

**Neighborhood Networks
Monthly Conference Call
December 16, 2003**

“Capturing Grant Funds: What the Funders Tell Us”

Brooke: Good afternoon. My name is Brooke, and I will be your conference facilitator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the “Capturing Grant Funds: What the Funders Tell Us” Conference Call. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speakers’ remarks, there will be a question-and-answer period. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press *1 on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press *2 on your telephone keypad. Thank you. Ms. Schachter, you may begin your conference.

Vickie Schachter: Thank you, Brooke. Welcome, everybody, to the December monthly conference call, “Capturing Grant Funds: What the Funders Tell Us.” As we all know, building financial capacity to attain sustainability is a very important goal for all Neighborhood Networks centers. And one way to support this goal is to enhance the understanding of foundation priorities and initiatives and also to develop proposal preparation skills.

At this point, I have two pieces of housekeeping that I want to share with our participants. The first is a reminder that this conference call is being recorded and a verbatim transcript will be placed on our website in approximately seven days. No conference call summaries will be sent out because of the verbatim transcript. And the second piece of important information that I want to share with our participants before we get started is a reminder that the START Online Business Tool has a section in it on funding, and for those of you who have reviewed that tool – and I hope that’s all of the Neighborhood Networks associated staff who are with us today – when you review that tool, you will see the section on Center Funding and you’ll notice that there are multiple and diverse funding sources that the tool recommends should be sought to support Neighborhood Network centers in their operations. We recommend, we strongly encourage – I can’t say it strongly enough or say it enough times – we strongly encourage a diversity of funding and that all sources of possible funding be explored so that you can have a strong and enhanced series of programs and services for the residents of your properties.

We’re very pleased today to welcome Miguel Garcia and Randal Pinkett of The Ford Foundation. Miguel Garcia is a program officer in the Community and Resource Development Unit at the Ford Foundation in New York City, my hometown, I’m pleased to say. The initial focus of his appointment has been on mixed-race/mixed-income communities, active public spaces, and

community development training opportunities. Mr. Garcia was formerly with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Houston, Texas, where he worked on community economic development and affordable housing programs and projects. Before working for the federal government, he served as the Assistant Director of the City of Houston's Planning and Development Department, where he managed various neighborhood revitalization programs. And before working for the City of Houston, he was the first executive director for the Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans – Mexican-Americans Community Development Corporation, where he redeveloped shopping centers, industrial parks, and initiative affordable housing projects that included ownership and rental properties.

Miguel has strong interests in the convergence of arts, sports, and hip-hop culture and community revitalization. He's told me that he's a martial arts and tennis instructor who has formerly served on the Board of the Nike P.L.A.Y. Foundation, which is a foundation that provides funds for youth recreation programs across the country. Miguel also told me that he enjoys surfing and other very extreme sports, by my standards that do not result in any additional orthopedic challenges. And finally, in a prior career, he consulted throughout Latin America with energy exploration and production companies to formulate and implement community and environmental development programs in sensitive locations that were experiencing civil unrest and illicit economic development activities associated with low-intensity conflicts – those nations being Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia.

As you can see, our speaker, Miguel Garcia, is a person with a great deal of background and vitality and a dynamic interest in people and locations. I'd like to turn this conference call over to Miguel Garcia of the Ford Foundation now.

Miguel Garcia:

Thank you very much. We'd like to provide a lot of time for conversation, so Randal Pinkett and I will try to keep our short presentation about 15 minutes.

Let me start by saying that I've been here at the Ford Foundation just over two years, and my charge here is to support the deconcentration of poverty, particularly in inner-city neighborhoods that have experienced program after program after

program to essentially try to create an investment strategy on a place-by-place basis. The work we're doing now really is trying to understand the significance of supporting a mixed-income/mixed-race agenda, and also connecting neighborhoods of inner-city to regional dynamics beyond the 30 or 40 or 50 square blocks that typically are thought of within a community development framework.

To that end, the overall portfolio that I think is most relevant for today's discussion is the work we're doing around mixed-income/mixed-race neighborhoods and trying to pursue two over-arching objectives. One objective is social integration, namely when you do have fluidity and changes in what we call "shifting sands communities" – these are communities characterized by changing demographics either by new immigrants moving in or a new class of folks moving in or market forces where real estate development is all of a sudden catalyzing neighborhood change from a for-profit perspective – what's the role of community-based organizations in trying to harness some of these forces of change for social justice purposes and to essentially help those that are not quite well-positioned to take advantage of these forces? So the first one is really social integration.

The second objective is upward mobility for the poor or low-income residents. Clearly, having the mixing of race or class is an important beginning towards understanding dialogue, but there has to be in our estimation some intentionality, if you will, to recognize upward mobility ladders for people and also the place while social integration is taking place.

