



**Strengthening Civic Impact:  
An Evaluation of Nonprofit Public Policy Trainings**

**Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest**

**With assistance from Innovation Network, Inc.**

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## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Overview and Methodology.....	5
Survey Findings .....	6
Demographics.....	6
Trainee Satisfaction.....	8
Change in Knowledge, Confidence and Motivation .....	10
Changes in Public Policy Engagement .....	11
Barriers to Participating in Advocacy .....	12
Success Stories .....	13
Conclusion .....	17
Appendix A – CLPI Theory of Change.....	18
Appendix B – Survey Results.....	22
Appendix C – Interview Protocol.....	42
Acknowledgments .....	43

## Executive Summary

Given today's social and economic turmoil and the huge challenges facing underserved Americans and civil society, effective public policy involvement by charities and their constituents is becoming increasingly important. To ensure the efficient use of scarce resources, funders and charities alike are looking for practical ways to evaluate efforts to increase nonprofit policy capacity and impact.

For more than 10 years, the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest (CLPI) has trained and supported thousands of charities, their staffs and boards. CLPI customizes half-day and full-day trainings based on the needs and interests of each organization. CLPI routinely evaluates each training session and has conducted six-month follow-up calls with many of its trainees.

In 2008, CLPI decided to take its evaluation work a step further to answer two primary questions. First, CLPI wanted to find out whether the charities it had helped – many new to public policy – actually took action to pursue policy as an internal and external strategy. If so, CLPI wanted to know the current impact of policy engagement on organizational capacity and mission. Second, CLPI sought to learn more about barriers and successes related to policy involvement and how CLPI might best support charities and the nonprofit sector in the future.

### **Innovation Network, Inc.**

CLPI hired Innovation Network, Inc., a respected nonprofit evaluation and consulting firm, to assist with the assessment. Innovation Network helped with design and analysis, conducted focused interviews, and wrote up results and case studies. The evaluation survey elicited both quantitative and qualitative information and is attached (see Appendix B). By teaming with Innovation Network and performing several routine survey and data tasks with its own staff, CLPI was able to conduct a valuable evaluation with limited resources.

### **Survey and Demographics**

The online survey was sent to 1,238 nonprofit leaders who participated in CLPI trainings between 2004 and 2008 and for whom CLPI had e-mail addresses. Out of that total, 209 trainees – or approximately 17 percent – completed the survey. Innovation Network then conducted follow-up interviews with a small group of the survey respondents and wrote up three of the interviews into case studies highlighting the actual and potential impact of the trainings.

Respondents were divided into four categories of trainees. The two largest groups of respondents were trained through capacity-building grants provided by Minnesota-based Northwest Area Foundation and Miami-based John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. By funding advocacy training and support for service-oriented grantees, these foundations were able to build stronger organizations and leverage greater impact in their targeted communities

on priority issues such as reducing poverty. The foundations also built policy evaluation into their respective grants.

With support from United Way of America (now United Way Worldwide), CLPI also conducted public policy institutes for many local United Ways' staffs and volunteer board members. Finally, during this period, CLPI contracted with a range of other human service and charitable organizations to conduct advocacy training.

Survey respondents represented a diverse group of nonprofit sector organizations. More than three-fourths of the respondents reported working for health, housing and community development, education, family economic security, and child welfare organizations.

The individual respondents comprised a variety of roles within their organizations, including executive directors, program staff, administrative staff and board members.

Respondents' organizational budgets were also well distributed. Nearly half reported budgets of less than \$750,000, while nearly one-third reported budgets of more than \$2 million.

The trainings reached organizations with a broad range of advocacy experience. More than 80 percent of survey respondents reported that their organizations were somewhat new to advocacy, while approximately 19 percent reported being very experienced.

## **Findings**

### *Public Policy Training and Support Increased Relevant Knowledge, Confidence and Motivation*

Consistent with CLPI's regular post-training evaluations, survey respondents reported consistent increases in their understanding of and motivation to apply lobbying and other public policy strategies to achieve their organizational missions.

- Nonprofit board members reported the greatest increases in knowledge, confidence and motivation (see Table 5). Given the importance of nonprofit boards in governing and approving organizational direction, targeting more policy trainings toward board members may be an effective future strategy.

### *Trainees Increased Some Policy Activities and Advanced Capacity and Mission, but Did Not Increase Election-related or More Time- and Resource-Intensive Activities*

Respondent nonprofit leaders reported increasing certain public policy activities but not others after CLPI trainings and to different extents. Consistent with other studies in the field, respondents at the time engaged in advocacy activities that required less staff and financial resources and did not increase election-related activities. Respondents cited constituent needs, funding and other internal mission-related factors as the keys to deeper involvement. However,

even with these constraints and the limited timeframe of the survey, respondents reported that public policy involvement had helped them to build organizational capacity and impact in important ways.

- After the CLPI training, 60 percent or more of respondents to some extent increased contacting a legislator, participating in a coalition or asking constituents to take action on a policy issue.
- A large majority of respondents reported at the time not having increased activity on election-related activities or other more time- and resource-intensive actions such as conducting a media or public education campaign.
- Even with these constraints and qualifications, respondents reported important achievements like greater community awareness, increased funding from state legislatures and policy-related program improvements.

#### Barriers and Keys to Organizational Policy Involvement

Consistent with more in-depth studies, survey respondents cited limited time, staff and funding as the main obstacles to policy involvement. Other barriers included the constraints of government funding and insufficient knowledge and skills related to permissible and effective advocacy. Respondents reported mission-related motivation as a critical factor that got their organizations more involved in public policy.<sup>1</sup>

#### CLPI Trainers and Trainings Receive High Ratings

CLPI trainings are delivered by a national network of Fellows who are experienced, state-based public policy advocates and educators.

- Nearly 95 percent of respondents reported CLPI trainings as “good” to “excellent.”
- Seventy-one percent of respondents said they recommended CLPI’s services to their colleagues, which Innovation Network described as a very high rate based on its experience.

#### Success Stories

Three case studies and a long list of self-reported success stories by respondents demonstrate the actual and potential impact that effective nonprofit advocacy can have in building nonprofit

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<sup>1</sup> The findings on barriers and solutions echo prior studies in this area. This includes a 2008 survey by the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies on nonprofit lobbying and advocacy, which was developed with CLPI. Prior research by CLPI, OMB Watch and Tufts University found that mission-related motivation was critical to overcoming barriers to policy involvement. This survey research was published as a book titled *Seen but not Heard: Strengthening Nonprofit Advocacy* (Aspen Institute, 2007).

capacity and impact. A sense of empowerment also permeates these stories. The following are a few examples:

- A case study about CASA of Montana, a child advocacy organization, describes how CLPI policy trainings helped it to “confront misconceptions about nonprofit advocacy and prompt stakeholders to action.” This action – grassroots advocacy and lobbying of targeted legislators on “powerful committees” – resulted in a \$285,000 increase in local funding.
- “We were able to marshal a coalition of builders and developers, government planners, lenders and consumers to convince legislators to adopt a mechanism to enforce the design and construction (accessibility) requirements of the federal Fair Housing Act effectively and efficiently.”
- “We worked to support the passed legislation for Idaho’s Grocery Tax Credit increase. It now includes those who don’t file a tax return, and they will receive a credit check in next tax season.”
- “We were able to connect a child care provider with her legislator to advocate for timely payments from the Department of Human Services for services provided to children receiving childcare assistance from the state. Payments were delayed 30, 60, 90 days and legislation was passed to pay providers within 10 business days of submitting their invoices.”

In conclusion, this evaluation of CLPI policy trainings and support between 2004 and 2008 indicates that such trainings increase the knowledge, confidence and motivation of nonprofit leaders and helps to increase their organizations’ capacity and impact. It also suggests a promising and replicable strategy for philanthropy: *i.e.*, that funding advocacy training for grantees in targeted communities can make a real difference for affected constituents and causes.

Echoing earlier research, this evaluation suggests that increased funding for public policy and connecting policy involvement to constituent needs and organizational mission are critical to deeper and sustained nonprofit involvement in this arena. Local and state institutions like community foundations and state nonprofit associations are well positioned to provide ongoing technical assistance and support of this nature. By providing advanced training and consulting, including targeting more support for nonprofit boards, CLPI and others can increase nonprofit policy capacity and impact on the critical issues of our day.

## Overview and Methodology

In 2008, the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest (CLPI) hired Innovation Network to assist with an evaluation of its training services. Innovation Network worked with CLPI to design a survey for trainees. CLPI administered the survey. To gather additional information, Innovation Network conducted follow-up interviews with a subset of respondents. This information was used to generate case studies highlighting the success of organizations that received CLPI advocacy training.

The survey instrument was designed to assess the change in learning and behavior in the organizations trained by CLPI. Specifically, the survey sought to identify any change in knowledge, confidence, motivation, capacity and engagement in advocacy activities. Survey content was drawn from CLPI's organizational Theory of Change, created in April 2007 with the help of Innovation Network (Appendix A).

