Inspiration: YOUNG MOVEMENT BUILDERS
Marguerite Casey Foundation was created to advance a vision of a just and equitable society for all, where all children are nurtured to become compassionate, responsible and self-reliant adults; where families are engaged in the life of their communities, the nation and the world; and where people take responsibility for meeting today’s needs as well as those of the future.

Since 2001, our mission has been to support a movement of low-income families by investing in cornerstone organizations, supporting those organizations in working together to solve the intractable issue of poverty, and, most important, investing in family leadership that empowers parents, grandparents and young people to advocate on their own behalf to improve the economic and social well-being of families.

As part of its investment in families, Marguerite Casey Foundation established the Sargent Shriver Youth Warriors Against Poverty Leadership Awards to recognize the work of young people ages 16 to 24 making a significant difference in their communities. The awards are named for Robert Sargent “Sarge” Shriver, Jr. – lifelong public servant and architect of Pres. Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty – because of Shriver’s belief that young people are essential to creating a more just and equitable world.

This year’s annual report profiles the 12 inaugural “Youth Poverty Warriors,” each of whom exemplifies Shriver’s and the foundation’s belief that youth can fundamentally change society for the better.

The young activists, each nominated for the Award by a Foundation grantee, give us hope as philanthropists that a more just society is achievable and that today’s youth, like the generations before them, are initiating and leading that movement – whether by running for elected office, supporting young men to be good fathers or advocating for immigration reform.

Their activism, born out of necessity and rooted in personal experience, is fueled by their belief in a better tomorrow for themselves, their families and future generations. These young people are passionate and courageous and poised to take the reigns as a new generation of leaders.

We are pleased to share the stories of 12 young people whose names you should know.
Marguerite Casey Foundation is dedicated to creating a movement of working families advocating on their own behalf for change. We strive to bring humility and hope to our work. Our actions are guided by the firm belief that significant positive change is not only possible, but absolutely necessary. Within this framework, we seek to do the following:

- **Support and nurture strong, vibrant** activism within and among families, enabling them to advocate for their own interests and improve the public and private systems that impact their lives.

- **Examine, change and inform** the advancement of social and economic policies and practices that promote the development of strong families and strong communities.

- **Encourage the development** of a coherent knowledge base for advocates, families and the organizations that serve them.

- **Invest in system change and cross-system change** in order to generate greater knowledge and provide effective working models for practice.

The Foundation’s target population includes low-income families, communities of color and youth residing in rural and urban areas in the West, Southwest, South and the Midwest.
Our Vision
We imagine a just and equitable society for all, where all children are nurtured to become compassionate, responsible and self-reliant adults; where families are engaged in the life of their communities, the nation, and the world; and where people take responsibility for meeting today’s needs as well as those of future generations.

Our Mission
Marguerite Casey Foundation exists to help low-income families strengthen their voice and mobilize their communities in order to achieve a more just and equitable society for all.
Robert Sargent Shriver, Jr. – a lifelong advocate for social justice and a chief architect of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty – held the belief that young people are essential to creating a more just and equitable world. In his words: “The young are the first ingredient for a successful overthrow of the reigning ethic of selfishness.”

“It is futile to wait just for leaders to improve society. All of history’s great changes – nonviolent changes – came from below, not from above.” — R. Sargent Shriver, Jr., 1915–2011

It was natural, then, for Marguerite Casey Foundation to honor Shriver’s legacy by establishing the Sargent Shriver Youth Warriors Against Poverty Leadership Awards to recognize the work of young people ages 16 to 24 making a significant difference in their communities.

Investment in community action – involving the poor in elevating their own lives – was a guiding principle of Shriver’s economic-opportunity roadmap, and it closely matches the mission of Marguerite Casey Foundation, which, with its grantees and their constituents, is supporting a movement of families who advocate on their own behalf.

The 12 young activists selected for 2012 – the award’s inaugural year – were nominated by the Foundation’s grantee organizations. They embody Sargent Shriver’s belief in the power of social action by young people and the Foundation’s recognition that a new generation of activists is joining previous generations “on the ground” to bring about a world in which all families have the opportunity to thrive. Each winner received an award of $5,000 to help them continue their work.

From young men in Chicago striving to address the roots of urban violence to an undocumented young woman educating new citizens about the right to vote, the young people profiled here are heroes. They have seen much and sacrificed more, and they continue to fight. Each was chosen to carry the title of Poverty Warrior on the basis of character, motivation and the ability to effect sustained positive change.

Marguerite Casey Foundation is proud to recognize these young leaders and their work.
RICARDO ZAMUDIO, 21

Ricardo Zamudio looks like lots of other young men in America – big, brawny, and with a ready smile. The eldest of three children born to immigrant parents, he arrived in this country as a baby, worked hard in school and landed a football scholarship to the University of Southern California, a dream of thousands of American boys.

But because Ricardo is undocumented, he was not permitted to accept the scholarship or the opportunity it represented.

Instead, when Ricardo graduated from Phoenix’s North High School in 2009, he enrolled in community college, as a social work major. Undocumented students pay three times the tuition that state citizens pay and are ineligible for federal financial aid, but Ricardo did not give up. He became a community organizer, working for immigration reform.

His efforts were inspired by more than disappointment at losing a football scholarship. The week before SB 1070 was signed into law by Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, criminalizing undocumented residents, Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio raided Ricardo’s neighborhood and Ricardo was forced into hiding.

That did it. “I ain’t running no more,” Ricardo declared and started a 103-day vigil at the state Capitol with six other young people. For more than three months, they sat outside the government building, bearing witness to the effects of SB 1070 and eventually inspiring thousands of others to join them.

That action was the genesis of Promise Arizona, which later registered 13,000 new Latino voters. In the months after SB 1070 was signed, Ricardo traveled to Nevada to meet with U.S. Sen. Harry Reid, and to Washington, D.C., to meet with the U.S. Department of Justice.

“Being nominated for the Shriver Award is humbling to me,” Ricardo says. “It will help me continue to do organizing work and create greater opportunities to empower my community.”

