

# IGNITING

social change





Eugene Springfield NAACP



Oregon Rural Action



Voz Hispana

# ADVANCING

## social justice

## Dear Friends,

Reflecting on the last year (and more than fifty years of social justice activism), it is clear to me that one size doesn't fit all. **It is clear that we must be steadfast, but also adaptive and flexible and responsive.**

Across the country and in Oregon, we continue to see:

- The militarization of our police and our borders
- Unchecked environmental degradation
- Expanding economic inequity and attacks on workers' rights
- And a seemingly endless fight against racism, sexism, and homophobia

These challenges are too big and too complex to tackle with a single solution. **To truly ignite social change, our work must fit the communities we serve.** When it does, we're able to accomplish incredible things.

We secure the freedom for LGBTQ couples to marry, when it seemed a far-off dream just a few years ago. We spark conversations about climate justice and green industry in communities once dominated by logging and resource extraction. We build an ever-stronger immigrant rights movement, even in the face of painful setbacks. **And we do so much more.**

Which is why this report is not only about MRG Foundation, it's about the difference we've made—and will continue to make—together. If you gave a gift, if you rallied for change, if you volunteered as a grantmaker or at an event, if you voted your values—**you were a part of advancing social and racial justice in Oregon.**

So, when you read about **Rogue Climate on page 5**, who's just getting started but is already doing fabulous work building a multigenerational movement for climate justice in Southern Oregon, or the **Center for Intercultural Organizing on page 11**, who received seed funding from MRG more than ten years ago and has since grown into a powerful movement leader, I hope you'll take a moment to congratulate yourself for the part you played.

**And then I hope you'll recommit to igniting social change with MRG Foundation.** With your continued support and passion and thoughtful engagement, I know that we can build an Oregon where people, cultures, and ecosystems thrive!



**Sharon Gary-Smith**  
Executive Director







Right 2 Dream Too



Unidos Bridging Community



Kitchen Commons

# GROWING

## the movement with seed funding



It's risky to fund groups that don't have a proven track record of success, which is why few foundations are interested in supporting emerging groups.

But throughout MRG's history, we've seen that small grants made when a new group is just getting off the ground can be the catalyst for a tremendous impact. MRG's seed funding grants are long-term investments in innovative leaders, emerging issues, and new ideas that Oregon needs to tackle our biggest challenges.

### EMERGING GROUPS FUNDED IN 2013-14

**Community Rights Lane County**  
Eugene \$5,000

**Kitchen Commons**  
Portland \$4,000

**Right 2 Dream, Too**  
Portland \$6,000

**Rogue Climate**  
Ashland \$8,000

**Unidos Bridging Community**  
McMinnville \$8,000

### SEED FUNDING THROUGH THE YEARS

**1979**  
Sisters of the  
Road Café

**1983**  
Cascade AIDS  
Project

**1984**  
Black United  
Fund of Oregon

**1995**  
Causa Oregon

**1999**  
Partnership for  
Safety & Justice

**2001**  
Center for  
Intercultural  
Organizing

**2004**  
Disabled  
United in Direct  
Empowerment

## IMPACT PROFILE

## Unidos Building Community and Rogue Climate

Launched in 2012, **Unidos Bridging Community** is the only Yamhill County-based group focused on advancing immigrant rights. With a combination of citizenship classes, policy advocacy, and community education events they are building a powerful community of Latino immigrants and White allies committed to making Yamhill County a welcoming community that values and respects its diversity.

Hundreds of miles away, **Rogue Climate** is mobilizing Southern Oregonians concerned about climate change. Led by millennial organizers, they've hosted some of the largest climate actions in the history of the state, engaging over 1,000 people concerned about climate change in events in Medford, Ashland, and Salem.

Two groups, working with different communities on different issues. But they have much in common. Both are deeply rooted in their communities and committed to building multiracial, multigenerational movements. Both groups are just two years old, but they have inspiring visions with the potential to shape their communities for decades to come. And both were awarded \$8,000 grants from MRG this year—the first foundation grant and largest single gift either group has received. **This seed funding will help them build infrastructure, inspire support from other funders, and deliver on their visions for a just and joyful Oregon.**

*“We are already starting to see the impacts of climate change in Southern Oregon, but funding from MRG supports us in taking immediate action and challenging entrenched interests.”*

—Shaun Franks,  
Rogue Climate







Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon



OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon



Albina Ministerial Alliance

# RESPONDING

## in times of need



There are moments when justice can't wait. When community members are primed and ready to respond to an injustice or seize on an opportunity and they just need a small injection of resources to spark change. That's where MRG's Critical Response grants come into play. To help groups respond to an unexpected crisis or organizing opportunity, our Critical Response Grantmakers can award up to \$2,000 in as little as two weeks. Social change doesn't happen according to a schedule, so MRG is ready to respond whenever an opportunity arises.