CLPI launched the survey using Survey Monkey. Survey invitations were sent electronically to 1,238 individuals from nonprofit organizations that participated in CLPI trainings between 2004 and 2008 and for whom CLPI had e-mail addresses. The survey was sent out in four separate batches grouped primarily by funder. To help boost the response rate, CLPI offered a free advocacy tool to all those who completed the online survey. In an additional effort to increase responses, two e-mail reminders were sent during the period of time the survey was active. There were 209 total responses to the survey, a 16.88 percent response rate.

Survey responses were analyzed initially by CLPI staff using SPSS statistical software. Additional analysis was later conducted by Innovation Network.

All survey respondents were given the opportunity to provide contact information (name, organization and phone number) for a follow-up interview conducted by Innovation Network. Of the 50 respondents who offered this contact information, a subset of 10 was chosen for follow-up interviews. Innovation Network processed three of the interviews into case studies included in this report. To ensure reliability, Innovation Network employed a standard protocol to guide all interviews (Appendix C). Interviews varied in length from 15 to 30 minutes.

## Survey Findings

### Demographics

Respondents represented a wide range of nonprofit organizations and various roles within those organizations. Organizational categories were selected by CLPI. Health (23.3%), Housing and Community Development (16.6%), Education (15.3%) and Family Economic Security (14.7%) were more the most prevalent types of nonprofit organizations.

**Table 1: Type of Organization**

	Frequency <sup>2</sup>	Percentage
Health	38	23.3%
Housing and Community Development	27	16.6%
Education	25	15.3%
Family Economic Security	24	14.7%
Child Welfare	16	9.8%
Youth Development/After School	11	6.7%
Arts, Culture and Humanities	7	4.3%
Environment	4	2.5%
Religion	4	2.5%
Research	4	2.5%
Juvenile Justice	3	1.8%

Respondents represented an array of roles within their organizations, from executive directors to administrative staff and board members. The majority of survey respondents were organizational leadership (ED/CEO/President, Director or Senior Manager, Board Member) or policy personnel.

**Table 2: Organizational Role**

	Frequency <sup>3</sup>	Percentage
Executive Director/CEO/President	62	27.8%
Director or Senior Manager	40	17.9%
Policy Staff	21	9.4%
Program Staff	33	14.8%
Administrative Staff	10	4.5%
Other Staff Member	15	6.7%
Board Member	21	9.4%
Other, please specify	21	9.4%

<sup>2</sup> Original responses included 60 responses of “other” that were recoded by CLPI staff into the appropriate organizational type category.

<sup>3</sup> Included in the data for Organizational Role are 15 “other” responses that were recoded by CLPI staff into appropriate categories.



The organizational budgets of respondents presented a well-distributed mix. Nearly half of the respondents had budgets of less than \$750,000 and nearly one-third of more than \$2 million. The majority of nonprofit organizations that file a 990 with the IRS have budgets of \$500,000 or less, and less than 20 percent have budgets over \$1 million.<sup>4</sup> This information combined with organizational type indicates that CLPI reaches a broad spectrum of nonprofit organizations.

With one-third of CLPI's training being provided to organizations with budgets of \$2 million or more, it is possible that CLPI may be positioned to provide training to organizations that have the resources necessary to effectively dedicate themselves to more resource-intensive advocacy activities. This may also open up an opportunity for CLPI to generate fees for services that can then cross-subsidize CLPI's support for small to mid-size organizations.

**Table 3: Organizational Budget**

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than \$100,000	35	18.1%
\$100,000 – \$249,999	24	12.4%
\$250,000 – \$749,999	35	18.1%
\$750,000 – \$1,999,999	31	16.1%
\$2,000,000 – \$4,999,999	37	14.0%
\$5,000,000 - \$9,999,999	14	7.3%
\$10,000,000 or greater	27	14.0%

Organizations were also asked to indicate their level of advocacy experience. Those new to advocacy (34.5%) and those with some experience (46.2%) made up the bulk of the survey respondents. Those who deemed themselves “very experienced” in advocacy matters constituted a smaller but still significant group of respondents (19.3%).

**Table 4: Advocacy Experience**

	Frequency	Percentage
New	68	34.5%
Some experience	91	46.2%
Very experienced	38	19.3%

To add context to the demographics, the survey also looked at what caused organizations to get involved in advocacy. Respondents were asked “What was the critical factor that got your organization involved in advocacy?” Three very clear factors related to organizational mission emerged as catalysts that spurred organizations into action. They were: constituent needs or injustice; other internal factors such as new leadership and strategy; and the need for funding.

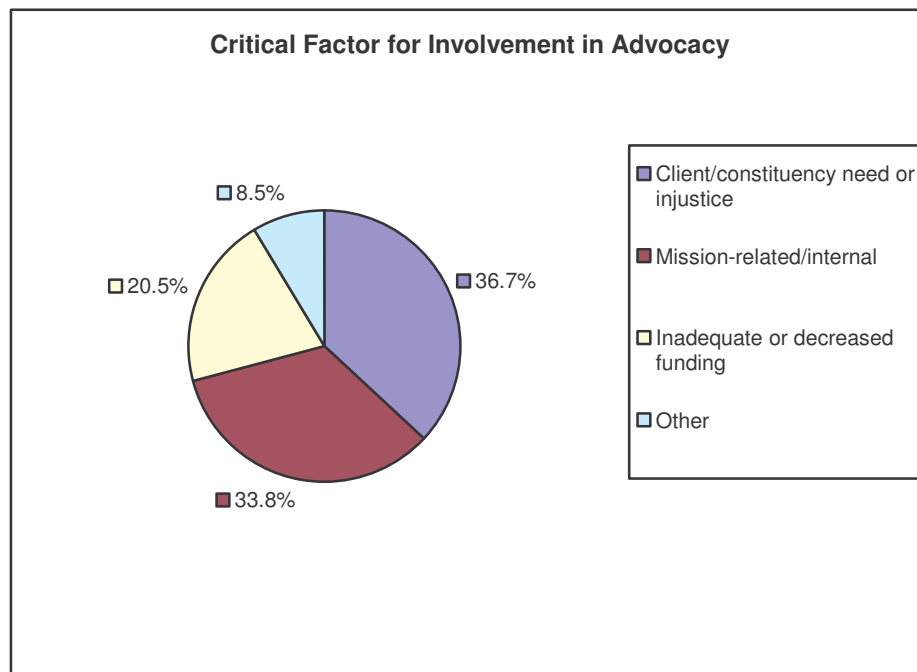
<sup>4</sup> *Nonprofit Sector in Brief Facts and Figures from the Nonprofit Almanac 2008: Public Charities, Giving and Volunteering*; The National center for Charitable Statistics at The Urban Institute; <http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=411664>.

Many respondents viewed their organizations' advocacy activities as responses to the needs of their constituency. More than one-third said client or constituency needs caused them to become involved in advocacy.

More than 33 percent of respondents highlighted other internal, mission-related reasons as the impetus for engaging in public policy advocacy. Internal motivators included the influence of new leadership within the organization and a shift in organizational perspective placing more emphasis on acting proactively in policy matters.

The third most mentioned critical factor was funding. Most prominent were a decrease of organizational funding and a need for more funding. The funding theme was most often spoken of in terms of accessing public funding sources to keep programs running effectively.

Chart 1



### Trainee Satisfaction

Three questions in the survey were designed to gather information on participant satisfaction. Respondents were asked to respond to questions about their overall experience, if they would use CLPI's trainings/resources again, and if they have recommended CLPI trainings/resources to their colleagues.

Participants were very pleased with the training experience they received from CLPI. Out of 167 responses, 157 respondents (94 percent) rated their training experience from "good" to "excellent." Only one respondent rated it as "poor" (see Table 8).

Respondents overwhelmingly reported that they would use CLPI’s trainings and resources again (118 out of 165 responses) (see Table 9). Additionally, 71.2 percent of respondents reported recommending CLPI trainings or resources to colleagues, a high referral rate (see Table 10). Without question, trainees were more than satisfied with the training services they received.

**Table 8: Overall, how would you rate your experience with CLPI? (n=167)**

	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	45	26.9%
Very good	79	47.3%
Good	33	19.8%
Fair	4	2.4%
Poor	1	.6%
No opinion	5	3.0%

**Table 9: Would your organization use CLPI’s trainings and resources again? (n=165)**

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	118	71.5%
No	4	2.4%
I don’t know	36	21.8%
We are still using CLPI’s trainings or resources	7	4.2%

**Table 10: Have you recommended CLPI’s trainings or resources to your colleagues? (n=163)**

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	116	71.2%
No	47	28.8%

Additional sentiments of client satisfaction came through very clearly in response to open-ended questions, a sample of which follows:

- *The training session was excellent. The information was well-presented, and the hand-outs were a great resource.*
- *The Miami NGO community is rather uninformed on how to improve advocacy and related resource development efforts. This type of training is badly needed.*
- *I was very impressed with the resource people and the training.*

*Change in Knowledge, Confidence and Motivation*

CLPI's theory of change includes the assertion that once awareness is increased through training, individuals will be more apt to take action in areas of nonprofit advocacy because of increases in knowledge, motivation and confidence. Training and information are important vehicles by which CLPI increases awareness to promote effective advocacy. Keeping true to this philosophy, survey respondents were asked to rate the three types of changes that may have occurred for them as a result of CLPI training. These changes were in knowledge and skills, confidence, and motivation.

