

Rockwood Leadership Institute's Cohort-Based Programs: 2016 Third Party Evaluation



Rockwood alums from AFL-CIO, CWA, Greenpeace, Jobs With Justice, NAACP, and Sierra Club at the Democracy Awakening 2016 march organized by the Democracy Initiative

The Impact of Rockwood's Fellowships: an In-Depth View from 15 Leaders Across U.S. Movements

December 2016

Prepared for:

**Rockwood
Leadership
Institute**

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LEARNING *for* ACTION

Overview

In 2016, Rockwood Leadership Institute engaged Learning for Action (LFA) to conduct an independent evaluation of Rockwood's cohort-based leadership development programs.

This report details the findings from interviews with 15 alums of various Rockwood fellowships and explores how Rockwood's cohort-based fellowships contribute to individual and movement-level outcomes. The visual below provides a high-level overview of the sections of the report.



Rockwood's Cohort-Based Programs

Sector-Based Fellowships

Rockwood fellowships bring together cohorts of leaders within an issue area in order to catalyze more powerful and engaged learning communities and partnerships. Each fellowship includes multiple residential leadership retreats, peer and professional coaching, and support between sessions. Rockwood intentionally curates cohorts of leaders based on race and other social identities, role within the field, and geographic diversity.

Cross-Sector Fellowships

Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong (LIO) is designed to build senior executive leaders' capacity to lead their organizations and networks effectively and to collaborate across issue areas, political and organizing orientation, geography, and background. In order to build leadership deep within organizations and across sectors, **Cross-Movement Yearlong (XMY)** is comprised of senior staff from participating LIO organizations. LIO and XMY include three 5- to 6-day intensive leadership retreats, expert and peer coaching, and assignments and daily practices to support and reinforce learning throughout the year.

Key Findings at a Glance

Changes in Individual Leaders

Rockwood provides social change leaders with the concrete skills needed to be effective in their roles and increase their emotional intelligence and understanding of their whole selves. By providing dedicated space for reflection and tools to be more intentional in all leadership aspects, Rockwood increases leaders' effectiveness and sustainability within their movements. As a result of their Rockwood fellowship experiences, alums have:

1. Increased **understanding of their innate strengths**, resulting in more confident and authentic leadership;
2. Increased ability to **effectively manage time and energy** resulting in a more sustainable work/life balance;
3. Increased **willingness and ability to work across difference**;
4. Deeper **relationships that decrease isolation and strengthen partnership**.

Movement-Level Outcomes

Rockwood fellowships accelerate social change progress by supporting leaders within and across movements. Fellows reported numerous movement-level wins, to which Rockwood contributed in the following ways:

1. Through **increased confidence and self-reflection**, alums pursue strategic movement roles, enabling them to serve their movements more effectively;
2. Alums gain the **skills, tools, and support they need to be vulnerable, take risks, and launch their next big campaign or idea**, ultimately leading to major movement successes;
3. The **deep, trusting relationships** formed during Rockwood fellowships decrease isolation, foster community, and empower leaders to **work across difference** and **collaborate across movements**.

Changes in Individual Leaders

Alums better understand their innate strengths, resulting in more confident and authentic leadership.

Through interactions with and feedback from cohort peers, fellows develop a deeper understanding of their own leadership strengths and learn to use these strengths to be their most authentic selves. This is particularly true for women of color and young leaders. For these alums, Rockwood drew out their innate strengths and skills and helped them step into leadership roles with confidence.

- Heather McGhee transitioned into the role of president of her organization during the course of her fellowship, and her Rockwood experience had a profound effect on her confidence as a leader as she stepped into this new role.
- HIV/AIDS fellow Olivia Ford shared that “The first retreat was really excellent; it was groundwork laying, but **the second retreat was life changing**. I am like small potatoes compared to the cohort peers. I was questioning my value.” She then described how powerful it was for her opinion to be solicited by other cohort members who were big names in her movement. The experience validated her natural talents, and, Olivia said, “At the second retreat, **I showed up as my full self** and brought deep listening skills and communication skills.”
- For Zahra Billoo, participation in the *Fellowship for a New California* exposed her to a community of diverse leaders, about which she said: “**Knowing that I am not alone, both as a young woman and a person of color**, but also just as an Executive Director [is helpful.] I talk to other Executive Directors about how this job can be so isolating **Having peers to learn and grow with is impactful.**”

It was a very vivid experience to see the **improvement in confidence and happiness and centeredness among people in my cohort** from retreat to retreat. The most vivid example was between the first and second retreat. We really opened up to one another and shared our challenges in the first retreat, and, as you would expect, people carried scars from this. By the second retreat, at the opening circle, **everyone was standing taller and was more confident in their leadership.**

- Heather McGhee

Alums increase their ability to effectively manage time and energy, resulting in a more sustainable work/life balance.

Rockwood recognizes that leaders’ professional lives are deeply informed by personal experiences and passions, and by creating space for reflection, Rockwood enables leaders to (re)connect to their purpose. As a result, alums report being more thoughtful about how they use their time and energy. This intentionality allows alums to pursue the paths that best suit their leadership visions, whether that be continuing in or changing roles.

Alums identified several tools learned during their fellowships that make them more effective leaders:

- The **POP (purpose, outcomes, process) Model** and **Important/Urgent Spectrum** help alums achieve balance and manage time and energy more effectively.
- Practicing **courageous conversations** (engaging in authentic and clear communication in situations that might otherwise bring up feelings of emotion for people) and **meshing** (a tool for staying centered in triggering situations) increase alums’ resilience when faced with conflict.

