Today's world needs justice

Today's world needs community

Today's world needs MRG



MRGenvisions

a joyful world where people, cultures and ecosystems thrive.

We seek to create a just world where...

...We live in harmony with one another and the natural world we all share, and we commit to the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

...We all have the freedom, support and resources to pursue our dreams and live out our full potential as communities and as individuals.

...We cherish and gain strength from the richness of our diverse experiences and the depth of our common humanity. We nurture our interdependence and actively care for one another.

We believe that everyone plays a role in creating and sustaining this world.

By building community, living our values, and working together towards this vision, we participate in the creation of justice and inspire

hope for the future.

It's more important than ever...

... for those of us who want to live in a just world to work together.

In today's political environment, it can feel like we're constantly on the defensive, with little room to dream of something better. Every day, we hear stories of military aggression, corporate greed and environmental destruction. These stories are so common that it can seem impossible to imagine a world in which war, racism and poverty don't exist.

But if we can't imagine it, how can we ever hope to get there?



At the McKenzie River Gathering Foundation we believe that to be effective, we need to have a vision of the world we are trying to create. We also believe that our ability to create justice is directly linked to our willingness to consider the lasting impacts of our actions, to work with others across lines of difference, and to follow the lead of those most effected by the problems we are addressing.

For 30 years, MRG has been an active partner in Oregon's movements for human rights, economic justice and environmental protection. In that time we've awarded more than \$9 million in grants and strengthened the movement for social change in Oregon.

As a foundation, our role is to increase the funding available for activists. But we see ourselves as more than just a source of funding — we are also an active part of the progressive community. So as we celebrate our 30th anniversary, we are preparing for the political struggles that lie ahead. An important part of that process has been creating a vision of the world we want to live in.

We started by challenging ourselves to imagine a world without oppression. What would that look like? Our answer to that question is on the facing page. The pages that follow feature those who have shaped MRG into what it is - a permanent source of funding for social change in Oregon - and share highlights from thirty years of activist-led grant making.

In a world where cynicism can seem like a healthy coping strategy, it's critical that we have a vision of the world we are trying to create. At MRG, our vision is for a just — and yes, even a joyful — world in which people, cultures and ecosystems thrive.

If this is the world you'd like to live in, I invite you to join us in creating it together.

In Peace,

Marjory Hamann

Mayon Homan

Executive Director



Today's world needs US IIIEE

Problems like war, racism, poverty and environmental destruction can seem impossible to solve

But throughout Oregon, people are doing something about it.

The McKenzie River Gathering Foundation (MRG) provides critical support for social change around the state. We fund *change*, *not charity* by making grants to groups that are addressing the causes of injustice, not just the effects.

Imagine a community that lives on the edge of a cliff. Tragically, sometimes people slip and fall over the edge. Community residents are hard at work trying to solve the problem. Gathering at the edge of the cliff, they begin coming up with solutions.*

Some people suggest building a health clinic at the bottom of the cliff to care for the injured. Others suggest building a fence at the top of the cliff, to prevent the injuries from happening in the first place.

While most people are looking over the cliff, a smaller group turns around and starts asking questions. Why are we living so close to the edge of a cliff? Why is our community under so much pressure that our people are falling over the edge?

This is the group that comes to MRG.

* Thanks to Tim Otani at Washington Mutual Foundation for this analogy.

Willing to take risks

MRG has joined activists in speaking up for the rights of people that others ignore, and bringing attention to problems that some refuse to face. Our priority is to fund groups that are following the leadership of the people most affected by the issues they are addressing.

We were among the first foundations — and sometimes the only foundation — to award grants to people in Oregon who were:

- Promoting HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention
- Publicly speaking out against the war in Iraq and highlighting the aggressive military recruitment of young people of color
- Launching a sex workers' collective to share information about health, safety, working conditions, and life after the trade
- Creating Bradley Angle House, the first shelter on the west coast for women fleeing violent homes
- Organizing to assure fair treatment for farm workers

Total Grants 1976-1992 \$3,190,000

Total Grants 1976-1987 \$1,900,000

Total Grants 1976-1982 \$790,000

1976 1982

1987

1992

ROP might not have happened if early funders like MRG hadn't supported us technically and financially and emphasized again and again that our work mattered. MRG plays that critical role with social justice groups in Oregon.

