

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



Summary of Findings across Three Evaluation Reports

December 2016

Prepared for: **Rockwood
Leadership
Institute**

Prepared by:  **LEARNING *for* ACTION**

Summary of Findings across Three Evaluation Reports

Rockwood Leadership Institute's Cohort-Based Programs

2016 Third Party Evaluation

Evaluation Overview

In 2016, Rockwood Leadership Institute engaged Learning for Action (LFA) to conduct an independent evaluation of Rockwood's cohort-based fellowships, including contributions to individual and movement-level outcomes. Through a survey and sets of interviews, LFA gathered information from 122 Rockwood fellowship alums. Based on these data, LFA produced three reports:

- A report highlighting **key findings from the survey** of Rockwood fellowship alums.
- A **cluster study** detailing the findings from in-depth interviews with 15 Rockwood alums about the impact participation in a Rockwood fellowship had on their individual leadership and their movement.
- A **case study** highlighting the role that participation in the *Fellowship for a New California* played in the 2013 passage of the California Driver License Law (AB 60). AB 60 provides undocumented immigrants in California with access to driver licenses.

This document summarizes key findings across all three reports.

Why Leadership Development Matters for Movement-Level Success

Social sector leadership development is limited and under-resourced with only 1% of funding from foundations going to support leadership development.* However, leadership development yields significant results:**

- It increases leadership sustainability for those doing the hard work of social change.
- It enables the creativity and innovation needed to identify common ground across issue areas.
- It creates a pipeline of leaders who represent the diversity of the United States and the voices of those who often lack power in our system.

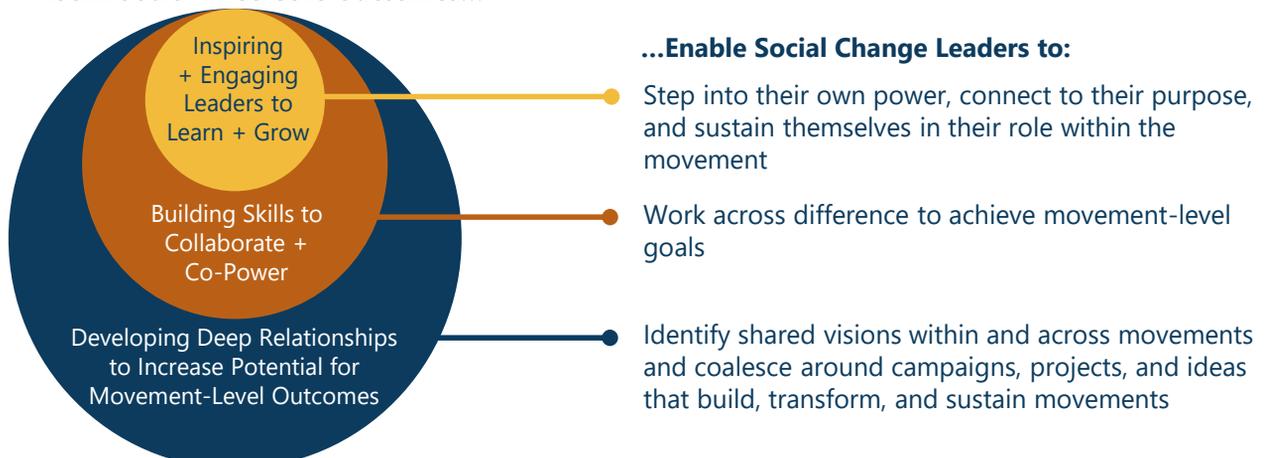
In *Social Movements and Philanthropy: How Foundations Can Support Movement Building*, Masters and Osborn define five core elements of movement building***, three of which have particular relevance for Rockwood: leadership, vision and ideas, and alliances.

LFA found that by participating in a Rockwood fellowship, fellows build the skills, knowledge, and practices to strengthen their leadership and make deep connections with other leaders. In turn, **Rockwood fellows are able to develop shared visions and create alliances within and across issue areas, resulting in stronger social change movements.**

Summary of Key Findings

Across evaluation methods, LFA found that Rockwood's fellowships consistently achieve three core outcomes.

Rockwood's Three Core Outcomes...



*Kirk Kramer and Preeti Nayak. "Plan A: How Successful Nonprofits Develop Their Future Leaders." The Bridgespan Group.

**Niki Jagpal and Ryan Schlegel. "Cultivating Nonprofit Leadership: A (Missed?) Philanthropic Opportunity." National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy.

***Barbara Masters and Tori Osborn. "Social Movements and Philanthropy: How Foundations Can Support Movement Building." The Foundation Review., 2010, Vol.2:2

Three Core Outcomes of Rockwood's Cohort-Based Fellowships



Participation in Rockwood fellowships actualizes leaders' full potential and nurtures leaders' whole selves. This roots leaders' professional journeys in their deeply personal motivations for doing the work. By learning tools to practice self-care and commit to personal ecology, alums strategically use their time, energy, and innate talents and skills to be more effective leaders. In doing so, they create time for self-reflection and identify their most effective place in their movements. For example:

- Alums shared that the Rockwood cohort experience drew out and validated their innate skills and allowed them to step into positions of power with confidence in their authentic leadership.
- By incorporating Rockwood concepts that support leaders in their personal and professional lives, alums shared that they are able to heal from trauma and move from a place of anger, sadness, and scarcity to one of compassion, curiosity, and abundance.

Leaders are better able to co-power[†] and work across difference. Alums work more effectively across difference, and they approach leadership in a way that allows for others to step into their own power. A primary way that alums work across difference is through the framework of courageous conversations[‡], a tool that is practiced throughout the cohort experience. For example:

- The ability of a group of Rockwood alums to have courageous conversations and work across positional differences contributed to the passage of AB 60, resulting in access to driver licenses for California residents regardless of immigration status.
- Alums who engaged in courageous conversations were able to address historical tensions within their sectors and move forward in a way that strengthened their movements.

The deep connections fellows develop increase leaders' impact within and across movements. 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
- Passing the California Driver License Law (AB 60) that provides undocumented immigrants in California with access to driver licenses
- 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.

Looking Forward: Opportunities for Rockwood to Deepen Impact

Rockwood fellowship alums are key players in social change and have collaborated with and supported each other to achieve movement-level goals and develop innovative, community-based solutions to some of society's most pressing issues. As such, Rockwood has the opportunity to be an even stronger force within movements. Rockwood could take a larger role in sustaining an intentional community of Rockwood alums and use the power of the Rockwood network to capture key movement moments to organize for a better world. This may include strategies to make Rockwood programming more accessible to social change leaders, expanding Rockwood's reach to leaders outside the nonprofit sector, developing in-person or virtual communities for alums to stay connected and collaborate, and acting as a bridge builder to take up the call to organize around key opportunities.

[†]Co-power - to own their personal power and lift up the power of others

[‡]Courageous conversation - engaging in authentic and clear communication in difficult situations