



# Reaching Out to a Willing Group of Champions

*For first time, board members receive magazine and Nonprofit Director*



by Peter Goldberg  
President and CEO  
Alliance for Children  
and Families

Within the nearly 525 combined member organizations of the Alliance for Children and Families and United Neighborhood Centers of America (UNCA) are an estimated 10,000 board members who represent much more than nonprofit governance.

You are our strong supporters who clearly believe in the role that nonprofit human service organizations play in individual communities and the larger society. Having the Alliance reach out to you in order to be a source of information and inspiration has been a goal of mine for some time.

Now, I am happy to announce that for the first time, our 10,000 Alliance and UNCA member organization board members are receiving the *Alliance for Children & Families Magazine*. We are very excited about this opportunity to provide our 10,000 “champions” with a resource than can help inform your role and your opportunities, and hopefully stimulate you to action.

In addition, we are introducing the newest publication of the Alliance, the *Nonprofit Director*, which is bound within this magazine. The *Nonprofit Director* features content chosen expressly to emphasize the integral role boards and constituents play in civic engagement. This magazine, and specifically the *Nonprofit Director*, is

meant to help educate and stimulate board members to recognize that it is their support and active engagement by which civic engagement will take hold at their organization.

The increased magazine distribution and new publication is a result of the multi-year civic engagement grant program of the Alliance, funded principally by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The program builds upon our longstanding National Family Week program and other civic engagement initiatives. The new program is a concerted effort to move away from civic engagement used as a “sometimes tool” by nonprofit human service organizations toward civic engagement as an everyday process.

We recognize that to make civic engagement an everyday process, active and responsive board participation is vital. So our “champions” of more than 10,000 represent sheer potential to make the type of meaningful changes that improve the lives of disadvantaged children, troubled families, and challenged neighborhoods.

In this magazine three years ago, Don Goughler, CEO of Alliance member Family Services of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, explained how his governance model includes a large degree of civic engagement by his board. “This approach

helps ensure that the board gains a closer identification with the causes that the organization addresses. Board members educate themselves about the social power maldistribution that may be at the core of the service recipients’ condition. This spurs them to educate and engage others, using external power sources to address this imbalance,” explained Goughler. Family Services of Western Pennsylvania’s ultimate goal? “Larger social policy gets changed,” Goughler said.

Yet, if we are ever going to see “larger social policy” get changed for the better, we must turn up the volume of the authentic voices for constructive social change.

With more than 10,000 motivated board members receiving materials directly relating to civic engagement, we hope you will be more motivated to facilitate such civic engagement and take part in strengthening the capacity and confidence of the organizations you are associated with.

Board members and volunteers are the “magic” that makes the nonprofit sector in America so special. We can never express our appreciation to you completely enough, but we kept trying. We hope this magazine captures the attention, meets needs, and stimulates interest. ■