These days, Ricardo coaches, mentors and trains other young people on the importance of community participation. Among their recent successes: a grassroots effort to recall the vocal anti-immigrant state Sen. Russell Pearce from office.

Petra Falcon, executive director of Promise Arizona, sums up Ricardo’s efforts: “What is remarkable is that even though Ricardo has not been able to live the dream of going to USC and playing football, he is working hard to make sure that others get that chance.”
Being nominated for the Shriver Award is humbling to me. It will help me continue to do organizing work and create greater opportunities to empower my community.
Sergio Rodriguez was unable to attend the Awards ceremony in person.

Even though my family lost their house to the banks and my community college tuition tripled, I remain optimistic for a change for the better.
Undocumented at a time when others with similar status were fleeing Arizona, Sergio Rodriguez chose to stay and fight, channeling his fear and frustration into voter-engagement efforts that registered thousands of other Latinos so that they could exercise their right to vote.

In 2010, during the days after the anti-immigration bill SB 1070 became law in Arizona, Sergio joined other volunteers at the Arizona Center for Empowerment (ACE), determined to increase civic participation among Latino voters. He helped register 13,000 first-time Latino voters and helped sign up 48,000 for early voting by mail.

Daily, he canvassed Latino neighborhoods, recruiting his family and friends to help register hundreds of voters. All told, the ACE coalition of nine organizations contacted more than 230,000 Latinos who had voted infrequently and saw 90,000 turn out at the polls. Sergio was a linchpin in this effort, and it doubled Latino turnout in Phoenix’s municipal elections.

Monica Sandschafer, executive director of ACE, recalls her first day working with Sergio. They were knocking on doors, trying to talk with prospective voters, and a dog bit her on the leg. Sergio took charge, getting her medical care and transportation back to the office. The next day – and every day until the election – he was back on the job.

“This incident hinted at what I was to learn of Sergio throughout the next couple of years: His strength, persistence and dedication are striking,” Sandschafer said.

Comfortable sharing his personal story of financial difficulty – his mother once pawned her wedding ring and heirloom earrings so that she could buy Christmas presents for her children; and his family eventually lost their home – Sergio quickly became an effective speaker.

“Scholarships were waved in front of me, but I was denied the opportunity to qualify for them,” he says. “I have now adopted a mentality to work even harder than a casual student to afford my education.”

He hopes one day to become a physician. In the meantime, Sergio remains a dedicated volunteer, one who is particularly proud of the day he made 1,000 sandwiches for the homeless.

“The thing is, I love Arizona,” he says. “It’s my home, the place I could never abandon. Even though my family lost their house to the banks and my community college tuition tripled, I remain optimistic for a change for the better. I am a great believer in Arizona’s power to change and become a state of hope, no longer the state of fear.”
Though he was born in California, Pedro Lopez spent most of his life in Colima, Mexico. In 2006, he returned to the U.S. – to Arizona – with his parents and entered high school as a freshman. In school, he worked hard, joined the Young Business Leaders of America program and thought he was headed toward a business or technical career.

But, in his last month of high school, Pedro found himself galled by Arizona’s controversial anti-immigration bill, SB 1070 – nearly everyone in his family was undocumented – and he rallied with other students against the bill at the state Capitol in 2010. Within weeks he’d volunteered as a field organizer with the immigration advocacy group Promise Arizona.

“I was going to go to college at Arizona State – I had my scholarship. But because most of my family is undocumented, I have a connection to that issue,” Pedro says.

Fighting for human rights – not career advancement – was his true passion, Pedro realized. So he packed his clothes and a family photo and headed south to the U.S.-Mexico border, where he spent two months volunteering to register voters. By day, he organized families. At night, he slept in a church janitor’s closet. After several weeks he had helped to register 850 new voters.

He speaks humbly, but Pedro’s get-out-the-vote efforts were part of a massive grassroots campaign that eventually brought him to Washington, D.C. to lobby for passage of the DREAM Act.

He is now a community college student and plans to transfer to Arizona State, majoring in political science.

“Delaying school meant losing some of the scholarship money, but I felt the need to help organize my community,” he says.

The decision had impressive consequences: In 2011, Pedro became involved in a successful campaign to recall state Sen. Russell Pearce, an anti-immigration activist.

In 2012, concerned about the lack of youth leadership in his community, he ran for a seat on the Cartwright school board in West Phoenix – and won. “We were the only campaign knocking on doors, calling people,” Pedro says.

Now the youngest officeholder in Arizona, Pedro intends to ensure that all students – no matter their background – have access to quality education. “We need to fight for our students, especially Latino and minority students. So, to me, organizing is an opportunity to help my peers. They hardly ever see successful people that look like me. It’s always somebody way older.”

When his school board term ends in 2016, Pedro plans...
We need to fight for our students, especially Latino and minority students. So, to me, organizing is an opportunity to help my peers.

The plan was to go into tech and have a high-paying job. But I left that track to organize in my community.

to go to law school and has put his Shriver Poverty Warrior Award toward that goal. “The plan was to go into tech and have a high-paying job,” he says with a laugh. “But I left that track to organize in my community.”
I’ve never thought of myself as a leader, so when I won the Shriver Award, I was really excited.
MAURA RODRIGUEZ, 21

Maura Rodriguez began volunteering at age 15, accompanying her mother in a door-to-door effort to organize fellow laundry workers in Phoenix. She watched, listened and quickly grasped the essentials.

“I would say to people that César Chávez wouldn’t have fought so hard for a union if it wasn’t going to help the people,” Maura says. “We talked about people’s rights, and I learned a lot.”

In 2010, she joined Central Arizonans for a Sustainable Economy (CASE) in a groundbreaking initiative to sign up thousands of Arizona residents for early voting. Intended to improve turnout among working people, early voting was still relatively new to Arizona, but it generated a dramatic increase in Latino votes during a mid-term election when participation in other states dwindled.

