



Education and Housing Equity Project Records.

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METROPOLITAN INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

"Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8



September 13, 1999

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Staff

Joy Sorensen Navarre

Executive Director

Minnesota Church Center
Suite 310
122 West Franklin Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone: (612) 871-8980
Fax: (612) 813-4501
www.micah.org

Ms. Margaret Gage
The Study Circle Fund
264 North Pleasant Street, 2nd Floor
Amherst, MA 01002

Dear Ms. Gage,

The Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH) fully supports the efforts of the Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP) to engage the Twin Cities metropolitan region in conversations to promote racially and economically inclusive communities and schools that work for children. Since 1996 EHEP has been the catalyst that has led to greater citizen awareness of regional problems, heightened citizen empowerment and increased citizen action. EHEP has brought diverse stakeholders in our community together to dialog about important life issues.

MICAH's was founded in 1988 by a group of religious leaders, housing advocates and low income housing developers. It is now a coalition of over 100 Protestant, Catholic and Jewish congregations and housing organizations dedicated to the vision that everyone in our metropolitan community must have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. Central to our work is the belief that must think regionally, act locally and live faithfully.

The Community Circle Conversations developed and implemented by EHEP during the past three years provides opportunities for MICAH groups and others to study the issues of race, education and segregation facing our region. Through the conversations, they learn to understand differing perspectives by sharing the personal experiences that shaped their lives. In addition they dialog about their differing ideas about how to create a region that works for all children.

As a board member and collaborating partner with the Education and Equity Project, I have seen first hand the internal workings and the external results of EHEP's work. It is my opinion that the organization's mission, outcomes and operations are solid. The Education and Housing Equity Project is a treasured gem in the Twin Cities region.

Sincerely,


Joy Sorensen Navarre

 The Study Circle Fund

September 1, 1999

Dick Little
Education and Housing Equity Project, The
Augsburg College, CB 185
2211 Riverside Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55454

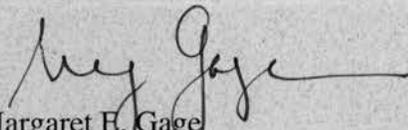
Dear Dick,

Thank you for submitting your proposal to receive funding from the Study Circle Fund. We will contact you if we need more information about your project.

The Board of Directors and staff of the Study Circle Fund will review proposals over the coming weeks. You will hear from us in mid-November, as soon as decisions are made.

Thank you again for your interest in the Study Circle Fund. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tina Clarke, our Program Officer.

Sincerely,


Margaret E. Gage
Executive Director

The Study Circle Fund

Grant Application by

The Education and Housing Equity Project Minneapolis, Minnesota

STUDY CIRCLE FUND CATEGORY: Established community-wide study circle project

AMOUNT REQUESTED IN FALL, 1999 FUNDING CYCLE: \$30,000

ORGANIZATION/PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Legal Name: The Education and Housing Equity Project

Address: Augsburg College, CB 185
2211 Riverside Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55454

Phone (612) 330-1505 *FAX* (612) 330-1507 *e-mail* ehpe@augsb.org

Individual Responsible: Dick Little, Executive Director - *Phone* (612) 330-1505 or 724-5662

The Education and Housing Equity Project was founded in 1995 to provide leadership in linking the continuing struggle over school desegregation with the issue of housing segregation, and to highlight awareness of the racism underlying both. It began utilizing the community circle strategy in 1996. Its current mission is to promote racially and economically inclusive communities and schools that work for all children in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. EHEP aims to expand public understanding and informed action on residential, economic and racial segregation and the educational achievement gap in public schools. It is the first -- and perhaps still the only -- metropolitan-wide community circle project in the country.

EHEP held its first community forum in December, 1996. This was followed by community circle discussions with the theme "Choices for Community: A Regional Conversation About the Challenges of Education, Housing, and Race in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area." Building a wide network of organizational partners and sponsors, it formed the Metropolitan Community Circles Collaborative. This brings together citizens and community organizations throughout the metro area to focus on the challenges of housing segregation, educational achievement and racial equity, and actions required for progress in the Twin Cities metropolitan region.