To that end, we've embarked upon a series of inquiries around, how do we realize these two objectives in a kind of changing landscape of a funding environment? So we have essentially one major initiative around looking at real estate development, looking at the opportunities to link physical development – namely, in this case, housing, and to some degree, commercial development – with some of the social development objectives that are supposed to be the legacy of mixed-income housing. And that work is being managed by Paul Brophy for Brophy & Associates, another former HUD person, and also Ed Marchand from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. We have an RFP available; we've essentially got a million dollars worth of what we call

“flexible capital” to assist developers of for-profit and nonprofits to make those linkages between physical development and also social development with those two objectives of social integration and upward mobility.

The second initiative is what we call “active public space.” And this is an area that I think is most relevant for today’s conversation. In the past, when we’ve looked at the literature of public space theory, most of the work has been done kind of on a passive basis: What is public space as an amenity? How does a park function? How does a plaza function as a way for people to gather? Perhaps there’s some attention to programming. But, all in all, most of the literature in the past has really focused on the passive nature of public space.

We’ve also seen public space be positioned for some sort of mitigation measure where by which over-crowding or if developers want variances to build a little bit more intensely, they’re required by local land use law or financial incentives to create more open space adjacent to their real estate development. So it’s also been viewed as kind of a mitigation measure to offset the density issues.

What we’ve tried to do in the last year and a half is to think about public space as a central theme towards mixed-income/mixed-race development, whereby which it’s no longer passive in nature; it’s no longer an after-thought or amenity, but becomes central to development itself both socially and also physically. And to that end, we’ve identified essentially three institutional archetypes for us to test and experiment some new ideas around active public space within these mixed-income/mixed-race communities.

The first one is public markets, and we have a group headed up by Project for Public Spaces that is actually heading up a national advisory board on public markets. The second one is neighborhood arts and culture institutions, and our partner with that particular initiative is Partners for Liberal Communities, Bob McNulty’s group in Washington, D.C. And then, most appropriate for today’s discussion and we’ll spend the balance of that is our work with community technology centers, and Randal Pinkett from BCT Partners, along with support from Project for Public Spaces is heading that effort up.

Our focus on community technology centers is to look for linkages between individual asset-building, namely the skill sets and the tools that individuals who may use these community technology centers may be acquiring for workforce development or for soft skills, but link it to how do we start to cultivate a community asset.

And we're trying to think of a community technology center as a community asset. In doing so, we are trying to understand the offsite impacts of these community technology centers. Many of these centers, through some initial research that Randal pioneered for us in the last year and a half, do an excellent job of bringing people to centers, having them be enriched onsite with some sort of content or programming, and then hoping to think through how they will have an offsite impact in the neighborhood that they're serving off property – not necessarily on the property, but off property.

So we've embarked upon a fairly modest attempt to seed five community technology centers throughout the country with our trade association partner, CTC Net, to support them with some modest funds to do business plans, little strategies – planning grants, if you will – ranging in amounts of \$35-\$45,000 over a four- or five-month period to have them think through what kind of strategies they would employ essentially to convert or reposition or continue to position their particular CTC as this active public space paradigm. Currently, we're at a point where they are finishing up their business plans. They are bringing them back to our managing partner and we'll be evaluating them for support operational funds during the next two years. We had a convening recently in Boston under the supervision and guidance of CTC Net – that's their home office there in Boston – where we had presentations by each of the five, and we had some very lively discussion about how to grapple with some of these issues of individual vs. community assets, the issues of upward mobility, and the issues of social integration. We anticipate that several of the CTCs will be ready with this cohort to move forward with operational funding over two years, and we anticipate some of them perhaps may need additional technical assistant; and that's where Randal's group headed by BCT Partners will step in and provide some additional work to co-produce this new direction for CTCs.

Let me just finish before I introduce Randal with a comment that says that this is a work in progress. This is not something that we

have defined with hard parameters around. We have a few little hypotheses. We have a few ideas. And essentially the grantees in this case are helping us to mature a paradigm, if you will, that hopefully down the road at some point we'll be able to scale up. But right now we're not in a position to scale up, and we're not necessarily out there trying to take on many, many partners. We're trying to essentially work with the ones we have right now to essentially get our arms around this emerging paradigm.

And, with that, let me introduce Randal Pinkett. Randall has come to us by way of MIT initially where he published his dissertation on some work he did at Camfield Estates, which, it's my understanding, is a public housing or Section 8 property there in the Roxboro section.

Randal Pinkett:

Also Neighborhood Networks.