### TRAVEL & CRITICAL RESPONSE GRANTS IN 2013-2014

**Albina Ministerial Alliance**  
Portland \$2,000

**Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon**  
Portland \$1,000

**Causa Oregon**  
Salem \$5,000

**KPOV High Desert Community Radio**  
Bend \$1,000

**KSKQ Radio**  
Medford \$1,000

**Confederated Tribes of the Lower Rogue**  
Coos Bay \$800

**Momentum Alliance**  
Portland \$1,000

**Occupy Roseburg**  
Roseburg \$2,000

**October 1st Conference Committee**  
Portland \$2,000

**OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon**  
Portland \$1,000

**Portland Central America Solidarity Committee**  
Portland \$1,000

**Project REconomy**  
Central Point \$600

### GRANTMAKING BY GEOGRAPHY



- Portland Metro 31%
- Statewide 27%
- Willamette Valley 21%
- Southern Oregon 12%
- Central/Eastern Oregon 9%

## IMPACT PROFILE

### Occupy Roseburg

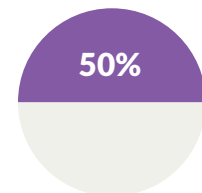
**Occupy Roseburg** has been shifting the dialogue about affordable housing in Douglas County since 2011. Their weekly “Feed the ‘Burg” gathering provides food and supplies to people who need them, while creating a powerful organizing and community building opportunity.

Like far too many cities, Roseburg criminalizes people experiencing homelessness. The local police “sweep” unhoused people out of their campsites, arresting or ticketing people whose main crime is that they don’t have access to safe housing.

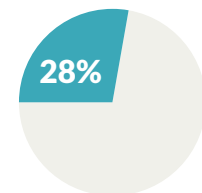
But this spring, Occupy Roseburg gained a new ally in the form of a local church who wanted to see a big change in how the city was talking about homelessness in Roseburg. This offer of support was well timed, with growing, widespread discontent with the City Council’s inaction. A Critical Response grant from MRG helped Occupy Roseburg partner with the church and community groups to launch a demonstration housing project and bring people together to confront this pressing issue.

**Because of MRG’s support, Occupy Roseburg was able to take action at an opportune moment, bring in new allies, and spark critical dialogue about affordable housing in Douglas County.** Constructing safe, decent shelter for Roseburg’s unhoused population is an ongoing project, but Occupy Roseburg’s demonstration project has moved the conversation about affordable housing forward by leaps and bounds.

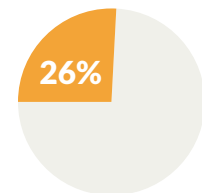
## MRG GRANTEES LED BY:



People of Color



Immigrants & Refugees



Low Income People

Portland Central America Solidarity Committee





# EMPOWERING

## those most impacted



MRG makes grants based on a simple but radical premise: those most directly impacted by an issue

are best positioned to develop strategies for change. This applies to both **how** we fund and **what** we fund. Our grant decisions are made by a group of grassroots organizers from across the state who have deep experience in a variety of issues. And we award grants to groups whose leadership reflects the communities they serve. This grantmaking strategy increases both accountability and impact.

### COMMUNITY GRANTS IN 2013-14

**Amigos Multicultural Services Center**  
Eugene \$10,000

**Common Cause Oregon**  
Portland \$8,000

**Confederated Tribes of the Lower Rogue**  
Coos Bay \$8,500

**Disability Art and Culture Project**  
Portland \$8,000

**Human Dignity Coalition**  
Bend \$7,000

**Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice**  
Portland \$7,000

**Koměmma Cultural Protection Association**  
Yoncalla \$8,500

**KPOV High Desert Community Radio**  
Bend \$10,000

**KSKQ Radio**  
Medford \$8,000

**Lakota Oyate Ki**  
Salem \$8,000

**Latino Club**  
Salem \$7,000

**Lotus Rising Project**  
Ashland \$9,000

**Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas**  
Woodburn \$10,000

**NAACP Eugene-Springfield**  
Eugene \$7,000

**Portland Central America Solidarity Committee**  
Portland \$5,000

**PFLAG Portland Black Chapter**  
Portland \$10,000

**Red Lodge Transition Services**  
Portland \$9,000

**Right 2 Survive**  
Portland \$8,000

**Unete Center for Farmworker Advocacy**  
Medford \$9,000

**Voz Hispana Causa Chavista**  
Woodburn \$8,500



## IMPACT PROFILE

### Human Dignity Coalition

In 1992, Central Oregonians came together in Bend to defeat the virulently homophobic Ballot Measure 9. No one realized that they were laying the seeds for decades of work by the **Human Dignity Coalition** to make their communities more inclusive, fair, and just.