The Community Circles Collaborative has produced major accomplishments in its first three years, including vital resources for a 1999 legislative initiative to address the region's major shortage of affordable housing. Accomplishments are described in greater detail on pages 5 and 6 of this proposal. EHEP has been the catalyst that has led to greater citizen awareness of regional problems, heightened citizen empowerment to address those problems, and increased citizen action in solving them.

EHEP is an IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization (**IRS determination letter attached**).

Total annual organization budget (excluding Wilder commitments): \$150,000 (**budget attached**). Also attached is a list of existing local grant sources, which we are working to expand.

Governing body, leadership and staff (Board list attached): Board members come from diverse backgrounds in business, civic, legislative, community service, housing advocacy, civil rights, media, education and law. Seven of the sixteen board members, including the president, are African Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, or Latino/a Americans. Four other African Americans and Asian Americans previously served on the board. Of the five staff persons who have worked for EHEP, two have been persons of color (African American and Asian American). Dick Little, Executive Director since 1996, provides staff leadership in collaboration with key partners. Other staff will be added in the near future.

A description follows of the Collaborative, its community and issue contexts, and future plans.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Community

Like most metropolitan regions, the Twin Cities has experienced steady growth. Many of the migrants come from New York, California, Illinois and neighboring states, while others are immigrants and refugees from Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Low unemployment rates have helped to attract a large secondary migration of refugees and immigrants to Minnesota. Since 1970, these trends have led to a major increase in the racial and ethnic diversity of a major metropolitan area that was historically one of the least diverse in the US. The majority of students in inner city schools now come from families with other than European heritage. The largest Hmong settlement in the Western Hemisphere, more than 45,000 people, is now located in Saint Paul. Minneapolis is home to the largest concentration of Somalis in this hemisphere.

A book-length study by Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*, revealed that the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area is among the ten most segregated in the country. Other studies have shown that the Twin Cities ranks third highest among all U.S. urban areas in the proportion of persons of color living in poverty. Minnesota State Representative Myron Orfield, in his book *Metropolitica: A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability*, has further documented regional patterns of segregation, racial and economic isolation and the growing disparities between inner-city and outer-suburban communities. And in *Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education and Persistent Segregation*, Dr. John Powell of the Institute on Race and Poverty at the University of Minnesota testifies to the importance of "unlocking the doors" to address other significant issues facing the region.

Critical Issues

These trends have been accompanied during the 1990's by enviable economic growth, resulting in a statewide unemployment rate of less than three per cent. As in other metropolitan areas, however, many of the new jobs are in service industries paying at or near the minimum wage. Moreover, public policy changes initiated in Congress during the past 20 years have resulted in a steady deterioration of and reduction in the supply of housing affordable to low-income people. As a result, one-third -- some say as many as one-half -- of residents of homeless shelters in the Cities are employed or consist of families whose sole parent/provider is employed. More importantly, the vast majority of the low-income employed who are not homeless cannot afford suitable housing.

Concomitant with these trends has been the continued flight of middle- and upper-income, predominantly white, people from the central cities and some first-ring suburbs into more distant suburban communities. With few restrictions on urban fringe development, there has been massive suburban sprawl; metro population grew 9.7 per cent from 1970-1984 but the land it occupied increased by 25.1 per cent. A high proportion of new jobs has been created in the urban fringe unaccompanied by housing affordable to the persons holding many of those jobs. In addition, many of the people who could take such jobs cannot reach them because they do not own cars and public transit is unavailable.

The most significant result of this situation is a concentration of poverty, including low-wage earners as well as those receiving public assistance, in the inner cities. The poverty rate in Minneapolis is 18.5 percent and in Saint Paul it is 16.7 percent, but in the suburbs poverty affects only 4.5 percent of the population. Moreover, poverty is much more prevalent among households of color, who are disproportionately concentrated in the central cities as well.

Informal steering procedures in the real estate industry and other practices often impose *de facto* limits on access to new communities by persons of other than European descent. The proportion of people of color who live in poverty in the central cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul is higher than in any other central city -- 37 percent of African Americans, 40 percent of Native Americans, 32 percent of Latina/os. Schools in the central cities serve only 22 percent of the region's children, but 55 percent of all elementary school children who come from impoverished families.