Miguel Garcia:

It's also a Neighborhood Networks. And he has been able to step up and manage a very interesting team of professionals that cut across different sectors of the spectrum here: community development professionals and also public space practitioners. And I approached him about a year and a half ago with the prospects of exploring some new areas, and he's risen to the challenge. He's been very effective in helping to shape where we're at today. And I think in this last meeting we had in Boston about a month or so ago, we're starting to see the maturity of these different fields coming together to chart some new directions. So, with that, let me turn it over to Randal and let him comment a little bit about some of the challenges he sees and opportunities he sees with respect to the managing partner perspective.

Randal Pinkett:

Thank you, Miguel, and hello to everybody that's on the call. As Miguel articulated, BCT Partners is working closely with the Ford Foundation around this program that's looking at the role of CTCs in their communities. And I guess just to add a little more perspective from my own vantage point on some of the underpinnings of this work, Miguel referred to these different areas of public space and community technology and community development, which are the very areas that we've been exploring in how they apply to technology centers in under-served communities.

As I'm sure many folks on the call are aware, a good number of

technology centers were established during what were very generous years in terms of funding, not only for technology programs but for the nonprofit sector across the board and, in the wake of the economic downturn, are now being challenged to really identify their role in their community and to be able to justify the resources to continue their work. We approach this work with the firm belief that CTCs do have a role in communities and that they're very important institutions and that they have a valuable contribution; and that access just for the sake of access is never enough, but rather when access is coupled with some other outcome or some other agenda, they can become very powerful. And we talked about jobs and education and economic development and youth development and many of the things that folks out there are working on, that really it is then that CTC is no longer really a technology program but it is a community program in that funders – which is really one of the things that it's called – funders support programs that make a difference in communities and by really asking the hard questions about what is the link for a given program. And it's different from one center to the next. For some, the answer is that we give people jobs. For others, it's that we're helping to transfer this neighborhood or we're helping to address issues around gentrification or anti-poverty strategies or organizing strategies, etc.

So these three lenses of public space being the first one, we're really trying to look at how does the design of the physical space help to engage community members. When we consider a CTC or a Neighborhood Networks as a space for the public and for the community to come and to interact and, as Miguel articulated, to achieve these goals of social integration, mixed-race, mixed-income, mixed-age, mixed-socioeconomic background, how can we design a physical space in a way that is going to accommodate those ideas? In the area of community technology, the question that we've all struggled with, which is what is the appropriate role of technology to achieve particular outcomes, how is that by strengthening the community's capacity through technology that we can make a tangible difference? And then our third lens, so to speak – community development – what are the pressing issues that residents are dealing with and how can a CTC be a resource to help address them? So that might involve some community organizing. That might involve some partnerships with a very prevalent theme in the work we've been looking at so far, and the

like.

So just in terms of challenges, I think we're still in this planning phase and so we're trying to get our hands around how this model will unfold. And I really look forward to the questions to get a little deeper in terms of how it's playing out but, suffice it to say that even though we deliberately chose to work with what we consider to be leading-edge CTCs or organizations in the field that we feel have really been innovative to date, we still find that there is a bit of a reorientation that's required to really think about the role of the center in these more traditional community development arenas. So how does a CTC affect gentrification? How does it affect the changing demographics and the changing environment of the neighborhood around it? And how does it move beyond just individual skill building to really community change, community transformation? And so, as we round out this phase and move into the implementation phase, we'll be looking to see specifically how this will all take place, but the strategic plans thus far are beginning to really help bring these things together for us. I don't know if you want to add anything, Miguel.

Miguel Garcia: I'll just say you might want to reference the document you published for us for the research phase.

Randal Pinkett: Yeah. That's available on our website at BCTpartners.com. It's Boy-Charlie-Tom partners, plural, dot com. There's a section on the website on publications and, for those that are interested, they can download the research paper there that is the result of some of the formative work that we did for this initiative.

Miguel Garcia: I think that's pretty much it for the presentation. I guess we're ready for some questions.

Brooke: At this time, I would like to remind everyone in order to ask a question, please press *1 on your telephone keypad. We'll pause for just a moment to compile the Q&A roster. Your first question is from Sandra Butler.

Sandra Butler: Hi. I'm just so thrilled to hear this information. I'm from the Campbell Heights Apartments in Washington, D.C., and we happen to be located at 15th and U Streets, which is an area that's greatly affected, in my opinion; and some of the original people that lived in this area are being affected by gentrification.

However, if you are familiar with Washington, D.C. and the U Street corridor, which was the entertainment and business center for African-Americans several years ago, you would understand what I mean. But it's changing rapidly; however, I think a center of this kind would be very effective. My question is, how can we get our grant, all the information together, so that you can provide us with assistance in order to get the center?

Miguel Garcia:

Right.

Sandra Butler:

I might tell you also that we already have a center. What we did was go out and beg computers and whatnot, so we have a center in our library already, but the computers are really outdated.