“I realized that voting really does make a difference in things that concern me and my family directly,” she says. Her taste for organizing now ignited, Maura returned to volunteer work with the fledgling launderers union, helping to register 3,000 new citizens as first-time voters. Her efforts were part of a historic victory: Daniel Venezuela became the first Latino to be elected to the City Council from Maura’s working-class district.

“Maura helped sign up thousands of voters to Arizona’s permanent early voting list, a strategy that increased Latino turnout 500 percent,” says Brendan Walsh, executive director of CASE.

In between campaign work, Maura was putting herself through Phoenix Community College by working as a cashier at McDonald’s. She put her Shriver Poverty Warrior Award money toward her tuition and plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University, where she hopes to earn a degree in business management.

“I feel like it’s my responsibility to pay for myself in college,” Maura says. “My mother still works doing hotel and restaurant laundry, so I never want to ask for any money.”

Though she has spent countless hours securing voting rights for thousands of other Latinos, Maura, because she is an undocumented immigrant, is not eligible to vote. However, she began applying for citizenship.

“I’ve never thought of myself as a leader, so when I won the Shriver Award, I was really excited,” she says. “Before, people would push me down and say that I wasn’t going to do anything with my life. Now I’m paying attention to things in the community that I never noticed before and using what I learn to help myself and for others.”
Christina Saeteurn grew up in public housing, one of nine children raised by a single mother. That challenging start, however, seems only to have made Christina more determined to improve life for others in similar circumstances.

Like many of her fellow Shriver honorees, Christina never set out to become a community organizer. She’d joined a youth group for Asian-American students that, she thought, might make high school more fun. Instead, it sent her on a life-changing journey.

As a 15-year-old sophomore attending meetings of the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Christina began to learn about the Chevron oil refinery that had long dominated her hometown of Richmond, Calif. By age 16, she was part of a successful grassroots effort to prevent the plant – owned by one of the largest corporations in the world – from processing tar sand oil.

“This was literally in our back yard, so we were petitioning and getting the word out about the real impacts, both environmental and economic,” Christina says.

Her voice was power, she realized, and she became determined to help other young people find their own ways of speaking out. “Our individual voices are the most important factor,” Christina says. “That’s what informs people and brings people together for change.”

Seasoned activists have described her as “relentless,” and no wonder. After the battle with Chevron, Christina dove into fighting for green jobs, speaking publicly in Richmond about the potential that renewable-energy technologies hold for low-income workers.

“What we’ve been doing is letting poor people in our city know the harm that Chevron has caused. Everyone thinks that it’s bringing us wealth, when really it’s hurting people’s health and not employing all that many local folks anyway. Green jobs and renewable energy will push the entire community forward, helping families that are struggling now.”

Christina’s early community activism stretched beyond her hometown. In Oakland, she worked to safeguard the rights of young women to terminate pregnancies without parental notification. As she puts it, “Everyone – young and old, rich or poor – should have the right to make the decisions that directly affect them and their livelihoods.”

By the time she was 17, Christina had already gained recognition for her work. In 2007, she received a Rainbow PUSH Coalition Award for her organizing within the Asian-American community. Four years later, in the summer of 2011, she was chosen for intensive training in advocacy work at the School of Unity & Liberation (SOUL) in Oakland.
“It was life-changing,” she says. “SOUL not only taught me about social change, it taught me about myself and about how much potential we all have to make a difference in our communities.”

The experience was so formative that Christina donated part of her Shriver Poverty Warrior Award to SOUL. “I want to give another young person the opportunity to experience what I did,” she says.

Since winning the Shriver Poverty Warrior Award, Christina has graduated from California State University, East Bay, with a degree in sociology and continues her volunteer work with the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, regularly speaking before city councils and state legislators to advocate smarter, healthier community planning.

Next up for Christina? Most likely, an advanced degree in business. “I want people from my community to see that someone from the bottom can pick themselves up and be successful,” she says. “I want to prove that being a young woman of color and growing up poor in the ghetto won’t keep me from achieving my goals. My background only makes me a stronger fighter for justice.”
Like many young people, Lorren Dangerfield has a finely-honed sense of injustice. By the time she won the Shriver Award at age 17, Lorren had already spent four years working to stop industrial pollution in poor neighborhoods and promoting fairer discipline policies in public schools.

In many school districts, suspensions and expulsions for Black and Latino youth far exceed those for other racial and ethnic groups. For Lorren, the connection was clear: More time spent out of school meant more difficulty catching up, a greater likelihood of dropping out and a direct route to poverty.

“Education is the best chance for moving people out of poverty,” Lorren says. “But it’s really hard to get through the education system, especially for kids who get discouraged by their teachers or whatever’s going on at home.”

Lorren began to press for community service work as an alternative to suspension and expulsion, and the San Francisco Unified School District agreed. “For the first time in my life, I had seen a reward for my hard work,” she recalls of the Restorative Justice Initiative, which she undertook with the San Francisco nonprofit People Organized to Win Employment Rights (POWER).

When Lorren had joined POWER as a shy ninth grader, she had been reluctant even to speak. But, the group’s campaigns for environmental and restorative justice began to resonate with her.

“The work spoke to me because we would talk about environmental justice issues around a Superfund site, which was where I used to live, and it all came together,” she recalls. “Learning about all these chemicals that I’d never known were there made me want to know more. It really hit home.”

Second only to her efforts on school discipline was Lorren’s work to incorporate ethnic studies into the standard high school curriculum. A pilot program debuted in four schools and has since been expanded to others. To Lorren, it is essential that students be able to identify with the faces they see in their textbooks, and she believes learning the history of their own people may instill a greater sense of social responsibility.

“I thought they’d see that the free education we receive is both a right and a privilege,” Lorren says. She took that conviction to the Board of Education – backed by more than 1,000 other students – and persuaded them to create the pilot program.

“She sees her personal transformation as directly tied to the transformation she wish-
es to see in her community,” says Juana Teresa Tello, the organizer who first introduced Lorren to POWER.