-Marcy Westerling, Rural Organizing Project

MRG Board Member (1993-1997)

Early investments

MRG plays an important role in nourishing the grass roots of the progressive movement in Oregon. We make grants to organizations with budgets under \$300,000. Many of those organizations have gone on to shape Oregon politics, culture and activism.

For example, MRG grants provided critical early funding for:

Total Grants 1976-2002

\$7,960,000

- Black United Fund of Oregon
- Womanspace in Eugene
- Portland Taiko
- Rural Organizing Project
- Western Prison Project

Grand Total 1976-2006 \$9,670,000

Fotal Grants 1976-1997 \$4,860,000

> MRG Foundation Grants Cumulative Amounts, 1976-2006

- MRG Grantmaking Committees
- Donor Advised

Then & Now: Dagoberto Morales

THEN Farmworker and volunteer labor organizer; First MRG grant, 1997. Medford, Oregon.

NOW Founding Director, Unete, Center for Farmworker Advocacy; Construction worker

Dagoberto learned the importance of advocacy as a student in Mexico. In college he helped campesinos get bank loans and taught them to watch for banks that overcharged on fees. After supporting a national teachers' strike, Dagoberto was unable to find work and moved to the United States.

He found work on farms, where he saw growers break their wage agreements. When one employer started withholding bonuses, workers gathered at Dagoberto's house to figure out what to do.

"I thought, 'We have to form a farmworker group. We can then think about the jobs, how we treat each other and how we can ask the companies to give more earnings.' The workers, however, were afraid." Despite their fear they worked together to form Unete, Center for Farmworker Advocacy.

Unete's first win was in 1997 when they rallied more than 100 people to protest a proposed bill that would make farm workers exempt from minimum wage laws in Oregon. The next day the bill was pulled from the legislative agenda.

MRG was Unete's only funder for the first few years. "Everything we've gotten done is because of MRG," Dagoberto says. "Other

people are starting to give us money now, but we feel like we are really connected to MRG."

Today, Unete is an active part of the statewide movement for immigrant rights. "People feel more comfortable to question things in the workplace, school, and police department," Dagoberto says. "People feel more confident. When you are organized, you can show that you can take a stand and show how much you value yourself."



JUSTICE MOMENT "We always lived in a small town in Mexico and I didn't know how poor we were until I went to the big city and realized that it wasn't right to be so poor. That was a moment that I always remember."

997 2002 2006

Today's world needs Ommunity



Linda Reymers (MRG staff 1983-2003) and Foncy Prescott hang out together at CALC's office.

MRG is a great resource to stay in touch with what's going on. Because the foundation is led by activists, it's right there, involved with the emerging and long-term issues that we need to pay attention to and support.

-Foncy Prescott

MRG Donor, Board Member (1992-1998) & Grantmaker (2000-2004)

How you get there matters

At many foundations, corporate trustees or people with wealth decide where the money goes.

At MRG Foundation, activists decide. Our volunteer grantmakers are deeply committed to their local communities and bring diverse cultural perspectives to the grantmaking process. They also bring real world experience stopping illegal timber sales, challenging anti-immigrant legislation, and mobilizing people to advocate for affordable housing.

We call it activist-led grantmaking.

This approach results in grants that are strategic and well informed. It also develops leadership in the progressive community as the activists who volunteer with MRG deepen their understanding of Oregon's social change movements.

Money In Action

After 30 years of funding community organizing, we know that when people take action together, social change happens. When those same people pool their money together, it creates a long-term source of support for organizers.

Each year, hundreds of people who care about Oregon give to MRG. Your donation makes it possible for MRG to award more than \$400,000 a year in activist-led grants. That's enough to fund 60 groups.

We work closely with grantees to help them make the most of the money they have through one-on-one conversations, events that bring activist groups together, and grant writing trainings that help them access money from other foundations.

In addition to our activist-led grantmaking, we also administer donor advised grants for people who want to fund work in specific areas.