Public opinion and school testing results in the mid-1990s produced widespread impressions that current school busing practices have failed to achieve school desegregation and inter-racial educational equity. After a year of organizing, in December 1996 20 collaborating organizations sponsored a community forum in St. Louis Park, a first-tier Minneapolis suburb, with the theme, "Beyond Busing." More than 100 people came, from a wide variety of groups -- churches, advocacy organizations, academia, public agencies and foundations. Plans were announced for a series of community circle discussions on the critical issues of housing, race, education and segregation, and an invitation was issued to potential sponsors and participants.

Organizations participating in the coalition (see also attached list)

EHEP's major initial partners included the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (MMEP), the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA), the Minneapolis Initiative Against Racism (MIAR), the Minnesota Fair Housing Center, and the Minnesota Churches Anti-Racism Initiative (MCARI). These groups formed the Community Circle Collaborative, a multi-sector initiative to promote both inter- and intra-community dialogue on education, housing, race and segregation in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

In 1998, EHEP was joined, as lead partner, by the Wilder Foundation, a self-endowed community foundation primarily serving the Saint Paul area. EHEP provided resources and helped to promote discussion of these issues in the "Cities at Work" initiative organized by Wilder for the East Metro area. This strengthened EHEP's outreach in the eastern portion of the region and also extended Wilder's administrative, organizing, and evaluative research capacities to support the community circles project in the West Metro area.

Although MIAR is no longer active, the other original partners remain closely associated with EHEP. The partnership has also grown to include additional partners such as the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, the Minnesota League of Human Rights Commissions, the Council of

Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters, the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches, the Minneapolis Public Schools, and the Study Circles Resource Center. Other additional partners, who provide a rich resource for study circle facilitators, are the Minnesota Facilitators Network and the Minnesota Chapter of the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution. Several important media partners have emerged to assist in disseminating public information about the community circles and the issues they address. These partners include the Minnesota Center for Journalism, the *Star Tribune*, *Pioneer Press* and *Insight News* newspapers, Minnesota Public Radio, radio stations KMOJ and KFAI, and cable TV station SPNN, which provides video documentation of major community circle and forum events.

EHEP is also a partner with the Minnesota Housing Partnership and the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless in their proposals for funding to launch a public relations campaign to reduce public resistance to affordable housing in the Twin Cities area.

Partners are crucial to (1) help assure racial, cultural, ethnic, gender, generational, political and geographic diversity of voices in the conversations, (2) fulfill the various tasks, objectives and leadership requirements of the project using the best possible combination of resources, and (3) assure that the results of the community circle conversations are widely disseminated and receive widespread attention. Partners are of five different types:

A. Organizing partners, who help to design the process; frame issues for discussion; prepare the discussion guide; recruit, train and orient sponsors, facilitators, scribes, and resource partners; publicize the project and work with the media; and assist with reporting and evaluation and the details of project follow-through.

B. Resource associates, who supply background research and expertise on the issues; written and audio-visual materials to inform the discussions and provoke spirited but thoughtful conversation; media coverage and project documentation; and/or financial and in-kind backing of project activities.

C. Sponsors (typically organizations) that supply meeting places (with child care, transportation, translators, hospitality, and other services as needed) for conversations, schedule the conversations, publicize the circles, recruit participants, convene or host the dialogues, and secure scribes who will record highlights and results of each conversation.

D. Facilitators with professional experience in mediation and facilitation who moderate the community circle conversations. Organizations of professional facilitators also participate in delivering facilitator training and in convening facilitators for assessment and evaluation. In addition, they have been instrumental in making the discussion guides more user-friendly.

E. Participants from diverse backgrounds who commit to at least five sessions of two hours each and participate with eight to fifteen other citizens in informed, deliberative dialogue.

In-kind support from organizing partners alone in the 1997 circles amounted to more than \$15,000 in documented resources, and a somewhat greater contribution was made in 1998. However, we estimate that this figure *tripled* in 1999.

