

THE SAMUEL HUNTINGTON PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

AUTUMN/WINTER 2012

Dear friends of the Samuel Huntington Fund,

Your generous support of this award has many wonderful stories to tell. We, Sam's colleagues, friends and family, are so grateful for your gifts to the Fund which have enabled us to make an unprecedented four awards this year (see the stories of our 2012 winners). This year we, the committee, interviewed six finalists, all of whom had written great proposals for their public service as well as getting stellar grades in their college courses and doing many extra-curricular activities. As usual we found ourselves in the difficult place of having to make choices! We discussed and debated for over an hour, narrowing our list to four. Finally Tom Robinson said, "I would rather invest in these kids than have our money sit in the bank earning little interest." A light bulb went off for the rest of us, and we unanimously agreed to give all four a chance to make their dreams come true and to help others help themselves. We could not have even considered doing this without your support. Some of you have enabled us to give an entire award, others large portions of awards, and many others have sent donations that added together makes this

all possible. THANK YOU ALL!

The stories begin when a young person sees an opportunity that s/he feels is worth spending a year of his/her life on. The opportunity might be here in the USA helping young people get to college, giving homeless people a chance to paint a new home along with college students, providing language support for people in housing court, helping young immigrants adjust to life here in the US through dance and theater - the list goes on, as do the stories of the people whose lives are changed because one person had a dream which you supported and made possible. Other stories come from around the globe from Nepal to Ecuador, from Nigeria to Brazil, from Chile to Costa Rica, from Ecuador to Tanzania, from Bhutan to South Sudan. In each story - here or there - lives are changed, kids and their families are changed and the cycle of poverty is changed. It's all because of YOU and your generous support of these wonderful young people - our winners - that these stories can be told, with happy endings!

We read about the impact of your generosity through the reports the winners send us both during and at the end of their public ser-



Jennifer Huntington
Chair

vice. We see pictures of happy people building composting toilets, wondering kids holding a book for the first time, poor farmers learning to use technology to get the best prices for their harvests, sick people going to a clinic that did not exist before - many of whom can't believe that strangers (that's you) in America would want to help them!

The stories start with you and your gifts - however large or small - which truly make a difference because they are invested in the social capital of our winners, whose energy, commitment and humor make these changes, and these stories, possible. Thank you for your kindness, for helping us write more stories, and for honoring Sam's memory.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Huntington

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2012 Winners Selected

Risk Capital to Agricultural Entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone and Liberia



After graduating from Duke University, **Michael Bernert** left for Sierra Leone to help farmers in Sierra Leone and Liberia increase crop yields, expand acreage under production, improve the farmers' access to markets, and add high quality jobs. Michael has

begun this effort through WAVA LLC, an organization that he founded to finance high impact agricultural enterprises. Each funding candidate develops a business proposal, which is reviewed by an investment committee prior to the WAVA investment. The successful

project then moves forward operating with a continuous improvement plan that includes real time tracking of goals and objectives. Michael expects that WAVA will become self-funding after an initial start-up period.

Sanitation Facilities in Bangladesh

Tasmiha Khan is off to Khulna, Bangladesh to build wells, latrines, and bathrooms for the community, and to provide sanitary kits and advice to its citizens. She has started Brighter Dawns to implement the effort. Working with a local NGO, she will build five tube

wells, four latrines, and five bathrooms, provide 1050 sanitary kits, and train two community workers to advise residents on health and sanitation issues. Tasmiha expects to make the project self-sustaining and expandable through a small user charge

associated with the facilities. Quite an amazing project for a recent graduate from Wesleyan University with majors in Neuroscience & Behavior and Psychology.



Helping At-Risk Youth Become Brockton's Next Champions



Jason Lynch is staying close to Stonehill College and helping at-risk youth in neighboring Brockton, Massachusetts. He has arranged space at a local gym to give the students athletic training and space for academic support. He will work

with MY TURN, Inc., a local drop-out prevention and intervention group, to provide advice and support to the students. Brockton is the home of Rocky Marciano and Marvin Hagler, both boxing champions. Jason's goal is to im-

prove the physical and mental fitness of his students, increasing their confidence and improving their grades. Jason is very qualified. He graduated from Stonehill Summa Cum Laude.

Dance Therapy for Students with Interrupted Formal Education

Dian Liu is also staying close to home. She is opening an after school program in New York City for immigrant teens who have had their formal education interrupted for two years or more. Dian has found that these children, numbering over 15,000 in New York City, face significant pressures and problems adjusting to their new environment, when they do not know the language and cus-

oms, and are behind in their studies. Her project addresses these issues by providing an alternative form of expression through dance therapy. Specifically, she is designing and implementing a dance movement expression class for the YMCA's after school program in Queens, New York. The classes will include an element that incorporates folk dances from the students' home coun-

tries. The objectives are to promote empathy, understanding, anger management, cultural exchange, and emotional and civic engagement through dance. Dian is also very qualified. She is a professional dancer who has performed from New England to Guangzhou, China, and is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College.



Reflections from a Prior Award Winner

David Milner

Samuel Huntington Award
Winner, 1990

I can hardly believe that it has been 22 years since I received the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award, not only because I remember it like it was yesterday, but also because I have watched with pride and amazement the incredible group of leaders, visionaries and social entrepreneurs who have followed since. What holds true across the many recipients and in the places in which they work is that this Award changes communities and the trajectory of people's lives. I know; I am one of those people.

I received the award for an idea to start Funds for the Community's Future (FCF), a non-profit organization that would help neighborhoods invest in the college education of their youth, and, in return, youth to invest in the rebuilding of their neighborhoods. More on FCF later, though, because I first want to tell you about the impact the idea of the Award had on me BEFORE I even applied for it.