In southern Oregon the path toward social justice will require building and strengthening the progressive base for the long haul. MRG is critical to helping us build strategic campaigns that engage a broad cross section of our community.

-Rich Rohde, Rogue Valley Oregon Action MRG Grantmaker (2003-Present) & Donor

Community Education

We believe that when people put their money where their values are, they become more effective agents of change. That's why we provide:

- workshops on socially responsible investing and estate planning
- community forums that untangle complex current events
- presentations that inspire people to recognize their money as part of their activism

An important part of our work is supporting progressive people with wealth as they discover the important role they can play in social change movements. We do this through a bi-annual wealth conference, one-on-one consultations and information about financial planning, estate planning and wealth management.

Everyone makes a difference

By bringing people together across lines of race, class, geography and areas of interest, we are building a stronger community of people who are working for positive social change. At the same time, we're reaching out to our peers in the foundation community and working with other social justice funders to increase the money available for activists in Oregon.

Please join us as we make our vision for the world a reality.

Then & Now: Eric Ward

THEN Community organizer, Community Alliance of Lane County; MRG Grantmaking Committee Co-Chair, Board Member and Donor (1991-1994). Eugene, Oregon.

NOW National Field Director with the Center for New Community. Chicago, Illinois.

Eric was 21 when he became involved with the Community Alliance of Lane County in 1988. At CALC, he documented the rapid expansion of the white supremacist movement in the Pacific Northwest. He also founded Communities Against Hate, a project to expose hate groups and respond to bigoted violence in Oregon.



Eric's time at MRG had a significant impact on his work. "MRG created a political and social space that brought me out of my silo," he says. "I was focused completely on racial justice issues, but at MRG I was interacting with immigrants and refugees, the LGBT community, environmental activists, and workers. That experience strengthened my work in phenomenal ways. It gave me the skills to build broad-based coalitions and talk about issues in

a way that resonates across different communities."

Today, Eric is the lead organizer for the Center for New Community's Building Democracy Initiative, where he documents the growing anti-immigrant movement across the United States. Eric is one of the nation's prominent leaders of color working to counter organized bigotry.

gathering of white supremacists where Bo Gritz was speaking. (Gritz ran for President in 1992 on the Populist Party ticket and helped spur the militia movement.) As part of his "anti-government" rhetoric, Gritz spoke out against the US war on drugs, and had been interviewed in High Times magazine. So I stuck a copy in my pocket with Gritz' article showing and walked into the meeting. It worked.



That was a life-changing day. I realized that addressing racism and other forms of bigotry was not just simply about individual change, but about countering social movements. The people were very welcoming and nice, but the movement they were creating had to be stopped."

Today's world needs

We have a clear vision of the world we want to live in

But to get there, we need to understand the challenges that stand in our way.

At MRG, we believe that the root cause of injustice is the consolidation of power, control and wealth among a small group of people who protect their power by using systems of oppression and privilege to control other people and the natural environment.

In the United States today, we see three dominant strategies being used to do this. They are the expansion of corporate power, the growing use of military tactics in foreign and domestic policy, and the manipulation of core human values to exert social and political control.

The consolidation of power, control and wealth in the hands of a few people depends on the rest of us feeling powerless and isolated.

Racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, ableism and other systems of oppression are used to separate us from one another and to convince us that we don't share the same hopes and values. They are also used to drive wedges between groups that would otherwise be powerful allies.

Working together is our only option

We believe that the best chance we have of creating a just world is by working together to address the ways oppression and injustice are operating in our communities.

We know this approach makes a difference. We've seen it happen again and again, even during politically conservative times.

Making real changes

Against Pesticides mobilizes rural residents and forestry workers in Lane County. They get the EPA to stop allowing a dangerous herbicide (a component of Agent Orange known as 2,4,5-T) in Northwest forests. Seven years later, Dow Chemical announces it is stopping production.

world-wide movement to end apartheid in South Africa, one of the strongest examples of the power of grassroots organizing in the final decades of the twentieth century.

1996 After years of protests, ballot measures, and lobbying, activists in Oregon succeed in pressuring Portland General Electric to close the defective Trojan Nuclear Power Plant.

of Tenants saves more than 5,000 units of affordable housing by successfully organizing for passage of the City of Portland's Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance.

