philanthropy to service delivery. However, when most program staff left philanthropy for nonprofit leadership positions, they found the learning curve steeper than anticipated.

Cruickshank “had to learn governance, how to recruit and nurture a board of directors, program delivery, putting a quality staff together, how to address the unique issues of communities within a region, how to mobilize sufficient funding to cover expenses—I sort of knew them from the foundation perspective, but actually doing it was a learning experience on the job.”

Orders added, “I wish I had understood early on how much is involved in the mechanisms of money exchange, in a sociological sense. There is a great divide between a foundation’s pronouncement to nonprofit leaders that ‘you really need to make this change’ versus bottom-line accountability. When you really have to do board development yourself, as I do now as a consultant, you realize that you have so much less real capacity to tackle it than you thought. You can’t just push a button and have one thing change—seven things are affected. It is infinitely tougher to make structural changes when you are actually in an organization balancing complex and interconnected needs and goals. Knowledge of the issues is not the same as the ability to actualize the goal.”

Richardson described being “worried about the academization in philanthropy, where there’s increasingly more theoretical knowledge and not enough practical experience. Philanthropy can become insular, only talking to itself.”

Others found the skills and knowledge that they gained to be limiting, especially when trying to apply them to a practical situation. A former corporate giving executive mused that he “learned in philanthropy to think and fund categorically. Issues are framed in clean boxes. We never quite get to the point of connecting problems and how they are related.”

Wilkerson reflected, “Foundations provide you with an overview, a very broad perspective, but you sometimes make recommendations based on very limited knowledge.”

Given grantmakers’ broad access to information, knowledgeable colleagues and professional development, many philanthropic careerists may begin to forget the realities of working in a non-

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profit—where research, time and finances are severely limited, constricted or stretched thin. Not understanding these limitations can skew a grantmaker’s perception of what a nonprofit can and cannot do within a given time period and budget. Richardson advised, “Grantmakers need to understand how hard it is to run an organization, how difficult it is to be strategic when you’re under resourced and overworked. You lack reflection time.”

Cruickshank was sympathetic. “If I go back into grantmaking I would be a more understanding grantmaker because of my experience running a nonprofit,” he said. I have a greater appreciation for people who work in nonprofits, especially their daily struggles to try to deliver services most efficiently amid many variables.”

To that end, Brooks suggested the following prerequisites to a career in philanthropy, “I would require hands-on experience in a community-based setting prior to joining a foundation or require program officers to intern at nonprofits while working in philanthropy. It is crucial not to separate yourself from the people you are trying to help.”

Having joined philanthropy directly after graduate school, Wilkerson agreed, “I might have been better at philanthropy if I’d worked in the field first.”

### ■ *Losing faith*

Perhaps the most disconcerting finding was the loss of personal satisfaction in the work over time. Burnout and feeling stuck professionally and personally eventually outweighed the benefits of expansive resources and the power to distribute funding support. “It’s not a place for personal or spiritual development,” Masaki said. While at the foundation, I struggled with confidence, the sense that I was making a positive contribution, and to feel like I belonged in that world. There’s not much time for self-reflection,” she stated. “In the end, I chose to leave because I wanted a less stressful, more introspective life.”

Hale found that some foundation colleagues seemed to be closed off from new ideas and perspectives. “Some have blinders on that [insist that] the secular humanistic philanthropy approach is superior to understanding motivations

and analyze the best solution possible.

You are not confined by limited resources and can be self-indulgent because there is no pressure to act.

# Afterlife

## As a grantmaker, you don't really do the work.

You are removed from both ends—you are not the donor and you are not providing the service.

of faith, which ultimately hinders their ability to be effective grantmakers," he said. "Grantmaking is a little sterile in heart and passion. You are taught to be like a doctor, creating an artificial distance and dealing with issues with the head only. It is fine to be concerned about business practices and being efficient, but not to do so at the sacrifice of mission."

Working within hard and fast guidelines, bureaucracies, or at a distinct distance from nonprofit organizations took a toll on some of those interviewed. They wanted to work in partnership, as peers, with others in leadership roles who were committed to the same issues. "I felt confined working within the limited vision, restrictions and compromises of a family board. It was a relief to become a civilian again," Gilcrest stated.

Masaki shared, "There are real walls around you, no matter how you try to eradicate them. People treat you differently. I couldn't tell if I was really seeing what was going on in the field."

"It is difficult to have authentic human relationships when you are a grantmaker. One has to be so careful as a grantmaker; every word is repeated and interpreted. I longed to speak my mind, be myself," added Lutman.

"Philanthropy was a career pinnacle in the sense of being well-paid and having power and influence, but it wasn't my most personally satisfying job," observed Jemmott. Indeed, many of those interviewed ultimately left philanthropy in order to become freer to be passionate, creative

and mission-driven.

In discussing life after philanthropy with a broad range of foundation colleagues, anecdotal evidence indicated a number of people dropped out of the workforce and were unable to go back to work without first healing from their jobs in philanthropy. Many people took self-imposed sabbaticals, lasting from many months to several years. Others made radical shifts, stopped pursuing professional work or dropped out of sight altogether. This is something to examine more deeply.

One of the key concerns is an eroding sense of one's inner capacities. A former corporate grantmaker provided this insight: "As a grantmaker, you don't really do the work. You are removed from both ends—you are not the donor and you are not providing the service."