In 2014, far too many lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ) people in rural communities still face harsh economic and social penalties for being “out” as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or trans—and for youth in these communities, the isolation and invisibility can be particularly devastating.

**The Human Dignity Coalition puts LGBTQ Oregonians at the forefront of their work and intentionally develops and empowers LGBTQ youth leaders through their Queer and Allied Youth Program.** Adults provide mentorship and support to LGBTQ student leaders as they organize a Queer Prom, Day of Silence, and Gay/Straight Alliances in Central Oregon high schools. These programs have served over 150 youth, challenging stereotypes and prejudice to make Central Oregon a more welcoming place for LGBTQ Oregonians.

*“I understand the struggles of my community and MRG’s Grantmaking Committee is one place I can contribute my knowledge, experience, and heart to making this world a better place.”*

—Vicky Falcón-Vázquez, MRG Grantmaker & Board Member





CAPACES Leadership Institute



Voz Workers' Rights

# BUILDING

## movement leaders



MRG not only supports emerging groups—we stick with them as they grow to scale. We make deep investments, up to \$20,000, in organizations that have overcome obstacles to become powerful movement leaders. What

makes a group a movement leader? Not just more members, but a track record of successes, strong relationships with other grassroots organizations, and a vision for a just and joyful Oregon. We're in this for the long haul, and so are these organizations.

### LEADERSHIP GROUPS FUNDED IN 2013-2014

**Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon**  
Portland \$19,500

**Beyond Toxics**  
Eugene \$10,000

**CAPACES Leadership Institute**  
Woodburn \$15,000

**Center for Intercultural Organizing**  
Portland \$20,000

**Community Alliance of Lane County**  
Eugene \$9,000

**Community Alliance of Tenants**  
Portland \$17,000

**Friends of Family Farmers**  
Molalla \$15,000

**Momentum Alliance**  
Portland \$16,000

**Northwest Workers' Justice Project**  
Portland \$14,000

**OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon**  
Portland \$19,500

**Oregon Action**  
Portland \$15,000

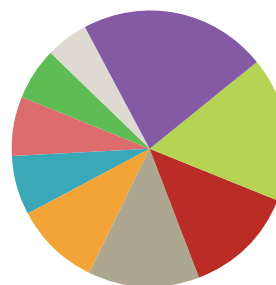
**Oregon Rural Action**  
La Grande \$20,000

**Rural Organizing Project**  
Scappoose \$18,000

**Street Roots**  
Portland \$20,000

**Voz Workers' Rights Education Project**  
Portland \$20,000

### GRANTMAKING BY ISSUE



- Immigrant Rights 22%
- Economic Justice 17%
- Housing & Homelessness 13%
- Environmental Protection 13%
- Criminal Justice 10%
- Cultural Preservation 7%
- LGBTQ Rights 7%
- Civic Engagement 6%
- Youth & Education 5%



## IMPACT PROFILE

### Center for Intercultural Organizing

The **Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO)** was founded in 2002 to combat anti-Muslim bias and a rising tide of militarism after the September 11 attacks. MRG was the first foundation to step forward with a grant, supporting CIO when they were an all-volunteer group with a limited track record.

**As we've stuck with them for more than a decade, CIO has racked up victories and grown into a powerful voice for Oregon's immigrants and refugees.** They've secured major victories on a number of issues, including:

- Passing a Limited English Proficiency policy in Beaverton, making city government accessible to more residents.
- Expanding the new American electorate, including registering over 1,600 new voters and engaging 400 volunteers in grassroots campaigns.
- Training over 120 immigrant and refugee leaders since 2008 and building the capacity of seven smaller immigrant- and refugee-rights groups.
- Persuading more than a dozen Oregon counties to stop collaborating with Immigration & Customs Enforcement and deny detention requests.
- Working with partners to pass a slate of racial justice legislation in 2013, including culturally specific healthcare, tuition equity for undocumented students, and racial impact statements for all state legislation.

In 2015, CIO is organizing a broad coalition to stand against police profiling. Their work to ensure that Oregonians of color can walk down the street without fear of police harassment has the potential to serve as a national model to turn the tide on public safety and criminal justice issues!