Incorporating these concepts contributes to a better work/life balance, and several alums shared that they are able to heal from trauma and move from anger, sadness, and scarcity to compassion, curiosity, and abundance.

To be honest, **I can’t imagine myself as the leader I am today without Rockwood**. Pulling the threads of Rockwood out of me would be difficult because it has been so transformative, especially the LIO program. This is in part about the skills I developed, but it is also about the level of professional resiliency that I gained through that program that has been really important in my work, and in my life.

- Masen Davis

...my leadership style pre-Rockwood was much more from a place of anger and frustration with the current way of the world, and I operated more from a place of scarcity rather than abundance. Rockwood has completely flipped that to **operate from a place of love and compassion and culture of abundance.**

- Tomás Garduño

Changes in Individual Leaders

Leader Profile: Olivia Ford

At the time she was nominated to participate in the 2015 *Fellowship for Racial and Gender Justice Leaders in the HIV/AIDS Movement*, Olivia was the communications director at the Positive Women's Network-USA (PWN-USA), an organization dedicated to training and involving women living with HIV in policy advocacy and decision making. By the second retreat of the fellowship, Olivia had transitioned out of her position. Rockwood played a crucial role in helping Olivia step into her authentic leadership and find the place within her issue area where she could be most effective.

No longer affiliated with a single organization, Olivia has pursued work as an editor, writer, and consultant, and is now more involved in intersectional work, including the intersection of reproductive justice and HIV/AIDS. She utilizes her strengths as a writer, editor, facilitator, and documenter to create materials around these key issues.

Olivia took part in planning the *HIV Is Not a Crime Training II Academy*, a national convening of advocates working to decriminalize people living with HIV in their states, which was co-organized by PWN-USA. At the event, Olivia used the courageous conversations framework taught by Rockwood to co-facilitate a workshop on surfacing beliefs about the legal system and the harm of HIV nondisclosure that was essential to building a strong, transparent, local anti-criminalization campaign.

Olivia also played a role in documenting the national and global HIV decriminalization movements, authoring media articles after the *HIV Is Not a Crime II Training Academy* as well as the internal report from *Beyond Blame: Challenging HIV Criminalization*, a pre-conference of the *International AIDS Conference* in Durban, South Africa.



I am collaborating in ways that are more authentic to my skill set. I am not organizationally affiliated now, so I am able to work with a number of organizations. ... I work as consultant editor with a reproductive justice project that intersects with my work in HIV. This is a direct result of Rockwood.

- Olivia Ford



Olivia Ford at the HIV Is Not a Crime Training Academy in 2016

Changes in Individual Leaders

Alums are more willing and able to work across difference.

Through participation in Rockwood, alums have a greater appreciation for difference and intersectionality. Alums shared that participating in Rockwood enabled them to dive deeply into conversations about race and gender, and work across difference, even if they had been working in an intersectional way prior to their fellowship.

- One alum, who identifies as a white woman, credits Rockwood for teaching her how to step back and let others lead, including grassroots leaders of color.

Several fellows were able to ease longstanding tensions with cohort members in service of their movements. Engaging in courageous conversations with their cohort peers allowed fellows to voice varying perspectives and work through conflict towards common purpose.

- One leader elaborated that after working through conflict with a cohort peer, she, as a state leader, now feels empowered to have a voice in national strategy conversations.
- For another alum, Rockwood provided space for her to reflect on why she did not work well with certain leadership styles. This learning helped her initiate a personal collaboration with a peer with whom she initially disagreed. Now the two have a peer-to-peer coaching relationship and touch base weekly.

Alums develop deep relationships that decrease isolation and strengthen partnership.

Alums share that their **relationships with Rockwood peers are some of the most significant personal and professional relationships they have**. Fellows develop deep and trusting relationships with their cohort peers, even if prior relationships existed. Alums expressed that holding senior leadership positions can be isolating, but the relationships forged through Rockwood reduce isolation and provide meaningful connection in ways leaders have not found elsewhere.

- One alum shared that the women in her sector-based cohort have become **“the most important professional relationships in [my] life.”** This group, self-named the “Rockwood Grrrls,” includes leaders in the sector who formed new and deepened existing relationships during their fellowship. The group meets regularly to navigate professional challenges, encourage leadership growth, and provide support to leaders in the field who often work alone.
- Similarly, another alum explained that she deepened her relationships with fellow female leaders in her fellowship cohort and regularly connects with these leaders.

Because of their shared Rockwood experience, alums have a common vocabulary that allows them to support one another and work more effectively together.

- One alum shared that she is able to have more effective conversations with her colleagues who are Rockwood alums because they understand the tools and concepts learned through Rockwood.

The willingness to engage and start from common purpose and then work out from there to address difference has been a transformational way of doing the work that has **opened up possibilities that would never have been there before.**

– Tomás Garduño

Many of us knew each other, but we weren't deep friends when we **started to be vulnerable in that way.** That was great. It really strengthened the network. The folks I was in the cohort with have gotten together and that has been great. We might have done it without Rockwood, but **it gives us an intentionality and conviction together because of Rockwood.**

– Wendy Levy

... [Working across movements] is a way of being, especially for executive directors and what we are asked to hold, manage, and envision. the sheer amount of perspectives we have and hold, it is other executive directors who go through that. **We can turn to each other for at least an ear and someone who knows how that feels - and that alone is of significant value.**

– Rea Carey

I know from talking to people who don't have relationships that I do, and they still feel isolated in their work. It's hard to imagine what my work life would be like without the group of Rockwood women to rely on as a support network. ... **The work would have felt more isolating without more opportunities to develop close relationships.**

– Kristin Houlé

Movement-Level Outcomes

Introduction

This section describes the ways in which Rockwood contributed to movement-level outcomes both within and across the environmental/climate justice, civil rights, LGBTQ, labor and arts/media, and immigration rights movements.