Randal Pinkett:

Right.

Miguel Garcia:

Right. Well, Sandra, I'm somewhat familiar with your community. We have two grantees. Actually, one of the five community technology centers that's part of our initial cohort is in the Columbia Heights-Shaw area.

Sandra Butler:

Uh-huh.

Miguel Garcia:

And Randal can talk a little about them since he's providing them technical assistance. I'm also working with Manna CTC –

Sandra Butler:

Uh-huh.

Miguel Garcia:

– I think down the street from you on some issues of the expansion of the convention center.

Sandra Butler:

Exactly. Yeah, they're quite a ways from us when you take a look at it, but okay. I know where it is.

Miguel Garcia:

Sure. Now to answer your question, at the Foundation, we're not right now in a position to take on new grant applications.

Sandra Butler:

Uh-huh.

Miguel Garcia:

We're still kind of working through the kinks of this prototype or this initial idea. We hope that by the end of summer we'll be in a position to say, "Okay, we have our act together to effectively communicate what we're looking for." As I said in my introductory statement, we decided to start small. We had a

request for proposal that was issued by CTC Net, our other partner in this venture, which is a trade association for community technology centers.

Sandra Butler: Uh-huh.

Miguel Garcia: And we have come together with five community technology centers: one in the District of Columbia; one in San Antonio, Texas, which is a multifamily housing developer; one in Boston; one in Oakland, California, at the Eastland Shopping Center; and then one up here in Harlem, Playing to Win in Harlem.

Sandra Butler: Uh-huh.

Miguel Garcia: The notion being that with these five, we would be able to jointly between them and us grow an idea and put some meat on the bone. Every month, more meat's being put on the bone so to speak. Right? But we're not quite there to really say we have a program yet. We would be happy to meet with you and talk to you about what you're trying to do and to provide any kind of insight as to some of the challenges we're facing with positioning this kind of argument, this kind of perspective. But right now we don't have a grant program that we're soliciting folks to be part of yet until we get through this first phase.

Sandra Butler: Uh-huh. Okay.

Miguel Garcia: Is that fair?

Sandra Butler: That's very fair.

Miguel Garcia: Okay.

Sandra Butler: I do think that we have the perfect equation because we have seniors and young people from the ages of birth to 19.

Miguel Garcia: Sure.

Sandra Butler: And then we have the senior citizens from 62 up. And so I'm not going to take up all the time, but I am just thrilled. How do I get an appointment? How do we come together?

Miguel Garcia: Sure. The best way to reach me, for anybody who's listening, is my email. It's M.Garcia, G-A-R-C-I-A, @Fordfound, F-O-R-D-F-

O-U-N-D, dot org, O-R-G.

Sandra Butler: Thank you so much.

Randal Pinkett: Yeah. Let me just throw my email out there as well. Rpinkett, RP as in Paul.

Sandra Butler: I'm sorry?

Randal Pinkett: Yeah. It's Rpinkett, R, P as in Paul, I-N-K-E-T-T, Rpinkett@BCTPartners.com. That's Building Community Technology Partners.com.

Sandra Butler: The real estate Pinketts in Washington, D.C.?

Randal Pinkett: What's that?

Sandra Butler: I said, the real estate Pinketts in Washington, D.C.?

Randal Pinkett: I think I'm connected to almost all the Pinketts. {Laughter}

Sandra Butler: Okay. I'm sorry.

Randal Pinkett: So we can throw the ones in D.C. in there as well. {Laughter}

Sandra Butler: Thank you.

Brooke: Your next question is from Carl McLester.

Carl McLester: Hi. Thanks for the information you provided thus far. I'm interested in two different questions. One, just a fuller description of the five programs. Where can we find them?

Randal Pinkett: Sure.

Carl McLester: As we move forward in designing our own programs, we can look at them as prototypes and that we'd have a better understanding of what's going on in each of those places because a couple of them we're connected with in other ways.

Miguel Garcia: Uh-huh.

Carl McLester: And the second question is, as a part of the whole community development and redevelopment process – I'm from Bridgeport,

Connecticut – we had HUD support a while back for a project called BridgeNet that was connecting several different facets of the community and community centers technologically. That sort of went under or funding was moved away from that and the City didn't pick it up, so it sort of left it in shambles. But as we look at the whole redevelopment of our community, part of the question is – the same question I think Randall spoke to and then, Mr. Garcia, you spoke to as well – is that some of these things happen not in isolation. The question is not of how an individual becomes changed or trained, but instead how the whole community is transformed. And as we've looked at redesign and done {unintelligible} and things like that in our community, we've looked at the right places for public access for technology and technology training that sort of really provides a high level of connectivity within the community – within organizations in the community – because we saw BridgeNet as a way that we could be connected through technology and it led to a lot of springing forth of a lot of partnerships and things like that. So in terms of design and community design and access to technical assistance – I know there's not a grant program out there right now.