An Action Forum is scheduled in the Fall of 1999 to shift the focus from discussion to action. Among the goals of the forum are to expand faith community participation, facilitate increased suburban participation, and recruit groups that can help to assure strong participation by persons of color. More importantly, though, the Collaborative is poised to take the important next step of moving beyond discussion to action by building community awareness and galvanizing meaningful change. The primary goal of the upcoming Forum is

awareness and galvanizing meaningful change. The primary goal of the upcoming Forum is to mobilize citizen action by developing a community-wide action agenda and connecting citizens to opportunities for involvement.

EHEP strongly emphasized to community circle sponsors in 1998-99 the importance of building racial/ethnic diversity into their discussions. Nine of the twenty organizing partners of the Collaborative are groups representing primarily interests of communities of color. Many of the new groups recruited for the 1998-99 conversations are minority culture-specific or multicultural organizations. Partner and sponsor organizations include congregations, non-profits, human rights commissions, neighborhood associations and community councils, youth groups, schools, family and community councils, university and college groups, a union local, a chamber of commerce, voter organizations, and city governments.

Although there has been reasonably good demographic and geographic balance among sponsors, we are striving to achieve better representation of the outer suburbs, the business community, recent immigrants, and students. Public officials also have been invited and encouraged to participate actively. As a means of continuing to promote diverse discussion groups, EHEP will encourage partnering of inner-city and suburban sponsors. EHEP also provides its facilitators with training to improve their multicultural awareness and skills. MCARI conducted a one-day introductory anti-racism workshop for facilitators early in 1999. A multicultural awareness workshop is scheduled for facilitators in the Fall, presented by Intercultural Communications Workshops, Inc., another community circle partner. These skills-development workshops are provided to facilitators as volunteer compensation.

The metropolitan-wide study circle program

In 1997 and early 1998, about 500 citizens from different walks of life joined in community circles and forums in 25 communities. They focused on the issues outlined above, with emphasis on the role that race and segregation play in exacerbating these challenges. Each circle was supplied with a facilitator, recruited and trained by the Collaborative, and a discussion guide prepared by the Collaborative. The discussions culminated in a metropolitan citizens' forum held at Macalester College and a report on the results of the conversations that was published in 1998.

After overhauling the discussion guide in response to 1997 evaluations, partnering with facilitator organizations, securing additional sponsors, and engaging the Wilder Foundation as a partner to expand the program's reach into the east metro area, the Collaborative launched further conversations in 1998-99, engaging about 1,000 people in 60 groups in 20 municipalities. This process, which is still going on, has helped to further define strategies and actions that will advance the common mission of expanding housing, education and economic choices and opportunities for all citizens.

Another round of Community Circle conversations was completed in the spring of 1999. A round of Circles, conducted in the fall of 1998 and co-sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Schools Office of Family and Community Services and five partner organizations, became a prototype for metro-wide conversations that began in February 1999. Drawing upon lessons learned in the 1997 and 1998 rounds, this round included a broader marketing effort and additional groups such as business and labor organizations, outer suburban residents and employers, more residents and leadership groups in Saint Paul and East Metro, and a wider range of participants from communities of color. These conversations were more clearly focused on systemic barriers and on changes needed to better integrate our metropolitan community, residential patterns and schools across barriers of race and class, and to make

institutions such as schools more multiculturally inclusive and equitable. This effort represents a major leap forward that brought the Wilder Foundation into the process and led to a more active and meaningful role for MMEP and MICAH.

The Action Forum, "Beyond Tolerance: A Call to Action," scheduled for the fall of 1999, will emphasize promising practices underway in the Twin Cities and elsewhere, and connect participants to volunteer opportunities. This action component will directly link the work of the community circles with the action agendas of partners in the Community Circle Collaborative, and also with the policy work of key decision makers and decisions-making bodies in the metro region and the state.

A major outcome of the three years of work to date was a legislative initiative, strongly influenced by partners in the Community Circle Collaborative, that significantly expands state resources and incentives available for development of affordable housing. Although it provided less in terms of resources than many would have liked, it was a very important start in rectifying some of the most urgent problems addressed in our discussions.