Responses demonstrated important increases in knowledge, confidence and motivation, even with approximately 19% of respondents describing themselves as "very experienced" prior to the training. Significantly, the greatest increases occurred for board members across all three areas. Given that board members have a critical role in organizational leadership and development, targeting more training to boards may provide a unique and effective entry point. Moreover, as discussed further below, survey respondents identified boards as the second largest barrier to their organizations' policy involvement.

**Table 5: Mean rating of increased knowledge, confidence and motivation related to public policy advocacy (1=didn't increase, 5=greatly increased), by role in organization**

	Knowledge and skills	Confidence	Motivation
Executive Director/CEO/President	3.4	3.31	3.5
Director/Senior Manager (other than policy)	3.88	3.45	3.59
Policy Staff	3.18	3.06	3.41
Program Staff	3.68	3.48	3.68
Admin. Staff	3.56	3.22	3.22
Other Staff Member	3.08	3.18	3.18
Board Member	3.92	3.83	4.17

### Changes in Public Policy Engagement

CLPI wanted to know how the actual advocacy activities of respondents had increased as a result of their participation in CLPI trainings. The survey asked respondents to rate, using a 5 point scale from “didn’t increase” to “greatly increased,” their level of engagement in nine specific advocacy activities:

- Calling or visiting a legislator
- Conducting a public education campaign on an issue
- Meeting with a representative of a government agency
- Writing an Op-Ed or letter to the editor
- Conducting a media campaign
- Participating in a coalition
- Asking constituents to act on a public policy issue
- Conducting voter registration drives and get-out-the-vote campaigns

For the respondents who answered this question, there was a significant difference between the types of activities in which they reportedly engaged after the CLPI training. Approximately 60 percent or more of respondents reported that they increased contacts with a legislator, participation in a coalition and constituent requests to take action on a policy issue. The extent of the increases varied from slight to great.

By contrast, respondents did not increase other public policy activities in the time elapsed since completing the CLPI training. Thus, a large majority of respondents reported not increasing their election-related activities or more time- and resource-intensive activities such as media and public education campaigns. The 2008 Johns Hopkins study suggests that such differences may reflect the level of financial and staff resources needed for and devoted to policy involvement. For example, it requires more staff time and resources to conduct a public education campaign than to send out an e-mail alert on a policy-related matter.<sup>[1]</sup>

There are many variables that were beyond the scope of this evaluation and might merit further inquiry in the future. For example, the survey did not gather baseline data on individual or organizational policy activity nor control for the amount of time between the training and possible change in activity.

Even with limited resources and modest training support, the following sample comments, along with the success stories reported by respondents further below, demonstrate the actual and potential impact of such public policy trainings.

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<sup>[1]</sup> See *Nonprofit America: A Force for Democracy?* Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies (Listening Post Communiqué #9, 2008). Developed jointly with CLPI, this survey report found that there is breadth but lack of depth to nonprofit advocacy. Nonprofits indicate that increased funding for dedicated policy staff and for general operating support would most help them to deepen and sustain their policy engagement.

- *Mile High United Way became visible at the State Capitol and we were welcomed by legislature and staff with open arms...their comment often was 'why has it taken so long for MHUW to have an active voice and participation.'*
- *The timing was such that we visited with our local legislative delegation, presented some of our key issues that we believe we want to push during the next legislative session. We will be creating more of a legislative agenda and work plan towards the end of the summer, and will no doubt use some of the learnings from the CPLI training.*
- *Recruited volunteers to educate voters on a public policy issue regarding youth.*
- *Formed an advocacy task force with our national organization to support activities related to National Arts Day in DC.*

#### Barriers to Participating in Advocacy

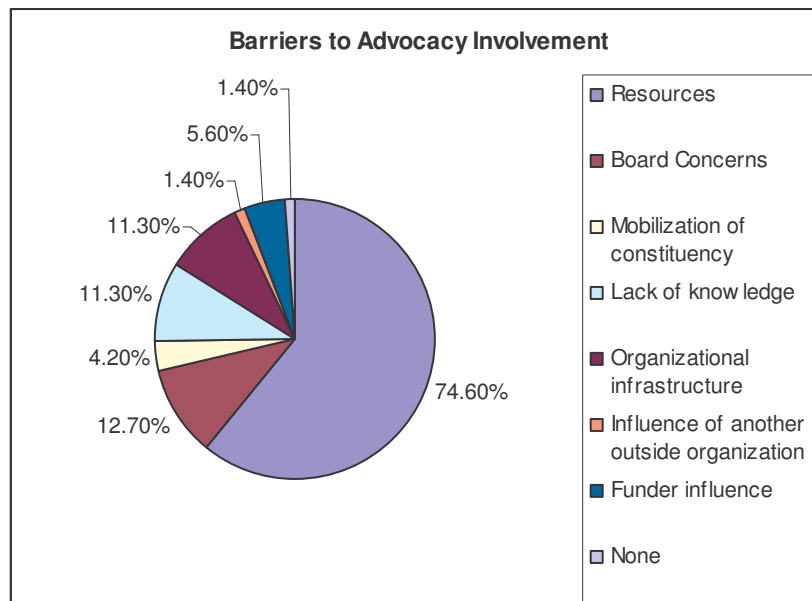
The CLPI-Innovation Network survey asked respondents to list the challenges or obstacles hindering their organizations' efforts to build capacity for increased engagement in advocacy. Respondents encountered many barriers, and they had much to say about them. This particular item yielded more response than any other open-ended question in the survey. There were 71 total responses that often listed multiple barriers to advocacy.

The top barrier reported was resources, with 74.6 percent of responses. These responses covered a range of resource shortfalls including staffing challenges and lack of staff time and funds to devote to policy work.

The second most reported barrier to policy involvement was dealing with concerns of the organizations' boards of directors, with 12.7 percent of responses.

Lack of advocacy knowledge and barriers related to organizational infrastructure were also mentioned, each at 11.3 percent of responses.

Chart 2:



### Success Stories

Despite barriers, CLPI trainees undertook significant action in the public policy arena that built capacity and advanced their missions. The following are a few examples of the success stories shared by respondents.

- *At the third public hearing on the county budget at which line staff testified regarding our need for funding, I appeared and reminded commissioners that we have been asking for four years, and they have declined for four years, but they continue to refer constituents to us. Commissioners replied that our testimony that night was "compelling" and agreed to fund us. We got confirmation a few weeks later.*
- *We worked to support the passed legislation for Idaho's Grocery Tax Credit increase. It now includes those who don't file a tax return and they will receive a credit check in next tax season.*
- *We have successfully been part of coalitions that have created public policy change on the local level. We have established several new smoke free ordinances and new Responsible Beverage Server Training ordinances in our region. Also we are in the process of working on new policy related changes.*

After the survey, Innovation Network interviewed a subset of survey respondents to gather deeper information on the successes that the organizations had seen after implementing what they learned in CLPI training. Three case studies were developed based on the follow-up interviews.

## **Jeri Shumate, 211info**

Jeri Shumate led 211info, a nonprofit organization that connects people to social services information. Part of the national 2-1-1 system, this regional service in the northwestern United States allows callers to speak with a live person who will assess their needs (such as housing, food and transportation services) and direct them to resources in their local communities. In practice, the system works like a free 411 call specifically for human services. Jeri participated in a daylong conference on advocacy for nonprofits, where she attended the CLPI training session.

After learning more about nonprofit advocacy six months ago at the CLPI training, Jeri immediately began operating differently. She described her organization as new to advocacy, but stated “I feel like there’s no turning back” after the CLPI training. She began thinking her advocacy strategy through more carefully. She became more aggressive in forming and using relationships with government entities. Jeri came away from the CLPI training with vital information on the workings of her state government budget systems and a better understanding of how to get involved in that process. As a result, 211info made a formal request for funding from the state of Oregon “in a fashion and manner I wouldn’t have known about before that training.” Jeri reported, “We might not have been on top of the funding time frame if I hadn’t attended that presentation.” After learning more about the budget process, she was able to lead her organization through taking more strategic steps in conducting advocacy, rather than just working in the dark and hoping for the best. For example, Jeri learned that the Oregon legislature’s budget must meet final approval of the governor, so Jeri led 211info to meet with the governor first and then approached the legislature. “We’ve gone for the governor first and then the legislature, which is something I wouldn’t have known to do before.”

