



An Honor and a Boon for Nine Nonprofits

By Judy Sarasohn

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Genius awards for nonprofits?

The *John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation*, known for the fellowship program in which it gives \$500,000 to individuals in many fields, has created a similar prize for nonprofit organizations. The prizes for nonprofits were given today to nine groups, including a reconstituted D.C. organization now known as *Knowledge Ecology International*.

That group, formerly the *Ralph Nader*-affiliated Consumer Project on Technology, pushes the United States and the international community to overcome patent and other intellectual property rights hurdles to make drugs to fight AIDS and other diseases available in poor countries.

"This small, effective and agile team of professionals . . . has played a key role in major international debates on intellectual property, including helping to pave the way for making essential medicines more available and affordable in developing countries," the foundation said.

James Love, who leads KEI, says the group is going to push for legislation in Congress next year to drive down the price of drugs by changing how research and development are financed. The goal would be for development to be based on drugs' potential health benefits, not on their potential market value. If this "new paradigm" is successful with the U.S. pharmaceutical industry, Love says, the impact would be felt internationally as well. The legislation is to be sponsored by Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.).

"We're going to make a run [in Congress] on this new idea," he said yesterday. The lobbying focus, he said, will probably be on trying to develop a citizens movement similar to the one that supported importing less-pricey Canadian drugs.

KEI received \$500,000 from the MacArthur Foundation to help with start-up costs associated with becoming an independent nonprofit.

Love said he was recruited by Nader in 1990. Over time, Love said, his organization has become more focused on intellectual property and international issues than Nader is. "We wanted to have a bit more of our own culture," Love said of the decision to reconstitute the group.

MacArthur Foundation President Jonathan F. Fanton said the awards, from \$250,000 to \$500,000, were designed to bring visibility and assistance to creative and effective nonprofits "at a moment when a significant grant will help."

Also receiving awards today are the Chicago Rehab Network, which works on preserving affordable housing; the North Lawndale Employment Network of Chicago, which helps formerly incarcerated people to get jobs; RealBenefits of Boston, a Web-based service that helps poor people seek public assistance; and nonprofits in Nigeria, Mexico, Russia, Peru and India.

Ledger of Lobbyists' Spending

Lobbying expenditure reports, which were due to Congress on Aug. 14, are starting to come in, and PoliticalMoneyLine, which follows lobbying and campaign money, has found some interesting ones. And despite lobbying scandals and tight corporate budgets, it seems there's always money to lobby.

According to PoliticalMoneyLine, the U.S. Telecom Association reported spending \$15.28 million on lobbying during the first six months of 2006, up from \$5.34 million for the last six months of 2005. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce spent \$14.3 million, up from \$10.54 million in the last six months of 2005, although its Institute for Legal Reform dropped to \$9.22 million from \$10.25 million.

Freddie Mac's spending on lobbying, however, dropped 20 percent. It spent nearly \$4.25 million in the first six months of this year, compared with \$5.3 million for the last six months of 2005. Fannie Mae reported a small increase to \$5.28 million.

PoliticalMoneyLine's *Kent Cooper* noted that these lobby reports are not required to include costs for issue ads and certain other expenses often associated with lobby campaigns.

Here and There

Moving about town . . . *Andrew Gray*, formerly communications director for the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee under the chairmanship of Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), has joined *Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide*. Gray had also been deputy press secretary for Shelby.

The National Association of Manufacturers has signed on *Jeri Gillespie* as vice president of human resources policy. Gillespie was director of government affairs for NCR Corp.

Jefferson Consulting Group has picked up *Timothy Coffin* as a vice president. Coffin founded *Celtic Consulting*, helping clients get business from the Homeland Security and Defense departments, as well as the intelligence community.

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