### Can Philanthropy Professionals Fill the Nonprofit Leadership Gap?

During the next ten years, the nonprofit community will face an important leadership challenge. Many of the nation's nonprofit organizations are led by individuals who will reach retirement age. Baby boomers' drive and dedication to public benefit—often without strong consideration to economic compensation—has shaped some of our most innovative and important organizations.

At the same time, nonprofit management is increasingly complex and demands multifaceted skill sets. Recent events have shaken the way the nonprofit sector works, requiring new visions of service delivery and organizational structure. Our sector needs an infusion of innovation and talent

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## Resources

*The Perfect Gift: The Philanthropic Imagination in Poetry and Prose*, Amy A. Kass, editor, Indiana University Press, 2002.

*The Seven Faces of Philanthropy: A New Approach to Cultivating Major Donors*, Russ Alan Prince and Karen Maru File, Jossey-Bass, 2001.

*On Leadership*, John W. Gardner, Free Press, 1993.

"The Seven Principles of Firmly Centered Grantmakers," *Foundation News & Commentary*, September/October 2001, Lee Draper.

"Get Out of Your Rut," *Foundation News & Commentary*, January/February 2002, Lee Draper.



to respond to new circumstances facing the nation and the world.

Will philanthropy play a direct role in filling this leadership gap?

Jemmott summed up the thoughts of many colleagues when she asserted, “Most people ought to leave philanthropy and go back into the community. Philanthropy is not a career. It is a way for midlife nonprofit professionals to hone the array of skills they have and then leave and return to nonprofits with deepened skills.”

Likewise, Vincent urged, “it is an important responsibility to take what you’ve learned back to the field.”

But if the leaders interviewed here are the exception rather than the rule, how can we address the brain and heart drain? How can philanthropy better inspire and train professionals so that they return to the field in significant numbers and assume greater responsibilities in the nonprofit and public sectors? Given all the professional development resources available to grantmakers, should philanthropy focus on developing the skills of staff and grantees so they can become tomorrow’s nonprofit leaders?

Staff development in nonprofit management probably would strengthen the sector on both sides of the table. The most successful professional transitions after philanthropy discussed in this article had four key ingredients:

1. Being grounded by previous nonprofit work
2. Viewing a philanthropy career as a finite episode
3. Maintaining peer relationships and identification with nonprofit leaders
4. Keeping close to the practical realities and understanding of responsibilities and constraints of nonprofit leaders.

Everyone interviewed left philanthropy to pursue leadership positions in organizations that serve the community in some way. Zeitlin concluded, “Philanthropy is a great experience, but not as a career. Gain expertise, strengthen your skills and broaden your perspective, then take all of that back to the community.” **F&C**

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Interviewee	Philanthropic positions held	How long in grantmaking	Current position	How long since leaving philanthropy
S. Kimberly Belshé	Program Director, James Irvine Foundation	5 years	Secretary, Health & Human Services Agency, State of California	6 months
Joseph Brooks	Program Officer, Neighborhood and Community Development, San Francisco Foundation	7 years	Director for Capacity Building and Civic Engagement, PolicyLink	6 years
Keith Cruickshank	Senior Program Director, Amateur Athletic Foundation	12 years	Executive Director, Kids In Sports	5 years
Kathleen A. Gilcrest	Vice President, The Ahmanson Foundation	Need data	Senior Associate Director of Development, Stanford Institute for Cancer/ Stem Cell Biology and Medicine	Over 6 years
Jeffrey Hale	Associate Director and Program Officer, San Diego Community Foundation	7 years	Director of External Relations, Oregon State University then Director of Liberal Studies, Oregon State University	6 years 5 years
	Baldwin Company (corporate giving director)	2 years		
Frances Jemmott	Program Director, The California Wellness Foundation	7 years	Managing Director, Strategic Concepts in Organizing & Policy Education	Less than 1 year
Sarah Lutman	Executive Director, Fleishhacker Foundation	6 years	Senior Vice President of Cultural Programming & Initiatives, Minnesota Public Radio	5 years
	Senior Program Officer, Bush Foundation	9 years		
Karen Masaki	Program Officer for Culture & Arts, Hawai'i Community Foundation	11 years	Partner, The Cultural + Planning Group Adjunct artist, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange	7 months
Timothy McClimon	Vice President of Arts & Culture, Vice President of International Programs, and Executive Director, AT&T Foundation	5 years 3 years	Executive Director, Second Stage Theatre	9 months
John Orders	Program Officer for the Arts, James Irvine Foundation	7 years	Consultant to nonprofits and grantmakers	7 years
John Passacantando	Executive Director, Florence and John Schumann Foundation	3 years	Founder and Executive Director, Ozone Action Executive Director Greenpeace, USA	8 years 4 years
Yolonda Richardson	Program Officer for Women's Health, Carnegie Corporation	10 years	President & Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Development and Population Activities	5 years
Christine Vincent	Deputy Director, Media, Arts and Culture, Ford Foundation	9 years	President, Maine College of Art	Almost 3 years
Deborah Wilkerson	Research Associate, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	4 years	Associate Director of Clinical Affairs, Barr Research	1.5 years
Marie Young	Program Officer, Senior Program Officer, co-Interim Director of Children, Families, and Communities, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	7 years	Chief Executive Officer of Affordable Buildings for Children Initiative, Low Income Investment Fund	16 months (did consulting for 10 months prior to joining LIIF)
June Zeitlin	Deputy Director of Rights and Social Justice; Program Officer for Women's Rights; Director of Gender and Institutional Change Project, Ford Foundation	Over 10 years	Executive Director, Women's Environment & Development Organization	5 years