As mentioned earlier, fellows reported numerous movement-level wins, to which Rockwood contributed in the following ways:

1. Through **increased confidence and self-reflection**, alums pursue strategic movement roles, enabling them to serve their movements more effectively;
2. Alums gain the **skills, tools, and support they need to be vulnerable, take risks, and launch their next big campaign or idea**, ultimately leading to major policy successes;
3. The **deep, trusting relationships** formed during Rockwood fellowships decrease isolation, foster community, and empower leaders to **work across difference** and **collaborate across movements**.

For an in-depth look at the immigration rights movement in California, please see the related evaluation report "How the *Fellowship for a New California* Contributed to the Passage of the California Driver License Law".

Environmental/Climate Justice Movement

Two environmental/climate justice leaders included in this study credit their Rockwood fellowship experience with playing a significant role in their leadership development. The skills they learned and the support and feedback they received empowered both leaders to implement projects that were historic in the movement.

Annie Leonard, Executive Director at Greenpeace USA, shared that the feedback she received from her cohort peers during the course of the 2004-05 *Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong* changed the way she communicated the importance of her issue area, resulting in the creation of a powerful narrative about waste and its effects on the environment. **Receiving authentic feedback from her cohort improved her storytelling skills to such an extent that she started her own media project which ultimately became the Story of Stuff Project.** The Project's online documentary has had more than 50 million views around the world and is one of the most-watched online environmental films in history. The Story of Stuff is now a larger effort that provides educational materials and learning tools to educators and the public, and supports anti-waste campaigns worldwide.

Tomás Garduño's participation in Rockwood encouraged him to take more risks and feel more confident in his leadership. As a result, Tomás assumed a leadership role in organizing the People's Climate March in 2014, one of the largest climate marches in history. See the following page for more about how Tomás changed his approach to movement-level work to be more intersectional.

At the beginning of Rockwood, everyone gives a talk about your purpose. I have worked on waste issues my whole life; I am neurotically obsessed. I thought it was my opportunity to recruit everyone to do this with me, and I gave this sophisticated talk about waste. My peers said that was totally boring, and they didn't understand the words that I used, and I was like, 'OMG you are kidding! No one ever told me that.' That feedback inspired me to rethink how I communicate, to **bring my heart along with my head into communication and to strive to connect with people** rather than show off my narrow expertise. **It was a game changer moment for me.**

- Annie Leonard

Rockwood encouraged me to think bigger and take risks as a more consistent course of action as a movement leader. **The deeper personal development put me in a place to be confident and secure** enough in my own leadership to take those leaps and ask those questions and move out of my comfort zone.

- Tomás Garduño

Movement-Level Outcomes

Leader Profile: Tomás Garduño

Tomás became engaged in the environmental/climate justice movement early in his career, first with the World Trade Organization protests in 1999, and has moved into various leadership roles within the movement over the years. He has also been an organizer and director for several community organizing organizations. At the time of his fellowship, the 2011-12 *Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong*, he was the co-director of the SouthWest Organizing Project (SWOP). While there, he was deeply involved in civic engagement and member leadership development, supporting five SWOP members to run for elected office at the local and state levels. In 2013, Tomás served as the political director for ALIGN: Alliance for a Greater New York, and in 2014, he took on a key leadership role organizing the People's Climate March.

Tomás attributes his ability to step into this leadership role directly to his Rockwood fellowship, and Rockwood's deliberate curation of cohorts. Rockwood intentionally brings together groups with different backgrounds, and—in some cases—historic tension. Rather than focus on what divides mainstream and grassroots groups, Rockwood encouraged Tomás' cohort to begin a dialogue by building from commonalities. By encouraging fellows to expand their perspectives of their movements and work across difference toward common purpose, Rockwood accelerated Tomás' progress as a leader and he felt confident stepping into this new leadership role.

Moreover, each of the core leaders of the People's Climate March had a touchpoint with Rockwood, either through direct participation in a program or indirectly through a colleague who had participated, that allowed this group to collaborate effectively from the beginning.

During the early planning stages of the march, Tomás was appointed co-chair of an organizing committee to respond to the 2014 United Nations Climate Summit. In this role, Tomás brought together constituents from unexpected movements, including labor unions, to lead the march. 400,000 people participated in the march, making it the largest climate protest in history and ultimately contributing to the U.S. climate agreement with China in 2016.

After organizing the march, Tomás transitioned into a consulting role. Tomás' Rockwood experience helped him realize that movement building requires a more expansive view to achieve big wins. Once heavily invested in working toward environmental justice with a specific population and in a specific issue area, Tomás has broadened his perspective on effecting movement-level change and now works with young women of color in the reproductive justice and environmental justice movements. Because of this new perspective, Tomás is committed to developing leaders who are community "insiders" and who can affect the most change within their communities.