“The essential learning is that we’re not categorically prohibited from lobbying just because we’re a nonprofit. That was new information to me.” Jeri met with the president of her board of directors about getting more involved with advocacy. In order to provide clearer parameters around organizational activity, 211info decided to make the 501(h) election. This is a decision that Jeri felt confident would benefit the organization in the future.

At the county level, 211info mobilized the communities that benefit from its services to advocate for funding from the county government. Supporters wrote letters, made calls and attended public hearings. Engaging the community in advocacy efforts paid off. One county government began assisting in the support of 211info after turning them down for four years. While Jeri saw this as a small win, CLPI training has changed the way she viewed the future. For example, she stated, “I can now go to the county to ask them if they will put us on their state legislative agenda.”

Training on nonprofit advocacy has helped 211info realize the full range of possibilities within reach. A more empowered 211info has emerged to access greater resources and provide better services to the citizens of Oregon.



## Ellen Bush, CASA of Montana

Ellen Bush is the executive director of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Montana. CASA is a nationwide organization with almost 1,000 programs spanning multiple states. Its mission is to recruit and train volunteers who then become advocates for children involved in the court system due to being removed from their homes. CASA of Montana provides court advocacy education and training for all court child advocates in the state.

Ellen attended CLPI training two years ago, and was impressed with the handout materials provided. She has since used them in her trainings with local volunteers and in educating her board members. She has found that the CLPI materials allow her to confront misconceptions about nonprofit advocacy and prompt stakeholders to action.

Training from CLPI has given Ellen and CASA of Montana the tools to push for greater change. For example, CASA has worked on supporting an initiative that would impact the way in which the court system handles dismissal of cases where a child has been removed from a home.

As CASA began an additional advocacy campaign for increased funding, they leveraged their relationships in local communities. First, volunteers wrote letters to the editor. Next came the main battle – getting into the governor’s budget. CASA experienced little success in securing a meeting with the Governor’s Office until they tapped their connections. One of the men who participated in its annual bike ride fundraiser worked at the state Auditor’s Office. He was able to secure CASA a meeting with the Governor’s Office. By using its connections wisely and strategizing its approach, CASA of Montana achieved a notable advocacy win. During the last legislative session, the organization was able to get local program funding increased from \$115,000 to \$300,000 per year. “It’s the first time we heavily got involved at a grassroots level and targeted specific legislators on powerful committees. The training came at the right time and I became more comfortable with doing that.”

CASA of Montana’s staff has accomplished remarkable things in the short time that they have refocused a portion of their efforts on nonprofit advocacy. Ellen’s eyes were opened by CLPI training; increases in funds, potential program improvements and greater use of relationships soon followed.

## **Barbara Gorzinski, Associated Ministries**

As a program manager at Associated Ministries of Tacoma-Pierce County, Barbara Gorzinski works on asset-building issues for low-income people in Pierce, Wash. She has been leading her organization in advocacy work around the issues most important to her clients. By working in coalition with other local organizations, Associated Ministries has seen legislative successes in Pierce County.

The boost for Barbara's increased advocacy efforts came from a daylong event sponsored by the United Way that she attended in Tacoma. CLPI presented sessions at that event, providing resources, advice and direct training around nonprofit advocacy work. Barbara still uses references and resources provided by CLPI, especially its booklet on legal parameters for advocacy engagement. Before attending CLPI's workshop, she said, "I didn't realize that I needed to register or track how many times I speak with legislators, and so I do that now."

Moreover, she has worked to institutionalize advocacy activities within her organization by working more closely with the board and "trying to get more clients—the people our services are for—to do a lot of lobbying and providing them with the tools to do the advocacy." By arming her clients with information she learned from CLPI, such as information about the legislative process and how constituent opinions could impact a legislator, Barbara made them into effective advocates for Associated Ministries' mission.

Since receiving training from CLPI, Associated Ministries has put much more energy into meeting with legislators and getting to know potential legislative champions. They have led a coalition promoting a statewide asset-building initiative. With Associated Ministries in a leadership role, the coalition continues to work on addressing legislative issues that enable low-income citizens to build assets (anti-predatory payday lending, financial education, etc.).

Training from CLPI helped Barbara feel more empowered to work at the legislative level, pushing for change in the lives of her clients. As a result of that work, and the work of the coalition, the state of Washington adopted a Working Families Tax Credit. This credit is based on the federal Earned Income Tax Credit guideline and provides a remittance to low-income families for sales tax that they are paying in the state.

Associated Ministries and the asset-building coalition have achieved great policy wins to benefit the low-income residents of Washington. Not only is Barbara much more aware of her advocacy power, she is also leveraging relationships with clients and coalition members in more effective ways to benefit the clients served by Associated Ministries.

## Conclusion

Training participants had a very positive experience and found value in nonprofit lobbying training provided by CLPI. This is exemplified by their recommending CLPI training and resources to colleagues at such a high rate. Trainees demonstrated an increase in knowledge, confidence and motivation related to policy involvement. CLPI has been successful in achieving these outcomes consistent with its theory of change.

In addition, after CLPI trainings, respondents increased their levels of activity in contacting legislators and constituents and participating in coalitions on relevant policy issues. Limited resources and other barriers may have kept respondents from greater involvement in these activities. They also may explain in part why large majorities reportedly did not increase involvement in nonpartisan election-related activities or more time- and resource-intensive activities such as public education and media campaigns. The survey lacked sufficient baseline and other data for better analysis.

Even with resource constraints and the limited timeframe between the CLPI training and survey, respondents reported significant policy-related gains in organizational capacity, confidence and impact. The success stories brim with a sense of empowerment and concrete gains related to increased public funding and program improvements. All of this is inspiring and holds promise for future efforts.

Echoing other studies, this evaluation suggests that increased philanthropic support for nonprofit advocacy and ongoing training that makes the connection between policy, constituent needs and organizational mission provide the keys to success. The survey also suggests that targeting more training to boards of directors may be an effective way to overcome organizational barriers. In sum, effective nonprofit policy engagement is needed more than ever. More intensive and sustained public policy training and support can yield a substantial return in advancing nonprofit missions.

## Appendix A – CLPI Theory of Change

### **Mission Statement:**

The Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest (CLPI) promotes, supports and protects 501(c)(3) nonprofit advocacy and lobbying in order to strengthen participation in our democratic society and advance charitable missions.

### **Problem Statement:**

Nonprofit organizations do not consistently or effectively engage in public policy because they underestimate the importance of such engagement to achieving their mission, they do not understand how to effectively engage in advocacy, and the environment surrounding nonprofits – including philanthropy – does not encourage them to do so.

### **Goal:**

Nonprofit organizations consistently and effectively engage in the public policy process to build their capacity and impact.

### **Resources:**

Funding; CLPI staff, consultants, Fellows (trainers), and partners; Web site; Existing materials, resources, and curricula; CLPI's reputation and brand recognition.

### **Activity Groups:**

- Support the participation of nonprofits in the public policy process by providing tools, organizing networks to convey those tools, and delivering high-quality trainings;
- Promote the participation of nonprofits in the public policy process by acting as a catalyst for nonprofit advocacy and lobbying within the nonprofit and philanthropy sector; and
- Protect and expand nonprofit advocacy rights.

This theory of change, including the below chart, was developed in April 2007 with the help of Innovation Network.

Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
<b>Support</b>				
<p><u>Standard Trainings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct preliminary research</li> <li>• Develop relevant curricula</li> <li>• Recruit and train Training Fellows</li> <li>• Regularly convene the Fellows</li> <li>• Market the trainings</li> <li>• Deliver the trainings</li> <li>• Evaluate and continuously improve the trainings</li> </ul> <p><u>Disseminate Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct preliminary research</li> <li>• Develop relevant resources</li> <li>• Post the resources online</li> <li>• Market the resources</li> <li>• Evaluate and continuously improve the resources</li> </ul> <p><u>Technical Assistance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market the technical assistance</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance</li> <li>• Update the FAQs, based on research and evaluation findings</li> <li>• Evaluate and improve TA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of trainings</li> <li>• # of Training Fellows</li> <li>• # of participants/ organizations at the trainings</li> <li>• # of resources developed</li> <li>• # of resources disseminated through trainings, publications sold, etc.</li> <li>• # of unique visitors to the Web site</li> <li>• # of registered users of the Web site</li> <li>• # of TA phone calls or e-mails fielded</li> <li>• # of people/ organizations served through TA</li> <li>• # of times newsletter is sent</li> <li>• # of times newsletter is opened</li> <li>• # of evaluation reports created/disseminated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of the importance of participating in advocacy</li> <li>• Increased motivation to make a difference</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of how to engage in advocacy</li> <li>• Increased confidence in their ability to engage in advocacy</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of the advocacy/public policy environment</li> <li>• Myths around advocacy are debunked</li> <li>• Decreased anxiety around engaging in advocacy</li> <li>• Increased knowledge, skills and confidence to build the capacity of their organizations</li> <li>• Increased strategic thinking around advocacy</li> <li>• Increased awareness of available resources provided by CLPI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals become champions for advocacy within their organizations and the sector</li> <li>• Organizations build their capacity to be more successful in the advocacy arena</li> <li>• Organizations become more engaged in the advocacy process</li> <li>• Organizations work to build the sector’s capacity to be successful in the advocacy arena</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonprofit organizations are prepared and have the institutional capacity to engage in legislative activity.</li> <li>• Nonprofit organizations’ lobbying rights are secured and expanded.</li> <li>• There is broad change across the nonprofit sector in how advocacy is perceived.</li> </ul>

Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
<b>Promote</b>				
<p><u>Social Marketing Campaign</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop goal</li> <li>• Conduct research</li> <li>• Develop plan</li> <li>• Secure funding</li> <li>• Implement plan</li> </ul> <p><u>Promotion of nonprofit advocacy and lobbying</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Ambassador program</li> <li>• Develop messages</li> <li>• Determine appropriate outlets for messages</li> <li>• Determine appropriate messengers</li> <li>• Define target audiences for messages</li> <li>• Develop Smucker Symposium</li> </ul> <p><u>Development of resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop e-newsletter</li> <li>• Develop and refine Web site and training resource center</li> <li>• Redesign one-pagers and legal pamphlets</li> <li>• Develop CLPI exhibit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research findings</li> <li>• Goal statement</li> <li>• # of funders showing interest</li> <li>• \$ raised for campaign</li> <li>• # and type of materials developed</li> <li>• # of nonprofits reached</li> <li>• # of Ambassadors recruited</li> <li>• # of speeches made</li> <li>• # of articles produced</li> <li>• # of conference sessions or breakout sessions</li> <li>• # of exhibits</li> <li>• # of quotes or media calls</li> <li>• # of newsletters published</li> <li>• # of times newsletter is sent</li> <li>• # of times newsletter is opened</li> <li>• # of unique visitors to the Web site</li> <li>• # of registered users of the Web site</li> <li>• # of redesigned one-pagers or legal pamphlets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of the importance of participating in advocacy</li> <li>• Increased motivation to make a difference</li> <li>• Increased engagement of the target audiences in the “ask” of the campaign</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of the advocacy/public policy environment</li> <li>• Myths around advocacy are debunked</li> <li>• Increased awareness of available resources provided by CLPI</li> <li>• Increased communication between CLPI and the target audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target audiences seek out additional resources from CLPI</li> <li>• Increased reflection of CLPI messages in the media</li> <li>• Individuals become champions for advocacy within their organizations and the sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonprofit organizations are prepared and have the institutional capacity to engage in legislative activity</li> <li>• Nonprofit organizations’ lobbying rights are secured and expanded</li> <li>• There is broad change across the nonprofit sector in how advocacy is perceived</li> </ul>

Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
<b><i>Protect</i></b>				
<p><u>Coalition-building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build coalition</li> <li>• Engage coalition</li> <li>• Mobilize coalition</li> </ul> <p><u>Relationship-building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build relationships with elected officials</li> <li>• Build relationships with administrative officials</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy Work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and track legislation</li> <li>• Make recommendations to boards of directors</li> <li>• Research proactive legislation</li> <li>• Introduce proactive legislation</li> <li>• Conduct grassroots and direct lobbying</li> <li>• Conduct media outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of coalition members</li> <li>• # of coalition meetings</li> <li>• # of resources developed</li> <li>• # of resources disseminated</li> <li>• # of meetings held with elected officials</li> <li>• # of meetings held with administrative officials</li> <li>• # of grassroots contacts</li> <li>• # of viable issues addressed</li> <li>• # of reports to boards of directors</li> <li>• # of media articles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased capacity of CLPI to address policy issues</li> <li>• Increased visibility of CLPI on Capitol Hill as a resource on nonprofit advocacy/policy issues</li> <li>• Increased visibility of CLPI with the IRS as a resource on nonprofit advocacy/policy issues</li> <li>• Increased visibility of CLPI on Capitol Hill as a resource on proactive legislation issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLPI is seen as a credible resource for nonprofit advocacy issues by federal elected and administrative officials</li> <li>• Increased legislative support of proactive policy issues</li> <li>• Increased legislative support for defensive policy issues</li> <li>• Increased grassroots network through the mobilization of the coalition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonprofit organizations are prepared and have the institutional capacity to engage in legislative activity</li> <li>• Nonprofit organizations' lobbying rights are secured and expanded</li> <li>• There is broad change across the nonprofit sector in how advocacy is perceived</li> </ul>

## Appendix B – Survey Results

### Question 1: What is your organization's primary focus? (n=163)

	Frequency	Percentage
Arts, Culture and Humanities	7	4.3%
Child Welfare	16	9.8%
Environment	4	2.5%
Family Economic Security	24	14.7%
Health	38	23.3%
Housing and Community Development	27	16.6%
Juvenile Justice	3	1.8%
Religion	4	2.5%
Education	25	15.3%
Research	4	2.5%
Youth Development/After School	11	6.7%

### Question 2: What is your position within the organization? (n=223)

	Frequency	Percentage
Executive Director/CEO/President	62	27.8%
Director or Senior Manager	40	17.9%
Policy Staff	21	9.4%
Program Staff	33	14.8%
Administrative Staff	10	4.5%
Other Staff Member	15	6.7%
Board Member	21	9.4%
Other, please specify	21	9.4%

Other:

- Community Organizer
- Volunteer Case Advocate
- Prevention Specialist
- General Counsel
- Civic Leader
- Lobbyist
- Communications Consultant
- Community Outreach
- Development Director
- Director of Marketing and Communications
- Youth Programs Coordinator
- Parent Site Council Representative (high school)
- Day Program Coordinator
- Volunteer/Active Member



- Volunteer
- Consumer Council Representative
- Education/Prevention Specialist
- Russell Family Foundation Jane's Fellow
- Steering Committee Member
- Regional Assistant
- Communications Manager

**Question 3:** What is your organization's annual budget? (n=193)

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than \$100,000	35	18.1%
\$100,000 – \$249,999	24	12.4%
\$250,000 – \$749,999	35	18.1%
\$750,000 – \$1,999,999	31	16.1%
\$2,000,000 – \$4,999,999	37	14.0%
\$5,000,000 - \$9,999,999	14	7.3%
\$10,000,000 or greater	27	14.0%

**Question 4:** What is the approximate percentage of your organization's resources that are devoted to advocacy? (n=194)

	Frequency	Percentage
0% – 10%	127	65.5%
11% – 25%	33	17.0%
26% – 50%	13	6.7%
51% – 75%	14	7.2%
76% – 100%	7	3.6%

**Question 5:** When you received CLPI training was your organization relatively new to advocacy or more experienced? (n=197)

	Frequency	Percentage
New	68	34.5%
Some experience	91	46.2%
Very experienced	38	19.3%

**Question 6:** How long ago did you participate in a CLPI training? (n=168)

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than one year ago	130	77.4%
One to two years ago	29	17.3%
More than two years ago	9	5.4%

**Question 7:** To what extent did the training increase your ...

	Didn't increase	Slightly increased	Somewhat increased	Significantly increased	Greatly Increased	Not applicable
... <i>knowledge and skills</i> related to public policy advocacy? (n=170)	4 2.4%	31 18.2%	50 29.4%	50 29.4%	34 20.0%	1 .6%
... <i>confidence</i> with engaging in public policy advocacy? (n=168)	10 6.0%	32 19.0%	44 26.2%	49 29.2%	31 18.5%	2 1.2%
... <i>motivation</i> to take action in public policy advocacy? (n=166)	10 6.0%	23 13.9%	37 22.3%	54 32.5%	41 24.7%	1 .6%

**Question 8:** What has your organization done to build its CAPACITY as a result of the CLPI training? Please select *all* responses that apply.

	Frequency	Percentage
Educated or trained staff members	66	31.9%
Educated or trained board members	55	26.6%
Dedicated at least one staff person part-time to advocacy/public policy	19	9.2%
Dedicated at least one staff person full-time to advocacy/public policy	4	1.9%
Volunteer(s) dedicated to advocacy/public policy	32	15.5%
Discussed public policy involvement with Board	57	27.5%
Established a Board committee for public policy	9	4.3%
Created a policy plan for our organization	23	11.1%
Integrated advocacy into our organization's strategic plan	39	18.8%
Discussed the 501(h) election within our organization	33	15.9%
Made the 501(h) election	8	3.9%

**Question 9:** After the CLPI training, to what extent did your organization increase its ENGAGEMENT in the following activities?