Miguel Garcia:

Uh-huh.

Carl McLester:

Finding the technical assistance that we need as we go through this design and redesign process for our community as to where community technology is properly placed in that layering, not just of the physical placement of it but also in everything from the layers of granting and support of fundings and {unintelligible} necessary for {unintelligible} redevelopment. Is there a source out there or a resource for technical assistance other than just going out and hiring somebody to do that?

Miguel Garcia:

Right. I didn't catch your first name, sir.

Carl McLester:

It's Carl.

Miguel Garcia:

Hey, Carl. You can call me Miguel. I'm not Mr. Garcia.
{Laughter}

Carl McLester:

Okay.

Miguel Garcia:

I guess the first question with respect to the five programs that are in this cohort right now, I believe – and, Randall, you can chime in

on this one – that there was an announcement made by CTC Net once they were selected through their website a little of profile of who they are. Is that accurate to say, Randall?

Randal Pinkett:

Yeah. There are some simple web pages on CTC Net's website. I'm going to pull it up in a moment and see if I can find the URL. But, yeah, there's information that is on their website about the five grantees, and we anticipate that through CTC Net we'll be disseminating information on the web regarding the status of the project, particularly as we finish up the second phase.

Miguel Garcia:

Right. And so I would refer you to that if, in fact, it is there. And, if not, I'd be happy to send you some information directly once we come back from the holidays and we determine who's ready for support money and who needs a little more time for technical assistance to be ready for support money.

In reference to the second question, Carl, you brought you a really good point in that when you have these neighborhoods going through these changing dynamics of demographics or market forces and the physical landscape of these communities are changing, the question of what is the role of the Neighborhood Networks or community technology center is very important. One thing we're starting to see quite a bit of is the use of visualization tools for designers and architects whereby which communities, as they go through shirettes {phonetic}, architectural shirettes, are now deploying in some instances some of these tools to kind of show the what-if scenarios of physical development or real estate development. One of the leaders in this area is based here in New York City; it's called the Environmental Simulation Center. Their URL is www.simcenter.org. The principal person there is a guy named Michael Kwartler, K-W-A-R-T-L-E-R. And Mike has been working with us on some of our initiatives in Texas and also in Camden, New Jersey, around looking at 3D visualization, almost virtual reality applications, through CTCs or by which the community controls the what-if scenarios to kind of show, for instance, what does a three-story building look like vs. a ten-story building on that particular real estate or that lot? What is the kind of feel and implication of a certain kind of land use mix, for instance, that is being proposed by the redevelopment agency or developer or the planning department? So we're seeing the deployment of those kinds of tools. They are based heavily on

geographic information services (or “GIS”) parcel data. So they’re only useful when you have good data to put into these tools, but increasingly we’re seeing a lot of grassroots efforts of collecting such data so that that data can be used to describe the phenomena of what’s happening in the neighborhood. But we’re now seeing increasingly that the data, the GIS data, is being used to prescribe solutions that I think is very important, and that’s where these sets of tools are starting to head. I hope I answered your question.

Carl McLester: The only {inaudible}. I was trying to really – the other piece of it was this sort of layering of financing as well.

Miguel Garcia: Ah.

Carl McLester: In the sense that beyond just the grants; and one of the things we’ve always looked at is public/private nonprofit partnerships.

Miguel Garcia: Right.

Vickie Schachter: Can I just interject right here, Miguel, if you don’t mind?

Miguel Garcia: Sure.

Vickie Schachter: Carl, I don’t know if you’re with a Neighborhood Networks center.

Carl McLester: Yes, we are.

Vickie Schachter: Oh, okay. Well, just for all of the folks who are in on this call who represent neighborhood network centers – please continue with your question, Carl – but if after this call you have questions about financing and about creative ways to seek out money, you know that neighborhood network does provide technical assistance. Our toll-free number is (888) 312-2743. So I just want to remind folks that they do have a source to call after this call is over.

Miguel Garcia: Right. Let me –

Carl McLester: Thanks. I apologize; I don’t want to monopolize the time.

Miguel Garcia: Sure. Sure.

Carl McLester: {Unintelligible} of the question. I’m just trying to follow {unintelligible} of maybe technical assistance in terms of how to pull the right partners to the table because some organizations,

some companies, have expressed to you guys at a corporate level an interest in really being involved, and others haven't, and so just a sense of where to go to find the right public/private nonprofit partners to layer in the right type of funding that's necessary.