In cooperation with the Minnesota Meeting, a joint project of the *Star Tribune* and Minnesota Public Television, and the Minnesota Public Radio Civic Journalism Initiative, EHEP and the Collaborative will cosponsor a Metropolitan Citizens Summit in December 1999 to collectively address issues highlighted in individual discussions. The Summit will bring together community circle participants with public policy leaders, and it will use electronic response technology to discover areas of consensus and to prioritize action steps. This event will further help to inform the policy and action agendas of partners in the collaborative.

Since it started to plan its December 1996 event, EHEP has worked closely with the Study Circles Resource Center and has relied upon its guidance in developing this initiative. In April, 1998, under EHEP sponsorship, SCRC provided a workshop for prospective sponsors and facilitators. This event greatly increased local capacity for initiating additional civic engagement projects, and it attracted new partners to launch community circle conversations. Executive Director Dick Little remains in close touch with SCRC.

One of the most important new activities now being undertaken by EHEP involves one of the partners attracted to the process by the SCRC workshop, the Wilder Foundation, which is now EHEP's lead partner in the Collaborative. With Wilder's help, EHEP is developing a ground-breaking, comprehensive and systematic evaluation of its region-wide study circle program. The Wilder research division is the principal contractor involved in collecting data and carrying out the evaluation.

Other Accomplishments of the Collaborative

Major EHEP accomplishments that have flowed directly from its success in its community discussions have included the following:

- "Popularized" the research done by the Institute on Race and Poverty at the University of Minnesota by making it broadly available in commonly used language to various publics in the Twin Cities area. This has made participants and decision makers much more aware of this valuable regional resource.
- Convened with both housing and education organizations to focus on re-drafting the State Board of Education's desegregation rule, and to link school desegregation issues with the broader issues of housing segregation and metropolitan stability (1996 and 1998).

- Supported a coalition working with the newly formed Minnesota Fair Housing Center on a fair housing testing campaign in suburban Hennepin County to frame the issue of housing discrimination in the context of schools, educational achievement, and access to broader life opportunities (beginning in 1996).
- Engaged the Minneapolis Public Schools and the Mayor of Minneapolis in support of and assistance in developing the community circles project and, after a presentation sponsored by the Family Housing Fund, encouraged study of the linkage between housing, household stability and educational achievement. This resulted in formation of The Kids Mobility Project (1997).
- Provided resources to, collaborated with and supported MICAH's proposal to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for joint development, with the Illusion Theater, of a series of theater events highlighting the issues raised in community circles (1997 - 1999).
- Participated by invitation as an advisor to the consulting teams working to mediate the currently pending lawsuits on educational adequacy and equity (*NAACP v. State of Minnesota* and *St. Paul School District v. State of Minnesota*). Helped secure Minneapolis School Board endorsement of mediation. Ideas emerging from community circle conversations have made important contributions to the settlement proposals being considered.
- Worked with the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability and the Right to Housing Campaign to develop an inclusionary housing policy and proposed legislation that offered a new approach to expanding affordable housing choices and mixed income housing development in the metropolitan area. Such legislation was enacted in 1999 by the State Legislature.
- With the Urban Coalition and MMEP, jointly sponsored a series of forums to discuss the State's proposed new Desegregation Rule, Inclusionary Education Rule and multicultural competency requirements for teacher licensure. The EHEP board also contributed substantive written testimony to the State Board of Education on the proposed changes to the Profiles of Learning (1998) and the revised desegregation rule (1999).
- Assisted the Minneapolis League of Women Voters with the Minneapolis Middle School Project (1998), which assessed possible ways to restructure and reform middle-school education.
- Contributed to the work of the Minneapolis Affordable Housing Task Force (1998 - 1999) conveying concerns, which emerged from study circles, that: (1) recommendations should focus not only on providing needed housing but also on expanding people's locational choices and access to economic, social and educational opportunities; (2) recommendations should focus on barriers related to race, not only income, and (3) recommendations should focus on metropolitan as well as municipal remedies.
- Upon invitation, assisted the Minnesota Fair Housing Center in planning and implementing a Hennepin County/Metropolitan Council-funded workshop for suburban housing and planning officials and human rights commissioners on best practices for achieving fair and affordable housing. More than 100 city officials and developers attended the "Building Inclusive Communities" Conference in the Fall of 1998.
- Co-sponsored, with the Fair Housing Center and the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, programs that highlighted promising practices in other parts of the country.
- By invitation of the Saint Paul Office of Interdistrict Initiatives, participated in planning development of a multi-school district governance structure to expand inter-district and integrated city/suburban education initiatives in the East Metro area.
- Initiated conversations, which are still underway, to explore collaboration in a similar inter-district effort in the Minneapolis metro area, the West Metro Educational Consortium.
- Assisted in the Interfaith Action/Saint Paul Ecumenical Alliance of Congregations interfaith dialogue and action forums on poverty, segregation and sprawl.