	Didn't increase	Slightly increased	Somewhat increased	Significantly increased	Greatly increased
Called a legislator regarding a policy issue (even if you spoke to legislator's staff) (n=145)	48 33.1%	45 31.0%	26 17.9%	16 11.0%	10 6.9%
Visited with a legislator and/or staff regarding a policy issue (n=145)	59 40.7%	32 22.1%	26 17.9%	20 13.8%	8 5.5%
Met with a government agency representative regarding a policy or regulatory issue (n=143)	66 46.2%	26 18.2%	26 18.2%	18 12.6%	7 4.9%
Conducted a public education campaign regarding a policy issue (n=136)	81 59.6%	26 19.1%	14 10.3%	11 8.1%	4 2.9%
Written an Op-Ed or letter to the editor regarding a policy issue (n=139)	87 62.6%	21 15.1%	19 13.7%	9 6.5%	3 2.2%
Conducted a media campaign regarding a policy issue (n=133)	100 75.2%	12 9.0%	10 7.5%	5 3.8%	6 4.5%
Participated in a coalition around a policy issue (n=142)	49 34.5%	33 23.2%	31 21.8%	20 14.1%	9 6.3%
Asked constituents or allies to take action on a policy issue (n=140)	51 36.4%	36 25.7%	26 18.6%	19 13.6%	8 5.7%
Planned election-related activities (Voter registration, "Get out the Vote," candidate forums, etc.) (n=135)	99 73.3%	14 10.4%	9 6.7%	9 6.7%	4 3.0%

**Question 10:** For organizations that have increased advocacy activity since the CLPI training, to what extent has this affected ...

	Didn't increase	Slightly increased	Somewhat increased	Moderately increased	Greatly increased	Not applicable
Organizational funding (n=123)	64 52.0%	12 9.8%	14 11.4%	1 .8%	1 .8%	31 25.2%
Number of clients served (n=121)	57 47.1	14 11.6%	12 9.9%	4 3.3%	1 .8%	33 27.3%
Quality of service for clients (n=121)	44 36.4%	24 19.8%	16 13.2%	4 3.3%	3 2.5%	30 24.8%
Organizational size in terms of staff, members or volunteers (n=122)	68 55.7%	17 13.9%	5 4.1%	2 1.6%	2 1.6%	28 23.0%
Visibility in the media or public (n=124)	40 32.3%	29 23.4%	15 12.1%	9 7.3%	5 4.0%	26 21.0%

**Question 11:** Please describe any "Success Story" related to your organization's public policy involvement. It may be internal or external success, or both. (n=41)

- *Senior staff member is involved with several state-wide boards that address policy for transportation and other economic development issues.*
- *We have successfully been part of coalitions that have created public policy change on the local level. We have established several new smoke free ordinances and new Responsible Beverage Server Training ordinances in our region. Also we are in the process of working on new policy related changes.*
- *We were able to marshal a coalition of builders and developers, government planners, lenders and consumers to convince legislators to adopt a mechanism to enforce the design and construction (accessibility) requirements of the Federal Fair Housing Act effectively and efficiently.*
- *During the 2008 legislative session we were able to get legislation passed increasing housing options for persons with disabilities.*
- *Strong relationships in many Congressional offices; proposed legislation at the Federal level. At the state level, successes in legislation and funding increases*
- *After the training, we created an awareness session of USA elections and encouraged people in our community to learn how to make choices and take decision. As a result of this exercise, people in our community who are eligible to vote (even those who are not eligible) have actively participated in the campaigning and other activities of their candidates.*

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- *We sent over 12 volunteers to after hours training on how to contact potential voters by phone.*
  - *Pro-Literacy Detroit conducted a Workshop on technology-based literacy instruction at the MI Dept. of Labor and Economic Growth Adult Education Workshop in May 2008.*
  - *We did a large media outreach on the necessity of early childhood education and concerns around the reduction in funds available to support the costs associated with providing care.*
  - *We have successfully engaged the support of the American Federation of Teachers in the organizational development of our Alliance. With their technical assistance we conducted a community canvass that grew our organization by 500 members in 1 week.*
  - *Passage of new laws impacting foster care placements and removals*
  - *Differing points of view on homeless population was brought to public attention and created more awareness.*
  - *Use our big fundraiser for advocacy too, grassroots development. I feel comfortable about what is allowed - still find some people don't see it that way. Starting on our policy for legislative session six months before it begins. Board took a position on CHIP imitative [sic] although hesitant at first.*
  - *We were able to connect a child care provider with her legislator to advocate for timely payments from the Department of Human Services for services provided to children receiving childcare assistance from the state. Payments were delayed 30, 60, 90 days and legislation was passed to pay providers within 10 business days of submitting their invoices.*
  - *City Council approved the Community Connect BIP #8; and the ONI budget*
  - *Prompted board members to meet with an agency administrator to help us understand the agency's regulations*
  - *We worked to support the passed legislation for Idaho's Grocery Tax Credit increase. It now includes those who don't file a tax return and they will receive a credit check in next tax season.*
  - *Increased funding at state level ... hope it lasts*
  - *We received an increase of state funds in 2007. We've increased capacity with our online advocacy and re-vamped our website.*
  - *We put on a workshop for our sister organizations, mostly around 990 issues, but also to encourage them to file the 501 h election. They all left the workshop ready to elect.*
  - *Haven't had one yet*

- *Got a feature story run in the newspaper*
- *At the third public hearing on the county budget at which line staff testified regarding our need for funding, I appeared and reminded commissioners that we have been asking for four years, and they have declined for four years, but they continue to refer constituents to us. Commissioners replied that our testimony that night was "compelling" and agreed to fund us. We got confirmation a few weeks later.*
- *We were able to modestly modify visiting rules with the department of corrections and tell of other problems related to visiting*
- *We increased the interest of the State Legislature in financial literacy delivery across the state. A work group was established through a Senate bill that will result in recommendations for action in improving standards, access, and funding of financial literacy programs.*
- *We have successfully lobbied our state rep to back off legislation that would have affected us adversely and provided no material gain for others. But the person who did that is leaving the organization. Thanks to your training, I am better qualified to take on that task.*
- *Working with health advocacy groups, suing advocacy groups to aid in our education and in education program coming soon [sic].*
- *We were able to get a "bootstrap" grant to support a half time resource development staff person for up to three years! This will be a great boost to our visibility, political strength, and fundraising.*
- *Organized North Dakota Housing Trust Fund Alliance*
- *Too soon to say....*
- *Increase in employee wages budget code changes state provider organization hired a full time director which can help more with lobbying*
- *Participated in several statewide coalitions which increased state investments in early learning and anti-poverty efforts.*
- *Organization is very directly involved in discussions with the county regarding county supported community mental health services.*
- *In coalition with others, helped get the Simple Majority referendum passed.*
- *Appointment of a board member to chair public policy committee. Tentative commitment to restructure reporting relationship of public policy committee to the board.*

- *Educate the public around housing issues.*
- *Working in coalition with several groups, we got the state legislature to put back into its budget funds that it had granted to our community for an early childhood program but then cut from the state budget.*
- *The first bill signed by Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter this year was a foster child care bill and it was covered by the newspapers and local TV.*
- *We were told that our efforts in support of a specific piece of legislation helped gain its passage. This legislation will improve outcomes for our clients.*
- *The newest knowledge was on the 501 (h) election and it was something that the state Board members were very interested in being able to use. Also some of the information from the training was shared with them and their understanding became greater on advocacy vs. lobbying.*

**Question 12:** What challenges or obstacles hindered your organization's efforts to build capacity for or increase engagement in advocacy? (n=71)

- *The ability to expand dedicated resources.*
- *The major is funding. We do not have direct funding from any foundation or organizations that is intended for building capacity for or increase engagement in advocacy.*
- *Organizations to which I assist do not have any budget for expenses related to political and advocacy activities.*
- *Our current scope of work is requiring the majority of organizational staff and financial resources. Although on the list of "things to do", creating an advocacy agenda has been pre-empted by other activities.*
- *Small size of staff, Board concern re: involvement in advocacy*
- *Getting people engaged on issues that don't have a significant sense of importance, application or immediacy to them, but are important to the long term strength of the program which serves them.*
- *Time and human resources*
- *Some board members are very insistent that we stay out of policy discussions so as not to alienate the current administration.*
- *Resources and savvy*