Currently a student at Sonoma State University, Lorren put her award money toward tuition. She is majoring in global studies, with a focus on international economic development. She also focuses on bringing new youth into POWER.

“I’m teaching them what I learned,” Lorren says. “I have fallen in love with politics and policy and working to change unjust laws.”

The work spoke to me because we would talk about environmental justice issues around a Superfund site, which was where I used to live.
This is what I love to do, advocating for education and inspiring vision and ambition in other young people to improve their communities.
But, like many young organizers, Adriana is determined. “I was not going to let obstacles like being a first-generation student, low-income or minority deter me,” she says.

Higher education was key to improving her future, Adriana decided. Youth from immigrant families are far more likely than others to live in poverty, and Adriana was well aware that, on average, college graduates earn $20,000 more a year than those who do not pursue a degree.

She worked after school in her father’s jewelry repair shop to earn tuition for East Los Angeles Community College and joined the California DREAM Act campaign, an effort to secure better access to public education for thousands of immigrant students. By the time she’d turned 18, Adriana was organizing young people across Southern California.

The campaign was called “Light the Torch”, and, through it, immigrant students at more than 60 colleges and universities generated 12,000 calls to the governor and 12,405 online signatures. Adriana personally helped organize more than 73 student actions.

“‘We need education more than anything,’” she says of immigrant students. “‘It’s the key for people to empower themselves.’”

Because of her work, in 2011 Adriana was invited to the historic ceremony at which California Gov. Jerry Brown signed two bills ensuring that the state’s 26,000 noncitizen students would be allowed to compete for financial aid.

Since then, Adriana has continued her advocacy work, speaking annually with more than 2,000 students, parents and counselors across the state to ensure that they understand the importance of a college education and the opportunities now available through the California DREAM Act.

“This is what I love to do, advocating for education and inspiring vision and ambition in other young people to improve their communities,” she says. “Education creates change, and it taught me to believe in social justice.”

Adriana recently transferred to California State University, Northridge, where she is using her award money to help fund her studies in urban planning. Her ultimate goal? Developing cities that better accommodate low-income communities of color.
But when he entered high school, Lester found crowded classrooms, low expectations and little encouragement to attend college.

By his sophomore year, Lester had transferred to Los Angeles Unified School District’s Esteban E. Torres High School. The first new high school to open in East L.A. in 85 years, Torres High was the direct outgrowth of community organizing efforts to transform education for low-income urban youth.

There, Lester and a few friends founded United Students, a branch of the grassroots group InnerCity Struggle, to improve college access for Torres students. They led tours to Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley – “mostly to give students a better idea of college life,” says Lester, who sees higher education as a lever to lift people out of poverty.

The Torres High School chapter of United Students was one of five in L.A., and, through it, Lester grew into an eloquent advocate. He spent a year pushing for better student medical and mental health services and gathered 500 signatures in support of a free reproductive care clinic, which opened in 2012.

That was only the beginning. Through the Boys and Men of Color Initiative, a partnership linking community organizations and advocates in Oakland, Fresno and Los Angeles, Lester conducted peer outreach and testified at legislative hearings about the importance of improving academic outcomes for African-American and Latino youth statewide. “It took another year, but we were able to pass public policy changes on unequal student discipline and get a School Climate Bill of Rights,” he says.

“These were just little steps,” Lester says. “There’s a bigger picture, and it’s that for many decades East Los Angeles has been viewed as a hopeless cause – even by people who live here. They think ‘Our kids will never amount to being college graduates and will never have higher-level careers.’ But knowledge is tied to the fight against poverty, because when you know how to move the system, your community is less likely to be poor. I really think better public policies are our greatest tools to fight poverty.”

Lester’s activism, however, has come with a heavy price. His mother, a factory worker, struggles to keep food on the table, and Lester used some of his Shriver Poverty Warrior Award money to relieve debt she had accumulated. The rest, he put toward living expenses for college. He plans to study computer engineering at Sacramento City College in the fall of 2013 and, ultimately, wants to run for public office.

Nominated by: Equal Voice for Southern California Families Alliance

LESTER MEZA, 18

Lester Meza knows the impact of education inequities firsthand. Raised by a single mother who emigrated from Guatemala to the United States, Lester, as he grew up, envisioned himself going to college and having a successful career.
“Trying to keep my school life, activism life and home life in balance was very difficult,” Lester says. “But I think we need real people with real skills – doctors, lawyers, teachers – in politics. I want to change many of the issues I experienced firsthand. The lack of quality education is a challenge that poor communities face and I plan to address it through elected office.”
His interest in jobs for youth started in high school, when Darius became increasingly aware of the sparse job opportunities for young people in his city and jumped in to help organize the LIFE (Leaders Investing for Equality) Campaign. LIFE organizers traveled the state to rally other low-income teens who wanted greater investment in youth employment programs from government.

“I remember going to Decatur, and they’d had no youth summer jobs for years,” he says. “We started these tours because we understand that youth employment is not only a problem in Chicago, but everywhere.”

To Darius, the lack of summer jobs for youth is linked to the cycle of poverty. Without experience in the workforce, he reasoned, low-income teens had even less chance to find solid employment upon graduating from high school: “When youth have a summer job, it opens up their minds, gives them experience and changes lives,” he says.

Darius also sees a link between the lack of jobs for young people in a community and the level of violence in that community: “We’ve done numerous studies about these links,” he says. “They show that when there’s no youth employment, there’s a rise in street violence, especially in the summertime.”

In 2010, after three years of hard work with LIFE, Darius watched as Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn signed Public Act 1225 – known as the Community Youth Employment Act – into law. It provides community organizations with funds for summer jobs for thousands of Illinois youth and has been recently refunded with $14 million.

“That was a major win for the LIFE Campaign,” says Shannon Jalida Bennett, deputy director of KOCO. “It was really a sweet victory, and Darius has become one of our core leaders on this. He’s a young person who’s come a long way.”