I remember the day I saw the flyer in my College mail box. I read it with interest and intrigue—a public service award that would enable any graduating senior to do a public service project anywhere in the world. "What an amazing opportunity," I thought. The only problem was, at that moment anyway, I didn't have any ideas for a project! But the flyer was always with me; the challenge was in the back of my mind.

Well, I had an idea a couple of months later, when I was driving back from an interview in Boston and passed the sign for Lowell, Massachusetts. I had spent a summer living in Lowell in a rough section of town while running a painting franchise. I met terrific people living on my block—people who had great

ideas, talents and dreams—but many were beaten down by a hard life, dead-end jobs and addictions to alcohol or drugs. The children growing up on the block were wonderful—like any child anywhere—but they were growing up on Clare Street which, in part, gave them lower expectations of themselves and their future than they should have had.

It was a simple idea. What if I set up a Scholarship Fund, a bank account, in the name of the block? I could match from my first job whatever the block raised and 100% of the proceeds would go for a scholarship to anyone living on the block.

I imagined the impact that would have—people would start talking about education more on their front stoops, residents would plan how to raise money for their Fund, communication and trust would increase as neighbors worked together to invest in their future and, most importantly, the kids would know from early age that just by growing up on Clare Street, there was support to help them to go to college. Those subtle messages could change attitudes, a sense of community, outlooks and, therefore, outcomes.

Well, I couldn't stop thinking about the idea. I got back to school and said "where is that flyer for the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award?" It was early February and when I found the flyer, the application was due literally a couple days later in mid-February. I dropped everything, went to the library and started writing and thinking. Instead of a block by block Fund based in Lowell I expanded to a neighborhood fund based in my home city of Washington, D.C. Neighborhood residents would interview and pick the recipients. Matching dollars would come from corporate sponsors and foundations. I wrote it up, sent it in, and hoped for the best.

I had the big interview with Mrs. Huntington and the panel and they believed in me enough to take the chance. That chance changed my life and the lives of many others.

I could write hundreds of stories because I ended up running FCF for 10 years (later we renamed the organization Community IMPACT!) but as an example, we:

- Sent hundreds of youth to college and vocational schools around the country with scholarships from their own neighborhood.
- Raised many millions of dollars including over \$1M each from the Ford Foundation, Kellogg Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies.
- Implemented thousands of youth-led projects that improved the neighborhood AND that raised money for the local Neighborhood Scholarship Fund—from building playgrounds to painting murals to organizing clean-up days.
- Hired hundreds of youth to serve as "Youth Mobilizers" to train younger kids in leadership skills and organize their neighborhoods around education.
- Expanded to Nashville and Austin where the effort continues today.

But I do want to tell one story from the very beginning - that very first year. The year that, by the end, a handful of neighborhoods surrounding McKinley High School in NE, DC sent 10 young people to college, including two to Middlebury College (my Alma Mater) both on full ride \$80,000+ grants and both whom graduated four years later.

In my initial months figuring out how to launch FCF, I researched schools, neighborhoods, communities, etc. Because I myself was only 22



years old, I figured the young people were the place to start—hence FCF became a youth-led organization from the beginning. To test the idea I walked up to a group of students hanging out in front of McKinley HS. I told them the idea about a Fund in the neighborhood that would help them go to college but that they also had to invest in the neighborhood by doing projects that improved the community. After asking a few questions, the students got excited and agreed it was a good idea (not a lot of downside for them really!)

I asked them "who's your favorite counselor?" After some debate, they gave me a name. I walked in the school and asked to see this particular Counselor. I told him that kids outside said that he was their favorite counselor, whereupon he sat up straight, smiled and even adjusted his tie a bit—clearly quite proud. I told him the idea and he liked it and thought it would work. He brought me to the principal, the principal brought me to the Board of Education and all of a sudden, by starting with youth, I was at the hierarchical top of

Continued on next page

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Reflections from a Prior Award Winner, continued

the DC Public School system. We did the same thing in neighborhoods--asking youth "who are the leaders of your neighborhood, what are the best organizations, what businesses do you shop at?" etc.

Armed with the support and backing of the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award that's how it started--a

few questions to a few young people. So, that badge of honor--the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award--enabled me to tell youth, neighborhoods, foundations and corporations that I won a national service award to give back to the world and to hopefully, in the process, change lives for the better. As a business entrepreneur now, that social return on

investment of the initial \$10,000 grant is pretty incredible--maybe even Google type returns!! And, that flyer in my mail box planted the seed to dream and to know that there is a source of support for young people willing to go out in the world and make a difference. Without it, I have no idea whether FCF would have existed, nor the many other incredible projects

the Award has sponsored.

In whatever way you can and to whatever degree you can, I urge you to support this award into the future. Support it because it works, it matters, helps memorialize a great man, it changes lives. What else is there at the end of the day, really?

Thank you to our Supporters!

The Samuel Huntington Fund was established in 1989, and has now granted 55 Public Service Awards to graduating college seniors. In this issue, we recognize individually all the supporters that had made contributions between December 1, 2011 and October 31, 2012. As year-end approaches, please do keep the Huntington Fund in mind as you consider your charitable giving. Thank you for your consideration! For your convenience, a pre-addressed envelope is enclosed with this newsletter. You can also make a tax deductible contribution at any time by sending a check to: The Samuel Huntington Fund, c/o Ms. Amy Stacy, National Grid, 40 Sylvan Road, Waltham, MA 02451.

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