In my role as a coach and as a technical assistance consultant to women of color led reproductive and environmental justice organizations, I really **made a choice to focus my energy on the group of people that can lead with some intersectional analysis**. And they can make more bold, transformative demands because of their personal intersectional experience. That for sure was incubated during my Rockwood experience. The recognition that that is where we need to focus our energy – those that live the intersectional experience is where I want to put my energy.... [Before Rockwood,] if you were to ask me about identifying as a practitioner as a certain way of being rather than race, class, gender, I would have said no way!

- Tomás Garduño



Tomás Garduño at the People's Climate March in 2014

Movement-Level Outcomes

Civil Rights Movement

Rockwood contributed to strengthening the civil rights movement by building trust among movement leaders and providing them with tools for collaboration. This has touched a broad swathe of civil rights issues in the following ways:

Increasing Communication and Collaboration Across the Death Penalty Abolition Sector

As a result of her participation in the 2013 *Fellowship for Death Penalty Abolition Leaders*, Kristin Houlé, director of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, made a commitment to fill the communication void in the sector and created a network for leaders working at the state level. The “Peer-to-Peer Network” holds monthly conference calls during which approximately 25 state leaders in the death penalty abolition movement share resources and communicate and collaborate in a way that did not exist prior to her fellowship.

The Rockwood fellowship occurred at a time of transition for our movement. It occurred at a time when there was a lot of distrust and tension and coupled with people scattered all over the country in their silos. **With Rockwood, we were able to break through some of that.**

- Kristin Houlé

Collaborating Across Movements to Bolster Voting Rights in States

After the Supreme Court decreased protections for voting rights, progressive organizations led by Rockwood alums—including Anita Earls at the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, Greenpeace USA, NAACP, Sierra Club, and the National LGBTQ Task Force—came together to support an organizing, communications, and litigation strategy to combat state laws that discriminate against certain populations and violate civil rights. As a result, voter suppression laws in North Carolina and Texas were declared unconstitutional, and thousands of citizens became able to vote in the November 2016 election.

My field is broadly civil rights, but when the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act, environmental groups, unions, women’s groups, and youth organizing groups all joined the NAACP and traditional civil rights groups to message about how bad that was, and to advocate for funder support to address it. **I had not seen that depth of cross-sector embracing of a civil rights issue [before Rockwood.]**

- Anita Earls

Supporting Comprehensive Democracy Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

A group of Rockwood alums in different sectors, along with other social change leaders, came together to promote democracy, voting rights, and campaign reform through a range of progressive approaches, including civil rights, worker’s rights, women’s rights, and climate justice. In 2013, these alums launched the Democracy Initiative, a platform for cross-movement collaboration based on the Rockwood approach. The Initiative melded together two previously separate streams of civil rights groups with different demographic make-ups: voting rights organizations (often led by leaders of color), and campaign reform organizations (often led by white leaders). Some of the Initiative’s successes include:

- Working with state organizations in Maine to organize and turn out voters in support of a 2015 ballot initiative restoring the 1996 Clean Elections law;
- Successfully pushing for the confirmation of executive branch and judicial nominees in 2013;
- Bringing together thousands of activists in Washington, DC in 2013 and 2014 to advocate for the restoration of the Voting Rights Act.



Anita Earls speaking at the North Carolina Legal Services Conference in 2016

Movement-Level Outcomes

Leader Profile: Heather McGhee

Heather's participation in Rockwood came at a critical time in her career. Formerly the vice president of policy and outreach at Demos, a public policy organization combatting political and economic inequality in the U.S., Heather assumed the role of president at Demos during the course of the 2013-14 *Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong* at the age of 33. As a young woman of color, the support of her Rockwood peers played a crucial role in Heather's ability to step into this new role with confidence and ease.

The relationships Heather forged with diverse leaders in her cohort benefitted not only Heather and Demos, but also strengthened the political power of movements across issue areas in service of the larger progressive movement. A deeper understanding of cross-movement fields and practices, coupled with strong relationships—both developed during her Rockwood fellowship—resulted in Demos partnering with leaders in the reproductive justice, immigrant rights, and Native American rights movements.

Reproductive Justice

Heather's relationship with a fellow cohort member working in the reproductive justice movement inspired Heather to develop a reproductive and economic justice program at Demos. Through conversations with her cohort peer, Heather uncovered how Demos could further intersectional work within the existing framework and mission of the organization.

Immigrant Rights

Demos worked with fellow Rockwood cohort members to wage two democracy reform campaigns, one in Illinois and one in Washington state. The legislative and ballot measure victories helped build structural power for working class communities of color, including immigrants.

Native American Rights

A fellow cohort member supported Heather to launch a racial equity organizational transformation effort at Demos and inspired her to center learnings about Native Americans in the work Demos is doing to more deeply understand the development of inequality in the U.S.



Heather McGhee at the Fair Elections Rally in New York



As a 33 year-old woman of color stepping into a multi-issue national organization, having the support of my peers was essential to have the confidence to accept the position. In addition, I would say that some of **the relationships I've created through my Rockwood cohort have really shaped my work.** These are actual partnerships that have come from being in relationship with leaders and partnerships across different movements.

- Heather McGhee

[My cohort] was extremely diverse and it was a real gift, and a rare occurrence. The peer situation was fantastic. I got to know my peers in a deep and meaningful way. I will be close with these leaders for the rest of my life. The authenticity that Rockwood cultivates from day one is extraordinary, and there is nothing else like it. **The relationships allow you to move at the speed of trust. It is so valuable and there is no other way to get that done,** particularly because the other ways that leaders interact is through a coalitional approach and [that leads to] a different dynamic.