Encouraged to push even harder, Darius has since worked to build a national coalition of 15 youth organizations across 25 states to address investment in youth at the federal level. The once-shy boy is now a recognized youth leader, regularly meeting with elected officials such as Illinois Rep. Bobby Rush, organizing press conferences and leading youth rallies.
His commitment goes well beyond shaking hands with the powerful. After Darius won the Shriver Poverty Warrior Award, he donated part of the money toward the establishment of a no-cost teen center offering mentoring, tutoring, creative-arts classes and sports programs.

Darius, now a high school senior, plans to become a restaurateur, and young people from the Chicago public schools will be among his first hires.

“You can count on that,” he says.

Meanwhile, Darius is fighting to reinstate a Chicago Public Schools program – lost to budget cuts – that had helped students prepare for life after graduation with college advice and career guidance.

“It helped students get ready for the real world,” Darius says, offering an apt description for his entire approach to youth organizing.
LAUREANO RIVERA, 19

After losing his mother to street violence in Chicago when he was a high school sophomore, Laureano Rivera struggled with paralyzing confusion and anger. But in the four years since, Laureano has channeled those emotions into a passion for addressing what he now sees as the root cause of his mother’s death: poverty.

“I always wondered why we had to move so much, and I witnessed the same problems in every neighborhood: gang violence, not enough programs after school and school not being challenging enough,” he says. “We lived in a lot of bad neighborhoods, and that’s what I saw everywhere: violence. There were no programs to involve kids except gangs.”

Lack of opportunity, he decided, was the primary problem, both for his mother and her attackers. With this in mind, Laureano joined the youth-led LIFE (Leaders Investing for Equality) Campaign in 2011, convinced that working for policy changes that encouraged employment for young people would be key to a better future.

“This was a very difficult time for me,” Laureano remembers. “I wanted justice so bad. But I realized I was on my own. I had to look for a job to sustain myself and help my grandmother, who became my caretaker.”

Frustrated with what he viewed as a sluggish response from the governor’s office regarding jobs, Laureano held a press conference to engage other young people and share testimony. Together, they publicly demanded that the governor fulfill a stated commitment to young people. Shortly thereafter, they released a report through LIFE: “Our Lives on the Line: Youth-Led Solutions to Violence in Chicago Neighborhoods.” The document included contributions from more than 300 young people across the city.

Suddenly, the shy, angry youth had become a spokesman for his peers. As a result of the LIFE report and press conference, a summer jobs program was created, offering employment to 2,500 youth – half of what Laureano had pushed for, but a first step, nonetheless. That step has spurred him to devise other solutions for youth unemployment.

He organized a youth town hall meeting where several hundred young people and adults from across Chicago gathered to share their struggles and contribute ideas toward the creation of the 2012 Equal Voice national family platform. That report, unveiled in July 2012, presents the policy priorities of 6,000 low-income families from Alabama to California.

Now a student at Northeastern Illinois University, Laureano continues to rally youth, recently organizing nearly 50
high school freshmen to point out that money raised through city-installed speed cameras could be used to support more youth jobs programs.

Laureano plans to major in criminal justice, perhaps en route to becoming a lawyer. All of his efforts are tied to a childhood in which his family moved from home to home, neighborhood to neighborhood, fleeing from violence and searching for opportunity.

“I became involved, not only because of my own struggles to find a job, but because I knew the problems of street violence and dropping out of school come, in part, from our city and state not providing enough resources in our communities,” Laureano says. “I want to help change that.”
After Jason graduated from high school in Detroit, Mich., his family moved to New Mexico. For Jason, it might as well have been to another planet. “There was a long period of adjustment,” he recalls. But a community college professor, recognizing Jason’s burgeoning interest in African-American history, believed he had much to offer others and urged him to transfer to a four-year university.

“I began to realize that back in Detroit there had been men who served as huge mentors for me,” Jason says. “I was the second-oldest of six kids, and just having that voice behind you reminding you that you’re doing things, not just for your career and education, but also for your family and community. That really instilled in me the urge to give back in some capacity as soon as I had the opportunity.”

As a communications major at the University of New Mexico, Jason soon found that chance. He served with AmeriCorps in the university’s Community Engagement Center, spending more than 2,000 hours mentoring children in some of Albuquerque’s poorest communities and developing engagement events for their parents.

“I’d realized the power of mentoring and the need to be a positive role model for young children who reminded me of myself,” he says. “At first, it was awkward. Coming from Detroit, which is virtually all Black, to New Mexico, where I was mostly working with Latinos who had never seen a Black person contributing toward their success, there were immediately barriers. People would stare at me, but that stare eventually turned into a smile.”

He moved on to training other young leaders on social justice organizing, community engagement and financial literacy through the University of New Mexico Service Corps. The idea was that they would take the lessons back to their home communities and spread the word. “It all just came full circle,” Jason says. “It’s creating a huge web, a huge system of sustainability.”

Jason used part of his Shriver Award money for college tuition and expects to graduate in December 2013. The rest went toward Jason’s attendance at two conferences for young community organizers. Passionate about closing the academic achievement gap for other young men of color, Jason developed a media-engagement project, traveling through poor communities around the state, capturing the voices and experiences of young people who had persevered, like one young woman who’d dropped out of high school but earned her GED and went on to graduate from college with a master’s degree.

That experience inspired him to create a series of work-
shops titled “Go to High School, Go to College.” Other young people, he’d discovered, were hungry for information on how to succeed in college, and they wanted it from other young people who looked like them.

“These students were definitely underprivileged, and for them to see someone who looks like them – and was where they are not too long ago – showed that students of color really can overcome,” he says.

“Lots of children who’ve had it hard put up barriers,” Jason notes. “It just means you have to work that much harder. “Individuals took time out to invest in my life, so the least I can do is give back – and never take no for an answer.”
By the time he was 17, Sheldon Smith had already served time in jail and was about to become a father. He appeared to be on his way toward becoming another dismal statistic despite having been an eloquent youth organizer as a young teen.

But, instead of letting those significant challenges daunt him, Sheldon used them to drive his resolve for change — both within the criminal justice system and within his community.

