

# Philanthropy and Professionals in Aging: Partners to Address a Growing Need

## *Introduction*

By Donna I. Regenstreif and Rose Dobrof, guest editors

The editorial board of *Generations* commissioned us to serve as guest editors of this special issue on philanthropy and aging in recognition of the importance of the many contributions philanthropic organizations make to an aging society. We were fortunate in getting a very talented group of individuals with diverse backgrounds and expertise to agree to share their knowledge and wisdom through the articles that follow. Our goal in choosing from a plethora of potential authors was to transmit information on what we, the guest editors along with the editorial board and staff of *Generations*, felt were the essential areas of knowledge necessary to enable the journal's readership to better understand the world of philanthropy and thereby enhance their capacity to tap into these important resources to advance their work.

With the growth of philanthropic resources—a phenomenon in no small measure related to the increasing age of the donor pool—come new opportunities and challenges. We hope the knowledge and strategies described in these articles will assist our audience in navigating them, to the benefit of the nation's burgeoning population of older adults.

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*Vast resources  
are available to  
benefit older people.*

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The contents of this issue are organized as follows: After a basic introduction to philanthropy and the world of foundations (Regenstreif), two articles provide historical information (Weiner and Solomon, and Dobrof).

The current scene is addressed in several pieces that describe (1) the various approaches of foundations to their planning and decision-making obligations (Hofland), (2) the role of government, with a focus on the federal Administration on Aging (Carbonell), (3) the role of foundations in advocacy and in supporting basic needs and developing new models (Torres-Gil), and (4) a current snapshot of philanthropic support for the aging enterprise (Kolb).

Several articles address the mechanics of relationships between grant makers and grant recipients, including how professionals in the aging field and those in philanthropy can improve their work with each other (Zweibel and Golden), and potential careers in philanthropy for professionals in aging (O'Brien). Another article looks to the future, recognizing the history and current trends in philanthropic funding for aging (Farquhar, Lowe, and Campbell).

Finally, a varied group of highly esteemed professionals with enviable track records in working with foundations share their secrets of success through three vignettes (Simmons, Whitelaw, and Meier).

It is our hope that this assembled information from research and practical experience will lead to creative new approaches to fundraising and the application of these resources in ways

that will increase the effectiveness of the work of both philanthropists and their partners in the field of aging as they move toward their common goal of meeting the increasing needs related to the aging of the population.

Finally, the guest editors wish to thank the authors and the editorial board and staff of *Generations* for their invaluable assistance in envisioning this issue and making it a reality. ☺