

AIDS and malaria]. It has reminded people we live in a very small world, and to ignore your neighbors is to do so at your own peril, because when someone in Karachi sneezes, someone in Kansas is catching a cold.

L&P: What is the most unusual grant request the GHA has received?

JC: You wouldn't believe the range of requests that we receive. While many of them might come across as wacky, such as a suggestion to buy real estate in Africa, the vast majority are from people or institutions that are really in need or have some great ideas that, unfortunately, fall outside of our scope of giving. That's a sad reality, because we'd like to fund many more proposals than we can. However, to have the biggest impact possible, we believe it's essential to stay narrowly

focused on the core set of priorities Bill and Melinda have chosen for their philanthropy.

L&P: Tell us about an outstanding recent success of the Global Health program.

JC: We funded the development of a malaria vaccine through one of our grantees, the Malaria Vaccine Initiative, based here in Seattle. ... If it [the vaccine] continues to perform well in clinical trials, it would be a major step forward in fighting this disease, which kills nearly 2 million people every year, mostly children.

L&P: Who has the most influence on the foundation's focus?

JC: Patty Stonesifer, our CEO. She was the highest-ranking woman at Microsoft before deciding to leave the company, and ... has guided the foundation—without pay—to incredible,

impressive heights. Starting in a small office above a pizza parlor in Redmond, Patty has led the organization in a meteoric rise and now has a team of more than 250. She constantly reminds us that, while there may be things that appear urgent today and perhaps six months from today, we have to keep a 10- or 20-year perspective. ... It's a marathon, not a sprint.

L&P: Besides supporting your grantees, what influence have you had on the world's public health?

JC: One of the things the foundation can do is to bring a sense of solvability to these issues—things that people often feel are intractable, that are hopeless. We can show them how much can be done for so little. Once you can do that, their awareness transforms into a demand for greater action.

Fostering Solidarity

By Betsy Model

With more than 9,000 children in foster care at any given time, Washington, like many states, is juggling the demands of a growing population with a simultaneously growing pressure for budget cuts.

Unique to Washington, however, are two situations that have the rest of the country keeping an eye on us. With more than 550,000 children in foster care nationwide, the ramifications could be significant.

In May 6,000 foster parents belonging to the Foster Parent Association of Washington State (FPAWS) did the unthinkable: They joined up with a union. The Washington Federation of State Employees, an AFL-CIO affiliate, already represents 38,000 state employees, including social workers with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), who administer the state's foster-care system.

The agreement between the foster parents association and the union is good for a year, renewable in one-year extensions, with either party able to opt out at any time. The union created a foster-care division in which FPAWS members will have joint membership but retain their autonomy. Membership for participating foster parents costs \$20 a year.

"Initially, this affiliation is about advocacy, not bargaining," says union president Carol Dotlich. "At some point, the members of Foster Parents Association of Washington State and the new Federation Foster Care Division may seek some form of collective-bargaining rights similar to home-healthcare workers and childcare workers."

"We have always viewed the Foster Parents Association of Washington State as similar to a union for foster parents," said FPAWS co-president Daniele Baxter. "The main difference between our association and other traditional unions is that we never had the same formal recognition that unions have. That's going to change ... In other words, we're organizing foster parents into a stronger advocacy force."

FPAWS, founded in 1973, is the first foster-care parents association in the country to affiliate with a union. In a May letter, FPAWS' board of directors told Cheryl Stephani, assistant secretary for DSHS' Children's Administration, the decision was driven by concerns over the loss of qualified foster parents, lack of state funding and training, and desire by foster parents for faster implementation of the settlement in *Braam v. Washington*, a class-action lawsuit brought in 1998 on behalf of foster children moved repeatedly from one home to another. It

resulted in a landmark ruling that holds DSHS to tough care standards.

In a 2004 settlement, DSHS agreed to major improvements in six areas. But a June report issued by a panel established as part of the settlement, said DSHS failed, in the assessment period through December 2005, to complete 32 improvements. The agency, which has complained of budget difficulties, was told nevertheless to come up with an improvement plan.

The eventual outcome of the *Braam* settlement, and the direction foster parents decide to take as union members, have the foster-care system's attention riveted on Washington. **L&P**



STRITMATTER KESSLER WHELAN
WITHEY COLUCCIO
PROUDLY ANNOUNCES THAT

Alisa R.
Brodkowitz

HAS BECOME AN ASSOCIATE
WITH THE FIRM.

ALISA'S PRACTICE HAS FOCUSED ON REPRESENTING PLAINTIFFS IN COMPLEX LITIGATION SINCE HER GRADUATION FROM SEATTLE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, CUM LAUDE, IN 2001.

SHE STUDIED AVIATION LAW AT LEIDEN UNIVERSITY IN THE NETHERLANDS AND WORKED IN THE HAGUE. PRIOR TO JOINING STRITMATTER KESSLER, ALISA PRACTICED WITH THE LAW FIRM OF KRUTCH LINDELL.

ALISA IS PRESIDENT-ELECT OF KING COUNTY WASHINGTON WOMEN LAWYERS AND IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT OF THE AVIATION SECTION OF THE KING COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION.

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