*"We started with no infrastructure, but MRG invested in us and we used the grants to create a strong, immigrant and refugee-led organization. Today, CIO is a nationally recognized model for cross-cultural organizing—this would not have been possible without MRG."*

*—Kayse Jama, Center for Intercultural Organizing*

Beyond Toxics



Center for Intercultural Organizing





Portland Community Conversation



Presentation Day

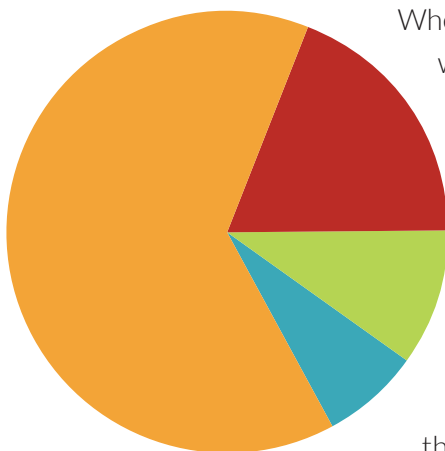
# GIVING

## more than money

### MRG FOUNDATION EXPENSES

**\$1.54 MILLION**

- **Grantmaking** 64%
- **Community Education** 19%
- **Fundraising** 10%
- **Administration** 7%



Where do you go to when you want to connect with other people committed to social justice? In addition to the grantmaking programs at the core of our work, MRG nurtures a community of justice-seekers committed to social change through community conversations, justice socials, and signature events. Our deep connections with movement leaders across the state and across issues offer unique opportunities for thought-provoking dialogue and collective action.



## IMPACT PROFILE

# Critical Community Conversations

In summer 2013, two events rocked the U.S. as stark examples of how far we still have to go on racism: the Supreme Court blocked part of the 1964 Voting Rights Act, and the nation reeled with the implications of the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the killing of Trayvon Martin.

To give people a chance to come together and discuss how to respond to these setbacks in the long arc of work toward racial justice, MRG organized community conversations in Portland, Eugene, and Ashland. Drawing over 175 participants, the conversations created a space for people to consider the ramifications of these setbacks and plan for action.

At the same time, MRG funded a march on the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom organized by **Albina Ministerial Alliance**. AMA's march protested the Supreme Court's gutting of the Voting Rights Act and ignited a conversation about voting rights in Oregon.

MRG's community conversations are supplemented throughout the year by justice socials and signature events like Justice within Reach, the Social Justice Summer Party in Eugene, and our Southern Oregon Celebration. When paired with our grantmaking, these community gatherings build a diverse and powerful foundation for social change in Oregon.

*"MRG gives grassroots groups what they need to succeed, including networking opportunities, training, and other tools that help groups develop their ability to be inclusive and effective."*

—MRG Donor in Eugene

Eugene Social Justice Summer Party





# ORGANIZING

## a philanthropic movement



Oregon's foundations move nearly \$250 million into communities across the state each year. Where this money goes and how it's used can have a huge impact on the future of the state, which is why MRG organizes within the wider foundation community to increase support of communities of color and community-based organizing. Partnering with other foundations and funder networks is an organization-wide effort:

- **Executive Director Sharon Gary-Smith** served on the GRANTMAKERS of Oregon and SW Washington and Philanthropy NW planning committee for the six-state regional conference of funders, delivering the opening address on the importance of equity and inclusion in the foundation sector.
- **Deputy Director Anita Rodgers** continued her service on the GRANTMAKERS program committee, coordinating workshops on funding in immigrant communities, supporting community-based organizing, and operationalizing equity.
- And **Grants Program Director Cris Lira** worked with MRG grantees to help them connect with other larger funders that might be interested in funding social justice work.



# YOU

## make social change possible

**We can't do this work alone.** All of our work to support Oregon's social justice movements takes many hands—activists organizing on the ground, volunteer leaders developing strategy, and generous donors fueling the work.

Whether you contribute \$10 each month or \$100,000 each year, your support is essential in building a just and joyful world.

As Oregon's leading funder of social justice since 1976, MRG has a unique role of moving resources to activists on the ground. MRG has deep experience handling stock gifts, supporting estate planning, and hosting donor advised funds. However you want to support social change, we can help.

*"MRG is rooted in the grassroots community and it's important for that community to come together to support MRG."*

*—Lauren Norris,  
Monthly Donor*

To learn more, donate stock, or open a donor advised fund please contact:

Carol Tatch,  
MRG Donor Relations Director,  
[carol@mrgfoundation.org](mailto:carol@mrgfoundation.org)  
or 503-289-1517.



Write a check



Charge it  
online



Become a  
monthly donor



Donate stock



Include MRG in  
your will



Establish a donor  
advised fund



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