- Heather McGhee

Movement-Level Outcomes

LGBTQ Movement

Rockwood played a significant role in deepening the National LGBTQ Task Force's relationships with immigrant rights, reproductive health and rights, and economic justice organizations. Rea Carey, the executive director of the Task Force, felt this so strongly that she called the intersectionality created by Rockwood "a way of being." These relationships, cultivated through Rockwood, expedite efficiencies across movements. For example, the Task Force established a program called the New Beginning Initiative, which took inventory of federal policies that discriminated against LGBTQ people. After identifying these policies, the Task Force was successful in changing policies and enabling a more inclusive policy environment for the LGBTQ community. Participating in Rockwood allowed Rea to share this successful strategy with other key leaders across movements.

I think [Rockwood] has given me a more expansive view and experience while sitting in an identity-based organization. We have always worked across sectors, but for me, **Rockwood has brought a lot of perspectives from those who have had different experiences in their movements**, even though we may have been working with [those] groups organizationally for a long time.

- Rea Carey

For Masen Davis, former Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center and current Interim Co-Director for Global Action for Trans* Equality, the deep relationships he developed with other leaders in his cohorts led to greater awareness of and connection to trans issues. For example, a fellow Rockwood alum from a different sector signed on as a key partner to defend trans-inclusive restrooms in California, thus resulting in a greater awareness of trans issues among atypical partners.

I think one of the biggest interventions that I can speak to is the fact that the **people in my cohort who went through this program have a much better sense of trans issues than they would otherwise.**

- Masen Davis

Labor Movement

CJ Grimes, Director of Digital Organizing at the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), learned how to experiment with new ideas and get support from unlikely allies as a result of her participation in the 2012-13 *Cross-Movement Yearlong*. Collaboration with another fellowship alum enabled her to implement a successful digital strategy that impacted millions of workers nationally.

Rockwood has helped me learn to **prioritize and strategize in a more effective way and build programs that helped the SEIU reach millions** of workers and members, and other people in new and creative ways who we might otherwise not be able to engage.

- CJ Grimes

Relationships and trust developed at Rockwood enabled an alum to bolster a successful minimum wage campaign. The alum is now working with a peer from their Rockwood cohort to develop an organizing strategy for the West Coast. The partnership would not be possible without the trust built as a result of the Rockwood experience. In just eight months, this partnership helped spur a winning effort to unionize and organize researchers at a large science laboratory in California. The alum added that they are going "to see dividends of this partnership for a very long time."

For additional wins that cut across movements, including workers' rights, see the profile of Ai-jen Poo and her work at the National Domestic Workers Alliance on the following page.

Movement-Level Outcomes

Leader Profile: Ai-jen Poo

Ai-jen Poo is the director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) and participated in the 2010-11 *Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong*. In 2012, NDWA launched the We Belong Together campaign to bring women's voices into the immigration reform movement. Ai-jen worked with another Rockwood alum to build the campaign which informed administrative and legislative policy work on immigration and helped bring about the first hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee focused on women and families in the context of immigration reform. Additionally, the campaign launched a website, Step Forward, to help women and families navigate their options for legal status in the U.S., and, in 2016, organized one of the largest civil disobedience demonstrations against hostile immigration policies.

One of NDWA's most successful campaigns, and one that continues to this day, is Caring Across Generations. Launched in 2011, the campaign seeks to shape the culture around caregiving and to support policies that value caregivers and those they love. The campaign spearheaded policy wins at the local, state, and federal levels, and has led to increased protections for over five million domestic workers between 2011 and 2016.

One of the contributing factors to the success of the Caring Across Generations campaign was the buy-in from key leaders across sectors. Because many of those leaders and co-collaborators were also Rockwood alums, Caring Across Generations garnered support and built momentum from its inception, kick-starting its early successes.



Ai-jen Poo at the #100Women100Miles Pilgrimage Anniversary Event in Washington, D.C.



Ai-jen Poo at the #100Women100Miles Pilgrimage to Pope Francis in September 2015

It was during my time in Rockwood that I developed vision for Caring Across Generations. Just **having the early stage support of the network gave me a jumpstart and imagine a set of possibilities that I would not have before**, such as refining vision and strategy and doing scaled work. And it was a set of people who are incredibly supportive and helped me work through ideas and concepts. If I hadn't had that sounding board, it would have impacted my ability to get early traction and do something big.

- Ai-jen Poo

We always were inclined toward intersectional work largely because of who domestic workers are In some ways, we are directly a part of every single issue. In the Rockwood context, it helped me make deep relationships with other sectors ... [including] the civil rights movement and the environmental movement. [...] **It informed our ability to work with other movements, find our strategic value add, and think about the invisible** (domestic workers are the most invisible part of every movement). It helped bring those less visible to the table.

- Ai-jen Poo

Movement-Level Outcomes

Arts/Media Movement

After completing the *Rockwood JustFilms Fellowship* in 2015, Wendy Levy, Executive Director of The ALLIANCE for Media Arts and Culture (The ALLIANCE), continued the development of the Oakland Fence Project, a collaboration of Oakland-based photographers who create large-scale interactive photographs for chain link fences around Oakland, California. Although the project is Wendy's brainchild, she has an abiding commitment to elevating diverse voices in the arts community, and was able to do so more effectively after learning to co-power (owning personal leadership and supporting the leadership of others) during her fellowship.

