III. Poster Presentation for Research Forums

Latinos and Philanthropy: Recommendations for Success for the Latino Federation of the Greater Washington Area

Eleanor Boi
Project D.C. Urban Research Internship, Georgetown University

Introduction
This research is in conjunction with the Latino Federation of the Greater Washington Area (LFGW) and Georgetown University’s Project D.C.

Because of the huge disparities in grant funding to Latino-serving organizations both nationally and locally, the LFGW was created in 2007 with the objective of becoming a sustainable philanthropic organization for the Latino community in the D.C. Area.

The purpose of this research is to provide recommendations for the successful development of the Latino Federation, based on the experiences of philanthropic organizations serving other communities. Specifically, the research is based on a comprehensive literature review of the development of philanthropy in unique communities, as well as interviews with three philanthropic organizations in D.C. that observe certain communities.

Additionally, this research is meant to open up a vehicle for communication between philanthropies that have similar paths. Literature review data has noted a lack of sharing of the experiences of such organizations, which represents a loss of valuable experience to all those involved.

Research Questions:
1. How have diverse philanthropies developed to serve their communities?
2. To what extent do these philanthropies engage their community’s culture in developing themselves as successful philanthropic organizations for the community?

Methods
- Extensive literature review on the development of philanthropy in communities overstressed by traditional U.S. philanthropy
- Interviews with three other similar organizations in the D.C. Area (LFGW, National Center for Black Philanthropy, and possibly Asian American and Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy)
- Generate recommendations for the Latino Federation based on the experiences and strategies of other organizations

Research Findings
1. Both the Jewish Federation and NCFJP’s interest unexpectedly revealed the importance in the sense of community and membership to that community as a necessary attribute to the development of philanthropy.
2. The interviews also revealed the necessity of acknowledging pre-existing forms of philanthropy in the community, especially those in conjunction with religious organizations that play vital roles in the community.
3. The data from both the NCFJP and Jewish Federation’s interviews suggest that an environment as well as philanthropic support from within that community are crucial in the development of a sustainable philanthropic institution.

Conclusions
Based on the research findings, the development of the Latino Federation must strive to create and further the feeling of membership and belonging to this Latino community in the Latino population here, work with local organizations (such as churches, etc.) that already have philanthropy resource, and are also working to unite and see if the Latino community, and make concerted efforts to eventually solidify philanthropic giving on all levels, thought is desirable to focus on a few groups of donors at a time during the initial period of development.

References