“Those seven months in Cook County Jail really woke me up,” he says. “Without them, I wouldn’t be who I am right now.”

After his release from jail, Sheldon participated in a leadership program held by the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations. Soon, he was walking the streets of Chicago’s Latino, Asian and Muslim communities and witnessing the profound effect of immigration laws on undocumented families.

“They were just torn apart,” he says. “I saw that the people are different from those I’d grown up with in the African-American community, but the issues — unemployment, crime, poverty — they were all the same,” he says. “It gave me a much broader outlook.”

In 2009, as a result of all he’d learned, Sheldon founded the nonprofit Dovetail Project to provide educational support and job training to other young fathers like himself.

“My father had been in and out of my life, but I had mentors around, and I saw that other men in my community didn’t. I wanted to help these young men become better dads,” he says.

“I would never have been able to do it if I hadn’t learned community organizing back when I was younger. I took everything I knew about youth and violence and unemployment and decided how I wanted my program to look, and then I just launched it.”

In addition to running Dovetail, Sheldon is in the social work program at Northeastern Illinois University and expects to graduate in 2015.

Sheldon put all of his Shriver Award money toward Dovetail. To date, the free 12-week program — run out of local parks, police precincts and the YMCA — has helped 116 young fathers ages 17 to 24 obtain their GEDs, job training and parenting skills. A key component is Sheldon’s “Felony Street Law” course, which educates young men of color about their rights and responsibilities regarding laws and law enforcement.

“The goal is keeping them out of the legal system and in their children’s lives,” he says.

But Sheldon, who knows well the barriers created through an early criminal history, is also focused on front-end solutions: after-school programs, summer jobs for youth and alternatives to incarceration.

“It’s one thing to be a father and to get a job, but if you don’t know how to avoid the criminal justice system, those things are really over,” he says. “You can’t raise your children from jail.”
I took everything I knew about youth and violence and unemployment and decided how I wanted my program to look, and then I just launched it.
Financial Summary

95 grants approved in 2012

Education  Advocacy  Activism
29       26       40

Income

Interest, dividends, gains and losses $ 74,035,000
Less: Investment management fees (1,964,000)
Less: Federal excise taxes (478,000)
Net investment income $ 71,593,000

Expenses

Grant & programs $ 28,283,000
Operations & supporting 4,977,000
Total expenses $ 33,260,000

Change in Net Assets

Change in net assets $ 38,333,000

Grants & Program Expenses 85%
Operations and Supporting Expenses 15%

To view the complete Form 990-PF, please visit our website at www.caseygrants.org.

Inspiration: Young Movement Builders
Grantees

American Friends Service Committee-US Mexico Border Program
San Diego | CA
For using the Equal Voice framework to develop the leadership capacity of immigrant families in San Diego County.

American Indians in Texas - Spanish Colonial Missions
San Antonio | TX
For issue education, leadership development, civic engagement and policy advocacy with Native American family leaders using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Americans for Indian Opportunity
Albuquerque | NM
For training Native leaders to create change locally and to organize an Equal Voice network for collaborative federal-level advocacy on education and health care issues.

Arise Citizens’ Policy Project
Montgomery | AL
For using the Equal Voice framework to build the capacity of member organizations and individuals to advocate policies that improve the economic and social well-being of low-income families in Alabama.

ARISE Support Center
Alamo | TX
For empowerment and engagement of low-income immigrant families in advocacy for improved education, fair housing policies, jobs, immigration reform and improved colonia infrastructure.

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAPIP)
San Francisco | CA
For strengthening social justice philanthropy targeting low-income and underserved immigrant and refugee communities and groups - particularly those stereotyped as dangerous post-September 11, 2001 - where organizing work aligns with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Aspen Institute: Aspen Forum for Community Solutions
Washington | DC
For work to support ‘opportunity youth,’ their families and communities by using collaborative approaches to problem-solving in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Association of Black Foundation Executives (ABFE)
New York | NY
For promoting effective and responsive philanthropy in black communities in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Black Alliance for Just Immigration
Oakland | CA
For using the Equal Voice framework to build strategic alliances between African-American and immigrant communities to advance their shared social and economic interests.

Border Network for Human Rights
El Paso | TX
For engaging families in advocating improved immigration policies and to develop regional networks for multi-issue collaborative advocacy campaigns using the Equal Voice framework.

California Calls Fiscal Sponsor: Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education
Los Angeles | CA
For using the Equal Voice framework in increasing civic engagement of low-income and communities of color throughout California’s urban, suburban and rural regions in 2012 and building infrastructure to sustain movement toward long-term social and economic policy change that benefits all.

California Child Care Resource and Referral Network- Parent Voices
San Francisco | CA
For supporting – in alignment with the Equal Voice framework – issue education, leadership development and parent-led advocacy to promote quality, affordable child care in California.

California Community Foundation
Los Angeles | CA
For increased naturalization of eligible immigrants in Los Angeles County, creating a path for elevated civic engagement and integration of immigrant families in alignment with the Equal Voice framework.

Campesinos Sin Fronteras
Somerton | AZ
For leadership development and community mobilization of farm-worker families and immigrants to advocate improved health, education and immigrant rights policies using the Equal Voice framework.

Casa Familiar
San Ysidro | CA
For a final grant to use the Equal Voice framework in developing the leadership and civic engagement capacities of low-income families in San Diego County.
Causa Justa :: Just Cause  
Oakland | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework in building unity between low-income African-American and Latino communities in Oakland and San Francisco to pursue strategies that improve the social and economic well-being of all families.

Center for American Progress: Half in Ten  
Washington | DC  
For education and advocacy toward building political and public will to advance policies that create good jobs, strengthen families and promote economic security in alignment with the Equal Voice framework.

Center for Civic Policy  
Albuquerque | NM  
For coordinating a statewide integrated civic engagement campaign and strengthening a network of community-based organizations’ capacity for collective impact by providing technical assistance, in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCAEJ)  
Jurupa Valley | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework to build the leadership, advocacy and civic engagement capacities of low-income families in Southern California’s Inland Valley region.