Miguel Garcia:

Okay. There's a couple of ways to answer that. First of all, a lot of the community technology centers that we're working with increasingly that are becoming more sophisticated, they are positioning themselves to be part of larger teams of consultants or of city agencies to devise strategies for what's happening in that neighborhood. And so, for instance, if a local neighborhood has a good geographic information system with data, they're bringing that to the table as saying, "You know, we can play an important role with this developer or with this planning development or with this public housing authority to help strategize on some of the solutions to some of the challenges we're facing, and we should be considered not necessarily as merely a repository of information but how do we animate that information to be part of a value-added team and we should be compensated for that particular participation." That's one avenue. The other avenue is that we're increasing seeing attempts for other community-based organizations in a constellation of neighborhood actors to use the community technology center as active public space. So instead of inventing another computer lab, they're able to access that computer lab that is specialized with curriculum and content that is relevant to the original organization's constituents. For instance, if there is a situation whereby which a senior citizen 202 project does not necessarily want to go to the expense of trying to start their own lab, they can interface with an existing one down the street and put into their development pro forma for HUD or for the banks a line item for that particular service. So we're seeing those kinds of strategies starting to emerge.

Randal Pinkett:

And let me just add, Miguel, three sets of resources. In addition to the fact that Neighborhood Networks provide technical assistance, I'm sure many out there are aware of CTC Net. For those that may not, they sponsor a wonderful conference on an annual basis. Their website has a good amount of resources pertaining to CTCs. Second, to this issue around GIS and planning, the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership ("NNIP") out of the Urban Institute – I think if you go to www.urban.org/NNIP for National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership, they have a number of

affiliate organizations across the country that are essentially GIS and data warehouses that help coordinate local activity around the use of data and information to effect neighborhood change. Third would be the Nonprofit Technology Enterprise Network, which is a national network of technology consultants who work with nonprofits, many of whom have particular areas of expertise. And then there are some that are focused on community development and how technology intersects with community development. My firm, BCT, is a member of the Network, for example, so I would say go to NTEN.org – NTEN, E-N – .org and see if there is an affiliate of NTEN or NNIP in your neighborhood that might provide additional resources or assistance.

Carl McLester: Thank you very much.

Brooke: Your next question comes from Renee McCauley.

Renee McCauley: Hi. I wanted to get the second speaker's name and title again because actually I work for a company in Boston and we have several locations. We're kind of mixed-income housing and we deal with a lot of issues that you addressed earlier about multi-ethnic and multi-income housing. We have computer learning centers within our facilities, and I think it's a matter of more we might need some assistance in tweaking the existing centers we have. They serve a lot of useful purposes, but maybe opening them to the public more and also providing better services for the residents we do have. Thank you.

Randal Pinkett: Sure. My name is Randal Pinkett.

Renee McCauley: Okay.

Randal Pinkett: R-A-N-D-A-L, one L, last name is Pinkett, Pink like the color pink, E-T-T.

Renee McCauley: Okay.

Randal Pinkett: And I am the President and CEO of BCT Partners, Building Community Technology Partners. And we've done a lot of work in Boston, so we'd love to work with you.

Renee McCauley: Okay. Thank you.

Brooke: Again, if you would like to ask a question, please press *1 on your telephone keypad. One moment for further questions. Your next question is from Carl McLester.

Carl McLester: Since we're sleeping out there, I have another question and that's that the conference that you mentioned, Randal. {Cuts out}

Randal Pinkett: Hello?

Carl McLester: Yes, I'm sorry. There is that conference you mentioned. Now I thought that was scheduled for June this past year and was canceled and it wasn't rescheduled. Did I miss something on that?

Randal Pinkett: CTC Net had their conference in June in Washington, D.C., and I think this year it is in June in Seattle.

Carl McLester: You know, I called in to Neighborhood Networks to register for the conference and was told that the conference wasn't being held.

Randal Pinkett: Hmm. Is that the Neighborhood Networks conference or the CTC Net conference, because those are two different conferences?

Carl McLester: Well, then that's my remission on that because I thought when you referred to that you were talking about the Neighborhood Networks conference.

Randal Pinkett: Oh, no. I was talking about CTC Net, which is a separate nonprofit organization.

Michelle Thomas: Carl, I can answer your question about Neighborhood Networks. The Neighborhood Networks conferences are held every other year and the next Neighborhood Networks annual conference will be held in June of 2005 and we're in the planning stages of that. However, in 2004, there will be three Neighborhood Networks regional technical assistance workshops in March and April. The first regional technical assistance workshop will be March 10-12 in Seattle, Washington. The second regional technical assistance workshop will be March 31-April 2 in Phoenix, Arizona. And the third regional technical assistance workshop will be April 21-23 in Memphis, Tennessee. And those are specific to Neighborhood Networks, which is separate from the CTC Net conferences.

Carl McLester: Okay. I appreciate that clarification.