One thing I want readers to come away with is a sense of the importance of MRG to building a movement. MRG has been there at the critical moments.

-Ramon Ramirez, President, CAUSA

MRG Board Chair (1980-1982)

Grant programs at MRG

General Fund grants support grassroots, social change organizing throughout Oregon. This is our primary grants program.

Peace Fund grants are dedicated to supporting peace movement building in Oregon.

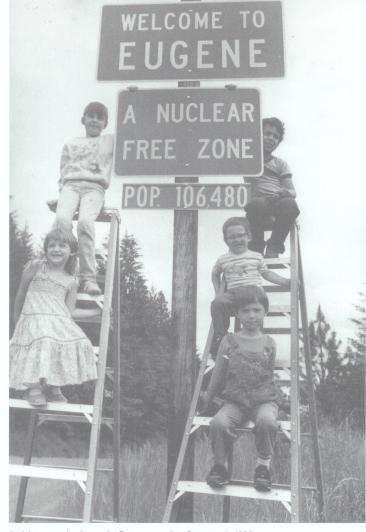
Critical Response grants support projects that organize people to respond to an immediate, unanticipated social change issue.

Travel grants support MRG grantees' participation in conferences and trainings.

Lilla Jewel awards support Oregon women artists who challenge the status quo.

Technical Assistance grants help MRG grantees expand their capacity so they can more effectively carry out their social change organizing work.

Donor Advised grants — MRG's Donor Advised Giving Program is provided as a service for those who want to support specific organizations.



Activists organized to make Eugene a nuclear free zone in 1986.

For more information visit our website at www.mrgfoundation.org or call 503-289-1517.

pressures the public transit authority to create a low-cost student pass for Portland's buses and light rail, making public transportation accessible to low-income students and removing a key barrier to students getting safely to school.

2001 Members of the Confederated Tribes of the Lower Rogue work with tribal elders and professional linguists to preserve the Tututni language.

Coalition plays a pivotal role in the passage of the Bend Equal Rights Ordinance, which extends civil rights to the L/G/B/T community.

touch off the largest mass mobilizations for human rights in recent history. In Oregon, groups organize the two largest gatherings ever held at the state capitol in Salem.

MRG needs

For 30 years MRG has been the model public foundation because they emphasize the word 'public' in all their work. Money is raised from a broad range of the public. Every gift is appreciated and valued. Then a diverse cross-section of progressive activists engage in a grantmaking process that is educational, inspiring and fun. MRG knows that how you raise your money, how you handle the money you raise, and how you give it away is as important as the grants themselves.

-Kim Klein, Publisher Grassroots Fundraising Journal

Where do you want to make a difference?

Each of us has the power to change the world. And each of us has a role to play in working for justice. MRG provides many opportunities to join with others so that we can build a just world... together.

As a community supported foundation, MRG offers a way to pool your money with hundreds of other thoughtful, dedicated people to fund social change activism in Oregon. MRG is also a resource for people who want to commit their time and energy to creating a better world.

Make an investment in the future

People give to MRG for many reasons. Some donate because they believe in racial justice, economic equality *and* environmental protection. They know that at MRG they can support a wide range of activism with a single gift.

Others are motivated by a desire to build a stronger movement for social change. They know that MRG is dedicated to bringing politically progressive people together so they can build connections among people working for change in different communities.

And some give to MRG because they believe in the radical idea of activists having greater control over financial resources.

Every gift matters

Sometimes when people hear about a donor giving thousands of dollars to MRG, they wonder how their own smaller gift has an impact.

MRG works because people across the state give generously at a level that is meaningful to them. We then pool those donations together to create a stable source of funding for activists.

Each year, we receive hundreds of gifts between \$10 and \$250. Together, they add up to nearly \$50,000 — enough to fund 10 organizations that might not get funded otherwise.

When you add your name to the list of MRG supporters it's like signing a petition that says you are part of Oregon's progressive movement and you are willing to put your money where your values are.



There are many ways to give...