Wendy has also taken this approach in working with diverse and intergenerational communities and organizations, and has collaborated with funders to invest in the work and the future of The ALLIANCE. In 2016, she organized The ALLIANCE's national conference, bringing together over 300 artists and organizations around storytelling, creative collaboration and sustainability, and innovation and social justice. She is amplifying the voices of artists most rooted in the community and feels strongly that the program cannot exist without letting others lead.

For Logan Phillips, Co-Director of Spoken Futures, a youth-centered arts and community engagement organization serving local youth in Southern Arizona, his participation in the 2012 *Fellowship for Leaders in Arts and Culture* helped him take his youth poetry slam project to the next level. As a result, Logan gained the confidence to convince city leaders that his project, now an organization, was integral to the creative economy of Tucson. Moreover, through deep friendships cultivated through Rockwood, Logan and another Rockwood alum collaborated to facilitate poetry workshops for terminally ill and opiate-dependent communities, infusing art as a tool for social justice with a community Logan may not have otherwise interacted.

Something I thought about at the time of my participation in Rockwood (and that I think of now) is how critical and revolutionary but overlooked the arts and culture sector is when it comes to social change. [...] It was beautiful to see Rockwood bring together a group of artists in totally different areas. [...] **Honoring the work that artists do is critical.** It was humbling and enabling as a DIY artist with a fledgling youth program to be sitting next to an executive director of a large organization. It made me realize that there was not the distance that I thought there would be.

- Logan Phillips

[The Oakland Fence Project] is being led on the ground by the community whose voices are part of the work, and it was not my original intention. [...] **I am putting my Rockwood experience to use every step of the way. And the project is stronger, better, more visionary and more resilient because of it.**

- Wendy Levy



2015 Rockwood JustFilms Fellowship

From my experience at Rockwood, I was **given tools to think through how an event like the youth poetry slam could become an organization.** Having to articulate why I do what I do helped me to articulate why we deserve to be respected as an organization, and that momentum has continued.

- Logan Phillips

Cross-Cutting Summary of Key Findings

Rockwood increases leaders' effectiveness by actualizing their full potential.

By providing dedicated space for reflection and tools to be more intentional in all leadership aspects, Rockwood increases leaders' effectiveness and the ability to sustain their movement work. Leaders who participate in Rockwood have an increased understanding of their innate strengths and are better able to manage their time and energy. As a result, they create time for self-reflection, and identify their most effective place in their movements. For example, two Rockwood alums who are women of color shared that Rockwood helped them find their authentic selves and step into roles where they could use their skills and talents to be effective movement leaders.

Rockwood fosters deep relationship-building that decreases leaders' isolation and strengthens partnerships.

Alums develop trusting relationships with Rockwood peers, which help sustain them as individual leaders and strengthen their issue area/movement. The long-term relationships built through Rockwood support alums on their professional and personal journeys and decrease their sense of isolation. Because of the relationships formed with cohort peers, alums are also able to work through conflict within movements. Some alums navigated longstanding tensions with their peers and are better able to work together in service of the movement as a result of Rockwood.

Rockwood enables alums to more effectively work across difference.

By learning in community with leaders from diverse backgrounds, alums have a greater awareness of and appreciation for intersectionality, leading to greater cross-movement collaboration. For example, an alum in the environmental justice movement realized how his skills could be translated to other issue areas as a result of his participation in Rockwood. He now works with young women of color in the reproductive rights and justice movement.

Rockwood gives leaders the skills, tools, and support they need to be vulnerable and take risks.

Because of trusting relationships formed through Rockwood, movement leaders are collaborating across issue areas. These connections provide alums with the support they need to launch their next big campaign or idea, ultimately leading to major movement successes, including:

- Organizing the 2014 People's Climate March, the largest climate march in history
- Bolstering voting rights in the aftermath of a Supreme Court decision that decreased protections for voting rights
- Developing strategy to win support for minimum wage laws at the city level
- Reframing the narrative about and supporting policies for caregivers in the U.S.

We usually only [come together] in times of national crisis. **We now have a shared values framework.** Because we have been in the context of relatively tough conservative political times, any containers that can **deepen our empathy and connection and how we are all in this together** creates a different context. And it can be the difference between maximizing our work and not. We still have problems in creating redundancy and competition, but **Rockwood helps to make it better in key places.**

- Ai-jen Poo

Looking Forward: Opportunities for Rockwood to Deepen Impact and Improve Programs

Based on conversations with the 15 Rockwood alums interviewed for this study, we offer Rockwood the following ideas to further deepen impact.

- **Consider expanding Rockwood’s model beyond nonprofit leaders.** Alums recommended supporting leaders to help train those most affected by social justice issues, such as formerly incarcerated individuals. Other alums suggested that Rockwood offer programs for leaders in the private and social enterprise sectors.
- **Consider taking a more active role in highlighting key movement-building moments.** Alums suggested that Rockwood overtly take on the racial justice conversation happening around the country and help bridge the gap between millennials and older generations who view race differently. Other alums suggested that Rockwood host a convening for leaders to reflect on the 2016 election and play a more active role in taking up the call for cross-sectoral representation.
- **Increase access to Rockwood programs.** Reduce barriers for grassroots leaders without access to funding for programs that require fees from participants. Additionally, communicate the value of Rockwood programs to leaders who think they may not have time for the program. Alums shared that some leaders are discouraged from applying to the program because they do not think that they have the time or do not have the financial resources.