Center for Community Change  
Washington | DC  
For support of the creation and launch of a distinguished fellow for movement building staff position at Center for Community Change.

Center for Third World Organizing  
Oakland | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework for movement building to implement sustained grassroots organizing and leadership development in low-income communities in the Bay Area, and to develop and deploy trained organizers across the United States.

Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño  
Fresno | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework to support issue education and civic participation among Oaxacan families throughout the Central Valley region.

Centro por la Justicia dba Southwest Workers’ Union  
San Antonio | TX  
For using the Equal Voice framework to form movement building networks and to develop low-income family leaders and engage them in local and state-level advocacy.

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles  
Los Angeles | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework in building movement led by low-income immigrant communities advocating state and national policies that improve the social and economic well-being of all families.

Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en Norte América (COFEM)  
Los Angeles | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework in building movement toward social and economic equity for low-income immigrant families throughout California.

East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy  
Oakland | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework to pursue economic development strategies that will create prosperity for low-income families in Northern California’s East Bay communities.

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights  
Oakland | CA  
For using the Equal Voice framework to build the leadership, policy advocacy and civic engagement capacity of low-income youth and families to promote solutions that bring social equity and economic prosperity to their communities.

Farmworkers Self-Help Fiscal Sponsor:  
Farmworker Association of Florida  
Dade City | FL  
For developing leadership among farmworkers for policy advocacy using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Florida New Majority Education Fund Fiscal Sponsor:  
Miami Workers Center  
Miami | FL  
For shifting the public debate in Florida toward a more expansive and equitable culture of democracy, in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Futuro Media Group  
New York | NY  
For building the capacity of this emerging independent voice in public media, which produces content that illuminates the Equal Voice framework and constituents.

Gamaliel Foundation  
Chicago | IL  
For - in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building - engaging and empowering families to participate in shaping public policy to help ensure equity, justice and access to economic opportunities for low-income families.
Georgia Strategic Alliance for New Directions and Unified Policies (STAND-UP)
Atlanta | GA
For work, in alignment with the Equal Voice framework, to provide low-income families with resources and organized infrastructure to create healthy communities and to benefit from economic development in their neighborhoods.

Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama
Birmingham | AL
For providing – in alignment with the Equal Voice framework – advocacy, organizing, leadership-development and coalition-building opportunities to low-income Latino families in Alabama that equip them with the resources and skills to integrate socially, economically and civically.

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Chicago | IL
For family engagement, leadership development, network development and policy advocacy to help ensure justice for workers and access to economic opportunities for low-income families, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Interfaith Worker Justice
Chicago | IL
For family engagement, leadership development, network development and policy advocacy to help ensure justice for workers and access to economic opportunities for low-income families, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Isaiah Institute
New Orleans | LA
For leadership development and public policy advocacy training for clergy and affiliated congregations in some of the most impoverished neighborhoods in New Orleans.

Jobs with Justice Education Fund
Washington | DC
For training, issue education and engagement of low-income and economically disenfranchised communities in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana
New Orleans | LA
For reducing the number of children in secure care, improving conditions of confinement for incarcerated youth, improving defense for indigent children, and expanding community-based alternatives to incarceration in alignment with the Equal Voice framework.

Khmer Girls in Action
Long Beach | CA
For using the Equal Voice framework to build the capacity of low-income Cambodian youth and their families to improve the quality of life in their community and connect their efforts to greater movement toward social and economic equity for all families.

La Unión del Pueblo Entero
San Juan | TX
For organizing communities to advocate improvements in education, housing, workers’ rights, colonia infrastructure and immigration reform.

Latino Center for Prevention and Action in Health and Welfare dba Latino Health Access
Santa Ana | CA
For using the Equal Voice framework to improve the quality of life of underserved people in Orange County through issue education and policy advocacy strategies that emphasize full participation of families in decisions affecting their health.

Leadership Center for the Common Good
Washington | DC
For a range of training programs and services that align with the Equal Voice framework for movement building to support emerging and existing community organizations and the broader field of community organizing.

Leadership Institute Fiscal Sponsor: Santa Fe Indian School
Santa Fe | NM
For development of Native American leaders and engagement in policy advocacy using the Equal Voice framework.

Logan Square Neighborhood Association
Chicago | IL
For family engagement, leadership development, network development and policy advocacy to address affordable housing, education, immigration justice and other issues, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.
McIntosh Sustainable Environment and Economic Development
Darien | GA
For improving the lives of low-wealth families in rural communities in coastal Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi through asset-based development, leadership development and civic engagement in alignment with the Equal Voice framework.

Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative
Biloxi | MS
For using the Equal Voice framework to build a network of low-income families who advocate public policy that improves access to and support for quality, affordable child care and early education in Mississippi.

Mississippi Workers’ Center for Human Rights
Greenville | MS
For engaging low-income working families in campaigns to improve job opportunities for formerly incarcerated people, secure protections for injured workers, and grow a family-led movement for human rights in alignment with the Equal Voice framework.

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund (NALEO)
Los Angeles | CA
For support of the NALEO Educational Fund’s civic engagement portfolio, in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

National Council of Churches USA
Washington | DC
For support of the Poverty Initiative, an effort in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building to better network the 100,000 congregations of the National Council of Churches’ 36 member denominations into a unified advocacy voice on federal anti-poverty policies.

National Council of La Raza
Washington | DC
For support of civil rights and advocacy through nearly 300 affiliate community-based organizations that mobilize millions of low-income Latino families in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

National Domestic Workers Alliance
New York | NY
For support of education, advocacy and organizing focused in the Caring Across Generations campaign, which embodies the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Officina Legal del Pueblo Unido dba South Texas Civil Rights Project
Alamo | TX
For leadership development of low-income workers and immigrant families to engage in local and state-level advocacy using the Equal Voice framework.