- Simply send a check to MRG or give online at www.mrgfoundation.org
- Name MRG as a beneficiary in your will, IRA or insurance policy
- Increase your giving without having to come up with a lot of money at once by making smaller, monthly donations
- Donate appreciated stocks or securities
- Ask your employer to match your gift to MRG
- Invite others to join you in supporting MRG

... And many ways to make a difference

- Check out the MRG website (www.mrgfoundation.org) to learn about effective organizations that are working on the causes you care about
- Contact an organization we fund to learn more about their work and find out how you can get involved
- Join the MRG listserv and receive invitations to workshops and events
- Talk to your friends about MRG and our grantees
- Host a house party
- Become an MRG volunteer call us to learn more

Then & Now: Carol Cheney

THEN Domestic Violence Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator at Clackamas Women's Services; Coordinated the Oregon release of Robin Hood Was Right: A Guide to Giving Your Money for Social Change for MRG in 1999. Portland, Oregon.

NOW Small Organization Support (SOS) Project Coordinator for TACS; Monthly donor, MRG.



"From the time I was little, I was a fighter."
Right out of high school, Carol worked for a tree nursery where most of the workers were
Mexican, but the managers were white. Only a couple could speak any Spanish. "I thought it was odd that they couldn't talk to 90% of the workers, and I said so."

The situation at the nursery didn't change while she was there, but it did change Carol. "I first came to an awareness of racism growing

2006

up in Eastern Oregon and being on the receiving end of it," she recalls. "At this job, I was able to see it happen in more structured ways."

A college work-study job at the University of Oregon's Women's Center introduced her to the larger social justice movement. "After that, I found my place in the world," she says.

She was fundraising for domestic violence programs when MRG hired her on a short-term contract to promote a guide for social change philanthropy. A year later, she joined MRG's Board.

Carol continues to be involved with MRG, as a project volunteer and a monthly donor. "There are a lot of issues and organizations that I care about," Carol says, "but I don't feel like I have time to write checks to all of them. MRG has a strong and unwavering commitment to its mission. I really appreciate that."

JUSTICE MOMENT "There was a time in college when I was learning about social justice and suddenly I had the language to understand what was happening to me and others. Everything jelled and I knew that no matter what else happened in my life, I would want to be with people fighting for justice. I've been incredibly fortunate to both have the opportunity to do what I can and to have wonderful friends and colleagues who constantly inspire me with their activism."

Looking to the UTUE



lana Matthews-Harris addresses protesters at the Take Back Our America Rally in Eugene, Oregon while Eugene Human Rights Commissioner Carmen Urbina looks on.

MRG has taken on a great challenge. They're taking a critical look at where we are today, where we want to be in 30 years, and how we must think and act to be more effective as an organization and as a movement. I think that's great leadership.

-Cliff Jones, TACS
MRG Board Member (1988-1995)

We're here for the long haul

The recent rollbacks of civil rights, environmental protections and international treaties leave the world in a precarious position. The stakes are high.

At MRG, we're preparing for the years ahead.

In recent months we've visited communities around the state to talk with progressive Oregonians about how our world is changing, their visions for the future, and the obstacles we face in moving towards a just world. As we celebrate our 30th anniversary, our leadership is building on those conversations to clarify what MRG's role will be in the years ahead.

We're excited about the direction we're heading in, and look forward to sharing our plans with you.

But we're not waiting to take action

In 2005, we launched a new Peace Fund to fund leadership development and strategic movement building within the peace community.

In 2006, we committed to expanding our grantmaking by another \$50,000 — our fourth year of increases in a row.

In 2007 we'll award the first round of grants in our new Technical Assistance Fund, helping the grassroots organizations we fund become more effective in their work.

Join us as we build on this work and chart a course for the future.



Creating a legacy for the future

For activists to have an impact over the next 30 years, they will need a long-term source of funding. MRG is uniquely poised to meet that need.

For three decades politically progressive Oregonians have trusted MRG to use their donations to fund activism across the state, resulting in more than:

- \$5 million in activist-led grantmaking
- \$4 million in additional donor advised grants
- \$1.4 million in endowed funds that will ensure MRG continues as a source of funding for activism for years to come

And this is just the beginning. A growing number of people are looking to MRG to help them leave a lasting legacy for social justice through monthly donations, multi-year pledges, estate planning and innovative giving strategies like the L'Chaim Fund (see profile on this page).