- Co-sponsored town-hall forums in Minneapolis and Saint Paul public schools as part of a national teleconference presented by the National Conference for Community and Justice on education and race.
- Organized three Twin Cities-area dialogues as part of the National Days of Dialogue on Race Relations.
- Assisted in the Saint Paul *Pioneer Press* civic journalism project "Poverty Among Us."
- Helped the Minnesota League of Women Voters to develop a plan for a statewide study circle program on immigration, which will take place in 2000.

In addition to these outcomes of EHEP's work, the past three years experience has improved the quality and scope of the discussion process. Thirty organizations contributed to the development of a new discussion guide. A faith compendium has been prepared by MICAH for use in community circles sponsored by churches, mosques, and synagogues. Guidelines and resources are being developed for an optional discussion session on race and economic development. It will be especially encouraged for use in conversations sponsored by business and labor organizations.

To assure better reporting of conversation results, reporting forms were developed for scribes. Professional facilitators helped to make the discussion guide more user-friendly and to develop a facilitator's version of the guide. The circles are also being resourced by the Urban Coalition, the Family Housing Fund, the Center for School Change, and the Institute on Race and Poverty. These organizations are providing research summaries to circle participants. All of these improvements are contributing to more productive discussions and the likelihood that meaningful ideas and commitments to action will be generated.

Awards and Recognition

At the end of 1998, our Community Circles dialogue project was selected by The President's Initiative on Race as a "Promising Practice" for advancing race relations and making progress on issues of race in the United States.

In May 1999, the Collaborative was one of four projects in the country selected to make a presentation at the Brookings Institution's National Symposium on innovative approaches to our nation's racial problems.

Sustainable Development Plan

The experiences of the past three years have taught us that continued development of EHEP and the Collaborative, as community resources, will require additional staff. To sustain the momentum of the community circle project and help to build inclusive communities and schools into the agendas of other public and community organizations, EHEP must expand its staff capacity.

The vacant position of administrative assistant will be filled in early September. However, to assist the director and to manage the daily operations of EHEP activities full-time, it is critical that we engage a Community Circles Coordinator to oversee and manage the community circles project as it moves from discussion to action, to coordinate activities with the Community Circles Collaborative, and to help ensure implementation of the action agendas developed by community participants. A recently prepared study has recommended the addition of this staff position as essential to the continued success of our work as we expand from discussion alone into action and implementation.

Additional funds are also needed to expand the Wilder Foundation's research efforts. To date, the foundation has not been involved in activities that extend beyond the confines of the city of St. Paul. In order to fully evaluate the Collaborative's region-wide effort, additional resources are needed for data collection and management.

In a larger sense, we also understand that EHEP's mission will not be achieved in just a couple of years. Ultimately, of course, EHEP would like to "put itself out of business," by fostering a new regional ethos that is sustained by the agendas and activities of the partner organizations, as well as the healthy civic habits of democratic discussion, deliberation and decision-making. However, these goals remain somewhere in the future. Early in 2000, the board of EHEP hopes to convene its major partners to develop a strategic plan that begins charting a course toward achievement of that ultimate goal.

Equally important to the long-range sustainability of the impact of the study circles is establishment of a more independent funding base. EHEP is exploring alternatives that include developing a donor base and generating income from distribution of its high-quality products and services. This too will be further explored as part of the strategic planning process anticipated to take place next year.

