



Exploring Innovation

United Way of the Mid-South's
Avron B. Fogelman Venture Fund

Planting the Seeds of Innovation

April 18, 2008

An "Exploring Innovation in Community Development Week" Event

SPONSORED BY THE FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS, MEMPHIS BRANCH

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead
where there is no path and leave a trail."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson, *American Essayist*

Memphis Marriott East

2625 Thousand Oaks Blvd.

Memphis, TN 38118

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11:30 am – 1:30 pm

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History

In 1987, United Way of the Mid-South (United Way) instituted a one-time grant fund that supported the creation, development and implementation of innovative approaches to address pressing community issues. This newly created "Venture Fund" was seeded with \$100,000 per year for the first three years of its existence by the United Way Board of Directors. The fund was later renamed the United Way Avron B. Fogelman Venture Fund in honor of philanthropist Avron B. Fogelman as a result of his contribution of \$100,000 in support of this new United Way approach to supporting the work of mid-south not-for-profit agencies. In later years, the United Way Board of Directors increased the Venture Fund available dollars for grants to one percent of dollars generated through the annual campaign.

Michael Uiberall of Watkins, Uiberall PLLCS, a United Way Board member, was appointed by the Board to provide leadership in the launching of the venture fund review process. With other United Way Board members and volunteers recruited from throughout the community, the Committee began meeting with agencies to discuss their proposed strategies for creating positive change in people's lives and their communities. In their first year of review, sixteen (16) organizations received grants ranging from \$600 to \$10,000. As the committee further defined the venture fund mission and focus, over 275 projects received grants up to \$20,000 for a total investment of more than \$3,600,000 from 1987 – 2007, which resulted in the implementation of unique service delivery approaches and an expanded partnership between United Way and the not-for-profit community. During these remarkable years from 1987 to now, this process has received leadership from several outstanding committee chairs. They are:

Michael Uiberall	2 terms	1987 to 1989
Johnnie B. Watson	2 terms	1989 to 1991
Ronald Register	4 terms	1991 to 1995
Linda Williams	7 terms	1995 to 2002
Martha Perine-Beard	4 terms	2002 to 2006
Josh Lipman	2 terms	2006 to Present

These leaders, with approval from the United Way Board of Directors, refined the mission of the United Way Avron B. Fogelman Venture Fund as follows:

"To provide one-time grants for the creation, development and implementation of innovative approaches that produce **"long-term"** solutions to community issues."

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In addition to looking for innovative approaches that create long-term solutions, the Venture Fund committee began to support projects that built upon the strengths and assets of program participants and provided opportunities for people and communities to participate in and control decisions, projects and/or policies that affected them. The Venture Fund was further designed to leverage resources through creative funding strategies that emphasized community involvement and problem-solving by coalitions of previously unrelated groups.

Another important extension of the Venture Fund was created through partnerships with the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis and the Assisi Foundation of Memphis, Inc. In 1991, United Way and the Community Foundation provided a combined \$40,000 which was matched by funds from the City of Memphis and Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to implement the Neighborhood Small Grants Program (NSG). This fund provided grants to neighborhood-based organizations to:

- increase the capacity of neighborhood organizations to plan and implement neighborhood improvement strategies,
- increase the base of resident participation and leadership in developing solutions to neighborhood problems,
- increase the linkages between neighborhood organizations and other institutions capable of providing support, and,
- increase financial and other resources available for neighborhood self-help efforts.

During the early phase of this program, the Venture Fund Committee served as the grants administrator of these funds. In later years, the Community Foundation and the Memphis Community Development Partnership assumed the lead for the grants review process for NSG.

Because of the need and successes demonstrated by neighborhood-based groups, both the Community Foundation and United Way increased their commitment in 1995 to \$40,000 each in support of NSG. In 2008, the University of Memphis joined as a partner providing funds along with faculty and student technical support to neighborhood and community-based organizations.

