



Great Grants and Initiatives

Grantor: Bonfils-Stanton Foundation

Grantee or Initiative: The Livingston Fellowship Program

Amount: \$125,000 Period of Grant Award: Annually

The Livingston Fellowship Program offers advanced learning and professional development opportunities to promising nonprofit leaders who hold or aspire to hold significant leadership roles in Colorado's nonprofit sector. Established in 2005, the Fellowship Program reflects the Foundation's belief that no investment in the tangible assets of a nonprofit organization can equal an investment in its greatest asset—its leaders. By identifying and supporting talented executive leaders, the Foundation hopes to build the capacity of a new generation of leaders to shape the future of the nonprofit sector in Colorado.

Each year, the Foundation's Trustees select five Livingston Fellows and award their respective nonprofit organizations \$25,000 to support activities designed to enhance their leadership skills. Candidates for Livingston Fellowships are nominated by a panel of community leaders and selected by Foundation Trustees based on exceptional leadership ability and promise as nonprofit "sector shapers." Once selected, the Fellows develop individual learning plans to move from "success to significance" as leaders of people, organizations, and Colorado's nonprofit sector.

Fellows have used their fellowships for a rich array of learning activities, including formal and informal study, research and writing projects, national and international travel, and executive coaching and peer learning. Examples include: traveling to Mongolia and the former Soviet Union to study approaches to youth homelessness; hosting a gathering of national leaders, including New York Times columnist David Brooks, to discuss strategies to help elders "age in place;" attending intensive leadership workshops at the Stanford School of Social Innovation and the Kennedy School at Harvard; compiling personal stories about service to the homeless and disenfranchised; and creating a photographic essay on the faces of child abuse.

The Livingston Fellows, now 25 strong, represent diverse backgrounds, ages, and aspirations, and lead Colorado nonprofit organizations serving a variety of missions and differing in size and geographic scope. What they share is an eagerness to learn, an appetite for probing difficult questions, and a collective commitment to making an impact that transcends organizational issues and boundaries. Through quarterly lunches with community leaders, an annual retreat, and other informal gatherings, they are exploring cutting edge ideas and new solutions to challenging societal issues, informed by knowledge and insights gained through their Fellowship activities. The return on this investment is manifested in unexpected collaborations and expanded opportunities, but perhaps most significant is the robust network of energetic and impassioned nonprofit professionals who are positioned to make a bigger mark in the world.