Although our budget expanded in 1999, we have not yet garnered funding for either of these two essential additions to our capacity. It is for these purposes that we request a \$30,000 grant from The Study Circles Fund.

Leadership and Staff

Board of Directors: EHEP's success rests heavily on an active, committed and diverse board of directors. The board has been expanded each year and now includes 16 members -- all key leaders in fields and institutions related to the mission of EHEP. The board includes extensive direct leadership experience addressing issues of education, housing and race. Members' connections and contacts enhance EHEP's ability to accomplish its objectives. The board sets policy direction and plays an active role in advancing the community circle project and bringing new partners into the collaborative. Board Chair is Matthew Little, a long-time leader of the NAACP and a major figure in the Civil Rights Movement in the Twin Cities.

Top paid staff: Richard C. Little, Executive Director

Dick Little is responsible for all aspects of the organization and project. He has an extensive background in housing, education, race relations and use of study circles. For 20 years he was a planning and housing official with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Since 1990, he has been a research associate with the International Institute for Inter-racial Interaction (INTER-RACE) at Augsburg College, a technical assistant with the Community Policing Institute, a member of the strategic planning team for the City of New Orleans Economic Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community program, and a consultant to the Minneapolis Public Schools. He has also served as policy chair, parent representative on the site leadership council, and co-founder of the foundation at Ramsey International Fine Arts School in Minneapolis. He is in his eleventh year as a mayoral appointee on the Minneapolis Planning Commission, and has a graduate degree in urban planning. He also serves as an officer on the boards of several non-profit organizations, including the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA). Mr. Little was a finalist for gubernatorial appointment to the Metropolitan Council in April 1999.

The position of Administrative Assistant will be filled in September.

EHEP has employed three part-time student interns and research assistants over the life of the project, and expects to have two interns during the 1999-2000 academic year. The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, the University of St. Thomas, the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs, and Augsburg College are our principal internship partners. Use of consultants and *pro bono* services has also augmented the ability of EHEP to carry out its work. Most important are in-kind staff and volunteer resources provided by partner organizations. EHEP has a fiscal service agreement with Augsburg College to assure that all financial obligations and fiduciary responsibilities are carried out.

In addition to EHEP staff, those most directly involved in assisting and working with the work of the Collaborative include the following individuals and organizations:

- Paul Kiley, a media, communications and marketing consultant with experience as head of the California Literacy Program, is providing *pro bono* services to help communicate and market the project to potential sponsors and participants, the public, and the media.
- Barbara Blackstone, State Mediator with the Minnesota Office of Dispute Resolution and Mediation, and an officer of the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution (SPIDR), Minnesota Chapter, heads up the process of recruiting, training and assigning facilitators.
- Mariann Johnson, mediator, facilitator with the Minnesota Facilitators Network and professional organizational development consultant, has led the effort to develop the facilitators' guide and the facilitator's version of the discussion guide.

EHEP has made extensive and creative use of volunteers and consultants, recruited through its own resources and those of its partners, and will continue to do so to provide assistance with writing, graphic design, professional training, speaking, etc.

1999-2000 COMMUNITY CIRCLES TIMELINE

- Continue evaluation of circles process and results September 1999
- Hold training workshops for facilitators and sponsors September 1999
- Convene fall round of 1999 community circles Sept.-Nov. 1999
- Co-sponsor "Cities at Work" Forums III and IV, Saint Paul (includes "Call to Action" Forum for 1998-99 Community Circles) Sept.-Oct. 1999
November 1999
- Hold "Citizens Summit" with the Minnesota Meeting and MN Public Radio December 1999
- Secure funding for and fill position of Community Circle Coordinator December 1999
- Complete evaluation process and issue report to community and metropolitan decision makers January 2000
- Develop and implement Year 2000 Action Agenda with stakeholders and community partners Jan.-Dec. 2000
- Implement new community circle conversations focusing on specific actionable agendas flowing from the 1999 forums and dialogues (e.g., working with the school districts to define the elements of an inclusionary school) Jan.-Dec. 2000