Michelle Thomas: You're welcome.

Brooke: At this time, there are no further questions.

Vickie Schachter: Brooke, I have a question. This is Vickie Schachter.

Miguel Garcia: Okay.

Vickie Schachter: I'd like to ask Miguel to tell us a little bit more about some of the other priorities at the Ford Foundation that might have implications for neighborhood network centers.

Miguel Garcia: Sure. We've adopted an asset-building approach for our entire division. Our division is organized into two units under a vice president, and it's called the Asset-Building and Community Developments Division of The Ford Foundation. Within the division, you have two operating units. One is the economic development unit, and the second is the community and resource development unit. Each of those two units have their respective program officers; somewhere between seven to ten program officers are in each of those two units and they function under the general rubric or the general framework of what is asset building for community development. We have on our website at www.Fordfound.org -- F-O-R-D-F-O-U-N-D.org, O-R-G -- we have a publication that is kind of our assets brochure that's called "Building Assets to Reduce Poverty and Injustice." It's downloadable in a .pdf format and we encourage folks to look at it if they have questions around what do we mean by asset building.

One of the units, as I mentioned earlier -- the economic development unit -- is focused on primarily building individual assets for individuals that are trying to gain wealth. We have program officers that are focusing on home ownership. We have program officers focusing on workforce development skills. We have program officers in the unit focusing on individual development accounts or IDAs to compel and motivate and incentivize individuals to save a dollar and get it matched with two or three dollars that someday will mature towards some sort of asset-building framework. That's our economic development unit. It's headed up by Frank de Giovanni.

I'm a member of the other unit, which is our community and environment development unit. That's headed by Mel Duncan.

Our focus is on community assets. How do we look at an asset, either a physical asset or a social asset, where it touches multiple people in multiple ways? And we have some very good examples with our international work, because we are a global foundation, around environmental assets. For instance, how does an organization or a community in Northern India manage a community forest so that multiple people can use the forest effectively? In the urban context, we don't really have a kind of blueprint yet for what does a community asset look like. Hence, we're trying to understand, as I said earlier in the opening conversation, what is an active public space community space? And that's why we're focusing on some of these archetypes.

Within our unit, we have folks that look at smart growth and regional equity. We have folks that look at community forestry, particularly Native American communities in North America. We have a program officer dedicated to community philanthropy. How do you aggregate local donations and financial resources at the community level? And we also have a youth development program officer who's just come on board looking at youth and pathways towards workforce skills. And then, finally, we have a program officer in environmental justice that is looking at environmental justice in healthy communities.

So each of us have our respective portfolios under this general heading or title of Community Assets. But, again, I would refer people to our publication, our .pdf file, on our website to get other case studies and some examples of bibliography.

Brooke:

Your next question comes from Sandra Butler.

Sandra Butler:

Hi. On the email addresses, did I copy them correctly? Is it M.Garcia and R.Pinkett? Or is it just Mgarcia and Rpinkett?

Miguel Garcia:

On the Garcia one, it's M.Garcia@Fordfound.org.

Sandra Butler:

Okay.

Randal Pinkett:

And mine, there's no dot to mine.

Sandra Butler:

There's no dot? Okay.

Randal Pinkett:

Rpinkett@BCTpartners.com.

Sandra Butler: Okay. And then my final question is, on the conferences that were just listed, are those the same conferences just in different areas or are those conferences somehow consecutive?

Vickie Schachter: I believe it's going to be similar offerings at each conference.

Sandra Butler: Similar? Okay. Thank you.

Brooke: Again, if you would like to ask a question, please press *1 on your telephone keypad. One moment. Your next question is from Carl McLester.

Carl McLester: Hello. Professing a profound ignorance as to the process, now I {unintelligible} the relationship with the networks and CTC, particularly as it relates to the conferences.

Vickie Schachter: I'm sorry. Could you say that again?

Carl McLester: The relationship between Neighborhood Networks, if there is any, and CTC, particularly as it relates to training and conferences.

Vickie Schachter: Well, there is not a direct relationship between Neighborhood Networks and CTC. CTC is a very fine organization representing community technology centers. I believe it has a membership component to it. And Neighborhood Networks is an affiliation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from multifamily properties that are FHA-assisted and insured properties that begin centers on behalf of their residents. So I don't think there's a direct – I don't think you should necessarily assume that there's a direct – relationship or that the CTCs and Neighborhood Networks are one and the same. They are not.

Randal Pinkett: Yeah. And I think, as this initiative is moving forward, I think there are tremendous opportunities for the work that's happening in Neighborhood Networks and the work that's happening here and the work that's happening with CTC Net to really cross-inform how everyone is trying to kind of best leverage their technology centers. I would argue that there hasn't been enough learning across the various networks and that there's a lot of opportunity for that to really happen.