Please contact us to explore creative ways to leave a legacy of justice for the future.

I've never before been a part of a progressive organization that had so wholly committed itself to rethinking its role in view of great changes since its founding. I feel this is the most politically challenging time of my life. It's crucial to me to be working with so many similarly committed people at MRG.

> -Dan Goldrich, Professor Emeritus University of Oregon Participant in original MRG gathering (1976) MRG Donor & Peace Fund Grantmaker (2005-Present)

Then & Now. Dick, Ashira & Karen Belsey

THEN Dick and Ashira: Members, Physicians for Social Responsibility and Social Workers for Social Responsibility,

respectively; MRG donors (1987-2000); MRG Board (Ashira, 1990-1991). Portland, Oregon.

NOW Karen and her partner Kevin are stewards of the L'Chaim Fund at MRG.

Dick and Ashira's early life together was profoundly shaped by the civil rights and labor movements, and Dick's family history of activist

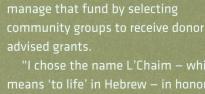


In the 1980's their professional training and political convictions motivated them to join other physicians and mental health providers to work for global peace and justice. Dick also served on the Department of Energy's Hanford Advisory Board, where he skillfully advocated for workers' rights and health.

Their passionate commitment to peace, justice and nuclear disarmament had a huge impact on their daughter, Karen. Motivated by their commitment, in 2003 she used her father's pension to create a long-term fund at MRG.

The L'Chaim Fund will provide more than \$350,000 in grants over 15 years. Each year, MRG takes a draw from the fund. Half of the annual draw supports MRG's activist-led grant making, and the other half goes into a donor advised fund. Karen and her partner Kevin

advised grants.



"I chose the name L'Chaim - which means 'to life' in Hebrew - in honor of my parents' conviction, courage and hope," Karen says. "As our daughter Amelia grows up, I hope helping give this money away will also help her learn

about activism, about giving, and about her grandparents."

JUSTICE MOMENT "My mother used to have a poster of Mother Jones on her wall with the quote: 'Pray for the dead, and fight like hell for the living.' I watched my dad fight for justice his entire life, and I transferred his pension to MRG shortly before he died – I just wanted to give him a release, to let him know that even though he was moving on, the money would help others keep fighting."

Leadership makes the difference



Back row: Mary Heffernan, Scott Shlaes, Leslie Brockelbank, Dan Goldrich, Guadalupe Quinn, Esther Stutzman, Chris Winter, Nancy Becker, Darryl! Moch, Anita Rodgers, Olga Turner, Sheryl Sackman, Cliff Jones (Consultant). Front row: Julie Miller, Carole Zoom, Marjory Hamann, Beth White, Kayse Jama, Amy Smith, Shizuko Hashimoto, Arbrella Luvert, Edith Casterline.

movement. This has been a great opportunity to support the work of others and broaden my professional networks.

-Elisa Aguilera,

Being on MRG's grantmaking

approaches to the social change

committee has increased my

understanding of different

-Elisa Aguilera,
Community Alliance of Tenants
MRG Grantmaker (2006-Present)

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(July 2005 - June 2006)

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Patty Duncan

Julie Miller

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FUNDING SOCIAL CHANGE IN OREGON

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How it all began ...

In 1976, MRG founders Leslie Brockelbank and Charles Gray invited activists to gather along the banks of the McKenzie River to decide how to distribute a \$500,000 inheritance. Leslie and Charles were committed to funding grassroots, social change organizing and felt strongly that activists working on the issues would be the ones to make the funding decisions. MRG



Foundation was created out of that meeting, beginning a 30-year tradition of activist-led funding in Oregon.



In Memory of Charles Gray 1925 – 2006

His legacy lives on

McKenzie River Gathering Foundation • www.mrgfoundation.org • 2705 East Burnside, Suite 210 • Portland, OR 97214 • Tel: 503-289-1517 • Fax: 503-232-1731