- *Time and money. We are actively working on both.*
- *Lack of a Board*
- *Time*
- *Managing outreach with limited staff support. Hesitant to start something we cannot manage well.*
- *Management's understanding of the benefits/pitfalls that are involved.*
- *Getting funders to feel comfortable with advocacy as a strategy to increase funding for services*
- *There are few funding opportunities for advocacy activities. Most grants are now focused on units of service or client contacts, not pro-active influencing of public policy.*
- *Continuous need to educate constituents on issues and ways to impact change.*
- *City Political and other Charity organizations (United Way of the Plains).*
- *Lack of funding and staff*
- *Don't have a straightforward policy, but moving that direction. Have new task force leader who has not been through this training, but very open to work with legislators and building relationships.*
- *The board is still not sure about this stuff. More than half our funding is federal, and they are worried about the Hatch Act.*
- *Funding for advocacy is hard to obtain.*
- *We would benefit from at least a part time dedicated staff member to separate the wheat from the chaff, and marshal our volunteer and staff resources. This requires money.*
- *Too few staff*
- *Local agency always worries about crossing the line into lobbying [sic].*
- *An internal bias among "survivalists" on the board against working with the public sector (2) a lack of agreement within the board on public policy questions (3) a lack of agreement within the board on whether the board should take positions on public issues at all [sic]*
- *Still encouraging faith groups to be involved and its [sic] the right thing to do.*



- *We are recovering from a period of financial difficulty, and all our energy is focused on building capacity for resource development and gearing up for more frequent housing development.*
- *Our organization (Commission on Children and Families) is an interesting hybrid of activism within government. In Lane County our Commission is supported by a County Department of Children and Families. This has both benefits and challenges. We have great access to County and City elected officials and are partners at many policy making tables. However, we are also somewhat restricted in what we can advocate for alone, because we have to follow our organizations protocols as well as the restrictions that come with being a government agency and advisory group.*
- *Loss of a major federal funding source to an agency ill equipped to perform the services*
- *It's difficult to get people to act... and we have a hard time finding out who in our grassroots network knows or has connections with elected officials to increase our effectiveness.*
- *We are largely government funded, and have to tread carefully. We have maxed-out volunteers and strained staff.*
- *We need more public relations, advertising our organization but we do not have the staff or expertise in that area.*
- *We needed education in how to, and courage. We still need more human resource capacity.*
- *Very limited funds and personnel*
- *Resources and time*
- *We're too small. All efforts/resources go to the immediate needs/goals of our org.*
- *We are still a fairly new organization and are heavily focused on governance and systems development right now (developing the board, setting fundraising goals and plans, defining programs, etc)*
- *Many members are afraid of engaging in advocacy because we are a 501(c)(3) and they don't want to lose it. It would be difficult for the current chair to manage these activities as closely as he has because it might require delegating.*
- *Board understanding and buy-in*
- *I think that not knowing how the direct services provider can advocate or even if they should be a part of this process is a direct hindrance.*
- *Lots of internal changes diverted our attention from advocacy for several months.*

- *We spend most of our time teaching school or managing school*
- *Time and resources*
- *Scarcity of operational grants.*
- *Time constraints*
- *Lack of time/funding*
- *Overwhelmed with the "small stuff" of running an organization*
- *Cannot spend money directly on lobbying*
- *Too short-staffed and too small a budget to educate advocates.*
- *Lack of resources. We appear to have a large organizational budget but most of it is expended in grants to community agencies. Staffing is lean.*
- *Attitudes*
- *Administrative and staff changes having nothing to do with the advocacy training have limited our ability to focus on this important component of our work*
- *Time. We are experiencing tremendous growth as an agency. We do direct service and have 39 programs. Writing grants, complying with reporting requirement, data collection, and operating programs essentially takes up more than the time available.*
- *Capacity of our technology - want to be able to reach out and touch more of our members - we are working on this and making it a budget priority money*
- *Public Policy Director position is not considered "leadership" staff and has little or no role in helping guide the organization's strategic efforts. We are located in a Capitol City and the Policy Director has major visibility with the legislature.*
- *We are limited by what the staff can do on a very part-time basis and what one very dedicated board member can do among all her other philanthropic activities. We also have to proceed carefully to ensure that we do not do harm to any of our board members' interests.*
- *Organizational Capacity -not enough staff*
- *The board of directors were very nervous and somewhat tentative, would we upset any of our agency partners or more important was \$ donors.*

- *Our Board has been slow to get behind public policy. Many are conservative and don't think government is the answer to anything good. SCHIP controversy didn't help. Locally, pre-K was a partisan issue.*
- *Job vacancy*
- *We are a small membership organization with one staff person.*
- *One challenge is that our infrastructure is not fully developed so therefore, there is no public policy committee and, of course, the immediacy of issues during a legislative year was not available. We encouraged members to get involved with what is happening in interim committees.*
- *I admit that it wasn't until after the workshop that I realized that we needed to take a look at whether or not I would be doing a significant amount of lobbying. It seems unlikely that I would use more than the amount specified in the h election, but it is important to note for the future that I may need to set up a different organization if we want to focus any significant attention to lobbying.*
- *Once the board supported this effort, the primary obstacle was financial, i.e., allocating the budget needed to build this capacity.*

**Question 13:** What was the critical factor that got your organization involved in advocacy?  
(n=68)

- *The critical factor that got our organization involved in advocacy is the discrimination against our clients in workplaces, school and the community in which they reside.*
- *I would like to form an advocacy group that would center on increasing media coverage, political awareness and cooperation among the 60 - 100 non-profit organizations trying to rebuild the MS Gulf Coast.*
- *Our need to address access to the resources that are used to support mission and activities.*
- *We've always been involved in advocacy through local, state, and national advocacy groups, primarily to increase funding for child care subsidies and quality early education and care services.*
- *Desire to bring faith-informed decision making to the legislative process.*
- *We are in a good position to be able to comment on policies and how their implementation has affected abused and neglected children.*
- *The people who walk or roll through our door and ask for help are suffering in the presence of our staff.*
- *Knowing the legal ins and outs of advocacy for a 501(c) 3 organization.*

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- *Lack of resources for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*
  - *Lack of funding increases from major funders; increased competition for funding*
  - *Funding for people with disabilities*
  - *We do believe the stories need to be shared; the poor in our country need advocates. Many do not vote.*
  - *Recommended by a trusted source: United Way of Miami-Dade*
  - *We were formed to do advocacy as a major strategy*
  - *The adult illiteracy rate is 47% in the City of Detroit*
  - *Me, but now I have left the position with that organization*
  - *Institutionalized wage theft by State agencies in the establishment of child care subsidy reimbursement rates*
  - *The welfare of children not being a priority of lawmakers, and the public at large*
  - *Concern for hunger and homeless issues*
  - *Decrease in state funding and local funding*
  - *Need to increase funding for programs. My own experience as a former federal funding manager/advocate (I moved to Miami from Washington DC)*
  - *Need for stable funding*
  - *I am the director, and I like to do advocacy work. Also, I have helped to save our funding at the national level once, and helped with others to double the state contribution to adult basic and literacy education in Montana.*
  - *We have done research for over 15 years and provided data to other organizations to use for advocacy. We decided we wanted to take our own research to the community and policymakers to try to make a difference and influence policy decisions.*
  - *Our executive director's passion around advocacy as a method of empowering those we serve*
  - *The hired staff was direct beneficiaries, as funds relate to their paychecks [sic].*
  - *Poverty*

- 
- *Increasing action, knowledge and understanding of issues facing local families, children and youth, resulting ultimately in greater funding, volunteerism and focus on prevention efforts.*
  - *Faith groups were missing when it came to advocacy for the hungry and poor of Idaho.*
  - *Awareness of family, parent and child needs and the benefits the agency provides with significantly less dollars than most child welfare agencies*
  - *We recognize that state legislative involvement and funding is critical. We know we need to find a way to spend more time on it.*
  - *In the 90s, funding for legal aid was slashed and almost completely obliterated. That is why our organization was formed.*
  - *It is what we have been doing since 1968*
  - *Need*
  - *Want to receive some method of state funding for private education*
  - *Lack of education/ training with deaf and hard of hearing issues led us to establishing this organization*
  - *Desperation--if we didn't get funding we'd go under, and our service is essential to the effective functioning of all other social service sectors*
  - *Very limited funds and personnel*
  - *Someone has to lead the way and can't rely on others to advocate for our mission*
  - *No one thing. Awareness of needing to be knowledgeable*
  - *recognition that environments influence families' choices related to healthy eating and active living; policy is what shapes these environments*
  - *Prisoners human rights violations*
  - *Our agency is already involved in advocacy. What got me interested in attending the training is that my program manager explained that when and if we have an opportunity to be advocating for our agency or the community that we serve, attending this training would be helpful*
  - *To a large extent, advocacy is the nature of our organization*