The Assisi Foundation extended an invitation to United Way in 2005 to serve as their partner in helping not-for-profit organizations address their need for opportunities for ongoing training and education of their Boards and staff members. With an investment of \$50,000 each, per year for three years by United Way and the Assisi Foundation, The Professional Development Scholarship Fund was created to provide grants up to \$3,000 per year, per agency to assist them with their organizational training needs. To date, over 74 scholarships have been awarded from this fund which is administered by the United Way Avron B. Fogelman Venture Fund Committee.

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United Way/Avron B. Fogelman Venture Fund
Committee Members
1987 - Present

Rita Allen
Lyn Arnold
Connie Bawcum
Martha Perine-Beard
Dr. Linda Bennett
Karl Birkholz
Nancy Bogatin
Tim Bolding
Peggy Brewer
Deborah Brown
Regina Burns
Clarence Christian
Carol Coletta
Bill Crawford
David Curbo
Ann Dillard
Shannon Dixon
Olliette Murray Drobot
Greg Duckett
Karen Drissel-Ervin
Naomi Dyson
Tanisha Farmer
Lavelle Fitch
Rose Flenorl
John Fockler
Janis Foster
J. W. Gibson
Hubert Gray
Dana Greenhood
Skippy Gronauer
Lilliam Hammond-Brown
Ron Harkavey
Felicia Harris
Janice Herbert
Debra Hester

Calvin Herring
Patrice Hines-Woods
Barbara Holden
Leanne Kleinman
Josh Lipman
Robert Lipscomb
Steve Lykins
Shea Lynch
Carol Mayfield
Keenan McClure
Dedrienne McKenzie
Michael O. Minor
Larry Morgan
Jennifer Newman
Celio Palacio
Don Pounds
Nellie Powell
Barbara Ragland
Deborah Reed
Ronald Register
Letitia Robertson
Susan Sanford
Willie Slate
John Stevens
Anne Stokes
Lonnie Thompson
Erica Thornton
Michael Uiberall
David Wade
Johnnie B. Watson
Craig Weiss
Cherry Whitehead
Darren Williams
Linda Williams
Melissa Wolowicz

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11:30 am	Registration and Lunch
12:00 pm	Welcome and Opening Remarks Martha Perine-Beard, Senior Branch Executive Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Memphis Branch
12:10 pm	United Way of the Mid-South Avron B. Fogelman Venture Fund – Conception, History, Accomplishments Introduction of Venture Fund Committee Chairs (1987 – 2008) Harry Shaw, President United Way of the Mid-South
12:30 pm	Recognition of Innovators Regina Walker, Senior Vice President - Community Impact United Way of the Mid-South

INNOVATORS

INNOVATOR IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Collierville
Leadership Memphis
MPACT Memphis

INNOVATOR IN STRENGTHENING NON-PROFIT SECTOR

Community Development Council of Greater Memphis
Volunteer Memphis
Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis

INNOVATOR IN ARTS

Circuit Playhouse
Hattiloo Theater
Young Filmmakers

INNOVATOR IN STRENGTHENING LIVES

Friends for Life
Karat Place, Inc.
Synergy Treatment Centers

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INNOVATOR IN ENHANCING LIVES OF SENIORS

Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
LeMoyne Owen College Community Development Corporation
Memphis Center for Independent Living
Tipton County Commission on Aging

INNOVATOR IN HELPING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Hope House
Memphis Child Advocacy Center
Ryan's Hope

INNOVATOR IN HELPING CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUCCEED

INROADS
Knowledge Quest

INNOVATOR IN CREATING AND MAINTAINING A SAFETY NET

Alpha Omega Veterans Shelter Services
Fayette Cares

INNOVATOR IN BUILDING VITAL AND SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

Bethel Grove Community Organization
Community Foundation of Greater Memphis
Frayser Community Development Corporation
Vollentine Evergreen Community Association
United Housing

1:20 pm

Special Presentation

Martha Perine -Beard, Senior Branch Executive
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Memphis Branch



United Way
of the Mid-South