Additionally, Rockwood might consider the following program improvements:

- **Assess the appropriate combination of depth and breadth in exploring racial justice issues in the program curriculum.** For example, one alum suggested that Rockwood integrate racial justice/racial equity throughout each component of the Art of Leadership Program, rather than focusing on this topic in one session or curriculum component.
- **Engage alums in programming once programs are complete.** For example, Rockwood could take a more active role in convening cohorts or offer opportunities for training with a specific focus or product, such as developing a project or campaign.
- **Continue to ensure that local, regional, and state work is represented in cohorts.** Two alums explained that state and regional leaders get a lot value from Rockwood and wanted to ensure that they are adequately represented among national leaders in their cohort.
- **Continue to offer both sector-specific and cross-movement cohorts.** Alums shared that both are valuable. Fellows share that there is no other opportunity like Rockwood to delve into cross-movement issues because there is no forum or conference for the progressive movement nationally. For others, going deep with the colleagues in their sector allowed them to address conflict and strengthen their movement area.

Given Rockwood’s place in the ecosystem, and its view on organizational performance, **it should have a point of view on what needs to happen and how to accelerate the work together**, and then bring some of this content into the leadership training. [Rockwood could play a role in answering the questions:] What does it mean to function as part of the movement rather than just as a liberal progressive nonprofit organization – or how does a progressive nonprofit help to win the future rather than incremental change?

- Ian Simmons

[There is] power in learning in community and being vulnerable in community. **The Rockwood model is really powerful; we need more of those kind of engagements.** It is important for people to talk honestly and be vulnerable about oppression in their lives, whether they experience oppression or benefit from it. [...] I would love to recreate that experience across the HIV community.

- Olivia Ford

One observation I would make to Rockwood is that they **continue to do sector-based cohorts and cross-movement cohorts.** Both have value. Every single movement has their challenges and tensions. And to be able to be in a cross-movement group that doesn’t have a vested interest between what happens, it is very helpful to have that cohort.

- Rea Carey

Appendix A: List of Rockwood Alums Interviewed

Interview Participants

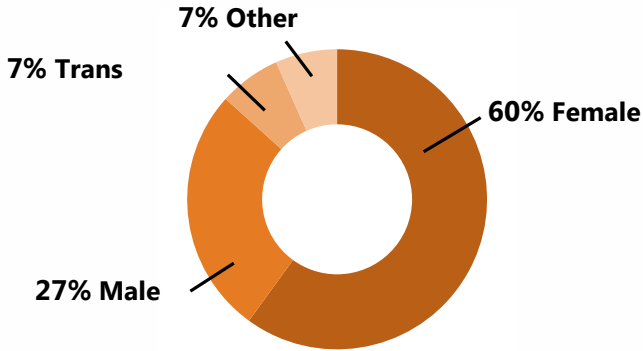
The following people participated in interviews for this report. This list includes their program, program year, their role and the organization they worked with at the time of their participation in Rockwood.

Topic Area	Name	Role at Time of Fellowship	Organization	Program and Year(s)
Civil Rights/ Civic Engagement	Anita Earls	Director	Southern Coalition for Social Justice	Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2010-11
	Heather McGhee	transitioned from Vice President to President	Demos	Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2013-14
	Kristin Houlé	Executive Director	Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty	Fellowship for Death Penalty Abolition Leaders 2013
	Zahra Billoo	Executive Director	Council on American-Islamic Relations	Fellowship for a New California 2014
	Will Pittz	Executive Director	Washington Community Action Network	Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2013-14
	Ian Simmons	President	Foundation for Civic Leadership	Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2015-16
Arts/ Media	Wendy Levy	Executive Director	National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture	Rockwood JustFilms Fellowship 2015
	Logan Phillips	Co-Director	Tucson Youth Poetry Slam	Fellowship for Leaders in Arts and Culture 2012
LGBTQ	Masen Davis	Executive Director	Transgender Law Center	Fellowship for LGBTQ Advocacy 2008 & Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2012-13
	Rea Carey	Executive Director	National LGBTQ Task Force	Art of Leadership for Philanthropic Leaders 2013
Labor	CJ Grimes	Organizing Director	Service Employees International Union	Cross-Movement Yearlong 2012-13
	Ai-jen Poo	Director	National Domestic Workers Alliance	Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2010-11
Environmental/ Climate Justice	Annie Leonard	Executive Director	Greenpeace USA	Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2004-05 & 2014-15
	Tomás Garduño	Co-Director	SouthWest Organizing Project	Leading from the Inside Out Yearlong 2011-12
HIV/ AIDS	Olivia Ford	transitioned from Communications Director to independent consultant	Positive Women's Network - USA	Fellowship for Racial and Gender Justice Leaders in the HIV/AIDS Movement 2015

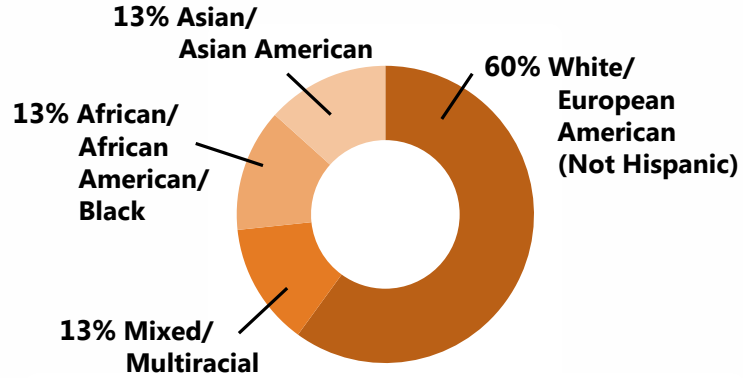
Appendix B: Demographics of Interviewees