One Voice
Jackson | MS
For building long-term policy advocacy infrastructure that aligns with the Equal Voice framework in Mississippi and Louisiana.

Parents for Public Schools
Jackson | MS
For building low-income parents’ organizing and leadership capacity for public education advocacy using the Equal Voice Framework for movement building.

Partnership for Community Action
Albuquerque | NM
For building critical infrastructure, effective leadership and innovative practices for racial, economic and social transformation in the South using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Promise Arizona Fiscal Sponsor: Center for Community Change
Phoenix | AZ
For engagement of community leaders in advocacy for improved education and immigration policies, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

People Organized to Win Employment Rights
San Francisco | CA
For using the Equal Voice framework in building the capacity of families and youth to advocate policies that will improve the social and economic well-being of low-income communities in San Francisco, and to build movement for impact on a national scale.

PICO National Network
Oakland | CA
For building stronger organizing infrastructure that will influence federal economic policy to prioritize the needs of low-income families using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Progressive Technology Project
Minneapolis | MN
For strengthening the infrastructure and capacity of community-based organizations through intensive communications, technology, voter engagement and fundraising development support.

Project South: Institute for the Elimination of Poverty & Genocide
Atlanta | GA
For building critical infrastructure, effective leadership and innovative practices for racial, economic and social transformation in the South using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Promise Arizona Fiscal Sponsor: Center for Community Change
Phoenix | AZ
For engagement of community leaders in advocacy for improved education and immigration policies, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.
Grantees

Proyecto Azteca
San Juan | TX
For empowering families in creating civically engaged communities in colonias of the Rio Grande Valley using the Equal Voice framework.

Proyecto Juan Diego
Brownsville | TX
For movement building, using the Equal Voice framework to develop low-income family leaders who can improve their lives and communities by advocating for equitable health care, employment, immigration and education.

Public Interest Projects: State Capacity & Innovation Fund
New York | NY
For the State Capacity and Innovation Fund, a donor collaborative that seeks to raise and distribute a minimum of $14 million over the next two years to build state-level integrated voter engagement infrastructure with community-based organizations, in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Pushback Network
New York | NY
For an integrated voter registration campaign that will register, educate and mobilize people of color, immigrants, low-income individuals, working poor, women, youth and their families in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Radio Bilingüe
Fresno | CA
For using the Equal Voice framework to increase the civic participation and advocacy capacity of Latinos and other underserved communities through the broadcast of informational and cultural programming.

Social Justice Fund Northwest
Seattle | WA
For leadership development and philanthropic investments in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Southern Mutual Help Association
New Iberia | LA
For helping low-income rural Louisiana families build healthy, prosperous communities through community development investment, civic participation and a community-led movement for public policy change in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Southern Rural Black Women’s Initiative Fiscal Sponsor: Children’s Defense Fund
Jackson | MS
For developing community leadership among low-income young and adult women in rural communities and engaging them in advocacy of equitable health care, education and job training policies, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

State Voices
Detroit | MI
For promoting civic engagement among low-income and diverse communities through coordination and strengthening of state networks, provision of collective capacity building tools, technical assistance and other resources to network partner groups, in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Tennessee Health Care Campaign
Nashville | TN
For supporting education on advocacy for improved policies around comprehensive health care coverage for all Tennessee residents, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Texas Civic Engagement Table Fiscal Sponsor: Youth and Family Alliance dba LifeWorks
Austin | TX
For supporting statewide advocacy and civic engagement through strategic collaboration and resource sharing with a network of nonprofit partner organizations, in alignment with the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

Texas Organizing Project Education Fund
Houston | TX
For engaging low-income families in Texas in advocacy for improved health, housing, employment, immigration, education and voting rights policies using the Equal Voice framework.

United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations Fiscal Sponsor: Inner-City Muslim Action Network
Chicago | IL
For family engagement, leadership development, network development and policy advocacy to advance equity for low-income families using the Equal Voice framework for movement building.

University of Maryland Baltimore County Shriver Center, Choice Program
Baltimore | MD
For a nationally recognized initiative that incorporates the Equal Voice framework for movement building to serve youth and families involved in Maryland’s juvenile justice system.

Voices for Alabama’s Children
Montgomery | AL
For family engagement, network development and public policy advocacy, using the Equal Voice framework for movement building, to help ensure the well-being of low-income children.
Marguerite Casey was born in Seattle, Washington, on September 5, 1900, and was the only daughter and youngest child of Henry J. and Annie E. Casey. Like her brother Jim, the founder of United Parcel Service, Marguerite profoundly believed in the importance of family, leading her to spend much of her adult life creating opportunities to help families and communities succeed and thrive.

In 1948, Marguerite and her three brothers established the Annie E. Casey Foundation to honor their mother’s legacy by encouraging public policies, human service reforms and community support to meet the needs of vulnerable children, youth and families. Almost two decades later, in 1966, Jim Casey’s interest in long-term foster care led him to establish Casey Family Programs in the family’s hometown of Seattle.

Sharing her brother’s passion and vision for improving the foster care system, Marguerite served as a board member for Casey Family Programs from 1966 to 1971. She was also a loyal benefactress of Seattle University and is fondly remembered for contributing a Christmas tree each year to Waterfall Garden for Seattle citizens to enjoy.

Marguerite Casey’s lifelong generosity made a tremendous difference for thousands of families and children across the United States, and her giving spirit continues to shine today. Marguerite Casey Foundation was officially founded by Casey Family Programs in October 2001 to help expand its outreach and further enhance its more than 30-year record of leadership in child welfare. Through the Foundation’s work, the memory of Marguerite Casey endures and will continue to serve future generations.
Robert Sargent “Sarge” Shriver, Jr. (November 9, 1915—January 18, 2011) was an American statesman and activist. As the husband of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, he was part of the Kennedy family, serving in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Shriver was the driving force behind the creation of the Peace Corps, founded the Job Corps, Head Start and other programs as the “architect” of Johnson’s “War on Poverty” and served as the United States Ambassador to France.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sargent_Shriver