Vickie Schachter: Miguel, with our remaining time, I was wondering if you would be so kind as to perhaps highlight the three most important things that

any organization should remember when they submit a proposal to a large foundation like Ford Foundation.

Miguel Garcia:

Right. Sure. I guess first is how you get into the foundation. What's your point of entry into a foundation, like the Ford or Rockefeller or Surdna or MacArthur, any of the larger ones that do work across the country and in some cases across the globe. I always say there's a front door, there's a side door, and there's a back door to these foundations. The front door is typically the avenue most people approach the foundation world through, and in our case we get over 40,000 requests a year globally for funding or which we only fund a small portion of that. You can imagine, given the limited resources. Typically, the first step to the front door is a letter of inquiry, which, again, you could go to our website and take a look at what the letter of inquiry specifies. It's essentially an introduction of who you are, what you're trying to do, and what you want to do; and it's usually routed to an appropriate program officer within the foundation that has the potential for a match and then the program officer makes the determination whether or not it is a good match and sends you some correspondence back.

The side door piece is one that you're part of an initiative or you hear something about some work that's being done and you try to match yourself up with a major interest area that you're aware that the foundation has been supporting – either other folks in your field or folks that you know about.

And then the third area, which is more the back door, is someone you know at the foundation that you have relationships with already or have established relationships while that person has been out there in the field trying to understand what you're doing and you can have your discussion with that person to say, "This is what I'm trying to do and what do you think? Does this match up?"

So that's the first issue: how you get your point of entry is important. Some foundations don't accept unsolicited proposals. For instance, Rockefeller. My colleagues over there don't do that. They will go out and ask people to submit something and they won't accept people that submit something coldly, so you need to know the kind of nuance of how people accept the proposals.

So there's a front door, a side door, and the back door. The second issue that I think's important is clarity. It's important that you fully understand what the foundation is trying to change. Most foundations are in the role of community change or social change or political change or economic change, and so it would be wise for you to do some homework on other grantees that have been supported by the foundation or that particular program area before you send something in. You may have a wonderful project or program that you're asking support for; but if you don't realize that there's no real interest at the foundation to cover that area, then you might become very frustrated. So the alignment of interests between the funder and the prospective grantee is critical.

Unlike HUD where I used to work, we don't issue big RFPs in the Federal Register that are easily discernible and you have some point of reference to say, "Yeah, I can do that," or, "No, I can't do that." In the foundation, it's much more nuanced, so it would be wise for you to do your homework on the foundation's thematic interest and what's most important to them at any given time because foundations do change their interests from year to year.

And the third area after clarity is, how do you develop a relationship? Program officers like myself throughout the globe, we're on the road two to three weeks out of the month. We're traveling either domestically across the country or some of us internationally throughout the globe. And so the development of a good, respectful and mutually benefiting relationship perhaps leading to funding is something we really, really do value. Very often folks try to pressure us to say, "I have a great project. You're doing this. Fund me." And very often there is a period where we have to understand what you're trying to do. We try and understand who you are. And, quite frankly, we'll actually set up times to come visit you once we feel that there's a match. This all takes time; and there are no deadlines. That's what's critical. There are typically no deadlines in the foundation world. It's kind of first-come, first-served based upon the budgets of each individual program officer. With the HUD Super NOFA, for instance, there are very prescribed deadlines for each of the 25-26 programs I believe over the last several years; so you know what your deadline is. In the foundation world, very often there are no deadlines so you have to cultivate a relationship with your program officer or your prospective funder and be patient and also be very honest about this because we've been trained, both in-house and

also by just work on the road, to determine whether or not someone's sincere or whether or not they're trying to bend back into shape to fit in the portfolio and it's being forced or if it's a natural fit. So be aware that we are looking very closely as to how much it's forcing themselves onto you vs. how much of it's a natural kind of fit.

So those are the three things I could probably give some advice on. Is that fair?

Vickie Schachter: That's more than fair. I think our call has come to an end. I want to thank Miguel Garcia and Randal Pinkett for the information that they've provided us today. We are looking forward to learning more about what happens with your five prototype sites, and we will be checking the various websites to see what is happening. I know that a number of our Neighborhood Network centers will also investigate the Ford Foundation's website and look at some of the other initiatives that may be applicable to their individual centers.

Miguel Garcia: Very good.

Vickie Schachter: Thank you all. Thank you callers.

Randal Pinkett: Thank you.

Vickie Schachter: For participating in today's conference call.

Miguel Garcia: Thank you.

Vickie Schachter: Good afternoon.

Brooke: Thank you. This is the "Capturing Grand Funds: What the Funders Tell Us" Conference Call. You may now disconnect.