The diversity of alums interviewed for this report reflects Rockwood’s commitment to serve racially and culturally diverse leaders and communities.*

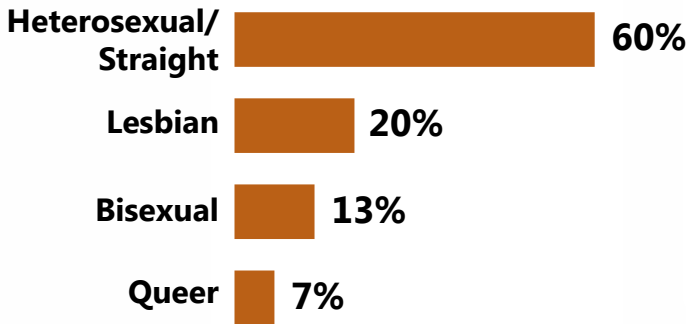
Gender** (n=15)



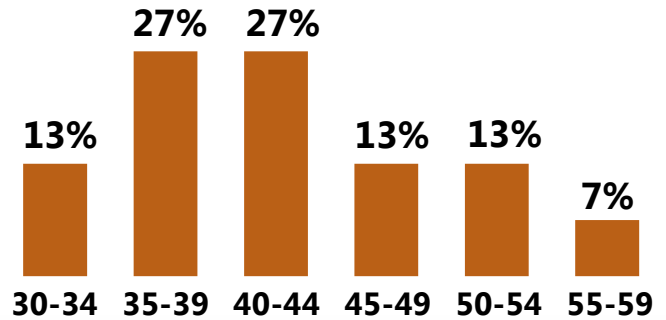
Race** (n=15)



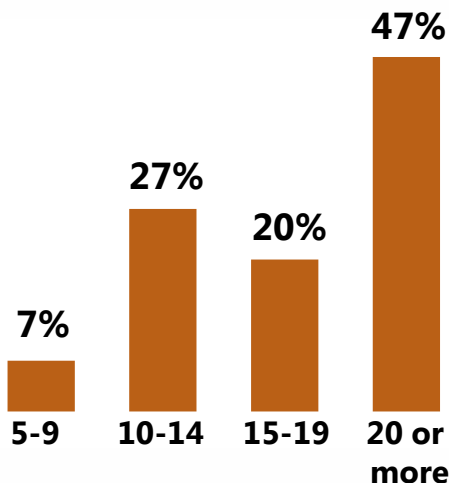
Sexual Orientation (n=15)



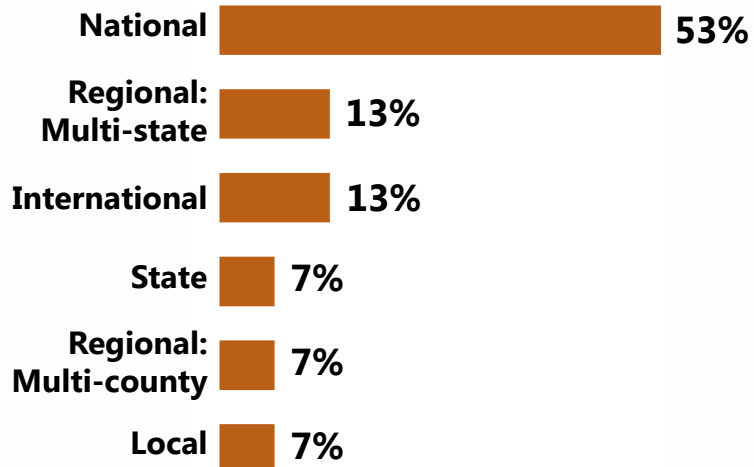
Age (n=15)



Years in Social Change** (n=15)



Geographical Scope of Current Work (n=15)



*LFA obtained demographic data from Rockwood.
 **Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Acknowledgements

Rachel Lipton and Steven LaFrance of Learning for Action (LFA) wrote this report. The authors wish to acknowledge the partnership, time, and insights contributed by Rockwood staff and alums. Rockwood and LFA also extend special thanks to The California Endowment, The California Wellness Foundation, The Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr., Fund, and Open Society Foundations for making this evaluation possible.

About Rockwood Leadership Institute

Rockwood Leadership Institute provides individuals, organizations, and networks in the social change sector with powerful, transformative training in leadership and collaboration. Since 2000, Rockwood has trained 6,000 visionary nonprofit leaders across North America and around the world. Rockwood's programs draw on best practices in proven leadership development programs from both the private and nonprofit sectors.

About Learning for Action

Established in 2000, Learning for Action (LFA) provides highly customized research, strategy, capacity building, and evaluation services that enhance the impact and sustainability of social sector organizations across the U.S. and beyond. LFA's technical expertise and community-based experience ensure that the insights and information we deliver to nonprofits, foundations, and public agencies can be put directly into action. In the consulting process, we build organizational capacity, not dependence. We engage deeply with organizations as partners, facilitating processes to draw on strengths, while also providing expert guidance. LFA's high quality services are accessible to the full spectrum of social sector organizations, from grassroots community-based efforts to large-scale national and international foundations and initiatives.