- *More demand for client services in basic needs points to policies that create economic instability for families*
- *The state legislature is under pressure from teachers' unions to stifle some aspects of charter schools development. We support public schools and we support just wages and benefits, but we would be unable to operate without the flexibility provided by a charter*
- *Serving more and more folks uninsured or underinsured day after day*
- *Need for policy change*
- *Needing to renew sources of funding*
- *Realizing that we needed to be proactive, not reactive to the conditions around us*
- *Turnover, budget concerns, increase quality of services*
- *Began to shift our understanding of our role in the community from one of funding services to one of creating impact at the community level. Advocacy is a natural component of a community impact framework*
- *In my job, the organization has always been actively involved in advocacy. It is also true in my job as a school board member*
- *We have been involved in advocacy by virtue of our mission from the incorporation of our organization 25 years ago*
- *Continually encountering barriers while trying to assist clients*
- *This is one of the founding tenets of our org. Have been doing this for over 100 years*
- *Check off the box on UWA's [sic] standards of excellence regarding public policy*
- *Our CEO decided it was time to move forward, so he signed up himself, a key volunteer and me to participate in the institute.*
- *State and municipal funding issues*
- *Very simple, (old saying) "If you're not at the table you may be on the menu"*
- *CEO wanted it. Unfortunately, he left in 2006 and we only recently filled his position. If the new CEO is engaged, we'll act. If not, we won't.*

- *Began 10 years ago, fit our mission*
- *Funding - we needed state funding to help build programs in the state. Also, laws that impact our clients and partner agencies*
- *Our primary focus is on the quality of life of people with mental illness. There are many issues that affect services available, housing accessibility and affordability, appropriate treatment and law enforcement/mental health contacts.*
- *A lack of interest or awareness in the public sector towards the benefits of open source methodology in its application to education.*
- *Homelessness and poverty*
- *The case was made that to significantly impact our issue areas, we had to become more engaged in policy and advocacy efforts.*

**Question 14:** Overall, how would you rate your experience with CLPI? (n=167)

	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	45	26.9%
Very good	79	47.3%
Good	33	19.8%
Fair	4	2.4%
Poor	1	.6%
No opinion	5	3.0%

**Question 15:** Would your organization use CLPI's trainings and resources again? (n=165)

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	118	71.5%
No	4	2.4%
I don't know	36	21.8%
We are still using CLPI's trainings or resources	7	4.2%

**Question 16:** Have you recommended CLPI's trainings or resources to your colleagues? (n=163)

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	116	71.2%
No	47	28.8%

**Question 17:** What additional services or resources could CLPI offer to help you achieve your policy goals? (n=33)

- *Determine how to structure an ADVOCACY COALITION geared to disseminating influential reports, increasing media penetration and increasing direct input to legislative representatives. Of course it begs the question ... "How does one fund a full-time advocacy program to support varied non-profits?"*
- *Sample of effective/implemented policy changes*
- *Continue to need practical, "1, 2, 3..." guidelines on how our organization can participate in advocacy without getting in trouble with the IRS - coaching, a call-in line for "Can we do this?" kinds of questions*
- *Guidance on very simple information for people who would like to get involved (contact a legislator, etc.) but are intimidated or concerned they may violate the rules re non-profits.*
- *More high-level advocacy strategy materials. We need something beyond the basics.*
- *Training/materials on how to develop a public policy plan*
- *Advocacy through various e-mail resources and software - what works best for smaller efforts and is cost effective.*
- *Some type of brief, easy-to-read summary of benefits and ease of engaging in advocacy.*
- *More targeted public policy training to focus on specific areas of interest.*
- *Continue to provide this type of training. I am the only one in my organization with advocacy and federal funding experience.*
- *Would like another Helena training before next session*
- *Annual trainings*
- *Scholarships for those community volunteers living on limited incomes*
- *Training on limitations for 501(C) 3 agencies*
- *Help us reckon with LOCAL policies, policy making*
- *Be available as consultants on an ad hoc basis*



- *To be able to discuss structural problems when someone in the organization is not doing their job*
- *Making sure that there is a contact person who can help with questions*
- *To answer Question 16, I would say, "No, not yet, but I would recommend CLPI to higher-ups in the coalition." At my organization, we need more money from the private sector, and that's lower-hanging fruit than public funding. But my instinct is to suggest Portland's affordable housing coalition and networks get together to integrate CLPI's strategies at the top level, and keep moving forward. I know the former CDN (Community Development Network, now merged into a statewide org and renamed as the Oregon Opportunity Network) has done advanced research and messaging work with Portland State University College of Urban and Public Affairs dean, whose experience includes working with George Lakoff in California to make health issues like smoking bans and gun control winners in California. The CDN won a major victory in Portland by winning a 30 percent set-aside of urban renewal funds through this effort, and I know the affordable housing community will keep fighting to score a legislative win in Oregon.*
- *It would be awesome if you could provide a "calculator" for lobbying expenses, i.e. a web-based resource that allows someone to see what their efforts work out to based on the federal guidelines. I don't know, maybe you already have one, but that would be neat. And I bet you could get a lot of converts to advocacy!*
- *Simpler print material to include in packets when we hold trainings for community supporters.*
- *This training was very helpful in form and content.*
- *Training about local advocacy, if possible, (county/city)*
- *Being available to answer questions as they arise.*
- *Perhaps more in-depth training on specific topics such as grant-writing for non-profits or building a media campaign.*
- *More materials - such as those recently produced by CLPI -urging nonprofits to incorporate public policy into their "core" activities.*

**Question 18:** Please share any additional suggestions or recommendations regarding how CLPI could improve its trainings and resources. (n=31)

- *CLPI did an excellent job presenting the advocacy concept. Now that we are "fired up", how do we fund such an entity?*

- *Current samples of policy changes, how it was implemented an organization or influenced change, the timeline for such, and who are the stakeholders for such change (diagram spoke wheel) to make sure each area is represented for change.*
- *Provide a lot of basic, practical information on the non-profit status, and how to utilize it with confidence.*
- *Your trainers or presenters are great. However, I will strongly recommend training for staff of a diverse community.*
- *Send me this survey in about six months.*
- *Share information on how to best follow legislative actions when the processes start - both state and federal level; especially when your agency does not have a lobbyist on staff*
- *Need to develop easy-to-read summary of benefits to engage top-tier management in this training*
- *Engage with the regional partners within the California Association of Nonprofits*
- *The training session was excellent. The information was well presented, and the hand-outs were a great resource.*
- *The Miami NGO community is rather uninformed on how to improve advocacy and related resource development efforts. This type of training is badly needed.*
- *Maybe video conference?*
- *Doing a workshop or day training at annual training conference.*
- *Adapt the training to social action within selected sectors (as you identified in an early question here). Consider relating your more mechanistic approach to other approaches e.g. Mohr's social marketing approach Place a great deal more emphasis on building partnerships with other advocacy/potential advocacy groups within the sector Adapt the strategies for all levels of government Place the political strategies' discussion also within the framework of the legal system and the executive/regulatory systems*
- *I enjoyed Jason's motivational presentation. I am new to this, a former journalist. Please keep his energy and enthusiasm at the fore, and hopefully someday I can find more time to do direct lobbying. Chuck Shetekoff's message about how it's everyone's duty to register as a lobbyist was great ... I want to follow up on that.*
- *I was very impressed with the resource people and the training.*

- *More small group time*
- *More on grassroots organizing and other approaches beyond legislative advocacy*
- *Less technical information about legal issues- I think anyone seriously pursuing advocacy as a 501c(3) may need to do additional research or obtain help, anyway- so less may suffice. Perhaps then substitute more information or discussion about lobbying and advocacy strategies.*
- *Get another extraordinary speaker like Jason Sabo.*
- *Can't think of any*
- *It was excellent training.*
- *None - you are great!*
- *It would be possible to have more BOD members at the training if it were held early evening (5:30pm) or 7pm.*
- *Encourage training participants to bring their current policy work plans to sessions for further development and evaluation.*

## Appendix C – Interview Protocol

1. Please tell us a little about your organization.

Probes:

- Demographics
  - i. *Type of organization (issue area focus: Arts, education, etc.)*
  - ii. *Your role within organization*
  - iii. *Scope (local, regional, national, international)*
  - iv. *Size (staff, budget, board)*

2. Please describe the services you received from CLPI (*training, materials, resources, etc.*).

Probes:

- What has been most helpful?
- How has it been helpful? What additional services would be useful to you?

3. Please describe how you came to receive CLPI training (*funder-sponsored, self-identified need, etc.*).

4. What type of impact did those services have on your organization?

Probes:

- What did your organization learn?
- What was done with that learning?
  - i. *Probe for buy-in across organization; was the information shared/disseminated?*
  - ii. *Probe for actions taken as a result*
  - iii. *Probe for results of those actions*
- Did your organization make the 501(h) election?
- Was there an increase in advocacy activity?
- Any noticeable improvements in the way your organization operates as a result?

5. How has your organization's impact on the community been changed as a result of increased engagement in public policy matters?

Probes:

- Changes to client services/programming
- Changes to visibility (*to the media, to funders*)
- Changes in funding
- Changes in relationships (*policy-makers, champions, other organizations, potential donors, etc.*)

6. Can you share any specific examples of specific achievements or successes that resulted from an increase in advocacy activity?

7. Did you encounter any barriers to your advocacy goals? How did you address those barriers?

8. Please share any other comments or suggestions you feel would help CLPI better serve its clients.

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